

Ep #109: Healing from a Breakup with Claire Byrne



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Maisie Hill

The Maisie Hill Experience with Maisie Hill

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If you want to do things differently but need some help making it happen then tune in for your weekly dose of coaching from me, Maisie Hill, Master Life Coach and author of *Period Power*. Welcome to *The Maisie Hill Experience*.

Okay folks, I've got a cracking episode for you today. So, we are doing relationships month throughout February in my membership, The Flow Collective. And I've invited my favourite relationship coaches of all kinds to come on in and coach you all on their areas of expertise. They're just all so fantastic. I'm so excited for you all.

So if you want to improve your relationships, whether that's your relationship with yourself, with your friends, your family, your romantic partner, your exes, your colleagues, any relationship or all of them. Then I highly recommend that you come and join us because it's just going to be so good. And as I said, I've got these amazing coaches coming in and I wanted to bring them all on the podcast over the next few weeks so that I can introduce them to you and you can really hear about the amazing work that they do and the wisdom that they have to offer.

So to kick things off I have none other than Claire Byrne here today. Claire is a heartbreak coach who helps people to find love again. And I had to bring her on the podcast because I know just so many of my clients have trouble moving on from previous relationships, whether they experienced a recent breakup or it's a breakup from some time ago that is still coming up for them even when they've moved on and they're in another relationship as well, I have to say. So, it can come up in all sorts of ways. So, Claire, thank you for coming on.

Claire: Hi, Maisie, thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

Maisie: Yes, it's great to have you. Alright, let's just jump in with the big juicy question because I know you're so – Claire, she knows heartbreak so frigging well.

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Claire: Well, I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing. The running joke is, obviously this is what I do for a living. And it's like, there are millions of heartbroken people and someone's getting their heart broken every second. And I'm like, "Yes." Because from a business perspective it's really messed up but it's just true. It just, it happens all the time, it happened to me multiple times which is why I was inspired to do this. But I also always say, I say this in one of the first videos of a course that I have.

If you're heartbroken you're one of the lucky ones because if you're willing to dive in and do the deeper digging, and the healing. And really understand the bigger lesson which all the time, I would say 99% of the time is more about you than it is about the other person you're heartbroken over. You're going to have this next level relationship with yourself that never would have done the work to do without that heartbreak. So, it really is, jokes aside of yeah, so my business will survive forever.

It really is the hardest most painful thing to go through but if you're willing to lean in and do all of that deeper digging and really reflect inward, not just about the other person, I always say this. I don't have one client who leaves working with me who's like, "No, I still think that person's the one who got away.

Maisie: Yeah. I'm just feeling the weight of a statement like that. So why is it so hard for so many people to get over their ex, what is going on there?

Claire: Well, I'm going to say my thoughts on it but obviously it's different for everybody, it can be different for everybody. I think obviously if you've had stuff happen in childhood you're going to have different attachment styles. So I tend to attract clients who have an anxious attachment style with partners, myself included, I identify as someone who has anxious attachment style. I've done a lot of work on it, but I still see it come up even in my most ideal relationship.

My partner lives five minutes away from me, he has four kids. So, we live 50% of the time as I'm acclimating, getting to know them. And sometimes when we part ways I still feel a little – and I could be going over there that

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night to hang out with him and the kids. It's just ingrained in the body but obviously I've come a long way. So if you're someone with an anxious attachment style there is a tendency to put a lot of weight on that one person to hold that one position in your heart to give you the love and the security that you crave as if it is oxygen.

So just speaking from that particular standpoint there's just all this need for that other person to fill that fear of being left. And especially a lot of anxious attachment style people, they have experienced the hot and cold behaviour in childhood. So, when that happens in their relationship it can send you really spiralling and feel like you're going to die. And it sounds very dramatic and extreme but it's a very panicky feeling that people with avoidant attachment style who are anxious attachment style people tend to attract don't understand it.

And then it's too much for them when the anxious attachment style, but I mean that could be a whole other episode in and of itself. I think that probably the main reason though is putting all that pressure and need for one person to fill one role. And then I also think that there is a lot of societal pressure. A lot of my clients just, I mean yes, they want to find their person for them but they also think that there is a big stigma attached to them not having found their person and they're 36 years old, or they're in their 40s.

And they've got parents who are concerned, or they feel like the odd person out, or they're the only single person at the wedding, or now their friends are married and they're on baby number three. And it becomes what I call clean pain of not having found your person because you just want that. There's a genuine desire for that. But then it gets muddied with dirty pain of everybody else has it and I don't, there must be something wrong with me. And then there becomes this angsty pressure and need to create that for yourself.

