



EPISODE 6

Amanda Christensen: Boundaries - What They Are and Why You Need Them

[Breaking the Silence Podcast by Reach 10](#) with hosts Creed Orme and Crishelle Simons

What does recovery from porn addiction look like for couples? When should you set boundaries? What are boundaries, anyway? How do I know if I'm being co-dependent? What does interdependence mean? All of these questions and more are answered in this interview with Amanda Christensen, MFT. Amanda has spent many years counseling couples and individuals struggling with pornography addiction. Hear what she teaches her clients about the power of boundaries, rebuilding trust in relationships, and what helps people make progress in recovery.

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- Creed: [00:03](#) Today we're breaking the silence on boundaries and trust with Amanda Christensen. Thank you so much for being here today, Amanda.
- Amanda: [00:10](#) Thanks.
- Creed: [00:10](#) Great to see you.
- Amanda: [00:11](#) Yeah, happy to be here.
- Creed: [00:12](#) Yeah, thanks! So as we begin, if you can introduce yourself a little bit - tell us where you're from, what you like to do; education, career, why you're involved in these kind of topics.

- Amanda: [00:24](#) I am from Marietta, Georgia and came out to Utah to go to BYU. I got my master's in marriage and family therapy from Brigham Young University, and got married very quickly. And now I'm a licensed marriage and family therapist and I have a, I own a therapy office in Spanish Fork called Hope Therapy. And I have two little boys, a two-year-old and an eight-month-old.
- Crishelle: [01:02](#) That is so fun. That is so fun. And thank you for telling us a little bit about you and your background. And we really want to focus on boundaries and trust, but we also want to paint the picture of, like, what recovery is. So just to start us off, what does it mean for an individual? What does recovery look like for an individual? What, what have you seen to be successful? What role does therapy play in that? Just kind of help us understand that.
- Amanda: [01:27](#) So, I specialize in treating couples with and affected by sexual addiction and betrayal trauma. So that's pretty much all of my clients. And I definitely have an ideal of what recovery could look like, but not everyone is up for all of that or can do all of it. But I will lay out what the best trajectory could look like. And that would be both partners doing therapy with me. I always do individual therapy with each partner and couple therapy. So I'll just usually do husband, wife, couple; husband, wife, couple, and then we'll alter that process however we want it to look. But in the therapy we're doing the deeper emotional work that people need to do and understand about themselves, and then outside of therapy, I've seen a lot of progress, the best results when people are involved in a 12-step group and have a sponsor and are working the steps on their own and they're doing daily recovery work. And that daily recovery work can look a lot of different ways, but it should involve step-work and journaling or meditation and some spiritual work that's going along with their 12-step higher power. And then they're talking to their sponsors, they're talking to members of their groups consistently. So if all of that work is happening outside of therapy, therapy is going to be a lot more effective and we can really make progress and do the deeper work instead of the, the just keeping people sober or just keeping people out of crisis. So I always say, use the free stuff outside of therapy and then, you know, bite the bullet and pay for therapy to do the really, the other meaningful stuff that's hard to do and you need to do one-on-one.
- Crishelle: [03:39](#) I really appreciate that perspective and I love your holistic approach to it. I think that's super important. Maybe that's the rec therapist in me, that's like, "it's not just about talking and like working through your problems!" It's about really living

and experiencing life and practicing those new coping skills and the new ways of self regulation and the new ways of soothing, like, honestly. So...

Creed: [04:03](#) So would you say with those who are trying to recover from sexual addictions that you work with, it sounds like they have to really work on lots of different things around their life, not just, you know, the addiction. It sounds like there's other things that maybe were lacking before that they're, that they need to work on together in order to be healthier? Is that right?

