

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (00:00):

When you said feeling lonely just now you look like you felt a little lonely in your face. Did I see that?

Nikki (00:07):

Hmm, yup

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (00:17):

Yeah. So when you're noticing distance between you and Chris, it's even more, it's like neon lights now.

Nikki (00:25):

Um hum.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (00:25):

is what I think I hear you say.

Nikki (00:26):

Oh yeah.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (00:26):

The loneliness feels so much more palpable almost because loneliness is kind of everywhere because you lost community support. Like both of you like your friendships and your church you're starting over.

Nikki (00:38):

Yeah. And so I mean, we have, we have people that stayed in our lives. They were purposeful about staying connected with us. And so

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (00:48):

Yeah that is good.

Nikki (00:48):

Um, yesterday, um, my sister um, a friend she's unfortunately long distance also, but I was just going to sit in the room in D's house in the afternoon, just, you know, like, well, why am I just sitting here? And so, um, so anyway, I think,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (01:09):

Nikki, what do you do when you're feeling lonely? How does, how does Chris know about that? Or what do you do?

Nikki (01:16):

I don't think he knows most of the time.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz (01:18):

Okay.

Chris ([01:20](#)):

I think, uh, I think, I, I think I noticed her getting . We talked about it before, but for me she looks like she gets flat affect . Doesn't respond to me as as easily. So I want to try to get in there and I'll ??? this, how I feel when I've tried to connect to her, I can, I can, I feel distant too, and I try to make a connection, even basic ones. And I don't, I kind of get a flat response from her when I think she is feeling in those situations. And we talked about it with Michelle, but, um, I I feel like she's mad at me. So

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([01:55](#)):

Yeah. That's, that's the meaning that you're attaching when you are feeling distant from your wife, when you try to reach out to her and you hit like, kind of like a wall,

Chris ([02:04](#)):

right.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([02:04](#)):

You automatically go, Oh, she's mad.

Chris ([02:08](#)):

Right. Yeah. That's my immediate reaction. That's what I'm trying to not assume she's mad and try to, you know, realize there's something else and try to figure out a different way to connect.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([02:18](#)):

So can, can you, can we slow down for a sec with that? Because as you said that, I think my wife is mad at me. You look like you got tears in your eyes.

Chris ([02:27](#)):

Oh yeah. I don't like, I don't like her, if . . . yeah. I mean, it's still like, you know, we're at odds at that point. It's how do you, it seems very difficult to reconnect. Like, like, you know, and the longer that, like, it is even like a day or two and a day or two, then become a week or two. And then it's like, it feels like that it's really hard to figure out how to intentionally reconnect. Even though we both are probably feeling

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([02:51](#)):

Both of you are probably feeling the distance. What I hear you saying, Nikki is I feel really alone. And that brings you to tears. I don't really reach out. And I don't share that with Chris. And you're saying, I noticed something, I pick up something from my wife. I start to feel the distance. Right. And I go, she's angry with me. And you said, I, and that brings you to tears the idea of your wife being angry with you. And you said, and I try to make a connection.

Chris ([03:19](#)):

Um hum.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([03:19](#)):

and I, and she's kind of flat her response. What is the thing that you try to do when you try to make a connection?

Chris ([03:25](#)):

Um, I usually just try to engage her in conversation. Um, how, you know, how are things going? You know, like when I wasn't around trying to understand how her day went, um, just try to be near her, touch her. Um

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([03:41](#)):

You try to like reach out to her kind of like what you did a few minutes ago.

Chris ([03:45](#)):

Yeah. It's kind of an instinct, I guess, to do that.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([03:48](#)):

Yeah. And how did she respond to you when you reached out to her to touch her or to be affectionate or?

Chris ([03:54](#)):

Um, I think the way I perceive her responding is different than she thinks she's responding. Um, um, I usually perceive her as not responding so, or very minimally responding.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([04:09](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. So Chris, when you, when your wife, when you pick up signals from her that she's distant that you said I go right to, Oh my God, she's mad at me. And I'm sitting here thinking, I wonder in the moments that she's feeling distant or, Oh my God, she's mad at me. If there's anything else. Like, if there's like, Oh, this could be bad. If she's mad at me or this could be bad if she's distant there. Go ahead.