And I just think, yeah, touching back on the clean pain, it's just we crave that connection, we crave that partnership, there is something to be said. Maisie, I talk all the time about how important it is to heal your heart and then just date yourself and really lean into your relationship with yourself

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before you jump into finding someone better. And it's not going to be that way for everybody. Sometimes Mr or Miss right appears when you least expect it, and you are still in the middle of cleaning up your heartbreak. I'm not saying you have to push that person away.

I do talk about the importance of really loving your relationship with yourself and feeling really content with who you are and really content in your own company. But I'm not going to lie, Larry, my partner now of over three years, he's the love of my life. He's definitely the one. My life is so much better with him in it. But while I was single my thoughts weren't, and my life won't be good enough until he arrives. By the time I got to calling him in which is a separate podcast episode, I was so fulfilled with me. I wasn't desperately needing someone to fill the role.

I was like I'm going to find him but I'm good without him because I don't want to be with someone who's going to be avoidant. I kept attracting all the avoidant attachment style men, hot and cold behaviour because I hadn't healed that within myself. And I was tolerating all of that BS behaviour and engaging in it, and making excuses for it, and overanalysing it, making myself the problem in order to just settle for the crumbs that I was getting. And then finally I was like, "Enough, Claire, enough."

Dating yourself, figure out a way to make that more enticing than settling for BS from men who are providing you the crumbs of crumbs. And then get good, and ready, and clear on who it is that you're looking for, who you want to be in that ideal relationship, how you want to be showing up for your ideal person. And I don't mean that in an antifeminist way like who, who I do I need to be for my man or whatever gender you are interested in?

And it's just really about being really content with you before you find that person which then ironically your life gets so much better with that right person when you're much more clear about who you are and how you want to be, and how you want to show up. And exactly who you're looking for and what you will and won't tolerate anymore, as well as knowing what to look for and signs to look for with unavailability.

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That's what I really help my clients do who are in the find someone better section is clocking unavailability because so many people come to me in their heartbreak and say, "I was blindsided." And then I'm telling you, Maisie, I've been doing this now for six years. When we start to unpack it I'm like, "Yeah, I'm not blindsided because these were all the things that were happening before him that you weren't clocking. And that's not to shame or blame you, it's just to say now you know what to look for, for the next time when you date again."

That these are not behaviours that are okay in a healthy, grounded, committed loyal monogamous relationship if that's what you're creating which is who I work with, people who are striving for a monogamous lifestyle and partnership. And recovering from who they thought was their lifelong partner in most cases.

Maisie: I love what you said there about it's just creating that amazing relationship with yourself first. And really knowing who you are and loving who you are and feeling solid in that. Because certainly what I have observed in the past in myself, I think less so in committed relationships but certainly in the dating stage of things is the tendency to contort who I am in order to please and get that reward of attention and love, even if it's not love in terms of I'm loving you, but receiving that.

And I think that's particularly true when you're autistic. We often tend to adjust who we are, and mask, and do things like that. But now that I am just so settled in who I am, it creates a very different experience for me in any relationship. And certainly, I mean I've been with Paul for nine years, we just had our nine-year anniversary.

Claire: What?

Maisie: Yeah, he's going to be coming on the podcast soon. We're going to be doing a couple of episodes together.

Claire: I can't wait to listen.

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Maisie: But I just feel very settled in who I am and that means I'm just not going to tolerate nonsense from other people, whoever it is.

Claire: Yeah. There's an abandonment of the self. And again I think that comes back to can this person fill that one position? And then all my problems will go away because then I don't have to worry about my mom being like, "Have you met anyone?" Or being the single person at the wedding, or just walking around with a story that there must be something wrong with me if I haven't found my person, to get to the point of I actually don't think there's anything wrong with me.

I actually, I talk about this with my clients, becoming the heroine of your love life story, owning your past history and what are the lessons that you've learned? Because I mean my heartbreak journey started in my mid-20s, and I didn't find Larry till 38 and I got my heart broken I would say five significant times. But there were two pretty major, three pretty major ones. And yeah, it was so much abandonment of myself and looking for that other person and trying to be who I thought they needed me to be.

Maisie: It's just such a shift to make that a shift and to do that work is just so, so powerful.

Claire: And it's also boring. It's way more exciting to have sex with someone else than to be like, I'm going to lie in bed by myself tonight, and the next night, and the next night, and the night after that. It is powerful work, and it is, I'm not going to lie, it's hard work but I think it's also easy to get indulgent about and dramatic like, "It's just so hard and I'm so lonely." It's like you can do hard, you can do lonely because guess what? I think being in a relationship with an unavailable person and trying to fit a square peg into a round hole just to have someone.