Amanda: [04:26](#) Yes. Yeah. And, and a lot of addicts come in and they're really afraid that they're just gonna be talking about pornography the whole time in therapy, and they don't want to talk about pornography the whole time. But if they're doing that outside work, like I always say, let group and sponsorship and everything get you sober, keep you sober, keep you in recovery and teach you a lot of grounding and just healthy living skills, so that in therapy, we're not really talking about the acting out very much. When it's important, we have to talk about it, when there's been a relapse or something, we'll talk about it. We'll make plans. But what I really want to work on in therapy is the deeper emotional why - why did this addiction ever sustain itself? How do you emotionally cope? How can you learn to healthily emotionally cope? What impacted your lack of emotional coping or healthy coping? And we'll do a lot of shame work, and then couple-wise we're doing all the connection and rebuilding trust and boundaries and, and things like that. So we really aren't talking about the addiction as much as people think.

Creed: [05:50](#) Mmhmm. Okay. And you mentioned a lot that, I think that the recovering person to be doing. What does the spouse or partner of someone who isn't particularly dealing with this sexual addiction themselves, you know, acting out in those ways, what are... do they need to do anything to assist/help out?

Amanda: [06:12](#) Again, ideally, this is the ideal that they would be doing almost all of the same things. And that's going to set the couple up for the best healing, because then the partner of the addict is able to separate themselves from that addiction. They're able to work on their own... Maybe trauma from their past that's now being re-triggered by the addiction and by the trauma, the betrayal trauma. They have a support system. They have steps that they can follow. They have a sponsor... You know? So I always encourage the partners to, to also go to group, to also have a sponsor to also be working the steps to also be doing daily grounding work. That might be meditation, journaling, self-care, step-work. Because then the whole

couple is a team and then they can really talk about recovery together. Cause sometimes if only the addict is doing all this 12-step stuff, that's kind of not common knowledge then the spouse is just like, "okay go - you go do your recovery thing. I don't really understand it or know about it but you just go make yourself better over there and I'll be over here". But it's better if they're both, you know, they both come home from their groups and then they talk about it - "Hey, oh we're working on step three today, and I heard this in group and it was hard to hear and it reminded me of this..." Then the couple is really connecting over recovery. I totally understand when people are really busy and maybe can't work that into their schedules, so I'll still hopefully find a way for the couple to be on the same page and really knowledgeable and educated about what recovery looks like. You know, what is the addict even talking about when, when they're talking about step nine? Or maybe they're talking about something that they learned in therapy that's lingo, you know, mumbo jumbo recovery stuff. The partner needs to understand that. So, unfortunately a lot of times in couple of relationships we just send the problematic person to therapy, you know, like, "Ugh, go fix yourself." And we do that with kids too - "This kid is acting out, this kid is being a problem..." So then we send the kid to therapy. And we have to involve the whole system.

Crishelle: [08:55](#)

Amen. Amen. I think that's so, so important and so valuable as, as we look at the whole system and as we recognize that, bless our hearts, we all have inner children that need healing. We all have core beliefs that we picked up that may or may not be serving us anymore. And the more that we can heal all of that, no matter what, how our coping is now, we need to heal those things. And Oh, there's so much freedom that comes from that. Yeah. I'm curious, you talked a lot about couples and I'm so grateful for that, that perspective on couples and how like it's a partnership and both need to be working together. For an individual, and this is something that I really wondered about as I was seeking a therapist, 'cause I'm like, I'm not struggling with pornography but I have like every symptom of betrayal trauma on the books and I don't know what to do about it. And I'm a single person and like, what does that look like for someone who's an individual, whether they're the one who's struggling with pornography or they're struggling with betrayal trauma because of like dating relationships or like family of origin stuff. What does that look like?

Amanda: [10:11](#)

Almost the same, different like you're saying. Yes, we're not using another spouse or partner to help out with recovery, but still in therapy I'm going to do the same

exact work, core beliefs, boundaries, inner child past trauma. And then we're going to look at all the symptoms of the betrayal trauma. What's coming up for you, how is this being triggered? We'll go through the actual criteria of PTSD and see that they really are experiencing real trauma and then we treat that. But even with single people, a single addict or a single person affected by addiction or any kind of betrayal, I still want them going to group. I still want them doing the 12 steps. I am very passionate about that just because when they don't, and sometimes I have clients who won't, you know, because group is really intimidating and scary and working the 12 steps is a lot of work and yeah, it's tedious for sure.

