

# Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Dr. Marie Murphy**

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

Hi everyone, I'm Dr. Marie Murphy. I'm a relationship coach, and I help people who are engaging in anything they think counts as infidelity to deal with their feelings, clarify what they want, and make decisions about what they're going to do. No shame, no blame, no judgements. If you're in the midst of an infidelity situation and you're ready for change, let's work together. You can schedule an introductory coaching session with me through my website, [mariemurphyphd.com](http://mariemurphyphd.com). This podcast episode is going to come out in early November, at which point we'll be getting pretty close to what many people think of as the holiday season here in the US – and in other parts of the world – and if you want my help dealing with your infidelity situation during the holidays, I encourage you to schedule an introductory session with me SOON. My availability between now and the end of the year is limited, and is growing more so by the day. So if you're ready to work with me, I encourage you to act on that readiness soon.

Okay. In today's episode, I'm going to pick up on some themes from an episode that came out earlier this year, called "Allowing Yourself to Want What You Want." That was episode 93 and in it, I talked about the importance of getting to know your desires, and allowing yourself to want things for the sake of becoming the fullest expression of who you are.

In that episode I talked about how we may freak out when we feel desire, for several reasons, one being that we sometimes don't want to feel desire unless our desires can be fulfilled right away. By being willing to acknowledge our desires, we are effectively setting ourselves up to experience uncertainty, or impatience, or frustration, or longing, or disappointment, or loss. By allowing ourselves to want things, we will have to contend with the experience of not getting what we want, UNLESS our desires are so close to what we currently have that there's very little chance, or risk, of not getting what we want.

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

Sometimes the desires most worth having are pretty far from what we currently have! And what this means is we may have to deal with having a desire for something we don't yet have for a while before we get what we want. And to expand on something I said in episode 93, it's only when we're okay with not having what we want that we can work towards getting what we want with faith and trust. When we are not okay with not having what we want, when we believe that having an unfulfilled desire is a PROBLEM, we are more likely to work towards getting what we want from a place of desperation, or frustration, or fear, or scarcity – OR to simply give up on our desire.

Let me be clear that there's a difference between giving up on a desire because you can't stand the space between wanting and not having, and deciding that you really don't want to pursue something. If you have a lot of desires, it may make sense to decide not to pursue some of them, for all kinds of reasons.

But if you really want something, if you decide that something is important to you and you decide you want to pursue it, being okay with not having it will actually help you get it. That might sound like a paradox but we're going to talk about how this works, starting with an example from my own life.

If you listen to this podcast regularly, you may recall that my dog Seymour died a few months ago. And let me tell you, I loved that little fucker like crazy, and his absence has been exquisitely unpleasant. And I'm tolerating my discomfort pretty well, thank you very much. I am most definitely practicing what I preach in terms of allowing my emotions, but they're gnarly! They do NOT feel good! It's been a pretty constant ache. And I'm living with it. Anyway, the reason why I'm telling you this, is because for a

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

while after Seymour died, I couldn't imagine having another dog. I couldn't imagine having a dog that wasn't Seymour. And then I started to realize that I didn't want to NOT have a dog for ANY LONGER. The point wasn't that I wanted another dog to come along and make feel better, the point was that I wanted another dog, whether I'm going to be sad about Seymour or not. I like having a dog in my life even more than I thought I did, apparently.

Seymour was a Westie, and we're planning to get another Westie, and we're planning to get one from a breeder. I realize there are other dogs out there in the world, and other ways of getting a dog, and that's wonderful, but I have these preferences for reasons that I like. Which is saying something, because the experience of getting Seymour from a breeder, or rather, the experience of finding a Westie breeder who would give us a dog, was quite something.

