



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Shayne and Sheila Pitcock: A Story of Redemption, Restoration, and Purpose, Part 2

Guest(s): Shayne and Sheila Pitcock

Air Date: July 31, 2026

- Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.
- Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. If you were with us last time, you heard the really exciting and just tender... even somewhat heartbreaking story of the marriage of Shayne and Sheila Pitcock. They are the co-founders of the ministry called Journey2Unity, but it wasn't always that way for them. I mean, the journey to unity was a lot of narcissism, a lot of emotional abuse, and they shared very, very candidly about that in part one of this conversation, which we have up at JDFI.org. Shayne and Sheila are back now to tell us how God has been, well, how he restored their marriage, but then how he's been helping them help other couples live through heartbreak and disconnection and emotional distance that a lot of couples are experiencing. Shayne and Sheila Pitcock, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.
- Sheila Pitcock: Thank you for having us again.
- Shayne Pitcock: Thanks, Roger. We appreciate it.
- Roger Marsh: Part one of the program, Sheila grew up in a very legalistic family and really felt just kind of shackled by, it sounds like it was a Christian faith, but it was super hyper-legalistic that made you feel the way you did kind of inadequate, especially in your marriage with Shayne. And then Shayne came in as a big military guy and said, well, my family was kind of... not perfect when I was growing up, but as long as Sheila's doing everything I want, we're good. And I hate to say it, but that's probably 90% of marriage problems, right? Where the guy says, what? And the woman's saying, we need to talk. And Shayne, you were just describing, as Sheila was talking about in our previous episode, Dr. Henry Cloud's boundaries solution of saying, hey, look, it's not a brick wall, it's a fence, and we're going to put those up, and God's going to clean up the emotional trash that gets thrown over the fence. And then you come along and say, wait a minute, I'm not used to these boundaries being here. I'm not used to these fences that are keeping me from Sheila. I have to ask you, though, I was thinking about this during our last conversation. Was there ever a point where you said, okay, there's got to be a gate here somewhere? Was there that big aha

moment for you where you realized, hey, Sheila's just not hiding behind an emotional boundary fence, but there really is a way to her heart. I just have to find the handle and turn the lock.

Shayne Pitcock: In all honesty, I learned that there were things that I could do that Sheila would open the gate. And in doing so, when I learned those things of what she would open the gate for and allow me into her heart, at first was manipulating the situation to try to get that opportunity. She realized that that needed to be a stronger boundary. And so she would set stronger boundaries that, that wouldn't happen again. In all honesty, we got to a point where we couldn't work out our differences while we were in the same location. So we went through a 12, 14-month separation just to find personal healing that we each could have, that we needed healing because our marriage... had developed in a very dysfunctional, abusive way. As long as we were trying to do the marriage and find personal healing, it wasn't working. So we had to separate to find our own personal healing first before we could come back and try to learn how to heal the marriage.

Roger Marsh: Sheila, who initiated that, the separations? Was it mutually decided upon or was it something where you said, look, I just, you need to leave for a... period because we're not getting anywhere.

Sheila Pitcock: I believe it was a combination of the two. We both knew it was unhealthy. We both knew we needed some space. But things came to a head in a way that I asked that he leave. And he didn't argue with me. He actually did. It was explosive. But that was the beginning. I think that was really the beginning of true healing for both of us. And for that first year, we really didn't have much communication between us at all. We were really focused on our individual healing. And by the grace of God, somehow we knew that we weren't living single. We were still fighting for the marriage, even though we weren't in, in relationship really at the time we weren't communicating our we were really allowing God to do heart surgery and this that was the season where I really got so much healing and perspective on how God saw me as his daughter as a woman um learning to implement those boundaries so when I would get an email that was full of a lot of stuff that I used to read them and think I had to respond to everything. And my mentor helped me see, no, you actually don't even have to read it. So there was a lot of that personal growth for me that helped me become who I am today by walking through. Yeah, it was hard. Yeah. Do I wish that I could have learned it a different way? Absolutely. But would I trade it? Probably not because of who it made me.

Roger Marsh: Well, Shayne, how about you? Were you going through a similar season where you said, hey, these boundaries aren't so bad? I mean, the ones she's setting up and maybe I need a few for myself too?

Shayne Pitcock: No, quite honestly, I had to learn to understand God's love because I truly did not fully appreciate His love. I had an experience of that where he changed my heart and gave me a promise for our future. But I never held on to that in the

moment. I didn't know what that meant. So I had to learn my own personal identity as well because I was not loved growing up. I was not appreciated and valued growing up. And I looked to Sheila for all of that. And we got to a point where our broken marriage was really the result of... of us being broken in different ways and we had to figure out what was that what was that identity that God really wanted to impart in us apart from the marriage because we were only relating to each other by virtue of the marriage and we had to learn what it meant to be independent people so that we could learn to be interdependent when we came back in there.

