



RETURNING

with Rebecca Campbell

A PODCAST TO RETURN
TO THE WISDOM WITHIN

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WHEN FRIENDSHIPS END

Episode Transcript

Rebecca: Hey, it's Rebecca. Welcome to Returning, a podcast to return to yourself and the wisdom within. I'm so glad you're here with me. Thanks for returning.

So in today's episode, I am exploring a really difficult topic, actually, and I've found it's one that doesn't get spoken about very much, and that is friendships ending. I personally have felt quite a pull lately to find a way to speak to this topic. There is just so much out there about different types of relationships ending like death and divorce and breakups and separation. But I've found and from personal experience in searching for it, I rarely come across conversations that really speak to the unique and profound grief that can come up with the ending of a friendship. When I started exploring this theme, I realized just how much there was to cover on this topic, and it felt really clear to me that I needed to be having this conversation with a friend who gets it. So I have called upon my bestie, Amy Firth, to just explore it and unpack this topic a little bit with me. Not only is Amy the Gayle to my Oprah, she is also an ordained interfaith minister, a spiritual counselor, a singer songwriter, she is the voice with me in The Rise Sister Rise chant, If you have ever heard it before, and I know some of you have been to retreats and workshops where she's been alongside me.

Amy and I have been friends for two decades, more than two decades, and our friendship really has woven and survived around and through bereavement, breakups and many breakdowns, that's for sure. We've seen each other change quite a bit over the years, and during that time we've both been really challenged and hurt and confused by relationships ending, particularly friendships. And so I thought, who better to call upon to just have a frank conversation about it? Because I sense that so many of us go through this and it is a largely unspoken topic. So yeah, we are going to be exploring all of the ways that we can heal and release and learn and grow through the changing landscapes of friendships. And as always, at the very end of this episode, you'll find a guided soul inquiry exercise for you to explore the wisdom within and what comes up for you during this episode. I know how precious your time is. So let's jump into sacred space together now, taking a moment and connecting in with the center of your heart, imagining a flower there and with your breath, inviting it to open petal by petal, revealing a light in the middle of this light,

representing your wise, intuitive self, your soul. Taking a deep breath in with me now and really inviting this part of you to step forward now. And together, let's acknowledge the keepers and custodians of the land where you are, where I am, where Amy is, known and unknown. Beautiful. Let's begin.

Amy: This is a big topic babe

Rebecca: I know, I know. I don't quite know where to start with it, It's like I feel first of all, maybe language warning. Maybe we don't need one, but maybe we will.

Amy: Oh, honey, we need one. We need one. I think there's going to be a lot of F-bombs for sure. And it also gives us permission to let loose with the F-bomb. So, yeah, if you've got little ears around, Apologies.

Rebecca: So I think where I want to start is that friendship's ending for me anyway I think has been one of the hardest things I've ever navigated. Even more so than romantic relationships, which I think is really, really, really hard as well. And I feel like one of the reasons I find it is really difficult to navigate is with romantic relationships or even when someone dies, it's like there is more cultural understanding and even rituals around it.

Amy: Totally.

Rebecca: Whereas when it comes to friendships, it's like we have this feeling like they shouldn't end. And if they end, we've done something wrong. But they're also like when it's a romantic relationship, it ends and there's clear boundaries around it, but friendships are kind of a bit messier.

Amy: Yeah, and because they are a bit more invisible in terms of a friendship ending, it's less obvious than perhaps a romantic relationship, a divorce, a separation, a friendship ending can seem more invisible to wider networks and communities. So it can also feel intensely lonely, it's something that obviously isn't really witnessed by others unless you're able to really talk about it. And I mean there's so many directions we could go in. And I just especially want to really thank you for bringing this conversation to the world because I think it is a topic that it doesn't really get spoken about. And if you are in a place where you can have that conversation, I think so many people are like, Oh, me too. Oh my God, me too. And I have this thing and I couldn't... that's even how we got into this situation because we were having this conversation and we were like, we need to have this conversation with our people. Like, let's put it out there. Because it's so universal, it's so common. It's so uniquely painful, that bereavement and grief that we feel the intensity of it, the confusion of it. I mean, there's just so much unspoken, I think. And that's very true. This is where simply putting words around it can offer so much healing.