Amanda: [11:23](#) So, sometimes you will, but it just really does give you the best overall healing. But yeah, and it is a little more challenging when I have a single addict because sometimes they have a harder time just because they don't have their spouse's pain motivating them. And so sometimes it can be harder to really, they want recovery really bad. They're done with the addiction, they just, they have the same exact feelings of, "Oh, I hate this. I want to be done with it. I don't want to live like this," but so you know, sometimes they don't have that pain staring them right in the face. They don't have a wife or a spouse crying and pleading please. And so I'll just verbalize that in therapy and say, you know, you're missing that, that part of motivation. So we've got to find motivation that's about you, you know, about you changing. And that should be where it's at anyway for any addict. But honestly, sometimes it does help when they have real pain because we know how much it really does hurt the individual who is the addict. But a lot of times they're used to that, you know, they're used to hurting themselves and pushing down their emotional pain and being stuck in shame so they don't, they're not really motivated by them hurting themselves, but they might be more motivated by them hurting their families. Does that make sense?

Crishelle: [13:07](#) Totally. Yeah. Especially as I think of like the stages of change, like that makes so much sense. And sometimes like the first thing that helps us to change is how crappy everyone else's lives are around us because of our choices. And hopefully it gets to that like an intrinsic motivation and that like internal drive to change. Yes. Everything that we're changing in our lives, right.

Amanda: [13:28](#) Sometimes I hope, this sounds mean, but sometimes I hope for something bad to happen. Sometimes that's what it takes. Somebody needs to lose their job, you know, 'cause they get caught at work or get arrested. I know that sounds extreme, but... Or maybe you know, that their spouse discover something or they get some

kind of consequence sometimes that will really wake you up. And so I hate to say that sometimes I hope something bad happens to you, but it's more like I want you to get into recovery so badly you need it, but you don't realize how much you need it until maybe the wheels start falling off.

Creed: [14:14](#) Probably a lot of people are stuck in this like limbo area of like, "yes, it's affecting me and it's painful for me in the end, but I'm still enjoying an aspect of it and I'm not there yet where maybe I want to completely change." I mean, it's kind of mentally that they want to, maybe in their heart they're like still wanting to hold on, and it takes maybe hitting rock bottom for them to realize, "Okay, this led me down here. I don't want to be down here. Now how do I get out of this?" So unfortunately that does seem to be the case sometimes.

Amanda: [14:43](#) Yeah, it's scary. It's scary to change. It's scary to commit to all this work. You know, it is a lot of work to change. And so if you feel like you could just coast and change later, then that's easier in the moment. But really, you're hurting yourself more and more. The more time that passes, the more trauma you're causing for your future partner or your current partner and for yourself. So, yeah, but it's scary to say, "here I go again. I've tried to stop this a thousand times in my life and now I'm going to try something else again or I'm going to try the same thing I've already tried."

Creed: [15:34](#) As a therapist, I feel like, I mean I'm looking into going into therapy as well. What do you do to help someone who, you know is, continues to be, continues to try, but is having a hard time to do so do you do anything in particular to help like give them hope and make sure that they're not, like, just completely shaming themselves and sad and just giving up completely? Like what kind of things would you say that you tried to do to inspire hope and, and continual effort?

Amanda: [16:06](#) I can give hope. I can give true hope. To be honest, when I first started specializing in this, I had a hard time with that because I didn't see a lot of change in the first few years because change happens very slowly. So I was the type of therapist that was like, I want to see results, you know, and I'm not seeing results or I'm seeing tiny, tiny bits. And so it was hard for me to say, really, if you do all of this and we really do the hard work and you stay committed and consistent, you're not going to be perfect. You will go backwards a bunch of times. You know, recovery is not this linear upward motion. Yeah, it was hard for me to say that, but the more experience I've had and the more people I've worked with,

which is a lot now, I can honestly say, this will get better if we do all of this work and you really just, I always just say dive into the deep end.

