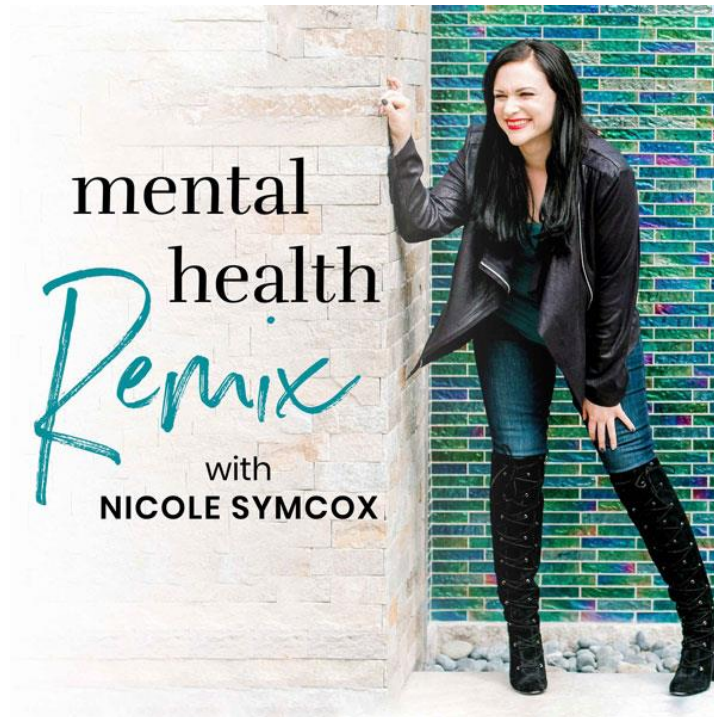


Ep #62: How to Process Emotion During Hard Moments



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Nicole Symcox

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Energy is designed to breathe. Like to move through different states. Like if you notice when you feel happy, you get an energy charge from feeling happy or if you're excited or when you feel motivated. Motivated is a feeling, right. That's why it doesn't last. Okay?

We hear this all the time from people where they're like, "I'm so frustrated. I just can't stay motivated." It's like well, motivation is a feeling. Motivation is energy in the body. It's a great kick starter, but it's not going to get you through right? You have to be consistent and really create a plan to really meet your goals. Like you can't base your whole goals or life plan on a feeling. But so often we get this confused. So often we want to take a feeling and make it work for us in the long term, such as motivation.

Welcome to *Mental Health Remix*, a show for ambitious humans who are ready to feel, think, and be different. If you want to stop struggling with perfectionism, build better relationships, and connect with yourself and your potential, this is the place for you. Here's your host, educator, coach and licensed psychotherapist, Nicole Symcox.

Hey, hey everyone. Welcome to episode 62. So today I want to talk about hard moments, and maybe talk about some different ways that you can get through them. Because hard moments happen to us all. We all have shitty days. We all have bad days. We have bad moments.

To start right off the bat, we just want to be really careful about labeling and attaching ourselves to the narratives that start when we're having a shitty day. So when you're having a bad day and you're just not feeling good or you're just going through really hard moments, it's really important to keep your brain in check. Because when you're being flooded with all of these emotions, all of these thoughts, all of these feelings, and they're all negative, it's really easy to take it as fact and just jump right into it and then start attaching yourself to its story.

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This is where things can get really icky. Because now you have all of these intense feelings that are coming up and going through you. Now you're starting to make a definition of yourself by them. Emotions are energy in the body. It starts in the body, our brain processes it and makes up something to go along with it, right? It makes up a story. It looks to the past. It looks to the future. It looks at the present. So it's gathering evidence to try to figure out what to do.

So what the first thing you need to recognize is that just as its energy in the body, energy is designed to breathe. Like to move through different states. Like if you notice when you feel happy, you get an energy charge from feeling happy or if you're excited or when you feel motivated. Motivated is a feeling, right. That's why it doesn't last. Okay?

We hear this all the time from people where they're like, "I'm so frustrated. I just can't stay motivated." It's like well, motivation is a feeling. Motivation is energy in the body. It's a great kick starter, but it's not going to get you through right? You have to be consistent and really create a plan to really meet your goals. Like you can't base your whole goals or life plan on a feeling. But so often we get this confused. So often we want to take a feeling and make it work for us in the long term, such as motivation. That's just not possible.

So that's a really great example of how it's energy in the body. So just like you might have motivation for like a day or two or maybe even a week you might feel motivated. You might be able to hold parts of that emotional state throughout your days over the course of a week. Eventually, it's going to pass.

