



Titans as Teens

Transcript: Amy Chan. Episode 3

The podcast is here:

<https://www.titansasteens.com/amy-chan-author-and-breakup-expert/>

[Theme music]

Brody [00:00:06] Hey Brody here, with the new episode of Titans As Teens, a podcast where I have detailed conversations with interesting people from all walks of life, about their teen experience and knowledge they have for teens today. Today, I've author and breakup expert Amy Chan.

Amy [00:00:22] If there's anything I could tell, whether it was my younger self or any younger people out here listening is, you can save a lot of wasted energy and time not chasing what appears to be love. And understanding - this is what healthy love is, which is - it's boring. It's consistent, it's supportive. It's inspiring. It's empowering. And unhealthy love is what you hear in a love song, in the movies. Romeo and Juliet, the Titanic. None of those would be interesting movie plots if it actually showed healthy love.

Brody [00:01:01] Amy Chan has one of the most interesting stories out of all the people I've talked to. She started by working for 15 years in marketing and branding when she decided to make her own future as an entrepreneur. She's the founder of Break a Bootcamp, a specialized retreat for people hurt in relationships. Her new book, Breakup Boot Camp, focuses on all the knowledge she has gained through her experiences and how you can learn from it. When I talked with Amy, I was enthralled by her story of how she got to where she is, especially what her teenage years were like.

Amy [00:01:30] Parents very busy, didn't have time to parent me, and I got bullied in school, which made me turn into hanging out with gangsters so I could feel safe.

[00:01:40] I wore many different identities, from being a club promoter to being an overachieving student, to being a startup founder and heartbroken many times and built a business around heartbreak. Found myself in New York, living a very Sex and the City lifestyle, and then now back in Vancouver, realizing that the glamorous life is not what it's set out to be, and really realizing that my values and priorities is balance, authenticity, kindness, family, nature.

Brody [00:02:18] Hmm. That's interesting. Sounds like you went through, like, the whole cycle. You know.

Amy [00:02:25] There's a lot more to go.



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Brody [00:02:28] So you said you were bullied and you got into gangs, and how does that happen? Did you consciously say, I'm getting bullied, I don't like this, I'm going to join or not join the gang, but, like, hang out with these people so I don't get bullied anymore?

Amy [00:02:43] Yeah, great question. And it's something not a lot of people know about me. I don't usually talk about this on a podcast interviews. I think it's important for people to understand because it started in elementary school. I was a cool kid. And then as cool kids do, they do mean things. And the whole cool group turned on me. That was like my first experience with bullying and I was afraid to go to school. I hated it. I questioned should I end my life? I was so young I didn't know. And because my parents were so busy, I never felt that - it never occurred to me you could go to parents. It never occurred to me that you could speak to someone about what you're going through. And so I remember in my shame, I said to myself, I will never let someone make me feel like this again. So small, so insignificant, like such a loser. And I made it a goal that when I entered high school, I'm like, I'm going to hang out with with gangsters, people who are respected and I'll feel safe with. And I did make that mental decision. And as an achiever, I sought up for that goal and started to hang out with people outside of my school. It started with people who are dealing drugs, people who whose parents were in jail. And so I really got mixed up with the wrong crowds for almost 10 years of my life. But at the same time, I was able to continue doing really well at school. I always had a couple of jobs. I always had this entrepreneurial spirit that I think I got from my dad. And I think at the end, the values that my parents had did pass on to me, but I didn't know how to figure it out.

[00:04:27] So that's the route I went. And it took some time for me to realize that while I felt safe, the respect that these people got was it respect? It was fear and intimidation. And I didn't realize that until my early 20s and I realized how much in danger I was putting myself in. And how if something had ever happened to me, it was so selfish because I always was like, I'm invincible. I always think of invincible. And if something happened to me, my parents, my family, the people who love me would pay the price for mourning over me. And I realized that I had to find another way to to create empowerment. And then I dove into business and climbing the corporate ladder.

Brody [00:05:21] How deep did you get into the sort of gang circles?

Amy [00:05:26] I was always - I was born and raised in Vancouver and it's different here. It's not like gangs have names, like it's not like this thing where you get initiated, but it's not what you see in TV shows. These are people who were kids of a lot of immigrant parents who many of them dropped out of school and their only way of surviving was to deal drugs. And how deep? I think it was really bad. Like my - what was normalized to me and even to this day was like, oh, yeah, like I was on drug runs, I saw my friends at the time like dealing cocaine and heroin. And I thought that that's normal. And I was 14 when I went to my first nightclub. I thought all of that was normal, but a lot of these people ended up getting murdered. So I think it's pretty bad.

Amy [00:06:18] Is there a story that you can remember from high school that kind of sums up who you were as a person back then?