And even if you feel, especially the anxious attachment style person, I'm going to just say she, but it happens for everybody, they can physically, it's like there's a physical pull and I really believe there's a soul lesson and your soul is just so tied up in his soul for the lesson. And you mistake that

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for love, healthy love, but I love him. And it's like, yeah, that's where the phrase, sometimes love isn't enough really rings true.

And that's really hard to untangle and let go, and step back and be like, "Okay, I may love this person, but this is not a healthy relationship and I'm not healthy. And I'm all day, every day thinking about when I'm going to hear from him, what kind of mood he's going to be. Is he going to be hot, hot, hot, is he going to be cold, cold, cold?" It's so exhausting and it takes you out of the rest of your life.

And then you become that annoying friend where you're constantly overanalysing your significant other or the person who broke up with you who maybe sucked you back in who you're breaking up with again over and over again. And it just becomes all consuming and that's how you know.

Maisie: And it's very, because I'm always thinking, well, with any behaviour there's something that we're getting out of it, whatever it is. There's a reason why we're doing it, that your nervous system, or your brain, or whatever it is that thinks this is a good idea. And it's just, when you think about that kind of the coming together, the falling apart, the coming together, that kind of the classic rollercoaster of I never know where I'm going to be on this but I'm up here and then I'm down here.

Claire: But there's an addiction to it.

Maisie: Exactly, because everything's firing. It's a very intense experience and we're kind of primed to like intense experiences on some level. It's very rewarding even if it's the worst thing ever for us to be experiencing.

Claire: It's satisfying and then what happens is my clients, and I'm talking about my clients, but this was all me, I did this stuff, all of it. So, I'm not sitting here on some high horse thing, like this is what all the people do. I coach on this because I did all of this, and it was so exhausting and it really messed up all the other areas of my life. I was super broke. I was lost in

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career stuff. I had a terrible relationship with my body and who I saw in the mirror. I was in drama with friends. I was in drama with family members.

It bled out everywhere until I had to just come back too. But yeah, that rollercoaster and that addiction is so real and so satisfying, and so hard to break.

Maisie: Yeah. And I think especially now with the impact of social media and the ability to, for the most part, see what someone else is up to. And then so there's the dopamine hit of logging into social media and taking a look and kind of the brain's desire to be certain about something.

Claire: Even if it's negative information, finding out that that person is with someone else, yeah. Well, which is why, Maisie, the first step to stopping wanting Mr or Miss wrong back is cut contact. And by cut contact that includes blocking on all levels on social media, phone numbers. Because to me, if you're taking a look see on what that person is up to that still counts as contact because your brain is still fixating. And it's almost like the brain believes the person is still in your life.

Maisie: That's so good. Okay, we're going to give all of you a moment to head over to Instagram, unfollow, go into your contacts right now.

Claire: Even more than unfollow, block and mutual friends and family members where you think you're going to be able to get information off of their social media.

Maisie: I can literally feel people squirming as they listen to this. But seriously, do it now. Claire has just given you a really crucial piece of information that is just do it.

Claire: You just don't even realise how your brain is being really sneaky and you and I have been colleagues and we know about thoughts create results. But what I love about this first step to stopping wanting your ex back is it's rip the band-aid, it's an active step. You can feel like I'm doing something. And guess what? I'm sorry to tell you, well, you know this already. The reason why Maisie is saying, I can feel everyone squirming

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right now is because it's really hard to do. And then it's going to feel really, really hard.

You're already heartbroken that the person isn't in your life in that way anymore, and then it's heartbroken feeling completely disconnected, heartbroken over not knowing what the person is up to and then going crazy in your brain. I'm not calling you crazy, but you feel crazy wondering what that person is up to, who they're with, how they're doing. Because you want to be able to read their facial expression on a picture. And also it's not just about what they're up to, you want them to see what you're up to and check to see if that person's looking at your stories.

Again, I have done all of this, so no judgement but let's be onto our brains. And I think that then that leads to, Maisie, I know I told you, I go on so many tangents so roll with me. It's like there is your desire to heal your heartbreak and there's the desire to just want that person back, there's two desires happening. And so I turn clients away when it's very clear to me, they're like, "No, I'm not going to cut contact." And I'm like, "Okay then, we're not going to work together because you need to be able to want to do the hard things."

That's why we hire coaches because what we want to create in our life we haven't been able to do on our own because there's so many things I can do on my own. I'm not drinking for 30 days, maybe 45, we'll see how I feel. It's the classic dry January I am doing. I'm not hiring a coach for that; I can do that. I know I can do that on my own, I've done it before. But there are just certain things that we can't do or just feel beyond our capacity. And so it's going to be really, really hard and yet what is it that you desire? Are you ready to let that person go?