- Amanda: [17:10](#) Some people ask me, "should I just maybe do part of it or should I—" I'm like, "No! Let's just go for it. This is it." You know, you have the tools, you're with a specialized therapist. Something has brought you here. Now is the time to heal. Let's do it. It can be done. I see people change all the time. You know, and then everybody's timing is a little bit different. Sometimes I meet with people and I really can tell that the timing isn't right, but it will be maybe in six months, maybe in two years. I don't know. But sometimes I can kind of feel that resistance but I have a lot of hope for people. I really, I don't think I could keep specializing in this if I didn't see change. And see, you know, couples really come together and be connected and feel happy. It would be too depressing if I didn't see that.
- Creed: [18:11](#) Right. It's helpful to see hope here and there. And I mean, you work at Hope Recovery.
- Amanda: [18:16](#) Yes. That's funny. Yeah, that's what it's called. Yeah.
- Crishelle: [18:21](#) That's really wonderful. So I want to transition a little bit and focus on the boundaries and trust and what are boundaries, and what role do they have in recovery and even in healthy relationships? Yeah.
- Creed: [18:36](#) And if you can explain too, just what boundaries are in general. Like when I was growing up, I had no idea what boundaries were. I didn't, I wasn't taught what those things were.
- Crishelle: [18:43](#) Seriously, my husband and I were having a conversation the other day and it's like, what are boundaries? And I'm like, it's so simple and like, cause I'm just used to it because of the work I do. And so yeah, please explain that to us.
- Amanda: [18:56](#) Well we really overcomplicate boundaries. We think they're like this elusive thing. But really I think boundaries are very innate inside of us. It's like I see my two year old, if I do something he doesn't like he says, stop mom, you know? "No!" And that's him. He's trying to set a boundary. He's trying to say, this is what's okay and this is what's not okay. The problem is sometimes we grow up in families or culturally, societally we are kind of taught, no, you can't have a boundary about "that". You know, you need to be polite and smile or you know, just, just things that kind of make our boundaries get off.

- Creed: [19:44](#) Like you're not allowed to say no. I mean, especially in the LDS culture, you know, with all this volunteer service we're supposed to do or serving others, if we ever hold a boundary of "no" we can feel guilty for doing that oftentimes I feel like, but I think, I mean, we can talk about this later too, but I love this book called Boundaries. Yeah. I don't know if you like that, but . . .
- Amanda: [20:06](#) By Townsend . . yeah.
- Creed: [20:09](#) And it talks about how Christ had boundaries, right? He wouldn't have been able to help people the amount he did if he didn't have his own type of boundaries. It's kind of knowing when to say yes and when to say no. But I'll let you continue.
- Amanda: [20:22](#) Yes, yes. No, I love that point. And so when we've become more empowered to actually be able to voice, "Oh, okay. I can have a say in my life and my safety." So when we're working with these types of couples, what I'm really focusing on boundaries for is emotional, physical, sexual safety. So they need boundaries. Addicts need their own personal boundaries about, you know—I know myself, I know my addiction, so I know that it is not safe for me to browse Netflix by myself. I just know that about myself. And so that's a personal boundary I'm going to set. For partners, they may, the more into recovery they get, they may realize, you know, when I start to follow him around in the car and track his location, I'm not saying that's a bad thing. Sometimes you really do need to do that to find out what the truth is, but, sometimes that can get me into kind of a crazy place and I'm just diving right into my trauma. So I'm going to set a boundary with myself that when I feel myself wanting to do that, I'm going to step back, call my sponsor, surrender. Right? And then there are a couple boundaries, relational boundaries. And those are things that ideally, both parts of the couple are agreeing on that, "Hey, this is the best way that this relationship can operate. We don't do this and we do do this and when this happens, this will happen." So sometimes both parts of the couple don't agree on that. Depending on the level of recovery. So then sometimes say a partner will have to say, "Hey, when you behave that way with these addict attitudes or when you're raging out on the kids we're all gonna leave the house and let you rage out by yourself. But we're not going to deal with that." So anyway I think that boundaries are amazing. They help people respect each other because they're you, they're voicing, "this is what respect looks like. This is, I'm respecting myself by setting a boundary and I'm letting you respect me by telling you this is what's okay with me."