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Amy [00:06:27] That's a great question. Yeah, I think there was a time where I - so I was friends with this girl, this really pretty girl in in high school, and she was a very innocent girl. So she wasn't in this whole dark world I was in. And this this gangster guy liked her. And the only way to get to her was like through me. And this gangster guy had a gangster girl, ex-girlfriend who couldn't get a hold of her. So contacted me and phoned me up and said, give me her address, give me her information. If you don't, we're going to come after you. And I was like, no, I'm not going to do that. And I just was like, loyalty to me is such a value and has been and and always will be and still is my day and I wouldn't give it up.

[00:07:22] And that cause a lot of problems for me. These girls did come after me. They came to my place of work. One of the girls kicked me and gave me a contusion that I couldn't walk. And I think as much as I have changed my identity, my jobs, my - the people I spend time with, there are certain values that have been ingrained in me and I still have today. .Which is loyalty, generosity, honesty, and...yeah.

Brody [00:07:56] Yeah. Well, I don't know many other people who I think would risk that kind of thing. So props to you. I guess that's an incredible story.

Amy [00:08:07] Thanks.

Brody [00:08:07] So. Was all they did come and beat you up, or were there other complications as well?

Amy [00:08:15] The complications were. So the way that these girls did things is they didn't just come and beat you up. They would find out where you were and bring in - there'd be about 20 people and they're no joke. They would smash bottles on your face. They did crazy, crazy things. And they never got that bad with me other than like an altercation. But it was like this constant fear and intimidation. So when I went out and someone would like spot me and contact them and they would come, I would have to like I would have to leave. It was a really crazy thing to go through when you're only 13, 14, 15 years old. And again, like, it just never occurred to me that you could get help from from an adult, from parents, from teachers, from the authorities...so...

Brody [00:09:09] Was it hard to get out in any way or were you not at risk in that way?

Brody [00:09:15] Yeah, it wasn't it wasn't like, are you in or out? It's just really me and a bunch of old friends, you were just the the the people that hung out. They're almost like gangster groupies. And so I, I had made a decision of, like, I need to stop spending time with these people and just really distance myself. So it wasn't hard in terms of like, are there repercussions? I think more of it is you also get used to a lifestyle. I was 16 years old. We were having caviar at dinner. It was it was just a really - I think I had to go through my journey to realize that the world I was in was really fucked up.

Brody [00:09:57] Yeah. Can you remember, like, a crazy party that you guys threw?



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Amy [00:10:03] Oh, my gosh. Yeah, I mean, there's tons like I, I mean, there was one party I threw at like some Vietnamese restaurant, and it was just like a shit ton of gangsters that came. And I thought was the coolest girl, I don't know, was probably only 15 or 16 years old. And I went to raves like at a very young age. I was doing ecstasy at age 14. Like, that's crazy. And back then, raves weren't organized. You would find out where it is like an hour before you drive there, sometimes it would be in some warehouse. And I just thought I was like the coolest person ever. And like, I don't I don't regret anything in my life. But I do wonder, like, if I didn't if I didn't do things like ecstasy at age 14, like, would I be smarter? I don't know what happened. Your brain is, like, not even formed. Your brain's not fully formed until about twenty five years old. And so, like, I did not treat my brain well.

[00:11:04] And back then I just never thought about things like taking care of my body, taking care of my health, taking care of my brain, like I just didn't think about all that. Like there's this kind of invincible attitude that I know I had. I don't know if it's a if it's a thing about being a teenager or if it's just specific to me, but I just didn't think about any repercussions. I never had the foresight to be like, what will happen five years from now, ten years from now? Which is something that really changes, I think, at some point in your life, whether it's age or through experience. And you stop just living for the moment and living for what feels good and pleasurable right now. And that goes from the people you spend time with, the substances that you're using, to the people that you date. You start to ask yourself, wait, how does this, how is the serving the direction I want to go? And I think when you start having the foresight to step back and and use that as a filter for your decisions, you really start to transform your life into the one you want to create.

Brody [00:12:09] There's a lot to unpack there. Like, first off, addressing the whole invincibility thing. Yes, that's everyone. And really, to me, the whole experience, like even listening to it, I can imagine how cool it would seem to do all those things. But of course, it's romanticized. It's not actually reality. You don't realize the strife and pain that comes along with it. Did your parents know about this?