The experience of meeting the breeders we met when we were searching for Seymour was CRAZY. And, to be perfectly frank about it, it was crazy because the breeders we met were crazy, or more accurately, seemed pretty terrifyingly crazy to me. And, on the one hand I get it, because I probably qualify as a crazy dog person myself, and if I were breeding dogs, I'd probably be a full-fledged crazy dog person, and if I were a breeder, I would definitely have some kind of criteria that people would have to meet if they wanted to get a dog from me. My experience with breeders has been that they – sometimes, anyway – have secret criteria, unspoken expectations, and a whole lot of judgments. And again, I sort of get it. If I bred puppies, I would want them to end up with people who would take excellent care of them and love them to pieces. So I understand scrutiny, but I do not love mysterious scrutiny, combined with inconsistent communication and rude remarks. And who knows, maybe we just didn't

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

connect well with the breeders we met. Maybe we didn't show well. Maybe it was us, not them.

And of course, when we were looking for Seymour, we eventually found him. And he came from a wonderful breeder who loved us and then totally forgot about us, which did not seem like a bad thing at all. But it took some searching, and right before we found the breeder who we got him from, I had really gotten to the point where I thought that no one was going to give us a dog.

And right now we're at the point in our search for Seymour's successor where it kind of seems like we're never going to find a Westie puppy. Intellectually, I know that isn't true, or doesn't have to be true. But I'm at the point where the gap between what I want and what I have seems totally awful. Like, it shouldn't be this way, why can't we have a puppy lined up already, what is wrong with the entire universe – awful. I've had a few moments where I'm totally in the temper tantrum/pity party of it all.

But here's the thing. If I want a puppy, I have to keep looking for a puppy. In order to keep up the search, I have to be willing to deal with the ache of not yet having something that I want, and the fear that I might never have it. I have to live with the uncertainty that is inherent to the process.

I could just give up on the desire because it is pretty painful to want a little puppy so badly and not have one and not know when or IF we WILL have one. By the way, if you're listening to this and "Thinking, what's the big deal? It's just a dog. That's not a major loss." Or, "What's the big deal about wanting a puppy? You can live without a puppy." If you're thinking that, that's the whole point. What that illustrates is that there no objective

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

order of magnitude when it comes to what's important to us. Some people will consider things that we think are a really big deal a really big nothingburger. And vice versa. And that's fine. Let me tell you this: your desires – or your losses, your sadnesses – do not have to measure up to anyone else's definitions of what's important for them to be important to you. If it matters to you, it matters to you, and you get to validate that for yourself, and sometimes you will HAVE to validate that for yourself. Sometimes no one else will do that, and that does not have to be the end of the world.

Anyway, having a puppy is important to me, and it hurts to want one and not have one! And one way I could deal with that is by telling myself that I don't really want what I want. I could talk myself out of wanting a puppy. Or at least I could try. But I would rather not. I would much prefer to contend with being in the space where I want something that I don't have, and allow all of the emotions that comes with not having what I want, even though it is not particularly comfortable or pleasant to do so. There's no way to instantaneously get what I want. I can't just press a button and have a Westie puppy turn up. Believe me, if that were an option, I'd be selling that instead of coaching.

OKAY. Let's stop talking about puppies, and start talking about infidelity. In certain infidelity situations, the gap between wanting something and having something CAN sometimes look like this:

Person A is married, and they're involved with Person B, who is also married. Person A and Person B are having an affair, and their relationship is super intense and exciting and passionate and the two of them really want to be together. And the fact that they can't be together RIGHT FUCKING NOW seems like a huge problem to both of them.

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

Here's the deal. If Person A wants to be with Person B, they can go through the process of making a clear decision about whether they want to leave their marriage or not. If they decide they want to get divorced, they can go through the process of getting divorced. There may be many steps involved in these processes, and it may take effort and time to complete these steps, and it may be uncomfortable. AND, it is totally do-able. If you want to create the possibility for you and your affair partner to have a non-affair relationship, you can do everything that it's within your power to do to help make that happen.

Now, even if YOU make a clear decision to leave your marriage and actually take the action of getting divorced, your affair partner, otherwise known as Person B, will have their own thing going on. Or not going on, as the case may be. YOU may have really efficiently taken steps to give your relationship with Person B a chance to be something other than an affair. You may be steadily clearing the path to turn your relationship with Person B into a non-affair relationship.

But Person B may or may not be doing that, and thus part of your job is to be willing to tolerate the uncertainty of not knowing what they're going to do. If you really want to be with them, you have to be willing to do everything you can to create the opportunity for the two of you to be together in a non-affair capacity, which includes accepting the fact that there are only so many variables within the equation that you can control.