So thinking about that, now motivation is not a bad feeling, but it's just the same for the bad ones. We get stuck there though, right? Like the good ones are easier for us. The good ones are easier because we don't have as much resistance built up, unless you have a trauma history or something complicated has happened in your past where you've created a narrative

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around good things, right. That is totally possible. That happens all the time in trauma processing.

So if that is coming up for you, you want to seek out a therapist and work through those emotions and figure out why you have resistance to good things. Okay. But that's actually more common than not than people with anxious brains and with PTSD or trauma history.

So there's nothing wrong with you. It's just means that you have information inside of yourself like, "Hey, I noticed I need to go to a therapist because I get freaked out every time something good happens." So it's all information, my friends. All information. Then you can work on that in therapy, getting the tools and the strategies and the emotional support you need to work through that. Okay.

But going back to this idea of hard moments and hard emotions that come up. So just like the good ones that come up, love, happiness, excitement, motivation. We love those. But generally speaking, we don't have as much resistance to them. So they're able to easily come and go just as emotions are intended to do.

So on the flip side when we have negative emotions, we have resistance. We have a story. We get pissed off, right? Like we have a lot of opinions about the negative feelings that are coming up. Mostly we just want to get rid of them. So sometimes in our attempt to "get rid of", we're actually making it worse. We're actually causing a traffic jam in our nervous system rather than allowing it to just move through you like the energy that it is.

So when you're in hard moments, when you're having hard emotions, the first thing you need to remind to yourself is this will pass. This will pass. This is an emotion. It is meant to be temporary. It will pass. Then you need to also name it. I notice I feel, and then fill in the blank, right? I feel like shit. I feel depressed. I feel hopeless. I feel angry. I feel sad. Like we need to name what it is. Your third step is to offer yourself support.

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So what does that look like? So thinking about it in terms of energy. So let's use anger. Anger has a huge energy charge, right? Huge. So when you're angry, you usually need to do something with that energy with your body physically. So this is when exercise comes really as a helpful strategy. So to what your body can tolerate or handle, you want to engage in some kind of exercise. That can be going on a walk, that can be doing cardio at your gym, that can be lifting weights. I mean it can be the sky's the limit with it, right.

But the trick in it is that you think about the thing that you're so angry about while you're doing the exercise or the activity. This helps your body discharge some of the angry energy.

Now, this is not a hard and fast rule, right? Like, we're looking for ways to support ourselves in hard moments. Because really on the flip side of anger is usually a lot of sadness. So using this idea of letting energy move through you, letting emotions move through you, let's talk about sadness.

So when sadness comes up, most of us want to get out of that feeling as quick as possible. Many times we can. We can distract ourselves. We can talk to other people. We can numb out. We can binge watch shows. We can whatever. Like there's a million ways to avoid sadness. So a lot of times when we think we're avoiding it then that means it's not there, but the truth is that it is there.

Sadness only builds. So sadness, anxiety, anger, these emotions want to be acknowledged, processed so that they can move on. They're not here to create a bunch of chaos in your life. Like they are here to give you information. They're saying I need support. Can you support me?

So what are your options? Like sometimes it's as simple as letting yourself cry. I have met so many people that are afraid of crying. Or they're like I cry too much or my family doesn't like crying or whatever the story is. But crying is so helpful. There's been studies done on tears. Like there are pain

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tears and there are stress tears. It is important to let those stress tears out. Let it out. Don't hold that shit in, you know. Let it out. Have a good cry. Have a good journaling session. Call a friend, you know. Let the emotion flow.

When you get stuck in these emotions, when you're not able to really shift from them, that's when you might need some extra support from your therapist. Right. This is where we start crossing over into disorders.

So when we start to have disorders, it becomes really difficult to move in and out of emotional states, right? We tend to get a little bit more stuck in anxious states or angry states or sad states or depressed states, right, or obsessive states. Like we get a little bit more stuck and we need more professional care and support.

Therapy has evolved so much, guys. Like long gone are the days of just talk therapy. Like there are so many options. Like talking to a therapist is not like talking to a friend, not if you're seeing a competent one. Like a therapist should feel like you should have a really good connection with them. Like you feel like you could be friends with them, but you know that you won't ever be friends with them because it's not allowed, right. But you feel a really strong, warm connection with them that feels really healthy and good.

But on the flip side, they are therapeutically helping you. They're using tools and skills that are really helping you get out of these states, right, or giving you what you need to support yourself. I'm speaking very generally right now because there's so many disorders and there's so many different types of therapy.