Chris ([04:39](#)):

Yeah. I mean, I, I, yeah. I mean, I, honestly, I don't, I don't want her mad at me. It's like, I'm going to, one of my goals has always been like, for her not to be mad at me and I just need to do what I can to fix it, um,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([04:55](#)):

I need to do what I can to fix it because if my wife stays mad at me. What happens?

Chris ([04:59](#)):

I don't know. I guess that's not well explored. Um, I think, I think about it. I'm afraid that, you know, she won't want to be with me I mean who would want to be with me, somebody that you're mad at all the time.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:12](#)):

Yeah. Totally get that. Yeah. That makes sense. Right. So if I pick up a signal that she's mad at me, or that she's distant, I'm like, something's wrong here. And I'm afraid if she stays mad at me or she stays distant and then maybe she won't want to be with me and then I'll lose her.

Chris ([05:28](#)):

Yeah.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:28](#)):

And that's like a big deal.

Chris ([05:31](#)):

Right.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:31](#)):

You do not want to lose your wife. She's that important to you? You don't want to lose her.

Chris ([05:35](#)):

Correct.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:35](#)):

And, and, and my guess is that came pretty close with when the affair came out, back in April. That was probably terrifying for you.

Chris ([05:43](#)):

Yes. Um hum

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:46](#)):

So now there's this like continue terror of, I could possibly lose her.

Chris ([05:51](#)):

Yeah

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:51](#)):

Is that kinda what goes on for you?.

Chris ([05:53](#)):

Um

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([05:53](#)):

I could possibly lose my wife.

Chris ([05:57](#)):

Yeah Yeah I mean, I think there's Still a feeling of that as she's done a lot to try to convince me that that's not what she wants, but you know, there's this. Yeah. There's that kind of concern of, um, what we know, what she thinks. Cause I mean, knowing that she hid so much from me.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([06:17](#)):

Yes

Chris ([06:17](#)):

for such a long time.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([06:19](#)):

Yes.

Chris ([06:20](#)):

You kind of, you have a whole lot of mixed things of like, like she's like not communicated clearly to me, what is she hiding?

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([06:26](#)):

Yeah. That makes sense to me that you would connect that. So if she's distant today and she's not sharing things with you, that it would go to this place of a little bit of fear and concern that she could be hiding something today.

Chris ([06:40](#)):

Right

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([06:40](#)):

Right. And that's why, and so you go in to try to fix it or try to kind of engage her in some way in conversation or you try to ask questions. Is that right? And do you, um, do, do you let her see the pain that you're in?

Chris ([06:59](#)):

Um.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([06:59](#)):

Like when you sit right here right now and there's tears in your eyes, does Nikki see this side of you much?

Chris ([07:05](#)):

No, I don't think so. No, definitely more recently than in the past, I suppose. But, um, I tend to not really engage a lot with my emotions. Just I've always been that way

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([07:20](#)):

You sort of learned that, right. It was sort of, it was like, not really okay. To engage in emotion when I look at your family and what you've been through growing up and what the little bit that Michelle had shared with me, I would not probably engage with my emotions much.

Chris ([07:32](#)):

Right. Yeah. And so, yeah. I mean, it's just the way I operate. And so it's kind of new for me to, I don't, you know, like when's the convenient time to tell somebody that you're not feeling good. There's never a convenient time.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([07:46](#)):

And when I sit across from me right now, it feels like the emotions literally like right here,

Chris ([07:51](#)):

Yeah probably

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([07:51](#)):

I keep seeing it in your eyes that there's pain here for you.

Chris ([07:57](#)):

Um hum

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([07:57](#)):

and you don't want to lose your wife.

Chris ([07:59](#)):

Correct.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([07:59](#)):

And you get afraid when you guys get distant Am I getting that?

Chris ([08:05](#)):

Um Hum Yeah

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([08:05](#)):

I'm wondering if you could tell her that now, can you tell her that in these moments, when I felt distant from you I get afraid, and I get afraid that I'm going to lose you?