Rebecca: Yeah, because I think when a romantic relationship ends, in most cases, I think romantic relationships have kind of like a contract around it, as in I want monogamy or I want whatever it is

or I want to now be with other people. Whereas a friendship, it's more gray. And friendships do weave in and out. But then when there is a big contract or if it's like you overly codependent and then it's just like, this is not serving us anymore, it's less clear, it's more accepted to go through those grief processes when a romantic relationship ends, everyone knows that, even if it's a good breakup, you probably going to go through these different stages of feelings, and they're kind of expected versus a friendship. It's like you kind of feel bad being a bit bitter and angry or remorseful.

Amy: Yea

Rebecca: There is no space. Do you remember at the end of last year in the sanctuary, we did that honoring endings ritual. I literally did that ritual because I tried so hard to ...well, no, a relationship in my life ended, and it was one that was definitely best for both parties to end. But the way it ended, so much was unspoken, there was no place for the clear communication, the voicing and Oh, this is what happened to me and this is why it's not good for me and this is why it's good for you. I love you. Let's go. Like that conversation didn't happen and oh my gosh, for me, whenever that's happened in a relationship, where those friendships ended and there's no space to kind of understand what's happened. And I think that's like ghosting kind of these days is that ghosting kind of thing, which is a little bit more kind of ...you can do it with people who you are just dating, but when that happens in a friendship, when you've got this history with someone and then it just ends like, where do you put all of that?

Amy: Yeah, yeah.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Amy: And that I mean, that's another way to.... I guess you could look at it like there's so many different types of friendships and even... Not to get all Brené Brown on your ass, but as human beings, we're hardwired for connection where we're social animals, we belong together, right? And so from the beginning of time, we've always found a way to live in our little tribes. And then we hook up with someone that makes us feel a bit sexy in our pants. And we have a lovely time and we procreate and we crack on. But obviously cut to modern day times, those friendship circles are more important than ever. But the conversations we've had and having babies and you're kind of like, Where's it? Where's my village? I need more help with this and so we're seeing more and more the importance of those friendships and the importance of those relationships beyond our immediate family, friendships are our chosen family. And often the core few friendships we have in our life will be some of the longest relationships of our life, like they will pre-date our romantic lovers or possibly our children, you know, and so when you think about, the importance of those friendships and there are different types of friendships, like I'm kind of scanning my nearest and dearest, right now, and I can think of one friend in particular where the spaciousness and the distance between us is so huge, but the second one of us reaches out, we can get on the phone or face to face and pick up where you left off. And it may be years, it could be months, whatever direction life goes. But there's something about trusting that expansive, boundless holding of each

other and that kind of ever present love and support. And knowing that you drop anything to be there. And now I'm thinking back to other friendships that have felt more challenging or the ones that kind of need a bit more maintenance. And I guess it's always going to be about everyone in their different seasons of life and needing different things. And sometimes those things might overlap with some friends and sometimes you might be a bit out of kilter and out of whack, and so that too can lead to conflict and people feeling disappointed, which ultimately leads to resentment and resentment, as we know, is like relationship cancer that just gets inside and makes everything really, really nasty and toxic. And, so then when you come at it the other way and you look at friendships ending like I think the example you're talking about with the ghosting, when someone just vanishes, it's brutal, it's if we talk about sort of the withholding of love as a violent act, it's really violent and especially what makes it different to a breakup with a lover is there is no communication. There's no chance, like you're saying, even if you're breaking up with someone, you're kind of in the process and you both know you're in a process. And if you don't get that chance with a friend, with an important relationship, where do you go with that?