And to be clear, if anyone here's listening to me and they're not ready to cut contact, but you're picking up what I'm throwing down, I don't mean to do a shame or self-plug in the middle of this episode. If you're willing to come and coach with me and work on cutting the contact, that I'm willing to help you do. "I know cutting contact is the right thing to do, Claire, I'm just terrified to do it. I need your help to help me do it." That's different than,

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“No, I’m not going to cut contact, but can you help me get over him?” No, because you’re not actually really ready.

Because how do you expect, I always compare it to alcohol, speaking of alcohol. If an alcoholic is quitting drinking, they should not be going to the bar to just sit around the alcohol and look at it and watch other people drinking it. That is just not recommended. If you’re trying to get over someone, don’t watch what they’re doing or communicate with them.

Now, of course, everyone always says, “What if we share kids”, or, “What if we work together and I’m not willing to leave my job?” That’s a whole other, obviously you have to navigate through that. And I help my clients in those situations. But outside of working together or sharing kids there’s no excuse. There’s really no excuse.

Maisie: I’m just picturing because it’s been a while since I was single or getting over anyone or anything like that. And I’m just really trying to recall what that is like. I think it’s just, it’s so human to want that, to seek out connection and to not want to feel alone. And I think this is where I think some of my clients that I’ve coached on this recently with, it’s like they want to move on. And they had this relationship that either ended recently or often some time ago but they’re still, they’re longing for connection and for relationship with someone else.

But that urge is kind of overriding their memory of the behaviour that was exhibited in the relationship and all the other reasons and it’s just always – I find that’s such a valuable conversation to have was like, “Tell me about this person.” And they’re like, “Well, he did this, and they did this.” And you’re like, “Okay, so tell me about why you want to get back together with them.”

Claire: Right. It’s only selectively remembering the good but really I don’t know one situation where the bad didn’t outweigh the good. In the hundreds of people who I have coached over the years, I have never like, “It sounds like that one really did get away.” Now, what I always talk about,

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Maisie, because you're obviously, your healthy, amazing, ideal relationship for nine years. I know in my bones Larry is the one.

But I always say, "And you never know. You never know, someone could get hit by a bus and then they go into a coma, and they come back out and they wake up and they're like, "I don't even know who you are." Anything could happen.

Maisie: Oh my God, it's like Grey's anatomy episodes.

Claire: Yes. I was an actress back in my day, so my brain is really fantastical and goes to the craziest most dramatic places. But even 9/11, Maisie, firefighters ended up having relationships with their fallen firefighters' wives while they were married. I mean trauma happens and people do crazy things.

Maisie: It's really interesting that you mention this because my first marriage, I don't think I've ever shared this on the podcast.

Claire: Oh my God, I'm on the edge of my seat.

Maisie: But you know how all the experts say, "Don't get together with someone who you've gone through a trauma with?" 9/11, so I was in New York on vacation, met someone who probably would have just been a holiday romance. And 9/11 happened and we were three/four blocks away when it happened and his mum was in one of the towers, thankfully she got out. But we went through, because we were right downtown and so for that whole – I can feel my whole body responding right now but it was traumatic.

It was so many people, so many neighbours and things like lost cousins and family members, it was horrific and I ended up marrying him. If that hadn't have happened I'm sure it would have just been a holiday romance that fizzled out. I had to jump in because I just thought, we're talking about 9/11.

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Claire: That's amazing but also, what about parents who are married, and they have a child who ends up being an addict or they lose a child? I mean sometimes you're together and married and then the trauma happens, anything. So I don't know if I necessarily agree with if you go through a trauma together you probably won't work out. I know that that breaks families up too, when you have, especially the statistics I believe, I mean don't quote me on it.

But I've heard that if you experience losing a child or moving through something traumatic with a child, they're very sick, addiction, that can often break marriages up as well. But I don't know, I mean that could also have really next level bonded you. Actually, I know of a couple who they were in DC on 9/11 which also got attacked, the Pentagon but they weren't in the Pentagon, but it was crazy. No one knew what was happening next and if there were other planes.

And they escaped their office building together and they fell in love and got married. I mean they weren't in the Pentagon, it wasn't as close quarters as what you went through. But I don't know, I feel like it could go both ways.

Maisie: Yeah. I agree with that, just thinking, just trying to remember how old I was. I must have been 20 or something like that.

Claire: Yeah, I mean you were so young, again, talking about getting to know yourself. I mean I have a few close friends. I lived in LA before I moved to Santa Barbara to have a life with Larry and his kids. And LA is such a great city to be single. It's got its pluses and its minuses, similar to New York, I'm also a New Yorker. I grew up in New York for the most part and spent most of my 20s and early 30s in New York. I did kind of a back and forth between New York and LA.

