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COACH: 00:04 There you go. Could you hear that announcement?

CLIENT: 00:07 I did.

COACH: 00:08 Okay. Good. So thank you for allowing me to record this session, and it's a privilege to be able to coach you again. What would you like to focus on today?

CLIENT: 00:22 I have been struggling with not feeling like I have a voice, not feeling like I'm being heard or that my opinion matters to most people.

COACH: 00:38 Okay. Go on.

CLIENT: 00:39 So I'd like to explore that a little bit. I don't know. I'm silenced a lot by other people, mainly my son, but I notice it happening with a lot of other people. When I'm trying to talk with him, he can silence me by just starting an argument or something, and it's like I don't even want to go there. It's not worth what I have to say. And then I get pissed off because it is-- I mean, what I have to say is valuable, but I can't say it. And like I said, I notice it most with him.

COACH: 01:57 Okay. Most with him, but he's not the only one?

CLIENT: 02:01 No. No. It seems to be a pattern in my life. Yeah.

COACH: 02:17 I hear some emotion when you say that, "It's a pattern in my life."

CLIENT: 02:23 Well, when I think about it, yeah. I don't remember my voice or my opinion counting to the extent of-- I still am a hand-- when I'm talking and excited, my hands go all over the place. And I remember being told as a child, "You don't have to be so dramatic. Keep your hands still." And yeah, I see that as a pattern through my whole life.

COACH: 03:19 Yeah hear that. How are you feeling as you talk about that?

CLIENT: 03:24 I feel emotional. I feel welled up. But I don't know how much that has-- I mean, I'm not discounting the fact that it has to do this subject, but it's also a very grey day here. So I'm feeling bluesy anyway. But yeah, I feel like I could bust out crying right now.

COACH: 03:52 Hmm-mm. And you're welcome to do so if you would like. This is a good, safe place where you can let out whatever emotions are there.

CLIENT: 04:02 Thank you.

COACH: 04:05 So, Melissa, if we're successful in the time that we spend together today, what is it that we will have accomplished by the end of this session?

CLIENT: 04:18 You know, I'd like to have a clearer understanding of whether this is a legit concern, if there's some way that I can dig it out and let it go, or if it's really part of my-- because in my OA (Overeaters Anonymous) recovery I'm learning that we are very controlling people, and any addict is and thinks that their way

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is-- that we know the best thing. And I'm trying to balance it and see if it's a legit concern, if it's really that I don't have a voice, or it's just that I can't control the situation, and that's what's really going on here. So I'd like to have a better idea of differentiating between what really is going on here. What is the root of this feeling?

COACH: 05:40

Yeah. Okay. Great. How will you know if it is a legit concern?

CLIENT: 05:48

I don't really know. How will I know if it's a legit concern? I don't know right now. I don't know.

COACH: 06:25

Okay. What's so important to you about figuring this out?

CLIENT: 06:40

I feel like it's stunting my communication with my family. I feel like it's standing in the way of being a better parent and also being a better person myself. It's one of those little things that just keeps poking around inside me that I want to stop.

COACH: 07:31

Yeah. So what would be the opposite of this, meaning if you weren't struggling with this, what would you be like?

CLIENT: 07:51

I'd be able to have free-flowing conversation without anybody thinking that I was trying to control them. I mean, I have 60 years of experience with life and wisdom that I would like to be able to share with my son. Not that I expect him to learn from my experiences, because that's not it. It's just listen without feeling that I'm judging you, or that I'm trying to control, or in your life. Just hear me, that's all [crosstalk].

COACH: 08:54

[crosstalk] What is it that keeps him from hearing you, do you think?

CLIENT: 09:10

Well, part of the fact is that he's a 16-year-old kid. What is it that keeps him from hearing me? Well, probably trust, trust on his part just of people and life in general. And I am healthier emotionally, mentally than I have been in his younger years and I didn't know. I reacted differently. I feel like I really did a lousy job parenting. I did the best I could, but for where I was at the time. Looking back, it was shit. But I also know that that's not-- I mean, I'm trying to get beyond that. And that's what I tell him, "We can't go back to the past. We have to start today." And I just want to be able to-- but what prevents us-- the original question I think is his trust issues with me and with life in general, people in general.

COACH: 11:12

Interesting, Melissa. When you started off this conversation and talking about what you wanted to talk about and focus on, you said you didn't feel like you had a voice or that your opinion matters. Now, I just heard you looking at yourself and saying, "I feel like I've done a lousy job parenting." How do they fit together?

CLIENT: 11:44

That I see my son going through life experiences and growing up, and we don't communicate well together. I can't communicate with him. You know, it's like

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a hug. I want to be able to be there for him in a way that nobody was there for me. I just want him to know that he has a safe place to come and talk. And he doesn't right now. He just silences me because he doesn't want to talk to me. He doesn't trust me.