Rebecca: I think the lack of space to communicate what has happened, regardless of what it is, is the bit that drives you crazy because you're constantly going, Did I do something wrong? Did they? Like is it something in my life that's triggered that? Like you're scanning and you're trying to ...the brain's trying to find the completion, and when I reflect back on some friendships that have ended in my life, that I haven't had the clear clarity on because I don't love conflict, but I need clear communication in relationship. I know I need that. And I can see in instances where I haven't communicated clearly because I've been afraid to be direct because I didn't want to hurt that person. And I think I've actually caused more harm that way rather than just say, because I think so often when and I think this happens with work as well, if someone is working for a company and it's not feeling right, it's probably not feeling right for the company either. Same thing with the relationship, we may not be aware of it, but voicing that thing in a compassionate, loving way saying, this is what's happening for me. I think it clears it a little bit, otherwise things just get built up on top and top and top. And then when I look back on this particular relationship, I'm like, Is it because I was going through something in my life that was triggering them? Is that it? was my presence, just me being me hurting them? And I know that we've had that with various people in our lives and we've been on both ends of it. Like, I know when I had a miscarriage, all of a sudden, seeing pregnant people, I just couldn't do it until I could. And I know that I've had people in my life when I've been pregnant, that I've been that trigger for them. And it just brings up the grief that we're dealing with. And sometimes it's not always straightforward to be able to say, Hey, you're triggering me. But I know that I've appreciated it when someone's just said or I'm really struggling right now to be around X, I'm like, Oh my gosh, I totally get it, and so you understand it. And so then you can actually be supportive. And supportive sometimes isn't being there. It's just trusting that the friendship can withstand anything that's meant to

Amy: Yes, exactly. That's what was coming up as I was just listening to you. I'm mindful that I'm Eneagram nine, which makes me the peacemaker, which makes me the least conflict avoidant, the

most conflict avoidant person there is, so listening to all that squaring up to that conversation is such a huge thing for me and for so many others. And I'm thinking now of my partner and just how hugely different we are in that and it's a constantly evolving conversation we're having where she says to me, you know, conflict is important, we need to be able to have it out, it's constructive. Whereas for me, I find that sort of conflict destructive. I find it activating and triggering in a way that feels really unskillful and unhelpful. Whereas she's constantly trying to help me see that moving towards conflict can actually be really energizing and an important way of kind of busting through into a new place, into a new realm. And I think that is true of friendships. And what I was hearing when you were just speaking then, it was sort of like, not only do we have all these tools for the conversations we need to be having without romantic partners, but it's almost like those rules or those tools don't apply to our friendships when it's so screamingly obvious that they should. But because the landscape's a little bit different because we have so many different types of friendships, it's almost like, I don't know, I don't know what that is. Something about not feeling... kind of let things slide, let things go. Maybe that's their shit. Maybe it's mine. But again, it's about really knowing the soil that your friendship is rooted in and how much it can withstand. And I think that's the pain of it, too. I'm thinking that probably the most painful breakup in my life is with a friend and interestingly, we did so much work, we did so much. We went to therapy

Rebecca: Oh you did a lot of work, if I were to do a Murial quote right now, cause you've really impressed Amy, you've really impressed me. Go to your Chambers. What a coincidence. No, but Amy went to therapy with a friend. I'm impressed. I've never done that.

Amy: And it's not even just a lesbian thing. Like she was a hetero so.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Amy: I know us Lesbians get kind of all wordy, love a bit of therapy, but yeah, we went to therapy in order to try and save our friendship to really try to work through what was going on for us and there's something so... Like whether you go to therapy or whatever it is or it could even just be having that conversation that you were just talking about. Whatever it is, when you kind of shift something in yourself and show a willingness to continue to move towards and move through something, it feels like you're walking towards the fire, right? for me anyway, again, not only is it conflict, but it's sort of coming up against all of this really excruciating...you have to be really ready to kind of lose a few layers of skin, right? Because it's just raw and uncomfortable and excruciating. And you have to be willing to sit in that and stay in that. I don't know there's so many things I can say about it, but I think ultimately jumping forward to the completion of that therapy, we actually were able to agree that our relationship was over. And so it was like a divorce or a separation

Rebecca: Like conscious uncoupling.

Amy: Totally, totally.

Rebecca: That feels so ...I'm even hearing that and I'm like, the finality of that feels so brutal.

Amy: Because it's also like what now?

Rebecca: We're not best friends anymore, or what does that mean? I think is so hard as well because it's with friends, I wonder how much of it is the tribe mentality, because then it's like I know with a divorce, it's like you going with that partner or that partner type thing and it doesn't have to be a divorce, a relationship ending, not everyone's married these days, you know what I mean? But with a friendship, it's like who goes with who and what does that even mean into friendship? Like, if you see them out, do you just not acknowledge them?