And I was an actress so there's just lots of free spirits. I mean I definitely never rarely felt the stigma of I'm the only one single because my high school and my college friends did all kind of the straight checking off the boxes of getting married at the 'right age' of 26, 27, 28. But I always had my fly by the seat of their pants artsy friends as well so I never really felt

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alone. But anyway, I had four really close friends, my closest friends in LA, one from college, one from New York. And three of us were single on and off throughout our 30s.

And we have all met the one, the three of us in our late 30s and early 40s. And I think, we went through so many breakups and we were just on this journey together, I do think that there's something to be said about. And for someone who's listening who's in her 20s, I'm not saying you can't find but just make sure you really, really know yourself. And I don't know, I'm turning 42 in a month, I don't know who I'm going to be at 52. But I do feel like we're solid partners who want to grow together in a way that definitely I did not know myself at 32.

Maisie: I think you're going to find the episode that I do with Paul really fascinating to listen to.

Claire: Yes, almost a decade in, yes. And who will be when Larry's youngest is – she's seven. So who will we be in another 10 years when she's out of the house? Because so much of our lives are consumed by the four kids and their personalities, and their activities, and what's going on at school. And there's always something going on and there's always someone upset about something. So obviously they go with their mom, and as I mentioned, we're together 50% of the time so we also get a lot of time for us to connect as well.

But even I find in a lot of our time we're talking about the kids so much and sometimes we're like, "Wait, how are you?"

Maisie: I know how that goes. Okay, so when we're thinking about someone who's wanting to get over an ex, I know you've mentioned – I'm just curious about the topic of closure because that comes up a lot, people really wanting closure. And I know you've mentioned ripping the band-aid off and cutting off contact. What are your thoughts or any other recommendations that are about finding closure that isn't reliant upon the other person behaving a certain way?

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And this applies to all relationships. We can have friendships that end, we can have, there's so many instances where people will say, "No, I want closure on this situation or this relationship." But usually once I get to talking to someone, they're like, "Well, I need this person to say this."

Claire: Yeah. I love this question more than you know and you'll hear why in a second. I just want to finish the point before we started talking about 9/11 regarding how hard it would be to cut contact. And you kind of going to that place and what I was trying to say about I think Larry's the one and I'm so solid in that. And I know if he proposed yesterday, I would say yes. We're in it to win it, in it for life. But I have no control over whether or not that could change at some point in time.

And I just want to say for what it's worth, even though I'm sitting here being like, "Cut contact, no excuse. If you don't share kids and you don't work together." I am telling you right now it would take everything out of me to disconnect from him, God forbid. I just think the difference is I really feel so solid and secure that he's my person because of the way that we show up. I'm not worried about him leaving me, but I always leave room for you never know. And for what it's worth, I say this to my clients all the time when they're shaming themselves for feeling the way they feel.

100% if he left me tomorrow I would be despondent on the floor, I would have to have guest instructors take over for me. And then I would do my process. So if it takes you time to kind of wean off and maybe it's cut contact that you don't communicate but you still want to sneak a peek on social media, you can take baby steps because I don't think I would be flawless if that happened to me with Larry for what it's worth because just to echo what you're saying about how freaking hard that is to do. I mean I really, really get that.

But also if the person leaves, do you want to just be grieving and holding on, and spying, and living your life to keep your fingers crossed that maybe they'll come back, or you poke at them, or they see you? You don't know if they're muting you and they never look at what your posts are but they don't want to block you. The way that we also read into, oh my God but he

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was watching my stories. Stories, Instagram I'm talking about, stories bleed into one after the next. You don't know if he was watching three other people's stories and it just bled into yours and he's like, "Oh."

But the way we want to make meaning out of it and at the end of the day, this is the kicker and then I'll move on to your closure question. It shouldn't take him seeing you on Instagram in maybe a hot bathing suit pic because maybe you got your revenge body, and you want him to see you. It shouldn't take that picture or some post of yours for him to recognise how amazing you are and that he wants you back. And again, forgive me the heteronormative terms here.

Use whatever genders apply to you. It's like I remember when I was in high school, I had this guy two years older than me, he ended up becoming my high school college sweetheart, we were together for seven years. But in the beginning, we were just hooking up when he would come home from college but it was not really defined or I didn't know what it was. And I didn't have a cell phone at the time, I didn't get a cell phone till college. Cell phones were just on the rise.

And he had to call my home, my landline and ask one of my parents to speak to me and then there was some falling out because I heard he hooked up with someone else and I was so upset about it and he got wind of it. And he knew how to get a hold of me, there was no Instagram. There was no Facebook back then. He didn't need a picture of me to be like, "No, I like you, let's do this, I want to be in a relationship with you." And that's a freaking 19-year-old. It's just not that hard.