Amy [00:12:38] No. And they still don't know. They I you I would lie and I would sneak out to go to raves and things like that. And one time my my older sister actually ratted me out and she's like, Mom, I think Amy's lying. And she's going to this party. She's doing drugs and she's like, buy me a ticket and I'll go find her. And I to this day, I don't know if she just wanted to go to the rave herself or if she was really trying to find me. And yeah, she basically came to the rave. She wasn't able to find me because obviously she was just partying herself. But I was confronted and I thought they - she had seen me. So I confessed and my sister painted the picture of like, she's she's going to raves, she's doing drugs. And I hurt my mom so much. And I just remember how upset she was and feeling so much guilt and feeling so horrible that I made her feel that way. And what she must be going through to, you know, have worked her ass off to be an immigrant, to be able to build a business and a life, having not been able to speak a word of English when she came to Vancouver, pay for our extracurricular activities, get us into schools. And then I repay her by being under age and drinking and doing drugs. Yeah, I just felt really bad.



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And I it was a wake up call to me. I stopped at that point and I was like, I can't do this to my mom. Like, this is horrible.

[00:14:19] And so that was not a fun time, but that was kind of the extent of it. I tried to explain to them, kind of like my my childhood. But to this day, it's it's challenging to really connect with my parents. There's such a generational gap in a sense. My my dad is in his 80s. My mom is in her 70s, and she doesn't understand a lot of these things. So it's quite surface level what they know of my experience growing up.

Brody [00:14:51] Well, I have to say, from my experience with my friends, at least, I'm glad it went that way for you, because I've noticed this guilt that you've been talking about, where your parents are rather successful, they've provided all these things for you. You can go one or two ways and the way you can happen to you, or this other way, where it morphs into some sort of anger that you won't live up to your parents expectation, and then you start doing more of what happened to you. Right?

Amy [00:15:20] Right. Yeah.

Brody [00:15:22] I'm just glad it went that way for you. Can you remember a song that was your anthem back in the day?

Amy [00:15:31] Let me see, my anthem. I think, if I think about anthems, they were always just totally sappy love songs because I was I was textbook love addict. Since I was young, I had no idea I was a love addict because I thought it was normal to constantly be obsessed over guys. I mean, and the start at age five, six years old. And I would be thinking about guys, crushes, does he like me, does he not like me, all that stuff. It was just constantly on my mind, probably like 80 percent of the time. And this was well into my thirties until I started to really unpack the relationship patterns and therapy and psychology and understand, like, that's not normal. It's not normal. I was so boy crazy and it seemed like it was normal, but it's actually extremely unhealthy and usually an indicator of a much bigger wound from childhood and lack of love and lack of attention and from your primary caregivers. And so, yeah, my love, my my personal anthems would have been any love song that could have had me escape reality into some fantasy world that some prince would come and rescue me.

Brody [00:17:02] Is there like a certain point where you can say, like if you think about boys this much, then you have a problem versus this much and you're fine?

Amy [00:17:13] Yeah, that's a great question. I, I think that it's not a matter of of the the percentage of time. I think it's if you are... If it's affecting your ability to live fully and to reach your potential and if your obsession is actually causing you to make unhealthy decisions, enter toxic relationships and your obsession is kind of distracting you from reality. Those are indicators that there is a problem.



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Brody [00:17:55] I'm sure a lot of people hearing this right now are kind of like, wait, is that me? So is there things that people can do, maybe go to a therapist, read something online that they can do to address that kind of thing?

Amy [00:18:07] Something called Sex Love, Addicts Anonymous. And they work just like there is Alcoholics Anonymous. There's actually something out there for people who have sex and love addiction. And there's a series of questions that you can actually find them online. And at my company, Renew Breakup Bootcamp where we help women through their breakups and heartbreak. We usually take out this quiz and we ask everyone to answer the questions. And we usually hear an audible like, oh, my God, that's me. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. And there's this kind of light bulb moment for so many people who are like, I, I have love addiction. And I think we are always I think everyone has had some degree of love addiction at some point in your life. And a little bit of it, it's healthy in the beginning of relationships, there's this whole chemical cocktail going on. And you're a little bit obsessive over the person. You are analyzing their text messages and their emoji. And and there's a little there's a certain amount of healthy that actually can propel a romance from this kind of spark, into a deeper connection. But there's also like the unhealthy. And when there's too much love addiction and it's where you are on the spectrum, where you chase highs, you repeat a behavior despite the negative consequences. So this is, for example, if you're dating someone who it's unhealthy and toxic, and if you are - "You know what, it's fine" like for the sake of love, like you continue to stay in these unhealthy cycles. That is an indicator that perhaps there's love addiction. It is repeating a behavior despite the negative consequences. And love and sex could be one vice. It could be drugs, it could be alcohol. But addiction is defined as consistently repeating a behavior despite the negative consequences.