- Crishelle: [22:56](#) I think that's so beautiful. And I think what I heard specifically when you were talking about boundaries is that boundaries create safety and they create security and we don't have boundaries and we don't like have the assertiveness to hold our voice of boundaries. We feel like we get walked all over and we feel we become victims and we become just like really stuck. And when we can figure out, okay, like what do I need in order to feel safe? I think that's what I always come back to. Like in order for me to feel safe right now. What conditions or what things need to change or be held true? That helps me figure out, "Oh, like I'm not okay with my boss ever talking to me like that or my my significant other like talking to me like that or, or I'm not okay when my anxiety, like things for anxiety," like I have boundaries about my anxiety. Like, okay, when I start going down a spiral, I need to back off in order for me to stay safe and go do something else. And so, yeah, I thought that you explained that so beautifully and simply and we will definitely link that book that you guys mentioned.
- Amanda: [24:10](#) and there's one called "Boundaries in Marriage" too so.
- Crishelle: [24:13](#) Oh, perfect.
- Amanda: [24:13](#) There's a lot of versions of that same book that are all really good.
- Crishelle: [24:16](#) Oh, wonderful. We'll link those in the show notes on our website so that our listeners can find those such good resources. Because again, it's not something that I learned in my household growing up, and not that you even need to use the word boundary, like "I'm setting a boundary," right. It doesn't need to be all uppity. But just like the concept I think is really helpful. And understanding yourself and relationships.
- Amanda: [24:44](#) Yeah, and as long as we can be clear about the boundaries aren't to control someone else, sometimes it's like, "Ooh, cool. I could set boundaries on someone else." Well, not really. Like I said, you want the couple to agree on these things. And so sometimes it will be like the spouse saying, "Hey, I really need this to change so that I can feel safe in this relationship. And so that I can continue to be close to you," and the partner might be like, "Oh, that is really impacting my life in a way I don't really want to do that, but I will because your safety is important to me," you know? So, but sometimes, yeah, you can't control how other people react to your boundaries. And so it's all about what can I do? What's in my power and my power isn't changing anyone else, but I can make my own choices for myself.

- Crishelle: [25:50](#) That sounds like my mantra every day! Can't change them. I can only change me.
- Creed: [25:57](#) I think oftentimes, and especially couple relationships or even friendships, like I've run into this in my own life of being codependent. And if you don't know what codependent means for our listeners I'm sure you'd have a better definition. But it's where you take on somebody else's problems and view them as your own. And that you need to fix them and that someone else's life kind of becomes your own and you're trying to fix somebody else and trying to take on responsibility that isn't yours. I feel like that would happen probably quite often. And in a couple relationship, do you see that a lot? And how do you help that spouse know or know what is healthy boundaries so that they're not trying to fix a problem that really isn't theirs to fix, right? It's still their spouse's problem. They definitely need to do their own work for themselves, but to help the system, the couple's relationship. But what kind of, how do you help a spouse that can be codependent? How do you help them out?
- Amanda: [27:05](#) That's a process for sure because I think we all feel a responsibility toward our partners. Like we're supposed to make them happy and we're supposed to be good spouses so that you know, we just think that we can solve other people's problems, which like you said, is codependent. It's unhealthy . . . and then I don't want the pendulum to swing too far over either to like, "well that's your crap. Go figure it out."
- Creed: [27:40](#) We don't want independence or co-dependence. Maybe interdependence?
- Amanda: [27:44](#) Interdependence is kind of a really good balance where both partners are affecting each other. It's kind of crazy to say, "okay, you don't affect me at all. I'll just be over here and you'll be over there." That's not really the ideal. Sometimes you do have to completely separate yourself and just for a time. But yeah, ideally the spouse, the partner is doing their own recovery and if they are doing the 12 steps, the 12 steps are all about "I cannot control my addict partner" or "I cannot control anyone else." And then I really, just from a therapist perspective, I really try to be very clear about where the responsibility is getting divvied up. I will say I'm in charge of this part so you don't have to worry about this. He's in charge of this part. No one else has to worry about this. I'm not doing it for him. You're not doing it for him. He's got to do the work and she's in charge of this part, you know? And, and when somebody tries to take someone else's part, I will just say, remember, I do this part. You don't have to worry, you know, I'm doing this in

therapy so you don't have to be anxious about it. I got it. You know, or he's doing the work. You don't have to take it for him. You just do yours. And like the better you do yours, the more you're going to help each other and that couple relationship. But yeah, we do have to separate what's my side of the street? What's yours? And I don't need to do it for you and I don't need to define myself by what you're doing or what you're not doing.