And also, last thing I want to say, and I promise I'm moving on to the closure question is, they know how to find you if they really have something to say to you. They don't need to be connected to you even by your phone number, even blocking. They can figure out a way, if you've been dating that person for a while, they know where you live, they can send you a letter. It's just not that hard in 2023. And then so someone could argue, well, then why block if they can get to you no matter what?

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Well, because you're on your phone and life is happening, and you want to put your focus elsewhere and you don't want those interruptions. But I had a client in my group and this guy really, you know, they were going strong for a couple of months and then he just broke up with her, he got too overwhelmed, freaked out, she blocked him on all the levels. She never uses Facebook and he found her on Facebook, and they are trying round two and he is showing up like no other.

And he sent her an unbelievable Facebook message. And if he couldn't have found her on Facebook he knows where she was. He would have written her a letter. It's just not that hard and we're making it be way too easy for them or selectively telling ourselves that, well, if we block in this way then he'll never be able to get in touch with me and that's just not true. Make them work, they broke your heart, make them work to find you and step it up and do what they need to do to get you back.

Maisie: Yeah. And I also think, what's coming to my mind as you're saying that is how there's the original heartbreak of whatever the situation is and then there's all of the reliving of that and kind of what we do to ourselves. So, there's whatever that person may have done, however they may have treated you and then there's the how are you treating yourself in every other time after that that you recreate and ruminate on it in your brain. And I totally get it.

I was talking to a friend today and she was just kind of exploring a recent breakup and she was trying to figure out why. And I was like, "But we don't know why. There's no evidence at the moment of why it happened. And I totally get how your brain has desperate need to know." But I was saying to her, "Just notice how your brain's desire for certainty is making you come up with a theory in your head that you're now believing as that's the reason, when this person hasn't told you the reason why yet or anything like that."

Claire: Which is a great segue into the closure question. You're believing that if you understand why you'll feel better and guess what? You fucking won't. Excuse my French, you won't.

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Maisie: I'm laughing because I can just think of so many instances where friends have done this and on the outside you're just like, "Why are you doing that to yourself? Stop it, stop it." But Maisie over here...

Claire: [Crosstalk] it loud and clear.

Maisie: Yeah, I had one particular heartbreak, it was my decision to leave the relationship but there was the heartbreak in the relationship that caused me to make the decision to leave. I was looking in all sorts of places, I just need to know. I need to know what happened, how it happened, the extent, just that constant searching, thinking that that's going to give me relief in some way. And all it caused was more pain.

Claire: More pain because I think when we actually know, and again I think what does that even mean? Because it's like, they met someone else. That's just going to create more pain or it's like job stress, or he has a sick family member, or he's lost in his career and he doesn't know. Okay, so then if it's, he lost in his career and he doesn't know. Well, maybe once he figures out his career then he'll come back to me. You think the mental gymnastics will be done once you 'know'. But they never are which is a great segue if you're ready for finally.

Maisie: I'm ready, let's do it. Everything you're saying, I'm like, "Yeah, and this, and this, and this." I love it.

Claire: Well, so I mentioned that the first step to stopping wanting Mr or Miss wrong back. I have five steps. The first step is cut contact. And the second step is let your heart break. So, a heart is breaking, we're grieving obviously. And so whenever I say, let your heart break my clients want to say, "Well, it is breaking, I am letting it break. It's breaking, Claire."

And I'm like, "No, I know it's breaking, but I think you're resisting it and you're wanting to fight it. And you're wanting him back. And you're wanting to numb out. And you're wanting to escape and you're wanting to rush through the grief and just get to the other side." There's so many different ways that we resist grief, understandably so again, been there, done that,

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no judgement, it's just natural. But when we're like, "Yeah, I am upset. Yeah, I'm heartbroken." Even if it six months after it happened, a year. Because then there's the judgement of how long it takes.

Maisie: Yeah, I should be over them by now, yeah.

Claire: Yes. And the irony is I think when you are like, "How is it true that I shouldn't be over them?" And you just give yourself that permission to grieve which I know probably I'm not the first person, for your listeners to hear. There is a big difference between just feeling really upset and giving yourself permission to feel upset, that you would be the best friend to yourself. If your best friend was beating herself up that she still wasn't over someone even if that someone was a terrible person.

You wouldn't be like, "Yeah, you should be over it by now." I hope you wouldn't say that to a friend. So then that's let your heart break, that's what I say for step two.

And then three is create closure without necessarily getting it from the other person. So, what does that look like? And at the end of the day the question that you really need to be asking yourself is, why is this done for me?

Maisie: That's such a good question.