Brody [00:20:02] I was actually reading about something very similar to this previously where it's like detailing toxic behavior in relationships, where it's people doing many different things and getting different outcomes every time. Some being positive and some being extremely negative. And that actually creates addiction because sometimes you're getting this dopamine hit and sometimes you're getting nothing.

Amy [00:20:23] Yeah, there's something called intermittent reinforcement. And I'd love to share this just because I work with a lot of people who are dating people who are highly narcissistic. And I'm careful with diagnosing and saying someone's a narcissist because I think it's just a term thrown around very easily. There's the actual narcissistic personality disorder, which is actually a disorder, and then there's people who have narcissistic characteristics and traits. And I think we all have some degree of it. It's what makes us ambitious and things like that. But again, narcissism is on a spectrum. And so there's something that people, whether they're aware of it or not, they do that gets people hooked into a cycle. And so when people come to me like I feel so addicted to this person and I know it's toxic, but I can't break free of it, sometimes we realize, like, it's not love at all. It's intermittent reinforcement. And it's one of the oldest tricks in the book for manipulation. And basically what it is, is when we have unpredictable rewards, we get a higher dose of dopamine. and they've done studies, so there's like this very famous rat study and there's a monkey study where they take these rats and there's a lever. And every time the rat



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presses the lever, they get a pellet of food. That's continuous reinforcement. They know they're going to get the reward. Then they're doing another experiment and they're like, OK, we're going to instead take away the food. So the rat presses the lever, it's not getting the food eventually gets bored and is like "screw this". And then they're like, well, let's see what happens when we make the rewards unpredictable. So let's give the pellet of food sometimes and sometimes not, and see how the rat reacts. And what they found was the rat becomes completely obsessed with pressing a lever because sometimes it got a hit and sometimes it didn't. So when you don't know when you're going to get the reward, the amount of dopamine hit you're getting is going to be greater. And it can also - when you're not getting it, so when you're in that cold cycle - make you obsessed over trying to get it again. And it's why slot machines work and it's what happens when you are in a relationship cycle with someone who's hot and cold, who's just bread crumbing you, just giving just enough to keep you from starving, but you're never, ever full.

Brody [00:22:46] And the only way to get out of that is to leave?

Amy [00:22:49] I think having awareness of what's going on is the very first step, because a lot of the times you think you're going crazy or you think, no, no, this person is just so amazing or oh, no, this is lov. And it's recognizing this is not love. I think if there's anything I could tell, whether it was my younger self or any younger people out here listening is, look, I believe heartbreak is something absolutely necessary because it's character building. However, you can save a lot of wasted energy and time from not chasing what appears to be love. And understanding this is a different - this is what healthy love is - which is: it's boring. It's consistent, it's supportive. It's inspiring. It's empowering. And unhealthy love is what you hear in the love songs, in the movies. Romeo and Juliet, the Titanic, none of those would be interesting movie plots if it actually showed healthy love. But no, like the words of Jerry Maguire, "You complete me" is completely indicative of a very toxic, codependent relationship. And so, like we're brought up with all these ideas of what love looks like and should feel like. And what happens is you can easily, especially if you didn't have a healthy model of what love was growing up, you can start to equate unavailability with love. Chaos with love. Abuse as love. And it's really important that the earlier we can start to identify, wait, this isn't love, this isn't healthy, I think the better and more healthier will be.

Brody [00:24:37] Yeah, and obviously I know because I researched you, but could you describe for the audience who don't know you that well, your experience with this kind of thing?

Amy [00:24:45] Yeah. So I'm the founder of Renew Breakup Bootcamp. We take a scientific and spiritual approach to healing the heart. And I started this company because eight years ago I was living in Vancouver. I thought I was going to marry the man of my dreams. And I had my whole life set out and that relationship ended abruptly and very tramatically. And I spiraled into depression and had suicidal thoughts. And I did a lot to heal and get out of this dark hole that I was in. And during that time, I sought the help of therapists, psychologists, energy healers, Reiki masters, psychics, you name it. I tried it and I decided that I needed to create a company to help other people, who after a



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breakup, you feel so completely lost. Or you can. And our friends and family, as much as they love us, are often equipped with really terrible advice and projection. And so I wanted to create a safe space for people where they can come, be in nature, have luxury accommodations and also the best of the best world experts in relationships to help you understand what are those patterns. Why did you why did you choose a toxic person? Why did you stay? Why did you ignore the red flags? And so I spent my entire life, adult life really researching and understanding relationships with psychology and science behind it and specifically breakups.

Brody [00:26:19] What's the most common thing you see in that situation?

