

## Ep 9. How to Deal with Difficult People



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kym Showers**

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## Ep 9. How to Deal with Difficult People

I'm Kym Showers, and this is *Reinvented After 40*, episode number nine, How to Deal with Difficult People.

Hey, friends. Welcome to *Reinvented After 40*, a podcast for all you women in the second half of life who are ready to take responsibility for your own well-being and create a life you love living.

I'm your host, Kym Showers, and after spending the first 40 years of my life people-pleasing and following all the rules, I was exhausted and ready for a change. I reinvented myself. I stopped outsourcing my happiness. And I've been brave enough to live a different kind of life.

I'll be here each week to help you do the same thing. It's gonna be fun. Let's go.

Hey, everyone, this has been an incredible week. I probably tell you that every week but every week is so good. Today I'm actually recording this on Halloween, Sunday morning, Halloween, which happens to be my brother-in-law's birthday. And so we have a really fun party to get dressed up for tonight. So it's just going to be a really great day. This week I've been coaching a lot, I'm writing a lot, working out, getting my body.

I have a new commitment to my body. I've been doing some weight training, try and get my body nice and strong going into the new year. I have two months, I have a two month goal and I am going to be really proud of myself by the end of 2021. So maybe you want to join me. I'd love for you to join me. I love to go into new year already ahead, not waiting for January 1<sup>st</sup> to start. I like to work ahead of time. So I'd love for you to join me in any goals that you have that you can absolutely start today.

Also I'm obsessed with the show, *The Voice*. And so I've been binge watching *The Voice*, I love the coaches, the singers. I just love the whole experience of that show. So right now that's my favorite show. *Ted Lasso*,

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I'm all caught up, I watched Ted Lasso over, and over, and over again. So I thought I'd find something else to inspire me and find some new best friends in the evening.

But today I want to give you a few useful ideas I have about dealing with difficult people, especially with the holidays coming up. So we have people in our life that we think of as difficult, or not easy, or not fun to be around, and the ones that usually kind of ruin everything for us. We would never choose to spend choose to spend time with them, that sometimes we are obligated. So how can we have an enjoyable thanksgiving when there is a 'difficult' person at the table? How can we have a magical Christmas when there will be a difficult person joining us?

Also how can we have happy holidays when the difficult person is being difficult because they choose not to join us? They don't want to spend the holidays with us and we are disappointed and maybe mad and think they should. And we let that ruin our experience and then we blame them for it. I have a few ideas and thoughts that I practice, and steps that I take when it comes to a 'difficult person in my life. And when I say difficult, I use the quotes because difficult is a thought, not a fact. And that is my first idea to offer you.

A challenging or difficult person is just a thought we have, not a fact. I have had many difficult people in my life over the years that I would tell you have caused me a lot of pain, and suffering, and ruined many of my holidays. I have one person in particular, I could tell you stories of the things she's said and the things she did that were mean, and selfish, and intentional. I wanted her to be nicer, and stop being so critical, and show up with a more positive energy. I wanted her to be different than who she was being so I could enjoy the day.

But you know what she did and keeps doing? She keeps being her. She keeps thinking, and feeling, and acting exactly the way she wants to. When

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I wanted her to be different I created anxiety for myself. When I wanted her to be nicer I created frustration for myself. When I wanted her to love me and say nice things about me, I hurt my own feelings with my expectations. I couldn't see it then but I absolutely see it clearly now. She was only difficult because she wasn't who I wanted her to be. She was only difficult because I thought she should be different.

She was only difficult because I took her words and actions personally. My mind was continuously looking and finding evidence to prove my thought that she is difficult, true. In my mind she was the bad guy and I was the good guy. And I'm sure in her mind I was the bad guy and she was the good guy. I thought about it, and talked about it, and anticipated, and tried to fix it. I created so much drama and anxiety for me. I tried extra hard to change her. I worked at it from all the angles. I thought it was a problem. I made it a problem. And in the meantime she just kept being her.

So finally to make peace for me I stopped, I let it go, I stopped all my drama, I let go of wanting her to change. I stopped wanting her to like me. I stopped trying to get her to be different than who she is. And I started accepting her instead. I stopped pushing against her. I stopped complaining about her. I stopped thinking about her as difficult. I stopped showing up defensive and weird when I was around her. I just decided to love her and not make her a big deal at all. I set myself free and you can do the same thing with your difficult person.

She or he doesn't have to change for you to feel better. Pay more attention to your thought, feel, act cycle than you do to theirs. What do you want to think? How do you want to feel? How do you want to show up around your difficult person? This is the best practice. This is the only way forward for you. Difficult people are for our good. They are our best teachers. People are neutral, the things they say and do have not one thing to do with us.

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They actually bring up things in us we need to look at and get curious about. And then when we are with them we can rise to our best most powerful self. We label them difficult. It's not a fact. It's just a thought.

Idea number two, sometimes we are the difficult person. Some people are easier to be around than others. Some people are easier to love than others. I can totally agree with this, this is what I think. I'm actually very clear about who I spend my time with and my energy on. I have solid boundaries and that's why I love my life so much. I choose easy people to hang out with. I choose people who I really like and people who really like me.

