

Amanda Turnbull

[Introduction Music]

Katie Axelson: Welcome to Have Hope; Will Travel. When we travel, we get to know people who are different than we are. We hear different perspectives, and we better understand other stories. We learn to stand with people instead of having opinions on issues. I'm your host, Katie Axelson. In this episode, we're going to explore spiritual abuse and toxic church leadership.

Katie Axelson: So if those aren't good topics for you to explore right now, maybe check out episode {95} with Grace Tran, where we talk about faith at work, or episode 98 with Katie Lane, as she talks about how she unlearned an alcohol addiction. I personally am really excited to get to chat with one of my new friends, Amanda Turnbull.

Katie Axelson: Amanda and I met through a Christian podcasting group that we are both part of. She's the co founder of Asha Media. She's a spiritual life coach. She's committed to helping women discover their authentic voice in the kingdom of God. She's also the host of Burning Butterfly, Burning Butterflies podcast.

Katie Axelson: So Amanda, welcome to the show. Thank you. for having me. I am so excited to, um, get to know you and to get to hear a little bit more of your story. Um, I know that it's a hard story, so thank you so much for sharing it with us and trusting us with it. Absolutely.

Amanda Turnbull: Absolutely.

Katie Axelson: Let's start here. What is Burning Butterflies podcast?

Amanda Turnbull: So Burning Butterflies is a podcast that my two friends and I do together and we all attended the same church. Uh, my friend Brandy and I were on staff together and then my friend Melissa was actually married to the pastor's son. And over the course of 20 years at that church, we came to the realization that there were some very toxic and abusive things going on, not just in the church, um, in the church office behind closed doors, but also in Melissa's marriage.

Amanda Turnbull: And we found out that those things were being swept under the rug by church leadership. So we all chose to walk away and in healing from

all of those things, we really discovered that this is a story that a lot of people live out. And statistically in America, most churches have less than 200 people.

Amanda Turnbull: And in Statistically, in America, most towns are small enough that you see the people that you do church with, you do life with, on a regular basis outside the church walls. And so we came to realize that there's people a lot like us, that we have to face the people that were our abusers, or unfortunately the people that we abused because we were so indoctrinated into that toxicity.

Amanda Turnbull: We have to see them on a regular basis in the grocery store. Um, at kids' sporting events, all of those things. And so how do you heal and move on from that? And most importantly, how do you untangle all of that junk from what is true in your faith? Wow.

Katie Axelson: Wow And so then that's, that's what you unpack on the episodes, that, that's our story.

Amanda Turnbull: We share our story from what we, we have, we're three years out of this. Okay. And so we've gone through a lot of therapy and done a lot of healing and so. We start our journey with what we feel led us to be the perfect targets for someone who is spiritually, um, and mentally abusive. What caused us to ignore those red flags and we just tell our story.

Katie Axelson: Wow!

Amanda Turnbull: We are doing it a little bit differently because as we were going through building this podcast and talking to people, we really discovered that this is a problem, unfortunately, systemically across the board in a lot of evangelical circles in America. And so we chose to change the name of the church and change the name of the people we're talking about, um, mostly just because we don't want it to be viewed as though, well, that's just that one pastor or that's that one place.

Amanda Turnbull: We want people to be able to look past the people in our story and look at the problem that we're addressing.

Katie Axelson: Wow!

Amanda Turnbull: And we really feel that if enough people stand up and call out abuse and call out toxicity. We can do better now more than any other time in our history in America, people are leaving the church and you see that across

demographics across age groups across, um, culture groups across sexual orientation groups, people are leaving the church and what is the common denominator across all of those things is the church. And so what can we do as Christians to stand up and say, this is not from God. This is not who Christ called us to be. And how can we do better?

Katie Axelson: Yeah, That's so good. And unfortunately, there is such a need for that. Um, so I'm glad that that you and your friends, first of all, were able to, um, step out and that you were able to find healing.

Katie Axelson: And now that you're able to help others, um, go through similar journeys as well. So let's talk about how do you identify if church leadership is unhealthy?

Amanda Turnbull: That's a , that's kind of a funny question because what we've come to discover is that it doesn't matter what you're looking at. If you're looking at a church or a person, um, or a relationship or even a job or a school, um, if you look close enough, you're going to find things that are unhealthy because we're all people.

Amanda Turnbull: And so it's, it's easy to, especially when you've experienced hurt in the past, put that hurt onto a new situation. And so what we have discovered is that any church in America probably has a few things that are unhealthy, um, but it's how they handle them that makes them, um, a God honoring church. So, um, one of the things that we really gained a lot of encouragement from was we put out a podcast episode about pulpit shaming.