Amy: Exactly, especially if you've got shared friends, the shared friends are like the children of the divorce, who gets who who's going to get invited to the barbecue? But I think there's something in what you were saying about that tribe mentality. It's something also about acknowledging how triggering this is for us. I think especially as women, especially as those who grew up as girls, as teenage girls. I think there are so many of us who have that story from adolescence, where we were kicked out of the group

Rebecca: You had that experience.

Amy: Totally.

Rebecca: I think that's the most... That bullying in primary school for me is the most traumatic thing.

Amy: Yeah, mine was more high school and I feel like as a mum now of a girl child, it is the stage of life that I'm most terrified of because it's where all my baggage is. It's oh my un-process shit when I'm already terrified for her to be a teenager.

Rebecca: But what about the re parenting stuff?

Amy: Totally.

Rebecca: Do you get to relive it? Oh, my God

Amy: Yeah, exactly. I mean, there's so much work to do there. But the point is, when you're going through any kind of conflict with a friend, with a girlfriend in particular, I think there's so many of us with that story, of that feeling of being kicked out of the group. And so therefore, we may swallow our discomfort, We may not say that thing. We're going to hold onto that thing. We're going to make ourselves small. It's like tall poppy syndrome. I'm going to just contort myself. Into a pretzel so I can stay in this friendship and just keep the peace, but also, life's too short. Come on.

Rebecca: And do you think that with your friendship that ended that you went to couples therapy with. Because I obviously know that friendship began during a very intense period of your life like you were changing so much as a person as well. Going through so much, and so it was like that intensity. It was definitely that relationship was so great for you in many ways, but it was in an intense time. And when I look at, like, some of the friendships that have kind of ended, but they have not been as brutal ending, it's not really been a thing that's been said out loud. Like, we didn't consciously uncouple, when I look back, I'm like, they all started with an intensity and it was a passionate love affair almost. And then it couldn't sustain. And whereas when I look at all the friendships that have withstood decades of my life and have enough nourishment in them, I'm thinking of my friendship with my friend Holly, we go through these periods where we just don't even talk, and then all of a sudden it's like, Hey. And it's, like you said, it's like you pick right back up and nothing's ever changed. There's no time in-between with the ones where they've been a little bit more volatile and there has been more of an ending whether it's spoken or not, they're the ones that came in like guns blazing, and you're like, I'm in love.

Amy: Yes. So what is that though? I feel like I'm quite a few years on now from that particular friendship ending and what I can see with more distance between then and now. And what I hear also and what you're saying they are seasons, right? Like people come into your life for a stage or a season and then they might cycle away again and then they might come back again or they might not, and I feel with my friend in that circumstance, we came into each other's lives like red hot, went through this really intensive sort of two or three year period where we both changed enormously. But so much of my life sort of fell away. It was a real time where I kind of felt like my whole life was under one of those really intense, high pressure water hoses. And it was just like, and everything was being blasted away. So all that could remain, was what was true and what was real, and interestingly, she was an incredible support. And her friendship through that time was the most loving presence I had in a time that was incredibly dark and incredibly challenging. And I really feel like she sat with me through some of the darkest nights. It's actually really beautiful to reflect on. And I'm thinking we shared so much beauty in the grief and the sorrow and the realness that we kind of witnessed for each other, and when things got to a point where, I do think it was that we ultimately triggered each other, whatever those seasons of our relationship had continued to evolve. And the sort of changing conditions of both of our lives continued to evolve. And it got to a point where for whatever reason and this might remain a mystery to me until I die, maybe it's not mine to know, but really, it's like our friendship had served its purpose, and we've then fallen into a place where we were so out of step with each other, and yet we were both so confused by that. And I think that's why we were both so willing to do the work and to show up and to keep trying to figure it out and to keep trying. And the therapy wasn't big and violent and fiery and swears like we were both doing the work to listen as deeply as we could and to really try and understand and to really take that in and reflect. And I am doing that and is that true for me? And ultimately we just ended up presenting to each other with as much tenderness and forgiveness as possible, just a completely different truth. And that made our friendship not compatible with life.