I have evolved and changed so much that I don't need a whole lot of people in my life anymore. And it's freed me up to create a business I love and to get to know and trust myself in a much deeper way. Having healthy clear boundaries will help eliminate many of the difficult people from your life as well. Sometimes we feel obligated and pressured to spend time with people that we don't want to spend time with. I'll be the first one to tell you, you absolutely never have to do that. You don't have to go to Christmas at your sister-in-law's if you don't want to.

You don't have to invite Uncle George to your thanksgiving if you don't want to. You don't have to keep everyone happy at the holidays. You get to do exactly what you want to do. You can be the difficult person in some people's eyes. It's not a problem. Everyone gets to do what they want and we want them to. This is what will set you free. This is what set me free. I can be the difficult person in other people's lives, it's not a problem for me anymore.

I used to want to be the easy one and keep everyone happy, and be the gatherer of all the people, and show up at all the gatherings but I don't think like that anymore. I changed. I constrained my energy. I narrowed in on my purpose. I don't easily go along with the crowd and I don't do things I don't

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want to do. Sometimes that will make me a 'difficult' person for someone else. And I'm completely fine with that. I am willing to let people down. I don't try to. I don't want to. I don't try to be difficult.

But whenever we are more in tune to our own lives and we stop people pleasing, other people don't like it. Other people think we're selfish, and challenging, and difficult. Sometimes we're the difficult one and that's okay. It's not a problem. It's just good for us to know.

Idea number three, difficult people should be difficult, they are supposed to be, it's completely fine. We don't have to be at war with them. If it's one of your kids I want you to know that you can feel so much better if you stop labeling them as difficult and if you let them be who they want to be. When we want our child to be different than he or she is being, we're instantly at conflict with them, especially when we have adult kids.

If you find yourself judging them, and fearful, and kind of wrapped up in their lives trying to fix them you need to step away and stop it. Your kids are here for your enjoyment. Stop getting in the middle of their conflicts, and in their business, and inserting your opinions. You do not know what's best for them. Stop taking sides, stop being the peacemaker and the referee. Let your kids work out their own differences. You don't need to be at war with anyone ever.

But you tell me, "Well, I just want everyone to get along and be happy, I just want to help." That's every mom's most popular thought. I just want everyone to get along. I just want all of them to be happy. But I promise you, it's every mom's most painful thought. It sets us up for disappointment because it's rare that everyone is happy and getting along at the same time, even at the holidays.

What if instead of I just want everyone to get along and be happy, we think how about I get along with everyone and I be happy? Everyone else gets to

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feel how they feel and be who they are. That's what I want. That feels much better to me. I don't ever have to count on anyone else's behavior to provide my holiday experience. I don't have any expectations outside of me. I get to simply love my people exactly the way they choose to be. We can't control them. We need to stop trying to make them something they don't want to be.

No more pressure, moms, difficult people should be difficult, we need to let them, it's fine, it's not a problem.

Idea number four, don't worry about who doesn't come to thanksgiving or Christmas, enjoy the ones who do. Your brain might want to make a big deal about those who opt out this year. Your brain might want to blame and take it personally and make them the holiday villain and you the holiday victim but don't fall for it. Don't indulge in those feelings and ruin your own holiday. Be on to yourself. You be the one to bring the fun and joy for everyone, especially for yourself.

You love on the people who show up and love on the people who don't show up, either way it'll be a good time. Even if it's just you and your husband this year, make it simple, and special, and sweet, create a really fun memory. You totally know how to do that. Don't be the difficult person by blaming and shaming someone just because you're disappointed.

So my recap for today, idea number one, difficult is a thought, not a fact. Idea number two, sometimes we're the difficult person. Idea number three, difficult people should be difficult. And idea number four, don't worry about who's not coming to thanksgiving or Christmas, pay attention to the ones who do, celebrate the ones who do.

And the truth is, you guys, I rarely deal with difficult people anymore. But when I do I know how I want to be. And I'm confident I'll be here. I show up intentionally every day of my life. Sometimes I'm surprised by someone



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who maybe doesn't like me, or argues with me, or gives me a little pushback but I stay the same. I treat everybody the same. I don't get defensive or take it personally or shrink back and hide.

I'm a kind, honest, forthright, generous self. I'm kind to kind people. I am kind to difficult people. This is why I don't gossip. I don't want anyone else's opinion of other people. I certainly don't want to know what other people are saying about me. I don't want to have a preconceived idea of someone. I like to think about people in my own way. I show up exactly the way I want to. I bring my own unique energy. I show up curious, and open, and interested with all the questions. I can draw my own conclusions. I give everyone the benefit of the doubt. I do it for my sake.

Difficult people are not a problem for me because I rarely hang out with them and because I can manage my thoughts and feelings when I am sometimes around them. I don't spend time talking about them or thinking about them. I always just circle it back to who I am being. That's the one thing I can do something about, that's the secret of the universe, keep circling it back to who you are being, circle it back to you, it keeps it simple and we like simple.

So my friends, that's it for today. Thanks so much for showing up. Thanks for being amazing podcast followers. Have a great week and I will see you next time.

To celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away a few of my very favorite things to five lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the podcast. And it doesn't really have to be a five-star review, though, of course, I would be ever grateful. And I do hope you love the show. But I do want your honest feedback so I can create something awesome that provides a lot of value for you.



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