Amanda Turnbull: And what does that look like and what does that mean and we actually had a pastor reach out to us who had heard our episode and said, "I didn't even realize I was pulpit shaming people." He felt that, you know, he's like, "I just really thought I was using relevant illustrations in my sermons. And I didn't really feel that, um, I was doing that, but after listening to your episode, I realized I've done that. And so I need to go and I need to apologize to people. Um, and I need to do better in the future." And so that in the moment, what he was doing, that was not a good thing that was unhealthy, but the fact that he recognized it. And is growing from it and has made amends for that, um, is showing that it's not a toxic thing.

Amanda Turnbull: And so if there are things that are coming up over and over and over again, it crosses that line from being unhealthy into that toxic zone of this is probably being done on purpose. Um, they more than likely know that it's

wrong because if it's being done repeatedly, they've probably been told repeatedly. That, this is not okay.

Katie Axelson: Yeah. That's so powerful. And I love your point of like, if we look anywhere hard enough, we're going to find unhealthy leadership, um, or like unhealthy practices. Maybe I shouldn't call all leaders unhealthy, but they are all human, which means they all have growing opportunities. And I know that for me personally, it's really easy for me to look at things and pick it apart and to find the unhealthy things.

Katie Axelson: And sometimes I overlook the healthy things and sometimes I have to look, hard to find the unhealthy things, but I try to always find them and then I get mad and run, um, which is not a healthy practice of myself, but one that I am working on. Um, so I'm glad that you called out, like, I will still always find those things. Because it's true. I will. I'm pretty good at it.

Amanda Turnbull: Yeah. And you know, there's where all three of us are at different stages, um, you know, in our, in our journey to find our way back into church, um, I'm, I'm currently attending a church and going. And one of the things that I have found so helpful is the fact that the people at the church that I'm currently attending are very open to questions and open to, you know, "Hey, you said this and it kind of rubbed me the wrong way," or "I don't really understand how this is happening. Can you explain this to me?" And Really, what we have found is that the places that there's unhealthy and toxic things going on, um, you get pat answers or you get brushed off. And places where people really want to do what is best for the church and really want to honor God, um, those are the places where those people are willing to have conversations with you.

Katie Axelson: Now that's so good. So what does that conversation look like?

Amanda Turnbull: Um, I, I've developed, so I've gone to the church I'm currently attending for about two years now. And so I've developed a relationship. I was very open and honest when we walked in the door. Um, a lot of churches have their, you know, get to know us class.

Amanda Turnbull: So we attended that and I was very nervous. I was very nervous to go back to church. And so I really just prayed and God worked that out that it was just my family in that class. That's awesome. And so we were able to have kind of a one on one meeting with the pastor and I just laid it all out and I asked the really hard questions and I kind of just decided that, you know, I spent 20 years shoving myself into a box and not saying what was on

my mind and that didn't get me very far . It ended very terribly for me. And so I didn't want to do that anymore. So I just decided I'm just going to say the hard thing and Based off of how they react to me saying the hard thing is going to be very telling of if this is the place for us or not. Yeah. And so in having those conversations, I've been able to build a relationship to the point where now my pastor, he'll be like, come up to me afterwards.

Amanda Turnbull: He'll be like, "I saw you made a face. Um, do we need to have a talk?" And there's some times where I'm like, "yes, absolutely." Or sometimes I'm like, "you know what, no, I'm good." Um, you know, I, I work through it on my own.

Katie Axelson: That's cool.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, and we feel like we are very cared for there that we're not pressured to, you know, grow in any certain way at their pace, we're allowed to, to come to things on our own.

Katie Axelson: Yeah, wow, that sounds beautiful and incredibly healthy. So let's say that you did make a face and you did decide that it was worth a conversation with your pastor. What does that look like?

Amanda Turnbull: Uh, there's some times where it's just something like, can you just explain to me what you meant by that? Um, and nine times out of 10, he misspoke and he's like, "I'm so sorry. I shouldn't have said that. Um, I shouldn't have said it that way." And, you know, there are some times where I'm like, "You know, I would feel more comfortable instead of doing this in the church lobby, I would feel more comfortable having a conversation with you maybe later on in the week. " And, um, he's been very open to that.

Amanda Turnbull: He, and, um, there's some times where, you know, if it's something that is very difficult, um, he will bring in other members of leadership so that we can work through it together. Um, but there, there's a lot of, Him wanting to grow and realizing that there, there are people coming to his church that have been hurt.

Amanda Turnbull: And it's a fairly young church. It's only about six years old. And so to have people who are now finding it, it's growing very rapidly. There's new people coming every week. Um, he wants to be very sensitive of that. And so. Um, I found that he's been very open because he wants to learn and he wants to do better for those coming into his church.