- Creed: [29:31](#) I like that a lot. Yeah. That feels very good. Organizing it in that way. Setting clear expectations so that everybody's on the same page. Right. Very cool.
- Crishelle: [29:40](#) Interdependence takes a ton of trust.
- Amanda: [29:42](#) Yes.
- Crishelle: [29:43](#) And so how do we rebuild trust when it's been broken. And I would love for you to talk about that in like a couple relationship, but as well as like, I, as a single person, I really struggled with that question. It's like I have no one to trust because I'm single and I don't even want to pretend like I'm going to practice that in a relationship right now because I feel so unsafe. So how do you rebuild that?
- Amanda: [30:10](#) Yeah. Okay. So that's a perfect way to talk about trust, especially as a single person. So I want people, we always want to jump to the couple trust first, but actually first I want people to start trusting their higher power, whatever your higher power is. Start trusting your higher power. That alone can take a long time. You know, because you might feel abandoned, you might feel forgotten, you might feel wronged, angry. I mean, all of that is completely appropriate and normal. And so that process, then you can start working on restoring trust with yourself and learning what your gut is telling you or what you know, the spirit is telling you or however you want to name that. Restore trust in yourself that you are a capable person of worth who can make decisions for yourself and you don't have to be the victim of your story and controlled by the things you can't control. And then if you're more solid in those areas, then you start restoring trust in the couple relationship and that's its own long haul. I want to be clear that that's not linear either. I mean, that's going to go backwards many times in the course of your relationship and that's okay. It doesn't feel great. It doesn't feel good at all. You, I mean, we all want trust to just be like building, building, building and I'm going from zero all the way up to a hundred consistently. But no, it's going to go up and down based on a lot of things. And that's how a relationship operates and that's okay. It's like when the trust is down, how do I keep myself safe when the

trust is, has been rebuilt? How do I let my guard down and allow myself to let go and trust my partner? And so things that contribute to that are going to be consistency, time. And just seeing the little things, seeing the big things. There's tiny ways to build trust. There's huge ways to build trust and all of that matters. So sometimes the addicts will be very impatient. Like, look, I'm sober. Why don't you trust me? And this also is like, well, You're raging out on the kids every day and you're screaming at me and you're still belittling me, you know? And so it's like, there's a lot of different moving parts to build that trust up. But yeah.

Creed: [33:06](#) I think it's important to recognize, as you were saying too, that all couples need to work on trust together, not, not just couples that struggle with sexual addictions, right? Yeah. I mean it's just a matter of relationships. It's like, are you going to be on time to pick me up for the movie? Or like—

Amanda: [33:21](#) Yes! "Can I count on you?"

Creed: [33:21](#) Can we go to church at this time? There's lots of things that you have to build with relationships and no relationship is perfect and the focus is just working on it together and loving each other, right?

Amanda: [33:36](#) Yes. Yeah. My favorite part of trust, and this comes way later. So this is like when a couple has been working in therapy for maybe a year or maybe six months. So, so don't expect this at the beginning, but really learning to empathize with each other and be attuned, attunement is huge. In what I talk about with couples, which is just, I'm tuned into you, I can focus on you because my stuff isn't first, you know, and I'm not in a trauma state or in a defensive addict state. And so I really can just be grounded and talk to you and listen to you, truly listen to you, I understand you. And then empathize. And that is like, that's the signal with couples. Whenever I see real empathy, I will highlight that so hard. I mean, I will just tell the couple this is a good sign. Look what just happened. Right, and the more that happens, the more people can lean into that trust and empathy's kind of hard to fake. So with betrayal trauma, it's hard to trust, "Oh, are they real? Are they being real right now? Or are they manipulating me?" But like attunement and empathy is hard to fake. You can feel when someone really cares about you or but probably not at first. Like I said, you have to build up that trust in yourself. Like, "Oh, can I? Am I just terrible at reading people?" You know, like a lot of betrayal trauma, you'll feel that like, "Oh my gosh, I must be really totally off base because