- COACH: 13:03 Yeah. I hear a lot of emotion as you share that. This is really deep within you, isn't it?
- CLIENT: 13:17 It is. I'm starting to see that it's me who-- that I didn't have a safe place, I guess. I didn't have a safe place to go and learn and deal with life. It is deep.
- COACH: 13:54 Yeah. And feeling the pain of that.
- CLIENT: 14:01 Yeah.
- COACH: 14:09 So originally, you said you wanted to be able to have a voice, that your opinion can matter. I'm almost hearing now you saying that the real issue is that you want your son to have a voice and a place to express. How do you hear that?
- CLIENT: 14:32 Yeah. That makes sense. That resonates. Like I want him to have a safe place.
- COACH: 15:01 You stated that the original thing you wanted to take away from this session was a clearer understanding whether this is a legit concern, or if it's something you can just let go of or what to do with it. How are you feeling about that right now?
- CLIENT: 15:24 It's legit. It's legit. And it's not a controlling issue. I see that now.
- COACH: 15:40 Okay. So where do we go from here?
- [silence]
- CLIENT: 16:05 I'm not sure.
- COACH: 16:13 I like that you shared that you don't want to go back and dwell on the things back there, that you want to move forward. You've shared that with your son as well.
- CLIENT: 16:26 Yes.
- COACH: 16:26 How do you move forward in this area?
- CLIENT: 16:38 Um--
- [silence]
- CLIENT: 17:04 Um--
- [silence]
- CLIENT: 17:25 Well, maybe now that it's clearer in my mind, I can just -- not just, because it's not easy -- but I can reinforce with him every opportunity that I get that he matters to me, that I care about him, and that it's a safe, nonjudgmental place

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for him to be able to talk about anything. Even though I'm his mother, it's still a safe place.

[silence]

COACH: 18:21 Sounds like some good things you can do in reinforcing that for him. What do you need to do within yourself?

[silence]

CLIENT: 19:08 Okay. I just drew a total blank. I need to be redirected [laughter].

COACH: 19:15 Okay. I said you were talking about what to share with your son to reinforce with him that you have a safe place, that you are a safe place where he can share anything he wants. That's going to be helpful for him. What's going on within yourself that needs to be addressed right now?

[silence]

CLIENT: 19:49 I guess also finding a safe place for me.

[silence]

COACH: 20:16 Your tone changed when you said that. "Finding a safe place for me." What are you feeling when you say that?

CLIENT: 20:30 I feel lighter. I have a sense of clarity in what I have to do. I mean, I need to go to my groups and talk to people in my program where it is a safe place for me to process things. I need to take real advantage of that.

COACH: 21:20 What does finding a safe place for you look like?

[silence]

CLIENT: 21:39 A safe place right now looks like somewhere that I can be-- I don't have to worry about or think about, okay, what are the words that I can use without triggering somebody else off into a rage, or denial, or something like that. Just like a benign place to be to talk, to be heard.

COACH: 23:05 You talked about going to some of the people in your groups to do that. Are there other places where you can find safe people?

CLIENT: 23:16 Coaching.

COACH: 23:28 Coaching. Yeah.

CLIENT: 23:31 Yeah.

COACH: 23:35 I hope you find this is a safe place.

CLIENT: 23:38 Oh, absolutely.

COACH: 23:47 Melissa, let me ask, how safe are you to yourself?

[silence]

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CLIENT: 24:07 Wow. That's deep. How safe am I to myself? I don't think very safe because I don't think that left in my own head I can make smart decisions and I can have clear opinions yet.

[silence]

CLIENT: 24:59 I don't know if that's what you meant, but--

COACH: 25:04 Yes. What would you need to do in order to be safe within yourself and for yourself?

[silence]

CLIENT: 25:42 To be moving forward and having the awareness that I need to tap into the things outside of people, outside of my head, until my thinking is clearer.

COACH: 26:22 Okay. How do you address your own thinking?

[silence]

CLIENT: 26:54 Well, right now, I wish I could just cut the tapes out of my head. How do I address my own thinking?

COACH: 27:07 What are the tapes saying?

[silence]

CLIENT: 27:53 Oh, what are they saying? That I'm not relevant or valuable. That I should be seen and not heard. That how could I possibly think that I could be helpful to anybody else.

[silence]

COACH: 28:48 If you were able to shut off those tapes and instead would be able to tell yourself the truth, that you are valuable, and are worthy of being heard, and that your opinion mattered, what difference would that make?

CLIENT: 29:08 It would be huge. It would be--

[silence]

COACH: 29:34 That would be treating yourself in a safe way if you would speak the truth to yourself that way.

CLIENT: 29:44 Wow.

COACH: 29:50 Wow?

CLIENT: 29:51 Wow. Yeah.

COACH: 29:58 Tell me more about the "wow."