Roger Marsh: So now we're going to cut through a lot of stuff. And if you want to learn more about Journey2Unity and Shayne and Sheila's story, go to their website, which is linked up at drjamesdobson.org. But there's a reconciliation part because obviously you're sitting here smiling and happy and married and helping other couples too. When was the aha moment when you knew, okay, it's time for us. We're going to be in the same house again. I think we're both to the point where there's enough healing that's happened individually to where we can go ahead now and start putting the marriage back together. What was that moment like?

Shayne Pitcock: It just became a progress. It became a stepwise proof that I could be a different person with her and with the kids and to show love that I was learning for myself. And we did get back together and we tried to bring the marriage together. But unfortunately, we realized we were still relating according to the old dance. And we were good people independently. We didn't know how to be married now. And we didn't know how to be married different from the way it was originally developed. So that we got back together for about a year and realized there's still a lot of things that we can't do together yet. And we separated one more time.

Roger Marsh: Wow.

Shayne Pitcock: For another year for the purpose of rebuilding the marriage. And so it was a long drawn out process. Mostly I would. I'll admit that I had to learn all of this and really understand the fullness of empathy, not just towards Sheila, but towards our kids as well.

Roger Marsh: Sheila, who was speaking into your life, each of you individually, but then as a couple at that point, was there a group of people or counselors or who was it that was really getting your attention with this?

Sheila Pitcock: Yes, to all the above. I was volunteering at our church. I was actually leading a study helping women just understand their identity in Christ because I learned I wasn't the only one that had been made up that way. And so I had my oversight for that role became a mentor to me, and she really helped me a lot. I had Pastors and the Pastor's wives pouring into me and the kids. The kids were in youth group at church, and some of the men, the leaders from that would pick up my son and take him out to ice cream and really spoke life and encouraged

him as the only boy. And so that meant everything to me to know that he was getting that. And then there were periods of counseling throughout that as well. And during that second separation, Shayne and I, we were trying to date. We were trying to learn, okay, so who are you now? And how can we understand things differently when they look the same? And so we were in counseling together at that point. And all of that healing process started with a challenge from the counselor for us to pray together. And that felt so vulnerable and so... hard just to pray together. And so he said, you know, if you can't just pray authentic, you know, if you just can't pray vulnerably, then choose a scripture and pray that over each other. And so we sat down to pray together with that being the intention and the Lord just showed up and we ended up just, our hearts just opened and we prayed together at that time in a very authentic and transparent way. And that was a huge healing point that I think was a turning point for us as well.

Roger Marsh: Shayne, what was it like for you knowing that you guys were at this point now where there's personal healing, there's healing as a couple, and now you don't have to be that kind of manipulative, oh, I'm going to find out where the gate is and I'll say all the right things and that type of stuff. It was really authentic. It was God was directing you now. What was it like for you having never experienced that before? That became a level of freedom that I don't know that

Shayne Pitcock: I can really put words to Roger because it's a spiritual walk that changed everything. I mean, I was getting knowledge right and left. I was reading books all over the place. I was gaining a lot of head knowledge, but I really didn't understand the heart change until I truly embraced the Holy Spirit to enlighten me of not just making it knowledge, but making it wisdom in my heart, in the difference of what it meant to really understand it and receive God's love fully into my heart. And there was many different ways in which God had basically created a transfusion of removing the anger and... pouring His love in behind it in such a way that it changed me from that point forward. It was really just a matter of walking along with the Holy Spirit and getting that guidance as I would surrender and I would receive insight of, here's what I missed. Oh, here's a way that I need to be more empathetic, or here's a way I need to understand her heart again. Or give her an opportunity to speak into my life. That was hard. Because a lot of times, people who spoke toward me, I would say, weren't really pouring into me for encouragement. And I had to get to a place of allowing Sheila to encourage me. Because that was a real block within my heart that was hard for me to accept.

Roger Marsh: Yeah, that encouragement as opposed to just doing things, that move from knowledge to wisdom is so very, very important. Okay, so now let's fast forward to when Journey2Unity got started. You guys were just happy to be married again, right? Back together in that kind of relationship. I wouldn't anticipate that you would be saying, whew, now that we've been through all of that very, very difficult work and we're emotionally kind of worn out, but we're... being renewed, let's start a ministry. How did Journey2Unity come about? I'm sure it

wasn't that pedantic and obvious, but talk about how the Lord kind of led this ministry to come to fruition.