Rebecca: Wow. It's so interesting because when I reflect back on that friendship and I'm obviously running it through the kind of filter of other intense friendships that I've had that have had the endings. And I think that is what makes it so hard sometimes when there's been so much beauty and so much nourishment and so much loyalty and you're there for each other and you've created things or whatever it is, I think that makes it so hard to let it go because you're like, But I know what it was and what we can be. But then also it makes me think like, you know, there is that, the concept of soulmates and I believe soulmates are not just romantic partners, I think that they are relationships that they're agreements that we make at a soul level and hopefully the ones that we meet, we're like, I hope you're here with me for the whole journey. But then sometimes they're actually not meant to be, and yet they hold a key that had they not been there for you, something would not have been unlocked. I'm thinking about your friendship with the person you're talking about. And I'm like, Oh, I actually feel such tenderness towards that person because I can see how they showed up for you at a time when I wasn't able to. And they could, you know.

Amy: Mm hmm. Totally. Totally. And. And there's there's a real medicine in that in terms of if we're able to sort of zoom out and let go and release that sense of, we know we have to control and micromanage and force and i we can let go and release a friendship with that trust of seasons and stages and allowing these people to come and go in and out of our lives, it's like anything I mean, it's so much of what you talk about and write about and teach and it's in that sort of holy surrender of I'm not going to assume I know what's best, and feel like when I was in therapy with that friend, we were doing the couples therapy thing. And just to clarify, like, she wasn't in any way a romantic relationship, but in that friendship counseling, we were both doing it trying to salvage the relationship because we couldn't possibly believe that we weren't lifelong friends or that we weren't soulmates here meant to do this work together. Like that's it's what you were just saying, that you kind of had to allow that disbelief to be there, to be like this makes no fucking sense. I love and adore this person and all these reasons and all these things, and yet it got to a point where our relationship wasn't able to support the other in the way they needed. And for whatever reason it felt true for me that I don't feel she was able to really see me because for whatever reason she was blinkered with other conditions or with other things in the direction of life where she was going. And maybe that was true for me too, and regardless, we were no longer aligned and so we prayerfully and very tenderly released each other from that bind of constantly trying to figure it .

Rebecca: Which is exhausting.

Amy: Exhausting, it's just like flogging a dead horse like, and yeah, even as I'm saying this, I'm thinking through different relationship landscapes of my life where I allow myself a bit less of a tighter grip on that and where can I sort of let go and trust where the conversations that I need. to have and I have the energy and I trust. Do I trust the landscape of that friendship? And I feel like I'm in a really bless place at the moment where I look at us like besties for 20 years on the other side of the world guardians to each other's babies and and yet we still find a way to lean in and trust our friendship because we have laid the groundwork and we show up for each other when it matters.

And again, if there are relationships or friendships in our lives where, you know, the garden needs a bit of watering or a bit of nurturing, that's really beautiful information, and we can to ourselves tend to those. I want to circle back to something you said about stepping back and the letting go of a friendship when you can feel that something is bubbling under the surface. And what I heard when you said that actually was how when you're on the other end of that and you feel someone stepping back or letting go, how it can feel really isolating or it can feel quite painful. And yet when you're on the other side of that, the way that you said it and what I heard was actually just how loving that can be and how in that surrender and that stepping back, it can be the most loving thing available, you know? Does that make sense?

Rebecca: Yeah, totally, and you are talking about the person who is stepping back or both?

Amy: Yeah, I guess both, I guess the missing piece is always going to be the communication, because you could say someone stepping back is whoever the ghosting person who's ghosted and they fucked off and you're like, Hang on, what? Because there hasn't been any communication. But I guess what we're fleshing out here is sort of how simple it can be to offer that kind of clarity to someone and saying whatever's going on, What is going on? I'm triggered by whatever's going on for you right now. I'm going to take some space. I love you and I'm just going to be over here for a while or, like, I don't know, I think it's Daniel Laporte who's got that excellent saying that's like hot, wide open, big fuck offense. You know you can still really lovingly hold space for someone and not have them in your life. That has to be okay, that's the and that's really what got me through that ending of that relationship. I still put that friend into my meditation practice in order to wish her well, in order to offer my gratitude for what we had and it's literally been years we're not in each other's life and I can wish her well. So I mean I say that knowing obviously time heals and it's been years and it's very different when you were in the intense kind of confusion and uncertainty for you. I'm thinking now of your friend where things kind of went very quiet very quickly, and that confusion and the uncertainty it's interesting how it sends us straight into that death spiral of what have I done? I've done something. Did I do this? Is that like a different place for you?