Amy [00:26:25] An uneven power dynamic. And it is usually the story I usually see all the time is - and I work with women- so it's the woman wants more commitment, wants more investment, wants more love, and the guy doesn't want to give it. It's really easy to focus like, oh, it's my ex, what an asshole or whatever. And that's one of the first rules we at Renew Breakup Bootcamp is we do not vilify the ex because it's never just ex, it's recycled pain. And we recreate the emotional experiences of how we're wounded, usually from a very young age. And then there's compound trauma. And so we really want to look at the exes to understand what is the pattern, because that pattern will reveal a subconscious belief. And the subconscious belief is usually I am not enough. And that root belief is what causes a person to over give, to try to earn love, to try to earn validation. To date people who don't want to invest in them because ultimately they do not feel they are worthy of love. And so if we don't get to the belief you can change the behaviors, you can change your dating apps, you can change the city that you live in, you're going to keep getting the same relationship outcomes.

Brody [00:27:42] As a teen, I'm not sure if this is young enough, but is there something that teens can do to prevent that mindset from forming?

Amy [00:27:48] Yeah, I'm really into practical tools. And so I think something that feels really natural is when you like someone and usually in the beginning it might start off even. What happens often, especially if you have a degree of love addiction, is you might go into a fantasy world. And fantasy, I think, is a coping mechanism. I know for me, I use fantasy to escape the chaos of my home and all the fighting that was happening all the time. And so you can create a fantasy about a person. And so there's there's healthy fantasies where you have a fantasy of becoming an amazing dancer or building your own business. And then there's unhealthy fantasies where it's - you fixate on a person or relationship or an idea of a relationship, to make you feel a certain way. And that's when you might - date 1, great, you have dinner, things are great. You go home and then you're like, oh, wait. He also loves, I don't know, hip hop dancing. I love hip hop dancing. Maybe you can be a hip hop instructor together. Oh, my God, he's really into yachting. I just I really want to go to yacht week. OMG we could go to yacht week together and then we'll go to Greece and like, you kind of go into your head and you start fantasizing about this life with this person.

[00:29:17] And you can also do this a lot when the life you have yourself, isn't that stimulating to yourself, then you latch on to someone else's potential of a lifestyle. And



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that could be mine like, oh, my gosh, that guy - his family on the boat like, oh, my gosh. You think of all these things. And what's happening as you fantasize this world with this person, your body doesn't know the difference between the past, present and future. It's still creating this chemical reaction. So when you're, like, fantasizing about this person, you are getting the dopamine, you're getting the oxytocin, the bonding hormone, and your feelings for this person starts to skyrocket. Then what happens? Date 2 or 3 comes and what would have normally been you start off your your equal and your feelings are developing gradually. Trust is building gradually. Yours is now off the charts. And this other person is like, we're just on date 2. But in your head, you've already gone to Greece, yachted to Mykonos, and become hip hop stars on TikTok. You know, like and and so it becomes uneven and the natural tendency is to like, I'm just going to do more. Oh, I'm going to do more. I'm going to make it easier to to make to see this person. I'm going to buy gifts. You try, you get into the cycle of like I'm going to earn, earn, earn.

[00:30:40] This doesn't mean you're fucked up, you're crazy. It's just a very natural thing. And you have to at that point, remember this podcast and stop. And remember that the balance is extremely important. Because when you start giving away your power- you know, instead of coming in at 50-50, you're like, OK, in the beginning you take one step, I take one step - we're dancing and you're like, you know what for - he's not taking any steps. So I'll just take three steps to make up for his lack of steps. That's when things start to go sideways. That's when your self-esteem starts to spiral down even more. What you'll do some crazy ass shit like text him like crazy or stalk them on Instagram, whatever the hell you're going to do. And so just remembering that the balance is key. And if you have a tendency towards love addiction to like slow things down. Like when it is so crazy, explosive in the beginning, generally speaking, in my experience of what I've seen, that doesn't mean that you've met your soulmate. It means that you've met someone who can wound you in a very familiar way. That's why you're like, oh, my God. And again, remember, that's not love and not equating this kind of high-high, low-low - the roller coaster with love, is very important.

Brody [00:32:05] That's fascinating. I had no idea that I was like a thing. That's really cool...

Amy [00:32:10] A thing (laughs)

Brody [00:32:11] ...it's like it's cool but it's not cool.

Amy [00:32:14] Yeah.

Brody [00:32:15] I think I'm going to start asking you the questions that my friends gave me...

Amy [00:32:19] Sure.

Brody [00:32:19] ...or the majority...some of them are mine. .



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Amy [00:32:22] Cool.

Brody [00:32:22] I think a good one to start is what kind of breakups are there?