Sheila Pitcock:

Well, there were a few years gap in there from that healing process and then walking in that for a few years before the Lord opened the door for Journey2Unity. But during that whole process, when things were so heavy and so difficult, Shayne and I were both individually not knowing each other, but we were both praying, Lord, please don't let this be just for us. If this is just for me, God, this is too hard. It has to help somebody else too. And so Journey2Unity is actually, I believe, an answer to that cry from our hearts that if He can restore our mess, He can fix pretty much anything if we allow Him to. And so Journey2Unity was born out of a desire to take all of that pain and all of what God taught us and shorten the process for others so they don't have to go through two separations and 13 years of dysfunction. They can do this in a shorter timeframe if they have the tools and somebody that kind of gets where they've been and can point them to the Lord. And everybody's journey is going to look different. This is not a cookie cutter thing. And I like to be cautious with that because our story has this beautiful restoration of us together in our marriage. Not everybody's story ends that way, yet everybody's individual walk with the Lord... that's where we have control. What does my life with the Lord look like, regardless of what somebody else chooses, regardless of where their relationship lands? God is a God of redemption.

Roger Marsh:

Amen. I love the fact when you go to the website that you see testimonies, you hear from people who are saying, oh my goodness, no marriage is too far gone. That's what they say, and that's what really happened with us, because we figured we were just completely out to lunch when it came to something like this. But talk about the cultural impact that that secularism is having on faith-based marriages. I'm sure there are a lot of Christians who are saying, wait, we're doing everything right and we're still getting attacked. We're still under this type of pressure. How do you help them to understand that there are forces apart from you and your spouse that don't want your marriage to succeed? They don't want to be trash.

Sheila Pitcock:

I'm so glad you asked that. No restoration is complete until you deal with the spiritual component. And we do have an enemy. But it's not each other. But so many times, that's where we point the finger because that's all we know. And realizing John 10:10 is such a beautiful scripture because Jesus tells us what the enemy's tactics are, and then He tells us why He's here. He says, the enemy has come to steal, kill, and destroy. That's exactly what he wants to do. And Jesus says, but I have come to give you life and life abundant. So, wow, what a contrast. So we have to realize that we do have an enemy, but Jesus is the antidote. And so when we work with couples, we introduce that concept. And sometimes it's a new concept, and we walk them through that. Never in a condemnation, never in a judgmental beat you over the head. We've had couples that one of them will say, I'm not really even sure where I'm at in this whole Christian realm, yet the principles of God are universal. When we can talk about God's principles and then they can allow the Lord to show them how that

applies in their situation, that's a beautiful little dance right there. We have tools. We have things that the Lord taught us that we introduce how to have these conversations. We're trained as marriage mediators for restoration. Typically, when we hear mediation, we think divorce. Well, those same techniques can be used to actually pull you back together.

Roger Marsh: Interesting.

Sheila Pitcock: That's part of what we do as well. But the spiritual component in that, until we realize that we have an enemy that really wants to kill everything good in our life, and that starts with our marriages and our families and dividing and pulling us apart, yet we have a God who has crushed the enemy's head...

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Sheila Pitcock: that says, I have come to give you life and life abundant.

Roger Marsh: I love that.

Sheila Pitcock: And that's what we love to do, is help couples find that abundant life on the other side of what the enemy wants to do to kill and destroy.

Roger Marsh: Shayne and Sheila, what do you say to the person who might be listening to our conversation right now or watching it on our YouTube channel? And they're saying, okay, well, this is great, but my spouse isn't cooperative, or I think my spouse is the problem, which I'm sure you get that a lot, right? But if they feel like they're the only ones fighting for the marriage right now, what word of encouragement do you have for that person who thinks they're fighting a solo fight?

Sheila Pitcock: I will answer from my perspective.

Shayne Pitcock: A lot of times, it is the woman who feels that way. And so, yes, I defer to Sheila for that response.

Sheila Pitcock: Yes, I felt that way for years. And what I earned in this whole process, God actually convicted me, and I wasn't happy about it, but He helped me to see that my enabling... my sugarcoating, my not confronting in a loving way had actually perpetuated some of the dysfunction, prolonged the healing in our marriage. And so when I have an opportunity, when a woman says, hey, my husband's not willing, I'm like, great, let's you and I talk. So then I help her understand what God is saying to her. What is her identity? Are you using boundaries? Is that a foreign concept to you? Those types of things. What can you do? Because I know for me, I felt powerless, and I felt trapped, and I felt like I can't do anything. If he's not willing, then I'm just stuck, and this is my life forever. And the Lord actually showed me, no, that's not true. There's a lot of power. Women, God wired us with the ability to give life through our words. And so there's a lot of things that we can do that can make a difference. Shayne

mentioned that when I started implementing boundaries is when he had the realization that, okay, what I've been doing before isn't working. I've got to figure out what God is saying and how do I do this different. There's a lot of that that can start with the one person who's willing at the time, and then the power of our prayers for each other in marriage are huge. Because if we're one in spirit, as God says that we are, then we have a unique authority to pray for our spouse that nobody else has. And so I think that power of prayer, maybe they'll come on board, maybe they won't, but what is God growing in you as an individual?