Rebecca: Yea, because I'm a four on the Enneagram. And so two things that happened with the four is authenticity is paramount. Like it's more important than most things, and so being able to speak clearly, even if it is hard, like just being able to actually know what happened is, I think, really important for the default we go into. I've done something wrong, what have I done wrong? And so you're scanning so you can try and fix it or understand it or whatever.

Amy: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Rebecca: But that's such a four thing. So how does it show up for you?

Amy: I guess very similarly. And I'm wondering too, I don't think there's any Enneagram type that doesn't experience that.

Rebecca: Yeah.

Amy: And it is just a really shared human experience of trying to make sense of something that feels really confusing. And I'm thinking now there was a time... I don't know how I feel about this, but I'm going to offer it because I want to hear what you think about it. I was going through a really messy separation from a romantic relationship that had been huge and important, and it was a real deep love. And as life happens, our relationship and our romantic capacity, I guess our compatibility had changed as we had changed. And it got to a point where it was sort of, blindingly obvious to anyone else that our relationship was sort of ending or had ended. And, yet both her and I were like really, really, really unable to let go of that or to accept that. And I remember at the time I was in my kind of own individual therapy and the person I was speaking to at the time made a real point to me where she said, it's not unusual for women in same sex relationships to find yourself in this exact position, because what you have to remember is that the women are hard wired to protect the home. I say this with a bit of like, Oh, I don't really know how I think about that, and there's a thread in that that felt so deeply true and still feels so deeply true. And the only reason I bring it up is because I feel like it also applies to female friendships. And obviously I've got a different insight on that because I am in romantic relationships with women and I have really important friendships with women. But I think it's true for both that if we go back to the caveman analogy times, the women are at home with the babies protecting the home, we're hardwired to protect that place of belonging. And so when it then falls to one of us to choose to leave or to choose to burn that to the ground or to choose to dismantle the entire thing. It goes against every grain in our body.

Rebecca: That makes so much sense.

Amy: I think it's related.

Rebecca: Yeah. And I relate to what you're saying as you know, with me, with the romantic relationships, particularly one like I would stay in there as long as I possibly could because I just didn't want to give up on what we built. And I'm pretty sure I know which romantic relationship you're talking about, and I think you're so right. Like, I don't think it's a clear cut kind of thing, but with that relationship, that started as a friendship.

Amy: Exactly it feels true for me across all my relationships, regardless of whether they're romantic or sexual or friendships, that there is equality in humans, and I think particularly in women where we are hardwired to keep shit together and I think that sometimes the most radically loving thing we can do is blow shit up or lovingly release things. It's that Kali fucking energy, ready to cut through the delusion and behead some bullshit because we're not really living. Are you really showing up? What's really fucking important? Like, are you awake in your life? And you can run that through all your relationships, whether they're romantic or friendships and are you really showing up? Are you really allowing yourself to be seen? Are you really holding space for that person? Do you really? How invested are you? And it's also really okay to not be that invested for

whatever reason and to make that clear, like, cool my energy is over here for a while and I wish you well.

Rebecca: They can't show up for me right now, which is fine. It's kind of reminding me of when Craig, my husband and I within the first year of marriage and I think something does happen. It doesn't just happen with marriage, I'm sure, but for us, there was something that happened in signing a marriage contract, tribes coming together and all of that, where it was almost like we thought everything was amazing in our relationship. And then all of a sudden, almost overnight, it's like, oh, here is the work of the family baggage, you know? And we got to this point, I had this broken foot. you remember at the time?

Amy: You've had so many broken feet.