I trusted him anyway." So that empathy is really what I'm looking for. But like I said, it takes a lot of work to really get there with couples. So

Crishelle: [35:39](#) That was so wonderful. And I really appreciate how you brought it back to, like, ultimately we have to be able to trust our higher power and ourselves and no relationship can be built without that foundation to begin with, period. That's been my experience and that's what I see over and over and over again. Just to like kind of bring it all together. What do you view as a healthy view on sexuality? Like what is healthy sexuality to you?

Amanda: [36:13](#) Healthy sexuality . . . A healthy sexual relationship with yourself and then how to bring that into a partnership? Those are kind of two different things. So healthy sexuality would have no shame. You're understanding the purposes for why are we sexual beings? What's the point of that? You've gotten peace there with God. That alone is like, Oh, a whole project sometimes. You've maybe found peace about not being a victim of your addiction anymore. Like working through that anger and abandonment about, you know, this is not fair. I was only seven years old when I got exposed to pornography. All of that is super valid, but you know, as you work through that you'll kind of get to a peaceful place about "Okay, it's ok that I'm a sexual being. That doesn't make me bad or wrong. That doesn't make me overly sexual" or, you know, all these negative labels that you put on yourself. Same with as a spouse. It's okay to be sexual but, you're not wanting to be objectified or objectifying as the addict. You have progressive victory over lust. So if lust is playing a huge part in your life, then I would say you're not healthy sexually, individually. If you have all of that, you know, you have this healthy understanding of how am I a healthy sexual being by myself, then you know, how do I bring that into a partnership, and give and take, and listen, and empathize, and treat that person with respect, and have boundaries around every single part of it. That's going to be a healthy sexual relationship and honesty, communication, integrity. I know I just listed like a bunch of great, awesome things. But yeah, it takes a lot of work.

Crishelle: [38:34](#) And I think it's that like we can work on over time and as we're working on it, we don't have to be perfect at it in order to like . . . There's not this like pedestal of healthy sexuality. I think healthy sexuality is being aware of those things and working towards them and building that, always. So I think that was perfect. Yeah. Thank you so much, Amanda. It's been so wonderful to hear and to learn from

your wisdom and, and to feel your compassion for people and, and for healthy relationships. Thank you. Yeah.

- Creed: [39:04](#) It's so wonderful to have you. Do you have any last final words about, you know any motivation for how to set boundaries and trust and hope at all for our listeners?
- Amanda: [39:17](#) Yeah, just do it. I just want to yell like Shai Laboeuf. "Just do it!" Honestly. It is. Oh, you have to do it. You have to do it and you can do it. And educate yourself. So many people want to make changes, but they just haven't met the right education or the right therapist who's, who knows about this problem. So sometimes I see that they've tried a lot of different things, but they're going down the wrong paths kind of. And then the second they have the right tools, they just go, it's like a fire. So keep trying. You know, you'll have to try the rest of your life. This is not a quick fix. This is not even a fix, I would say. Like, never have I had a couple where I say, "okay, you're fixed." You know, I just say, okay, I think you don't need me anymore, you know? You know what to do and you might, you might need to come back over and over and that's okay. But you have the tools and now you just gotta be consistent and keep going, but it's never going to be over. And that doesn't have to be a bad thing. Sometimes when I say that, people are like, Oh my gosh, for the rest of my life. It's like, yeah, progress. Work on yourself for the rest of your life.
- Creed: [40:43](#) That's what it is. Yeah. We're all here to do that.
- Crishelle: [40:46](#) It's exactly what every relationship takes regardless of what you've been through it takes constant progression. That was perfect. Thank you so much. You're such an angel. Thank you so much. That was great.
- Amanda: [40:58](#) Oh, yeah. Thank you.