Chris ([08:15](#)):

Um Yeah, definitely. Whenever, whenever we're distant, I definitely have a lot of fear that we're moving back apart and that you might leave me . . . somehow we might be apart for forever.

Nikki ([08:32](#)):

Um Thank you for sharing

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([08:39](#)):

Chris, how was that to say that to your wife right now? I'm afraid that you'll leave me when we're distant. I'm afraid that you'll leave me

Chris ([08:48](#)):

Well, I mean, I, I think she knows that already. We've discussed it before, but repetition is Important. So it feels good I guess . . . to have permission to say it again. I suppose. Yeah

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([09:04](#)):

What did she say back? I didn't quite hear what she said. I know she said something. Did you hear it

Nikki ([09:08](#)):

I said thank you for sharing?

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([09:12](#)):

So, um, Nikki, how was it for you when he shares? He said, what I heard him say is I don't really share this side much with Nikki and emotions are kind of more newer for me in my life. And I've sort of kept them contained because I've had to and now they're kind of right up at the surface and he shares that. And can you see the tears in his eyes?

Nikki ([09:32](#)):

Um hum

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([09:32](#)):

And how does that, how's that for you when he shares that with you right now?

Nikki ([09:38](#)):

Um, I have Um . . . I just want to be right next to him and, um, find try to find healing so that, um, I don't know. I, I, I don't, I know I can't take that pain away. Um, uh, the past pain that, um, I think we're both operating off, what are a lot of fear and, um,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([10:16](#)):

Now wonder you are fatigued Like when you get right. Cause fear takes a lot of energy for us. And you just said, I think we're both operating a lot of fear day to day.

Nikki ([10:23](#)):

Right.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([10:24](#)):

And it's churning inside both of us for different reasons.

Nikki ([10:30](#)):

How are the same reason?

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([10:32](#)):

Same reason. Can you tell me about that?

Nikki ([10:38](#)):

Um, just that we, can't . . . sorry,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([10:48](#)):

Just take your time. That's okay. That's okay

Nikki ([10:50](#)):

The reason, the reason that the, that the potential that, um, we've done too much damage, I think is the fear we're both trying to overcome that there's been too much time put into the, into, um, the hurt I've been. Um, and then not just in the, you know, in the recent, affair but in the previous times in our relationship as well. And so I think the fear is there it's just that

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([11:28](#)):

You're afraid that you, if I can stick with you for a second, you're saying I'm afraid that I did too many things to damage our relationship and we might not be able to make it through on the other side.

Nikki ([11:42](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I think that a lot.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([11:47](#)):

I'm afraid that I've done too much damage here. The things that I've done may have forever broken us.

Nikki ([11:55](#)):

Yeah. Just feels pretty overwhelming. The the timeline, you know, are we going to have to wait another 20 years before, before we're like, fixed

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([12:15](#)):

Oh, that's that does feel overwhelming. Oh my God, It's been a rough 20 years for you. I'm sure. And you're saying, did I do too much damage here that it's going to take us 20 years for us to be okay.

Nikki ([12:43](#)):

yeah

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([12:43](#)):

You want so much for you and Chris to be okay.

Nikki ([12:46](#)):

I want to be okay.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([12:48](#)):



You want to be ok . . . Yeah

Nikki ([12:48](#)):

You know, I mean, children are here with us now and um,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([12:57](#)):

You're longing to be okay now. Now you're saying, yeah,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([13:02](#)):

20 years feels so overwhelming, but if it's going to take us that long You want us to be ok

Nikki ([13:09](#)):

Yeah.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([13:12](#)):

And I, and I feel like Nikki, what you're saying is I am afraid that I did so much damage here.

Nikki ([13:20](#)):

Yeah. I mean, yeah.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([13:31](#)):

maybe we can't repair because of the damage that I've done. Is that what that is? that maybe Maybe this affair created too much damage or

Nikki ([13:44](#)):

Yeah. Or that, I don't know. LONG PAUSE Sorry.