Katie Axelson: That is so beautiful. I hope that everyone learns from him.
[Both chuckle] Let's talk a little bit about, um, like coming, I don't remember exactly how you phrased it, but essentially you're back in church now. What did the journey look like of deciding that it was time to come back? Did you deconstruct through it? I think that's what I'm trying to ask you.

Amanda Turnbull: Uh, yes. So, um, when we left, I actually, my husband and I, um, this was the church that he grew up in. And when I came to the realization that it was time for me to leave, I told him, um, if he still wanted to attend and he wanted to take our kids, I would be okay with that. But I could not, um, I, I no longer could see God at work there.

Amanda Turnbull: Wow. And he agreed and it was things that, um, you know, he had seen over time as well. And so we both agreed that it was something very important for our family, um, was to find somewhere to be able to go together as a family. And so we started looking online. We attended online. We attended several churches, sometimes two or three a Sunday online, and we found the one that we liked.

Amanda Turnbull: And so, um, initially my husband and I tried it out first for a few weeks on our own before we brought our kids. Luckily, our kids are older. Um, so, you know, they, They weren't, you know, itty bitty. We didn't have to really worry about children's ministry and stuff like that. Um, I know that's a difficult thing for some people.

Amanda Turnbull: And so we tried it out on our own and then we brought the kids and we all just really felt like this was, um, a place that we could grow and we could all heal from together.

Katie Axelson: I love having online church. Like, I love that that exists because it is such a good way to try different churches. And even if like, that's the effort that you can put in today is turning on a digital church and you may or may not even make it through the service, but you turned it on like that is still a victory.

Amanda Turnbull: Yep, absolutely. And, you know, for us, it was, it was something that we started going attending right away. Um, we didn't, you know, we didn't serve for quite a while and through that process, um, I realized that I was deconstructing.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, Melissa and I both kind of came to that realization at the same time together. And we were like, Oh, that's what we're doing. And we, um, we've always equated it, uh, the verses in Matthew where it talks about

your faith is like a house, you know, the house built on the sand is the storms come and it's washed away.

Amanda Turnbull: But The house built on the rock will withstand the storm and we really felt like we needed to just kind of tear our house down because we were in such a toxic, abusive situation that it was really hard to know what was true and what was said to control or to manipulate. And so we didn't know what to keep and we didn't really bring in the wrecking ball and just demolish it. The analogy we use is we went room by room. And so we would go through a room and as we were preparing that room to demolish the house, we would find these things that we were like, no, you know what, in this instance, I know that was God. I know I truly experienced God. And so we set that aside and we hold on to that.

Amanda Turnbull: And. We tore everything down. I had to go clear down to the fact that, you know, this is the church where I accepted Christ and I was baptized. Was that even real? Am I even saved? Like, what does my faith even stand on? I don't even know if I have a foundation to my house. I don't, I, I don't know. I had been at this church since I was 15 years old.

Amanda Turnbull: And so, um, I really had to tear everything down and it was as I was going through that process and I found those things of like, Nope, I know this was God. I know this was God. I know this was God that it became my new foundation for my faith. And so I understand how people can deconstruct and walk away from everything completely because I came very close to that.

Amanda Turnbull: The thing that kept me, um, going with my faith was the fact that I know without a doubt I've experienced God in my life before my deconstruction.

Katie Axelson: Wow Yeah. Have you also experienced him in your life after your deconstruction? Oh, yes. Even

Amanda Turnbull: Oh yes, even more immensely.

Katie Axelson: Okay, go . Um,

Amanda Turnbull: it's so, it's so much easier to see him more clearly when you don't have the noise coming at you.

Katie Axelson: Yeah. So let's talk about deconstruction. What are some healthy ways to do it and what are some unhealthy things to watch for?

Amanda Turnbull: Honestly, Just questioning is very healthy. I feel like sometimes in church we feel like we can't question, um, especially when you get into some of the more toxic situations because you're told that you should just have faith.

Amanda Turnbull: And, you know, we, we don't want to be a doubting Thomas. And, um, You know, when, when you see practices that don't really make sense and you call them out and you question them, um, you know, versus that were used against me were, you know, Mary and Martha, and you should just learn to just sit and be still.

Amanda Turnbull: And why do you have to, um, you know, why do you have to be so bossy and why do you have to demand your way? And when I was simply asking questions and, um, you know, being a doubting Thomas and, um, Look at how it turned out for the rich young ruler and he all he wanted to do was get his own way and so questioning things is very healthy.

Amanda Turnbull: It's very natural Um, I think we see examples in scripture where people were questioning whether they said it out loud Or they were just questioning within themselves And Jesus acknowledged that, um, I have to believe that, you know, the bleeding woman when she reached out and she touched Jesus's cloak, she had to have a level of doubt in her mind of like, I, I really hope this works, you know, she believed it would, but we all have that level of like, I, like, I'm putting myself out here and I could really get in trouble for this.