Rebecca: Craig and I discovered a type of therapy called Imago therapy. And one of the principles is conflict equals growth, and obviously conflict is like not physical, but conflict equals growth. ahhh and so both parties need to kind of agree to it. And it's not just like yelling matches necessarily, some relationships are a bit more volatile. I know mine is a bit more volatile than my parents, my dad's a nine on the Enneagram, mum's a seven so maybe that's it, whereas Craig and I are four and three and he often says to me do not mistake my clarity for anger. So he's and Aries like he kind of blasts through a little bit more and I've learned to do that more. I do have Aries Moon too, so I have some fire in me. But when we both committed to this first of all, we created a safe container where we could face conflict. And I think that's a thing that perhaps a romantic relationship can do more clearly than a friendship, because this is a safe place. We are committed to each other. Now let's bring up what the conflict is, because together, perhaps through facing this conflict, we can transmute it and go on to the next phase. And I look at my relationship with Craig and it's definitely not all rosy all the time, but it's because we face the conflict. I think that we keep on, we've had, I reckon, four relationships already. It's like we're completely different people and I think that is because of the facing of the conflict and being both of us coming into it but in that safe container.

Amy: Yes. So how can we apply that to friendships, even just the idea of applying that to friendships feels so radical and expansive and essential. Right?

Rebecca: Right.

Amy: Like we're basically now kind of just getting deep into human relationships. The whole point of this episode, when friendships end, it doesn't get spoken about. It's incredibly confusing. There's so much silence, bereavement with no space for it to go anywhere. And I guess trusting that the intention and the purpose of this episode was simply to bring it up into the air or like bring it out into the world through putting words around it and kind of riffing on our stories and experiences of it. But also, I guess where I'm at now, having had the conversation we've just had, is I'm reflecting less on the friendships that have ended and I'm reflecting more on the friendships I

have and what are the signs for me around what spaces feel safe and nourishing and nurturing for me. And it is the friendships when I can show up and be real and be seen and talk about my prolapse and my asshole and whatever else I need to talk about that day and the friendships when I can show up and hold space knowing that it's a place where both people are invested. That's what it is. Both people are invested, both people are invested. And there may be those cycles in those rhythms where you're a bit off kilter. It's kind of overlapping merry go rounds where you're kind of maybe riding the same direction or you kind of high five each other as you go past or but like with you and Holly, like you're both invested in the friendship. You have that deep trust that is the soil, that is the landscape. And then there's seasons upon that where you can physically meet or you can speak on the phone or you can, you know, tend to friendship in that way. And I guess when it's kind of those underlying, prickly, uncomfortable friendships where that's the pain I think of when you can feel that both people aren't sort of tipping in or chipping in. And then therefore it feels painful, it feels violent, especially when not only someone isn't contributing, but they're withholding, right? And so, yeah, I don't know, maybe that's a whole other conversation of how can we support ourselves and each other through that kind of silent bereavement. You mentioned you did your endings ritual. How did that heal or shift things for you?

Rebecca: Well, I think obviously there's different layers to this because I was kind of also creating it for other people because I started talking a little bit about that. I was going through something which was the ending of a friendship. And it's been really hard for me. And I was blown away by so many people who commented Oh my gosh, me too, how do I do this? It'd be great to have a ritual for it or whatever, right? And so I and you were part of it as well. We created the Honoring Endings ritual and it was kind of like a funeral, really, out in nature and it was just working with the elements, just like any kind of ceremony does, where you're just honoring what the friendship was and actually just kind of holding space for your grief, holding space for your anger, holding space for what has been unspoken. And so, you know, you kind of write down anything that you need to get off your chest, what has been unspoken, because I think you do that a little bit. When someone passes, you know, you can have a conversation with their spirit. I think a lot of people do that or have a conversation with a friend about what was left unsaid, you know? And so, yea that's, that's why we created that, and there was a playlist and everything. So sometimes as well, when there is an ending in my life that is not quite being acknowledged I just put on the playlist and it's filled with those songs. Because I think this is what happens when friendships the grief and the gratitude because they're not so far apart, even though they are. And so because it's the combination of the feelings that I think make it so hard to deal with because it's not just one thing, it's those combination feelings. I think they're the ones that are hardest to deal with. And I think actually that is, like birth is like this, death is like this. Beginnings are like this, endings are like this, where it's actually two feelings being present at the same time totally tends to be there when we're truly living, and I don't think we have a way to deal with that.