Amy [00:32:25] So I guess there's a few different types. There's a breakup where it's very abrupt and something blows up. So there's cheating, there is a huge fight. It's almost like unexpected. Right. And every time someone like, oh, my God, I had no idea this was going to happen. I didn't know he was cheating on me or she was cheating on me. We always realize that you just ignored a bunch of the the signs along the way and when it when it ends by a big blow up. Usually, I mean, every single time that I've seen, is there was a lead up to it. There was a lack of communication and honesty. So there's that there's the gradual erosion of a relationship where it just becomes very bland and two people kind of stop trying. And spark isn't going anymore. Sometimes it's just totally natural and it just becomes more of a buddy buddy thing. And then there's like an amicable ending to things.

[00:33:22] There is... one person wants more than the other. And this is - someone wants more commitment, wants the label, wants to move forward and the other person doesn't. And that's usually - there's going to be a power imbalance there. And again, like I recommend during those times, like don't fight for someone who's not fighting for you. It's - you need an equal investment in the relationship for it to work. So there's that unequal power balance.

[00:33:54] So those are three main types that I see. Then there's like the on again off again one where like you've broken up and got back together like 20 different times. And that could be a variety of reasons. You could be in a relationship with someone who is narcissistic tendencies. You might have love addiction with a person. You might be completely indecisive and think that, oh, no, this time it's going to be different. And I think all of that is not being reality based. Yeah, and then the fifth one, I think, is you outgrow each other, you want different things. And that relationship was a wonderful experience and a bridge in your life. And I don't think relationship endings need to be traumatizing. I think love, if it's real, love, it doesn't die, just takes different forms.

Brody [00:34:42] So the last one is the one you want to aim for if you're going to breakup.

Amy [00:34:46] Yeah.

Brody [00:34:48] All right, this might be a hard question for you, because I know you mostly, obviously, you mostly focus on adults, but do you think that dating has changed from when you were a teen to teens today?

Amy [00:35:05] I think so, yeah. Because when I mean, I've been dating for a really long time and it's kind of like seeing all the iterations of it. I think when there wasn't this proliferation of online dating and apps, I think it was harder to do things like ghost someone. Right. Like if you if you like, because back in the day when you didn't have like an app...I remember when I was doing apps, I would go on an app and just count to one hundred. One hundred, because I usually was just left swiping as I was interested, and just



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count to one hundred and swipe people. And like you might think like oh no, like that, it's not doing anything to you, but it really is on a subconscious level. There is this mentality that you're shopping for people. That people aren't good enough. There is always something better. And if hey, if it doesn't work with this one, there's one hundred other people I can swipe. And I think that's how easy it is to go through people, is different now than it was before. Because back then, when before they had all of this stuff, it wasn't as easy to go through people. And there were consequences - like if you were introduced to someone or you met someone through work or what we consider old school way and you just fucking disappeared - like there's repercussions of that. Now you can meet someone in London and talk to them for three months and feel like you have a total connection and that person can completely be like 'peace out', I don't want to reply to you. Right. And it can be a lot more impersonal. And it can almost - when we're behind a screen - it could take the human out of it. And make it suddenly, OK, that you're not being kind and in integrity. And like I think also when we're so glued to our screens, like dealing with uncomfortable emotions, that's a skill you learn and you learn that by being around people, by having conflict, by talking through it. But when it's so easy for you to just block someone off IG, not respond to their text message, you don't ever have to go through that cycle of like, oh, this is an uncomfortable conversation. I'm not interested in this person. I'm going to have an honest conversation with the person. You just don't have to do it. So you're not building your skill and your muscle for being able to have these adult conversations and your emotional intelligence. So I think that's probably a big difference.

[00:37:42] I also think there's a lot more of a casual nature of dating right now. And again, like because we're going through people, no one has time anymore. And so there's this kind of transactional feel. And like instead of being like you like, oh, my gosh, that first it was amazing. I'm going to this to you. I'm going to delete all my apps and I'm going to totally just focus on you. But what happened? You're like, I had a great date with this person and I'm going to now go on Raya, Hinge, and Bumble and see what's up there. And you also get the validation there. You're get you're so fucking hooked on these dopamine spikes. I'm like, oh, my God, I got like a heart. I think all that is really stopping us from being able to create an environment where love actually grows.