Claire: And then automatically if you're heartbroken, you just want the person back, I never want Larry to listen to this. But my anxious attachment style brain as I mentioned, it never dies. It's gotten a lot better, and he has helped me with that as well. And I think there's something to be said, if you do all this work to attract your right person and then you guys come together, and you still grow together and he's had his own relationship trauma. So, we help each other, and we've come a long way.

But God forbid he ended it with me, I mean there are definitely, as I mentioned, aspects of our relationship that are really challenging. He has four kids, and my heart would be broken five times over if it wasn't to work out. But there are some really, really hard things. We were just in Hawaii for

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two weeks with the four kids, it was our first time in closed quarters 24/7 for two weeks. And there were some really challenging moments. I think no more so even if it was a nuclear biological family. But I think I would just be like, there are pros and cons.

I mean again if he heard me say this or God forbid his children, I live and die for them. I don't want anything else. They're my family. But I would start looking at, okay, well, then maybe there was something else on the other side. I would just invite that if it wasn't a choice for me to not have them anymore. Byron Katie, my favourite quote of all times, when you argue with reality you suffer. When you argue with reality you suffer. If Larry left the building, I would start looking for why that is better for me.

Now, I think his kids are the best for me. I wanted biological children before I met them. Larry told me when we first started dating, "I have four, four is enough, but I would love for you to come onboard with my family." And that was hard. But it was the right thing for me. He and them are the right thing for me but again, there are hard moments. I'm just using that as an example. Or maybe I'm supposed to live somewhere else or maybe that sparks a different path and career or something, I don't know. It makes me sick to my stomach using that as an example.

But I use myself as an example, God forbid, my greatest fear was to come because it's like okay, this situation is what it is. And when I argue with reality I suffer. Again, after cutting contact, after giving myself permission to grieve, what I don't want to have happen. Well, why is this the best thing for me? And I'm going to put this out there because for anybody who's listening who is heartbroken over someone who just left and broke up with you, nine times out of ten, Maisie, they do it in a really shitty way.

They're just like, "Yeah, I'm just not feeling it anymore." Or they two days before were telling you that you were the sun, the moon, and the stars and then they abruptly break up. There's usually some really just unimpressive way that the person goes about doing it. Or their behaviour leading up to it, I actually, I'm working with actually a client in London. And she just started to date this guy a couple of months ago and there were some things I was

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a little, hmm, about. But there's some things where you have to move through getting to know the person to figure out.

And ultimately, he very clearly became very unavailable. And he ended up writing her this very apologetic flowery romantic but yes, I can't be who you want me to be for you. And when I read it, because she forwarded it to me, it was just such a man child message. And I can't do this for you and I'm so sorry. And it's like, you can, you're choosing not to. And the way you behaved just a month ago and what you were saying you wanted with me, and you're a man in your fucking 50s and now you're giving me this.

And I love my client, we've been working together now for seven months. So, she's more equipped to be like, "Yeah, this actually helped me be like, "Boy, bye." Because it's painful and she's mourning who she wanted him to be but it was such a man child message. And so, use the very disappointing behaviours about them for that to be enough closure for you, versus needing them to spew you some more bullshit that will never give you the satisfaction for creating the closure. It's actually so much more empowering.

And it will propel your healing process that much faster when you decide why this is best for you. Thank you for showing me who you are because that behaviour actually is not what I want from the father of my children, if that's how you treat women.

Maisie: Yeah. It reminds me, like you said, when someone's saying one thing one day, and then the next it's this way. And I remember hearing someone talking about, it was actually about professional relationships and working on a team. And how when someone's being let go or fired from a role, they should always know that it's coming. Because their experience of working should be that they're aware that they're not doing tasks to the level that they need to be or that there's a problem in their communication.

Or that should be always being discussed and very clear. So, then they know where things need to be improved. And then when they're not it's like,

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well, we have had this conversation. And that's what's coming to mind when you're talking about that, but people don't really do that.

Claire: Or he didn't even break it off with her, he just kept letting her down to the point that she was like, "Hey, I'm giving way more here than you are." And he's like, "You're right." That's so disappointing as well. You're right, I'm so sorry. And also, kind of leaving the door open like right now I can't. Well, then why did you freaking start dating me in the first place and tell me that you did want it a month ago and you're in your freaking 50s.

And look, I have a whole video in my course about how age is neutral but I do have a higher expectation of people in their 40s and their 50s when they're putting themselves out there. You should know better, that's my thought on it. You should know better than someone behaving like that at 25. Stop messing with people's hearts all these years later. And my guess is, she's not the first he has done that to.

Maisie: So, what's next after that? I forget where we are in your process, your amazing process.

Claire: It's step four. Step four is fall in love with you, which I touched on. And there's really a whole process within the fall in love with you. And then step five is find someone better which is a whole process there. It's five steps on each of those but that's kind of the bigger scale overview of stop wanting the person back and finding someone better. Really, but those first three, cut contact, let your heart break, create your own closure, those are so crucial for you to then be like, "Okay, now I'm going to fall in love with me."