If you want to make your relationship with your affair partner happen, you have to be willing to take action in the service of that goal, even though there aren't any guaranteed outcomes.

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

And this is where a lot of people in a situation like the one Person A and Person B are in start to balk.

A lot of people want to just have their imagined future with their affair partner be their reality already, without having to do anything hard, or even much of anything at all, to get there. They just want the fulfillment of their desire. They just want to feel all of the good stuff, and none of the not-so-good stuff. They don't want to tolerate any space between wanting something and not having it. And let me be clear that I am totally sympathetic to this. There have been plenty of times in my life when I've wasted a lot of time wishing that this were not the way it works. But it is a waste of time, and it doesn't work.

Here's something important that I want you to be aware of. Sometimes having really intense desire for something AND the torment that may come from not being able to have that thing creates a very intense experience. And this sort of intense experience can provide a VERY convenient distraction from us dealing with some sort of important business in our lives. I talked about this in an episode called Drama, Distraction, and Infidelity, which is episode number 37. When we really want something and are very tortured by not having it, we may think that we don't like the roller coaster ride we're on, but those intense highs and lows can be really, really, really compelling. We may be getting a lot of excitement out of the drama, even if we think we don't like it.

And what I see for a lot of folks who are married and are involved with someone else is that they effectively use the drama of their affair to avoid dealing with the question of what they want to do about their marriage. I'm not saying people do this on purpose. In fact, my impression is that people

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

usually DON'T do this on purpose. But it happens a lot, for reasons that I think are totally understandable. The drama of the affair may seem like a fucking emergency, and it's kind of exciting to have an ongoing emergency we have to deal with. Even when it gets exhausting, as it often does, it can still be a lot more compelling than doing something you really don't want to do, or don't know how to do – such as honestly explore the question of what you want to do about your marriage. We may not want to deal with our marriage at ALL. We may just want to press a button and live happily ever after with our affair partner. It's kind of like the insta-puppy button. If I invented a button you could press to live happily ever after with your affair partner IMMEDIATELY, I know people would buy it. RIGHT?!?!?

Here's the thing: it's possible that you CAN live happily ever after with your affair partner! It's TOTALLY possible. That is a thing happens, and you can make that happen, too. Or at least, you can do YOUR part to make that happen, and your affair partner may well do the same. Or they might not.

Your part of the deal depends on you being so sure of what you want that you're willing to tolerate not having it, so much so that you're willing to take action in the service of your desire even though the outcome on your affair partner's end isn't guaranteed. If you leave your marriage and they don't, you might be sad about that and disappointed about that and all of the other things. For sure. And that's important, but that does not have to be a problem. AND, the only way it will be possible for the two of you to become a non-affair couple is for you to do this. Yeah, your affair partner's actions are the other half of the picture. But the whole thing can't come together without you.

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

How on earth do we do this, you ask? How can we be willing to not have something we really want, and moreover, to make big changes in our lives for the purpose creating the possibility that something we really want will come to fruition, even if there are no guarantees?

Well, the simplest answer is to just decide that you're okay with this. You could just do that, and some people do! Some people decide that it's simply better to create the possibility of getting what they want – in this case, a non-affair relationship with their affair partner - than to NOT create the possibility of getting what they want. Some people decide that it's just better to contribute to the expansion of possibility rather than to limiting possibility.

But for those of who need a little more coaxing, let me offer a few other thoughts. Working towards something we know we really want often feels better, deep in our guts, deep in our soul, than NOT pursuing what we want the most. Even if we're terrified we might not get it. Being on the journey of creating something we really want, even if the outcomes are not guaranteed, or not guaranteed in any specific way, may feel a lot better than sitting on the couch, literally or figuratively, and telling ourselves it isn't worth trying.

We're best able to work towards something we want when we're willing to exist within the gap between wanting it and having it.