[00:38:34] I'm in a really incredible relationship now and we did things very differently. We met on a dating app and I had just gone through so many different mini romances, like it was like a revolving door of people. And I lived in New York City like it was really easy to do that. And I was so sick of it. And I remember I connected with my partner on this app. And it was funny because we - someone tried to set us up before and I said no. And that just goes to show like, no, no, no, I'm not interested. Like, it's so easy to dismiss someone. You're like, not my type. No. And we we met on a dating app. And before our very first date, I remember saying to myself, I'm like, I'm just going to go in with a complete open heart. No expectations, no pressure. I'm just going to have so much fun and be curious. I'm not going to look for red flags or what we're not like, well, I'm just going to have a fucking fun time. And I showed up differently. And he told me after when we started dating, he noticed right away, like you were so open. I was like, not fuck it, I'm going to be open too. And after that first day, he deleted his dating apps. It wasn't because I was so amazing, I think he was getting dating app fatigue anyway. But because he did that, it



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changed something. Because I went back home and even though things were great, we went off to do more dates, I was like, I was still like, oh, I haven't opened, I didn't delete them, but I did open them, like to see what's going on. So I just act a little aloof. Should I play one of those games and I just stopped myself, like holy, what bad habits have I just learned. And I'm like, fuck it. I deleted my dating apps. And I think what was really different is, it's not because there's one person out there for you and I met my one person. I think it's because we created the conditions for a spark to grow into a connection and for that connection to grow into a deeper bond. And that's where I think people have a challenge these days. It's not that there's not amazing people out there or ways to meet them. It's that we block it, in the very beginning because of all this other shit that we've got going on.

Brody [00:40:50] Absolutely, yeah. I mean, especially with dating apps, there's no shortage of people, as you said. It's just people not trying. Not trying is not the right way to say it. But yeah.

Amy [00:41:02] Yeah, I think no, it's true. Like trying is a part of that is just taking the risk. It's being open and vulnerable and being like, here you go. Like I'm going to just be totally open and I might get hurt. And when you have this solid foundation that you are inherently OK and you are safe, you can approach dating that way because rejection doesn't mean it's a rejection of your value or your worth. But when you don't have a strong foundation and unfortunately a lot of people don't and it's not that it's their fault, it's that there is like some pretty deep wounds there that haven't been healed or looked at. Getting rejected is so scary because rejection becomes a story that you're not worthy, you're not lovable. And so I think if we focus on our energy, not on swiping to find more people, but focus some of that energy on what parts of myself are blocking love from growing, what parts of myself am I not loving myself. And creating and generating that love inside myself. If we just kind of change that focus a bit more on our on our internal love, that's going to have such a huge impact on the people that you're going to attract that you're attracted to and the relationships that you can have.

Brody [00:42:28] Next question I have is this one also might be a bit difficult for you because you focus on women, as you said. Is there a difference between the way boys and girls process break ups?

Amy [00:42:48] Oh, yeah, totally. So and this is not I think a lot of it has to do with socialization, not because there's a fundamental difference in genders. But from the research to what I've witnessed is women have a tendency to, after break up, to take it really hard in the very beginning. So their mourning process starts immediately. What they will do is they will go to community, they will talk to their friends. They'll talk about the story over and over and over again. And whereas guys have a tendency to distract themselves. And so what happens is instead of like, oh, my God, I'm going to feel all the feels and process the pain, there is a tendency to suppress the emotions or distract. And so what might happen is they might just automatically just get onto a dating app and be like, what? I'm going to feel better by getting validation. I'm going to sleep with this other person. I'm going to drink. I'm going to party my face off. I'm going to just kind of forget that. And that works for a period of time until you do hit a point eventually where the shit catches up to



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you. And so men actually take breakups a lot harder. They are more prone - 2.5 times more prone to suicide after heartbreak versus women. And I think a lot of this is like due to socialization, right? Like from being a little boy when a boy falls and scrapes his knee, there's this thing called the skinned kneed effect, when he scrapes his knee, usually what the parents will do is like, "Come on, get back up. Don't cry. You're so strong. You're so great. Yeah". When a girl falls and scrapes her knee like, "Oh, my God, are you OK? Are you OK". There's coddling effect, right? So at a very young age, you learn as a girl that it is OK to cry and feel. It's a lot more acceptable to be sad versus angry. Whereas when you're a boy, you're taught it's not OK to feel. Be strong, be brave, don't be sad, OK, some anger is fine. Aggression is OK. You're a man. And so what happens when this message is ingrained in you. You grow up and you think that feeling is weak. Not being sad or crying is for girls or you're a pussy, right? Like even the the language around it is so negative towards feeling, if you're a guy. But if you're a girl, it's OK. And so yeah, because of that, it causes a very different reaction in how the sexes respond to heartbreak.

Brody [00:45:22] Hmm. I didn't know that when you said 2.5 earlier, was that two point five percent or two hundred fifty percent.

Amy [00:45:30] It's like they're like they're twice more likely than women. Yeah.

Brody [00:45:35] Jeez...I'm trying to like they phrased it really weird...s it normal to still be hung up on someone even after two months, that they broke up with me?