Amy: Yes. I hear you. I hear you. It's that moment when you're holding the paradox. It's like you are straddling the bull's eye of truth. I had a teacher that kind of said that once. It's almost like if you're

not holding one without the other, you're not seeing the truth. There's something so holy and powerful about truly straddling that paradox. It's seeing like a cross on the earth and it's like you've got one foot here and one foot here. Like you are holding life in its most rich and raw and powerful and that's huge. No wonder we need ritual, No wonder we need ceremony, like we need our people around us in that time. That's what a wedding is. That's what a funeral is. That's what any kind of ritual is. Right? We are witnessing the threshold of, this is how it was, this is how it is. This is here I am somewhere in the middle holding the enormity of these huge things. You can hold both. You can hold it all. It can all be true at the same time if we allow it.

Rebecca: Wow that's like Marion Woodman saying, you know, the holding the extremes of the opposite polarity but it's also reminding me of what you said before about that friendship where it was your truth and her truth. Totally both. Who's to say what is the truth? Well, there is no truth.

Amy: Totally.

Rebecca: Both are true. Well wow.

Amy: Huge.

Rebecca: And then that's the hard bit of the endings, because you're like. But. But. But. Why can't things go back to...

Amy: Life changes, seasons life.

Rebecca: I know that we wanted to have this conversation and it's not like an episode to be like, here's the three steps to a friendship.

Amy: Here we are the experts on ending friendships. By the way, Rebecca, I've got something I've been meaning to say to you... I'm joking, joking. I'm saying, this is an episode.

Rebecca: We're ending?

Amy: That would be an interesting episode, wouldn't it? No, darling, I'm not. I'm not ending anything with you.

Rebecca: We're only just beginning.

Amy: Oh, stop. But it's true. There's so many more directions this conversation could go in, and it does feel like we've literally just sort of taken the lid off it and brought it forth. And neither of us are here pretending to be friendship or relationship experts. We're just here being well, shit, let's just lay it all out. This is hard. Let's try and put some words around it. And we've done that for an hour and I'm feeling all inside out. How are you feeling?

Rebecca: Me too, me too.

Amy: I'm feeling like warm and fuzzy and alive and there's power and energy I can really trust. Like, how important this conversation is being. I feel it's definitely shifted stuff for me and I kind of got a bit of a vulnerability wobble. Like I want to go get into a big, cozy dooner.

Rebecca: Lets and watch a movie even if we are on the other side of the world, would do that right now.

Amy: Yeah. Thank you for letting me do it with you.

Rebecca: Thank you.

Amy: Love you.

Rebecca: Soul inquiry is a practice where we enter into a direct dialog with our wise inner self. I like to write my answers out as I find I receive my guidance a little more clearly that way when it's physically in front of me. But feel free to just ask from the center of your heart and hold it in your heart or speak it out loud whatever feels good for you. So today's soul inquiry prompts have you experience a friendship ending before? And then if so, is there anything that you're being called to do to honor the ending of that friendship today? Is there anything that you're being called to do to honor the ending of that friendship today? And now it's time to commit to a baby step, a grounded action. So writing down what is a baby step you can take in that direction to integrate it into your life today? What's a baby step? Something you can do that so easy to really act on. What's come through for you today? It's been such a big episode, a beautiful episode. Let's share a deep breath together as we close this sacred space that we've stepped into today. And it's such a big, energetic container we have been sifting through today in this conversation. I'm so grateful for you being here. If you'd like to keep returning to yourself and returning here with me, then hit subscribe. If you'd like the show notes or the transcript from today's episode, or to sign up to receive each new episode directly to your inbox, then head over to Rebecca Campbell. Me forward slash podcast. And yeah, if this episode has spoken to you or you can feel or know someone in your life, a friend who is going through a friendship ending or maybe they've experienced one before, then feel free to send it on to them. The best decision I ever made was showing up to a regular daily spiritual practice. If you're looking to commit to explore, expand or deepen your own spiritual practice, you might like to check out the Free Discover your Spiritual Practice program. When you sign up for Discover your Spiritual Practice, you'll receive seven days of free guided practice. So head over to Rebecca Campbell.me forward slash practice to get started.