And we may most easily exist in that gap when we practice santosha, and aparigraha. Those are both Sanskrit words, Sanskrit concepts. Santosha is translated many different ways, and from the way that I've interpreted those translations or synthesized them, and applied this concept to my own

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

life, I like to say that santosha means contentment that isn't dependent upon outcomes. Contentment that isn't dependent upon outcomes. What a concept, right? What if we could just be content right now? Yeah, we might want other things. But what if everything is already okay, in the cosmic scheme of things? What if nothing is lacking from right now, just as right now is? What if our cup were already full? And from there, what if we could pursue what we want, without grasping for it?

On that note, aparigraha can be translated into non-grasping, or non-clinging. It's often translated as non-attachment. Tosha Silver, who has written some very nice books including *\_Outrageous Openness\_* talks says that when you practice aparigraha, you are allowing everything that needs to come to you to come to you, and you're allowing yourself to let go of everything that needs to be let go.

What if we could want something without getting stuck to the idea that we have to have it? What if we didn't have to cling to an outcome, or a certainty, in order to pursue our desires? What if we could want something AND be okay with not having it? And what if that feeling state, a state of desire without desperation, is exactly the kind of feeling state we need to in if we're going to tenaciously create what we really want in life?

Sometimes creating what we want is anything but easy or straightforward or instantaneous. Sometimes it's easier or quicker than we think it's going to be, and that's very nice. But that doesn't mean that anything has gone wrong if we don't get what we want quickly or easily. Sometimes it takes a LOT of tenacity to get what we want. Sometimes we have to be willing to not have something for a long time in order to do whatever it takes to get it.

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

And so often, we don't want to deal with that! We just want the thing! We want the magic button! We just want to feel better, and we think that having a certain thing or experience or situation is going to make us feel better. So we pursue the thing desperately, or we give up if we don't get it quickly enough.

And there isn't anything WRONG with doing either of those things, exactly. It's totally human. The only problem is that it usually feels terrible. Laboring under the impression that we need to have something in order to feel okay and not having it usually feels awful. And the actions we take from that feeling state usually don't help us get more of what we want.

And that impacts the way we engage in our relationships. If you are desperate for your affair partner to leave their marriage so that you can make a decision about what to do on your marriage that's based on their actions, you're going to interact with your affair partner in a very different way than you would if you were content without knowing what their outcomes were going to be. In affair situations it can be REALLY easy to believe that our fate hinges upon other people's choices, and other people's actions, but that doesn't have to be true. If you're married, you getting clear on your marriage depends on you and no one else.

Some people tell me that if their affair partner isn't going to leave their marriage, they might just want to stay in their marriage, and that's why they "need" to know what their affair partner is doing. And to that I say, do you really want to make your decision about your marriage dependent upon anything but how you feel about your marriage? Your affair partner is not your only shot at having a relationship other than your marriage. If that's what you want, you can create that no matter what. If you're grasping for a certain outcome to happen in a certain time frame, that may not be

## Ep #113: Wanting Something and Not Having It Yet

guarantee-able. But you creating the kind of relationship you want to have is something you can work towards from a state of trust and faith and santosha, contentment that isn't dependent upon outcomes, no matter what your love life looks like right now. And I'm going to talk more about that in a future episode.

For today's purposes, explore this idea of contentment that isn't dependent upon outcomes for yourself. Explore what it might be like to cultivate santosha when you are living in the space between wanting something and not having it yet. Explore why it might be so, so, so very worth it to be willing to want something without any guarantee of when you'll get it. And, more specifically, if you've been hoping for a certain outcome with your affair partner, see if you can just ENJOY THEM for the sake of enjoying them, rather than waiting for them to do whatever it is you want them to do.

And of course, if you want my help applying concepts and practices like these to your own life, let's work together. It's one thing to hear me talk about stuff on the podcast and it's another thing entirely to have me as your coach, who helps you MAKE USE of what I talk about. Working with me requires work on your part! It is an investment of your effort as well as your time and money! And it may be the most worthwhile investment you ever make. If you want to schedule an introductory coaching session with me you can do that through my website, [mariemurphyphd.com](http://mariemurphyphd.com). I can't wait to meet you.

Thank you all so much for listening! Have a great week. Bye for now.