Amy [00:45:45] Oh my gosh. For sure. People always want to know what's the time, what amount of time like is it, is it two months? Is eight weeks? Like what is that magic number? And it's going to be different for everyone. But the grieving process is generally the same. So when someone is going through a breakup, they experience what is very similar to the stages of grief when you are mourning someone who has passed away. So there's different stages of separation and the very first stage is is shock. So shock is very healthy because basically what that's doing is your body is like not accepting one hundred percent of the new reality to kind of brace yourself for it because the new reality would be too overwhelming. So you have a shock response after that. You normally have what's called denial. Denial is like, no, no, no, it's not really over is over. No, I don't think so. Where your reality starts to settle in, but you kind of push it away. The third is sadness and depression. That's when you're like, oh my gosh, like this is done. Like, I think we're really broken up and you get really sad and you get really low. And then after that, there is anger. And anger is like when you start to be like, oh my God, like they're posting, like, these hot selfies on Instagram. Oh my God, they're already out on the beach having their best life, like, what the fuck? And you start to get really angry and you're like, what a dick. Like he didn't even text me back or whatever that is. And that is actually energy starting to move. So it goes from sadness and apathy to it's now starting to bubble. It starts to move. And that's actually a positive sign in the stages. The next stages, usually there is a part where you kind of have like a blip, in the sense where you kind of go back into denial. And that's when you're like, well, maybe if I just tried one more time. Or, you know what, I'm just going to show up and, like, bring flowers, whatever it is. Again, you're like you're back into a loop of denial. And in that stage you might even get back together with someone. And



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then it might happen many times until you finally really break up. The last stage is acceptance, and that is when you accept reality and you realize there's nothing that you can do to change this person or change the outcome, you stop living in this "I should have done this. He should have done that. She should have done that." You stop doing that and you're like, this is reality and I accept it. And you can't fast forward through one stage. And that's what the problem is when you are suppressing your emotions or you do not allow yourself this grieving process, you get stuck. When you deny that you should be in a stage or you get mad at yourself or you shame yourself. Like "I'm so stupid, like, why do I feel so hung up" or whatever it is, you just stay in that stage longer. But you need to go through all of them, and you might bounce back and forth. But the beginning and the end is always the same. It starts with shock and it ends with acceptance. And the more you can process through those stages in a healthy way, the sooner you can get to a stage of acceptance.

[00:48:53] And so my word of advice for people who are still hung up on someone, don't give yourself this timeline that you need to adhere to. Understand what stage of the process that you're in, have respect that you're in it, and understand that this is completely normal. And if you need to, do timed grieving. So if you're in the very beginning stage of a breakup and you're really upset, what I tell people to do is - it's healthy to feel the feels, to cry, all of that. But it's unhealthy when you just stay stuck. And so this is - time yourself. You give yourself a 20 minute interval where you're like, OK, this 20 minutes, I'm going to ugly cry, I'm going to listen to fucking Coldplay, all that shit. And after that 20 minutes, you set up something that gets you out of that state. Maybe you go for a jog, you ask your friend to go for a walk, whatever it is, but you force yourself to do that. Otherwise you will stay twenty four hours in wallowing in misery. So, yeah, be gentle with yourself and there is no right amount of time. But it really depends also on the intensity of the relationship. And if you have more anxious tendencies, it's going to a break up is going to affect you a lot more.

Brody [00:50:10] Last question I have for you is, do you have one mega tip for dating as a teen?

Amy [00:50:16] Yeah. Stop thinking that the person you're dating is the one. They're not. Like I could pretty much say, like everyone who's listening, you're probably in your teens not meeting the person you're going to spend the rest of your life with. That's the exception. It's not the norm. And so right now is the time to to date and meet people so that you can understand, what, what do you love, what do you not love. And stop thinking you have a certain type. You're really going to sell yourself short and that because you really want to, like, experience as much as you possibly can during this stage, so that when you get into the next stage of life where you've really got more of a foundation, you have more of your identity, you have a much clearer understanding of like what is a right fit for you. I think when you date with the mentality of like, oh my gosh, is this the one? It puts a lot of pressure on the person, on the relationship and on yourself. And you might do things to hang on to the relationship or to make it a certain way, because you want it to be the one so badly. But I know for myself, every time I was dating to marry since I was like 18, 19. And if I didn't have that mentality, I probably wouldn't have taken the heartbreaks



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so hard and I probably wouldn't have clawed my way to try to make something work when it wasn't, and yeah, learned some of those lessons a lot earlier.

[Theme music]

Brody [00:51:50] That was Amy Chan. If you want to learn more about Amy, or want to hear more of what she has to say, please go check out her new book, *Breakup Bootcamp: The Science of Rewiring Your Heart*. If you want to learn more about Titans as Teens, please visit [TitansasTeens.com](https://titansasteens.com) Thanks again for listening.