Like, I'm just speaking very generally to the fact of if you're having a harder time moving in and out of emotional states, like if you're getting really stuck for days on end, it might be time to seek out help. Even if you're not, I also feel like let's bash that idea too. Like long gone are the days where we go

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to therapy because we're in crisis or just because the world has gotten so heavy for us, we can't function anymore. Like fuck that shit. Go to therapy before you get to that point.

Like, again, like therapy has evolved so much. You don't have to wait for the crash before you offer yourself support. In fact, it's way smarter to go before you hit the crash, right? It's less work. Let me tell you. It's less backward. So once you've hit the crash, you're depleted, right? The rebuild and the processing that has to go into that is so much more complicated. Completely doable and you should absolutely go if you're in that state, but what I'm saying is that therapy is good for everyone.

Therapy is good for everyone. So no matter where you are in your journey, if you're noticing hard emotions coming up and you want support, you don't have to do it alone. Like I think going to therapy is a helpful resource. Again, we have so many different types of therapists now. Finding someone who's niched is really, really important. Like finding a therapist who actually has a niche and something that they're good at. Something that they specialize in treating so that you feel like you're getting expert help from somebody who only treats the same thing all day long, right.

This is incredibly important for if you have trauma. Finding a trauma informed therapist. You can't talk trauma away. Trauma has to be processed out of the body. Okay? You need coping strategies and tools for how to deal with it. Trauma informed therapists are people that are trained in EMDR, IFS, somatic healing, art therapy, brain spotting. Like these are your people to seek out and look for.

EMDR if I didn't already say that. EMDR is my favorite. I'm EMDR certified so I'm biased, but I'm like I can't even believe I wouldn't say that is the first one if I missed it. I can't remember if I said it. But anyways, so EMDR people. Yes. Is very, very good.

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So I think we just really need to bash some of the stigmas that are around therapy. That it's just like chatting with a friend or it's just venting to somebody. Like sure that's possible. Maybe that's what you're doing one session, but there's just so many different modalities now that can help you wherever you are in your journey of healing or wherever you are on your journey of life right now. Or if you just have goals that you want to reach and achieve and you want to get your emotional world under control, or feeling in a more balanced and aligned space, therapy is your go to.

So anyways, this wasn't necessarily designed to be like the therapy podcast, but I just think it's really important because I think there's a misconception out there that, oh, I can just handle it on myself until I can't. Then when I can't, then I go to therapy. I just want to let you know you can go long before that, and it's beneficial.

So in thinking about that, I want you to consider at the end of this episode ahead of time before you get into these emotional states that you get into, what can you do for yourself? What's the plan? What are things that you know support you when you're feeling sad? What are the things you know support you when you're feeling angry? What are the things you know support you when you feel happy or excited? Like let's do the good emotions too.

So noticing that is a really important part of your mental health protocol. Because sometimes when we're in those hard moments, it's hard to think of anything. Like we turn into our eight year old self. We're like I don't know. Nothing sounds fun. Everything is boring, right? The truth is that we're just in a hard moment and our brains having a hard time coming up with ideas.

So if you do this ahead of time, it doesn't mean every idea is gonna fit or work. Like we're a human being. We're unique. It depends on the moment what we need, but it's good to think about that you have some go to's. Like when you're angry, like people in anger management, I feel like they do this

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because they have to learn like strategies. Like how to react. Like when I get angry, what's my protocol? How am I gonna handle it, right?

So it's the same idea, but it can be with sadness, it can be with depression, it can be with anxiety, whatever it is. What are the things in this world that help and support you? Those are important things to know. Instead of just avoiding the things that stress you out, which is one tactic, but another one is what are the things that support you?

Like, let's stop pretending that hard moments aren't going to happen. Let's stop pretending that we're not going to get anxious before a presentation. Let's stop pretending that we're not going to be angry over injustice. Like let's just respond, but let's respond in healthy ways for ourselves. Let's learn how to support our internal worlds so that we can still function at high capacity in our real world. That is why going to therapy even before the crash is important. Like let's keep you functioning at your best all the time.

All right, my friends. So if you would like an easy, easy way to get started with learning how to manage your emotions and manage your thoughts, I highly recommend getting my Anxiety Remix workbook. It is chock full of the tools and strategies for how to manage your mind, your emotions, your relationships, and then it's got an entire section on anxiety coping skills and strategies. Highly, highly recommend it. You can get a copy of that on my website, and I will see you next time.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Mental Health Remix*. If you like what you've heard and want to learn more, go to nicolesymcox.com.

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