CLIENT: 30:05 Yeah. That was an ah-ha moment. It would be treating myself good and safe when I-- it will be.

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COACH: 30:23 I like that. Not it would be, it will be.

CLIENT: 30:28 It will be.

COACH: 30:34 How will it be?

CLIENT: 30:39 Well, when those things pop up, I'll hear them and react to them differently now. Because I am a good person, and I do have a lot to offer, and I am valuable, relevant.

COACH: 31:08 Oooph! That's a wonderful tape to play back to yourself. "I am worthy. I am valued. I am a wonderful person." I'm glad we're recording this. That's something [laughter] that you might want to capture and literally play it back again, and again, and again [laughter].

CLIENT: 31:37 Yeah.

COACH: 31:39 Now you're laughing.

CLIENT: 31:41 Yeah.

COACH: 31:45 Melissa, what are you learning about yourself?

[silence]

CLIENT: 32:15 I'm learning that as each of these things come up and I talk through them and process them, that it's a really significant growth platform for me. That I am becoming a-- I'm feeling aware, a way, and moving forward in spite of the past.

COACH: 33:13 Yeah. I like that. Not dwelling on the past, but in spite of the past, moving forward.

CLIENT: 33:21 Yeah. Ah, man. It feels like I've been striving [crosstalk]-- ah, man. Right [laughter]?

COACH: 33:42 What were you starting to say? "I feel like I've been striving--"

CLIENT: 33:46 I feel like I've been striving to move forward, and I've just been stuck in concrete shoes, in one of those dreams where you can't run and you're in slow motion. And with each of these ah-ha moments, a little bit of the concrete is chipped away, and I can increase the momentum to being a healthier-minded person, more in touch with myself, more in touch with the world as it really is.

COACH: 34:27 Wonderful. I love that image of the concrete shoes and the concrete being chipped away. And so as it's being chipped away, you're able to take some steps forward. What are some of those next steps that you'll take?

CLIENT: 34:45 To be really aware of my thinking about myself and changing those tapes and really understanding now, understanding personally what it means to change those tapes and take better care of myself. And to just continue with the intention to move forward.

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- COACH: 35:35 Yeah. Really a first step before you move forward is to have that intention to move forward.
- CLIENT: 35:46 Yeah.
- COACH: 35:50 Hmm Very good. Good work, Melissa. Good work.
- COACH: 35:55 So let me ask, early on, the focus was on your son, okay. And providing that safe place for him and how could you build the trust with him. You've come to the ah-ha moment and the insight that it starts with really working on yourself. And if you are doing this, and the concrete is beginning to break away, and you're taking steps forward, what difference will that make in your relationship with your son?
- CLIENT: 36:33 I think it will improve it because-- like when I talk to him today, I won't have the-- I think I can be more present today. I won't have that angst about, "How much can I say? Choose my words carefully." I can just be more present and talk, and if it's not the right time, then revisit it somewhere else without letting it totally leave me with the sense of, "Oh, my God. I did it again." You know? "How am I ever going to be able to communicate with him." Now, it's okay. It's happening the way it's supposed to happen. And the more secure I am in myself and my safe places, then it'll just transmit to him.
- COACH: 37:53 Yeah. Wonderful. How will you continue to move forward in this way?
- [silence]
- CLIENT: 38:12 Spend more time with him in the present and try to be present in all of my relationships instead of worrying about how everybody's going to react, and just being present and taking care of myself. And with that, I feel like the flow will happen. Or if it doesn't with other people, then it continues to happen within myself and it doesn't set me back.
- COACH: 38:52 Well, good for you. You talked earlier about the people in your groups as well as the coaching times as being support. How will they be a support as you continue to move forward in your concrete shoes?
- CLIENT: 39:09 Because those are safe places right now that I can go to.
- COACH: 39:18 Okay. So you will continue to reach out to them?
- CLIENT: 39:24 Yes. Absolutely.
- COACH: 39:28 Good for you. Good work, Melissa. How are you feeling right now?
- CLIENT: 39:39 Relief. Relief, lighter. Good. Good.
- COACH: 39:56 It feels like we're coming to a conclusion here. Anything else that would be helpful for us to talk about today?
- CLIENT: 40:05 I think I'm good today. I think I'm good today. I'll definitely follow up though.

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COACH: 40:17 Yeah. Okay. You have some good things to be working on until our next session. So let me ask this, Melissa. When we meet together next time, what is it you'd like to tell me that you've accomplished?

CLIENT: 40:34 That I've become a safe place for myself.

COACH: 40:43 I like that. I like that. Terrific. I will ask you if you have been and will be looking forward to hearing your answer.

CLIENT: 41:01 All right. Great. Thank you.

COACH: 41:05 Let me shut off this recording, and then we'll talk about our next time. Okay?

CLIENT: 41:09 Okay.

COACH: 41:11 Let me stop this.