Chris ([14:09](#)):

No, Don't be sorry (second reach - puts hand on her leg).

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([14:09](#)):

Yeah you just apologized, what are you apologizing for right now?

Nikki ([14:26](#)):

I don't, I don't want it to be, I don't want to be selfish anymore. Like,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([14:36](#)):

okay.

Nikki ([14:38](#)):

Don't want to be selfish anymore.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([14:40](#)):

So as you're sitting here right now and you're overwhelmed and you're crying and you're saying, I want us to be better. And I, and I don't want its taken 20 years for us to suffer in this place of fear and pain is going to pretty much kill me. And somehow there's a part of you that feels like by saying that out loud, you're being selfish right now.

Nikki ([15:02](#)):

Um,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([15:04](#)):

Is that ? was that?

Nikki ([15:04](#)):

Um, I don't, I don't know. I feel like, I feel like thinking, not being able to see the strength he has and the love he has and, and use that, um, as Reassurance, as reassurance and if I join, that, I feel like that part of that part of it is selfish that, um, just, um, the brokenness that, that was there in me, even, even before our marriage started um, you know, that, that I've used that I've carried that and that I haven't, um, that I was too afraid to, to seek healing for it or that I didn't know the path or see, or see the path, um, I feel like that part is selfish or, you know, and continues to be.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([16:18](#)):

So I feel broken inside. That's how I feel about myself. And I feel afraid that I created way too much damage here.

Nikki ([16:28](#)):

Yeah

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([16:28](#)):

That maybe, maybe you, Chris may never really be able to forgive me. And maybe I, Nikki can't ever really be able to forgive myself for what I've done and for my brokenness.

Nikki ([16:41](#)):

Yeah. I mean this, yeah. I think that's, that's how I would put it when I think about it.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([16:51](#)):

Can you tell that to Chris right now? Can you tell him about that fear, that you're afraid that you're too broken and you, that you created too much damage here and that you guys will continue to suffer? Because of it.

Nikki ([17:06](#)):

Um, yeah. I'm spending a lot of time trying to figure, you know, figure myself out. And, and I, I, I feel, I feel afraid that I'm not using your presence in my life to, to move forward that, um, that I'm just, um, it's a lot of inward focus to try to get past this. And I, I feel, I feel sad for, um, for the times when I, when I detach myself from me because of those, because of those feelings, because of the shame and the fear I have about overcoming this,

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([18:07](#)):

Umm . . That was, I really appreciate you doing that. That last part that you said to me made so much sense. I feel shame and I feel fear for what I've done. And I detached myself at times to try to fix this inside of me and where it leaves me is, it leaves us disconnected. Yeah.

Nikki ([18:29](#)):

Yeah. I think that's, I think that's true.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([18:34](#)):

Yeah And you're saying, and I don't reach out to you, Chris, when I'm feeling that shame.

Nikki ([18:41](#)):

No, I, I think the timing, yeah. I think most of the time, I, I, I think many times I numb to it or, or succumb to it, um, rather than trying to move, move toward her and move forward with, with the fear.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([19:03](#)):

So when I feel ashamed and when I feel fear on the inside of the damage I've done, or that I'm such a bad person because of what I've done and that I'm broken, what you Chris will see on the outside is me pull away and me distance myself from you. And I I'm, I'm not turning to you. And then when she distanced herself, when you feel that disconnect, you're saying, I go into this panic that I could lose you. And I don't want to lose you because I love you more than anything. I'll do whatever I can. Right. And I try to a little bit, try to get you to have a conversation with me.

Chris ([19:39](#)):

Right.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([19:40](#)):

Right And sometimes she stays distant and that adds to your panic.

Chris ([19:46](#)):

Yeah.

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([19:48](#)):

I get that

Debi Scimeca-Diaz ([19:48](#)):

That right. And then you're sitting here in this like spiral of shame and fear and I'm bad. That's what, that's my sense of I'm getting that you are locked in this place all by yourself.

Nikki ([20:01](#)):

Yeah. And then sadness too, over, over, you know, what we've each lost, what we each had to give up and what our family has had to give up.