

DTD Episode 56 Show Notes

Are Hoops Creating Your Drama?

It's time to talk about a drama-inducing tactic that many of my clients use or experience in their relationships both personal and professional.

I call it the Hoop! As in, jump through my hoop.

The hoop happens when one individual is testing another individual without their knowledge.

If a hoop holder were honest, here's what they'd say, "I'm going to ask you a question. I am going to assign all kinds of meaning to the answer you give me to this one seemingly simple question. You don't know that I'm doing this. However, you will suffer the consequences if you don't answer the way I'd like.

So, for instance, in a recent example a client shared that he had asked an employee whether they would like to attend this specific seminar. The employee, thinking it was just a straight forward question about a specific seminar on a specific day said, "That won't work for me."

My client, the hoop holder, surmised by this answer that the employee wasn't really very interested in his job. A yes would have indicated a passion and potential for greatness. A no, on the other hand, in my client's mind meant that the employee didn't care to learn anything new about his field.

Well.....that's a long leap to make from can you attend this seminar to, wow, you care nothing about your future here.

I asked my client to go back and ask the employee why he had said no. Low and behold. He had already participated in a very similar training on his own dime before he started working there. He loved it but didn't want to waste the company's money when he'd already done something so similar.

Hmmmmmm – seems having the actual conversation was very insightful.

A few years ago I held a hoop for a bit. My husband started doing his own laundry. Some would jump for joy over that. For me, it created a bit of fear. Years ago I was told that doing laundry separate was an indication of significant others living as roommates rather than partners and could be an indication of the demise of the relationship.

I offered to do his laundry. He said he'd keep doing his own. Oh the horror!

Did my husband know that he had generated this response in me? No!

Was his switch to doing his own laundry a sign of impending doom? No!

I knew better, though. I put down my hoop!

Rather than jump to conclusions I sought to have my unanswered question answered. Why was he doing his own laundry? The answer had nothing to do with our relationship! He was doing his own laundry because his stuff kept getting mixed in with the clothes of our teen boys who were now wearing the same size. It was just a way to keep his items separate from theirs.

Issue resolved and less laundry for me!

Had I let it be a hoop I would have continued to ask if I could do his laundry and then lived in fear as he continued to say no.

Jumping to conclusions can be dangerous. And when we're testing our relationships without people's knowledge they have no idea what is at stake.

A hoop holder is attaching so much meaning to an answer or an outcome. The employee, spouse or significant other is participating in a test without being told.

These hoops breed drama as the hoop holder becomes disappointed or frustrated with the hoop jumper and begins to relate to him or her differently.

Instead, have the conversation. Ask the question.

What is your unanswered question?

Where are you attaching potentially unrelated meaning to an action or answer?

Where are you testing your relationships through covert operations rather than just hashing out your concerns?

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