And fall in love with me, I know you guys, that's so cliché of, "No, self-help, fall in love." And I couldn't find better wording, it just flowed better, and it is that. It can come in many forms as I mentioned before. I had a terrible relationship with money, terrible relationship with my body, alcohol, family, friends, finding my purpose, my career. In those videos that I do in the fall in love with you section, talking about making peace with your singledom,

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falling in love with just being single at whatever age you are, really embracing your love life journey up until now.

And just overall being at peace with yourself without denying you do want to find love. And making peace with the clock ticking and all of that. Just I am right where I am supposed to be. Again, another very cliché, but it's to say, but really trusting that. I feel like when I did this fall in love with you work, I did it for five months in 2019 before I met Larry in September of 2019. And it was just this really easy way of being with myself and thriving in my coaching business. And really stepping into this boss who I had never been before.

And finding my own personal satisfaction and empowerment, and a talent that people were really responding to. Or in my acting career it was sometimes response, most of the time not. Or years where it was really lucrative from commercial work but then other years really successful artistically but not making enough money. There was just so much struggle.

And then when I discovered coaching which was really a plan B to support my plan A or pursuing acting, I was like, "I like this so much better than acting." Because it was just so rewarding seeing people have all these wins all the time. But I got my heart broken one more time in 2017 and that's when I was like, "I'm going to become a heartbreak coach and do things differently." And then really focused on that but then I was still kind of dating and that's when I realised, okay, wait, one thing at a time.

And for me, my fall in love with you work was really relationship with money, body and my career and just feeling that. Now, some people listening here might be like, "I love my body, I'm great, I'm very financially stable, I've got a great career." So many people come to me, Maisie, and say, "The only thing that's missing in my life is my love life. I've already done that fall in love with you work." And there's always some way that I very clearly see it's not about having the boxes checked.

It's nice to have something to work on through your fall in love with you work but it can also just be, and oftentimes with the people who have all the

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boxes checked who I work with, usually what I'm seeing is that they are still holding on to their exes but they're not realising it. They're like, "No, no, I'm over him but." And then all this stuff comes up and I'm like, "We have more healing to do." And that's okay, let's just figure out what it is so that we can clear the space for the right person and just for you and for your own peace of mind.

Maisie: Well, I'm so glad that you came to this work and made the decision to go with your plan B. Isn't it funny? I think we have, there's plan A is the best and we have all this attachment, whether it's dating.

Claire: Similar to dating, yes, because I also never thought I was going to leave LA and move to Santa Barbara and not have my own kids and join a man with his four children. But I just held the space for the result that I want to create is my ideal person and a dream life that may be beyond my wildest dreams. Because I never wanted four of my own, I'll tell you that. So now I'm in love five times over and I came out of the womb literally singing, dancing, acting through my mid-30s.

And I was like if anyone ever said, "At some point, are you willing to throw in the towel if it's constant struggle and you're living hand to mouth sometimes?" And I was like, "How dare you. I will never stop." And then it's like, wait, a whole new other dream was born. And so I think that too for your listeners as I know we're wrapping up, Maisie, is keeping, maybe, just maybe there really is someone so much better and so much more right for you that will make this pain so much worth it.

Maisie: Agreed. That's certainly been my experience for sure.

Claire: Mine too.

Maisie: Yeah, amazing. Claire, thank you so much for coming on. We covered a lot and I'm just so grateful to have you here and I'm very excited for the members to get to experience your coaching inside the membership next month.

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Claire: Me too, I'm so excited, Maisie, thank you so much for having me, this was so much fun. And congrats again on your nine-year anniversary.

Maisie: Thank you. Well, before we wrap up, let the people know where to find you because you have a podcast, they need to know about it, tell them the things.

Claire: Yes, thank you so much. So, my podcast is called Stop Wanting Him Back and Find Someone Better. Again, I'm always sensitive about the pronouns. I talk about it in pretty much every episode. This is of course a universal lesson. I do solely work with women. I don't care about race, religion, sexual orientation. And then can also go to clairetheheartbreakcoach.com if you're interested in working with me.

My offers can change from time to time, currently offering one-on-one coaching and my group programme that you can find all the details on at clairetheheartbreakcoach.com C-L-A-I-R-E. And if you have any questions regarding the offers, sometimes when everything is covered you can email hello@clairetheheartbreakcoach.com and we'll take care of you.

Maisie: Amazing. Alright, thank you so much, Claire.

Claire: Thank you, Maisie. See you soon.

Maisie: Bye.

Claire: Bye.

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