Shayne Pitcock: But there's another aspect of Sheila's testimony as well. When she got to a point where she was so angry with me and basically yelling at God saying, I want out of this marriage.

Sheila Pitcock: Yeah, that's true. In my pain, I was very validated in telling God that I hated my husband. I wanted out. Please let me out of here. And his answer to me was, well, I love him. It made me mad. It wasn't what I wanted to hear.

Roger Marsh: Wow, I'll bet.

Sheila Pitcock: Yet, I was at this place with the Lord that I knew it was his truth. I'd heard all my life, Jesus loves you, right? Well, okay, he loves everybody. So I'm doing this through my head, and I knew it was his truth, and I had a choice in that moment. I could argue with God and try to convince him of my reality, or I could figure out where I was out of alignment with his reality. And I started praying, God, if you love him, then there's something lovable that I'm not seeing, and I need you to help me see him the way you see him.

Roger Marsh: That's powerful when you hear those words because you're looking for God to give you a hug and say, there, there, Sheila. It's okay. I totally understand. If you need to leave, you just leave because he's a jerk. And instead, God says, I love your husband too. And you're like, oh, oh, okay, well. Yeah, I guess that makes sense. Shayne, talk about what the journey2unity.com website has for our listeners and our viewers.

Shayne Pitcock: The biggest thing that we want them to know is that there's hope without judgment. Because the most impactful story to me in the Bible is when they brought the woman caught in adultery and were going to stone her. And Jesus knelt down and said, those of you without sin cast the first stone.

Roger Marsh: Amen.

Shayne Pitcock: We did not get the best healing when it was an environment of judgment. And so we want them to have hope without judgment because I've got no stones to throw. I've probably done it. I've probably lived it. I've probably been on the other side of whatever it is they want to present as the problem. But in reality, it's really a matter of my heart was not in alignment with God's truth. So, let's understand what is your belief behind your behavior. And we want them to

understand that that's where we do the work, is we get really at the deepest level of that iceberg of their heart in such a way that we can, God actually does the work. He thaws it out and reveals what needs to be healed, and we facilitate that to make that happen. So, really, the nutshell is... we hope they find the hope that we got in our relationship and that there is a way out of wherever they're at, with no judgment.

Roger Marsh: I love that. Do you guys do seminars? Do you do Zoom calls? What other resources do you offer through Journey2Unity?

Shayne Pitcock: At this point, our coaching offerings are either personal coaching with me or with Sheila. So the women with the women and the guys with me. And then we do couples coaching as well. So we're pretty much facilitating just how to coach them into what they want to become and what they want to achieve for their marriage. And it is done virtually, mostly at this time.

Sheila Pitcock: We do have an offering where we have a two-day, where we spend two days, just the two of us, with a couple. And we prefer to do that live. So we have that option. Doing retreats is something that's on our heart as God opens the doors for that. So that's in development.

Shayne Pitcock: And speaking engagements, we would love to be available for that as well. What God has done in us, we want to propagate that as much as possible.

Roger Marsh: Of course.

Shayne Pitcock: It's just a matter of what are those doors the Lord would open for us to walk through at this time.

Sheila Pitcock: Maybe one of the most helpful things on our website that they would find is the link where they can schedule a free consultation on our calendar. So anybody that is saying, hey, I wonder if this would be a good fit, we'd love to just talk with them. and find out. We're not a perfect fit for everybody, but for some, we're their last hope, or for some, we're like, this is exactly what I'm looking for. So you can see our calendar right there on the website, and we would love to talk with you.

Roger Marsh: And we've got journey2unity.com. It's up at drjamesdobson.org. What a great conversation. What a fascinating testimony. And Shayne and Sheila Pitcock, thank you for being so vulnerable, not only with our listeners, but also with... and with each other in terms of letting him put you on that journey to unity that you now help others walk as well. Thank you so much for being with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Sheila Pitcock: Thank you for having us.

Roger Marsh: Well, no marriage is too far gone. At least that's the hope at the heart of today's conversation with Shayne and Sheila Pitcock, two people who walked through

years of dysfunction, two separations, and a whole lot of heart surgery, if you will, from God before He brought their marriage back together. You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's family talk, and if you missed any part of this powerful conversation, or if you'd like to learn more about the ministry Journey2Unity, visit jdfi.org. We have a link there for journey2unity.com up on our website as well.

Friends, the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is here to preserve and promote the family, to stand for the sanctity of human life and religious freedom, and to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible. And it's friends like you who make this mission a reality. So I invite you to partner with us today. You can make a secure donation online at jdfi.org. You can call a member of our constituent care team at 877-732-6825. Or you can send your support through the U.S. Postal Service. Our ministry mailing address is Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, P.O. Box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, the zip code 80949. Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for joining us today. Be sure to tune in again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love. This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.