Amanda Turnbull: And so, um, really questioning is healthy. So don't let anyone make you feel like just because you have questions or especially concerns about things, um, that it is not okay where you cross the line into that unhealthy, um, level is when you are looking at tearing down a person or a place over calling out the toxic situation.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, and realizing that you are not crazy. Um, that is something that a lot of people who deconstruct feel is that they feel like their feelings you're made to feel as though there's something wrong with you for feeling the way that you feel. And when you try to explain it to someone, you feel like you're talking nonsense and they, and people look at you like you're crazy.

Amanda Turnbull: And so just know you're not crazy and you're not alone. Um, but It does get into an unhealthy zone when you really cross that line into embracing that crazy. And, um, being more vindictive and being more calling things out just for the sake of being argumentative, um, and not doing your research. There's a million and four things out on the internet and on social media.

Amanda Turnbull: And so you can find evidence to make anything say anything. If I wanted to find evidence that the sky is really green instead of blue, I'm sure I could find it somewhere on the internet.

[Katie chuckles]

Amanda Turnbull: And so. To be able to do your due diligence and look at multiple sources, um, as you're deconstructing, finding people who have walked through the same things you have and reach out to them.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, that has been huge for us looking at, um, People who have gone through similar situations. We listened to the rise and fall of Mars Hill podcast. That was huge for us healing because we realized that there are people out there that, um, walk through what we walk through deconstructed and came out on the other side and are still, you know, still claim Christ and still attending church.

Katie Axelson: Yeah, that's so good. So you can deconstruct and still be a Christian.

Amanda Turnbull: Yes, I think I think deconstruction, because it kind of came along in the early 2000s, and it kind of became this big bad wolf in the evangelical movement. And so there's some people who prefer the term "untangling," um, or "detangling" instead of deconstruction.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, if you're at a place in your faith where you can just kind of untangle yourself from the junk, that's great. I love that. Um, but if you're a little deeper in it, uh, you kind of need to tear the whole house down and just start all over.

Katie Axelson: That's fair. And both are valid and both are necessary, depending on the circumstance.

Katie Axelson: And sometimes they're both necessary for the same person.

Amanda Turnbull: Absolutely.

Katie Axelson: So you talked a little bit earlier about Mary and Martha and a couple of other, like, scriptures that were used against you. Um, why is it important to know biblical history and how does that affect us as women today?

Amanda Turnbull: Oh, my. Um, It's so important.

Amanda Turnbull: I've always been someone who has been super into history. And, um, I actually someone told me once that the Bible is like a history book, and that's what helped me be able to read scripture and understand it. Um, and it's really easy to not understand. Where, where we get our translations from, a lot of the things that are said in churches are just dogma and things that are, we don't really understand why we believe that.

Amanda Turnbull: And we say it's biblical, but if you really dig deep into what they're saying, um, you don't really see any validity behind it. One particular time, um, that comes to mind is I had asked my pastor a question and, and he was kind of skirting the answer a little bit. And so when I pressed him, he got frustrated with me.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, and as we were having a conversation, it became a little bit more heated and he got very mad at me and he screamed at me, "It's women with a mouth like yours are the reason why Paul tells people not to get married in the Bible. "

Katie Axelson: Woah!

Amanda Turnbull: So, When you have verses like that thrown in your face, I took that to heart.

Amanda Turnbull: I mean, that, that cut me deeply. And so it's really important to know, um, exactly how God feels about women, know exactly how God feels about you just as a person in general. Um, I could, I could go on and on about this topic. I've done a lot of research in, because it's something that I really, I took to heart so deeply that, um, There was a point in my journey at this church where I considered ending my life because of how I felt I was as a woman and how I wasn't living up to the standard that was being put on me and I was being told this was my standard I needed to live up to for God.

Amanda Turnbull: And, um, I've come to realize now that it wasn't God at all. And so, um, books that have really helped me, my wonderful friend, Julie Zine

Coleman. She did an amazing job. She wrote a book called *On Purpose* where she talks about God's purpose for you as a woman. Another really amazing book is Maddie Downs's book *Go Wide*.

Amanda Turnbull: I would love to sit here and just tell you what they say. I'm a super smart person. These women did the work and the research and really poured their soul into their books. And so I suggest like, if that's something that you're struggling with, really go check them out.

Katie Axelson: Well, we'll link to those in the show notes as well.

Amanda Turnbull: Awesome.

Katie Axelson: Um, no, that's so good. I especially appreciate your point of like, a lot of what the church does, we say it's biblical, but it's actually just dogma. Um, because I've encountered that a fair bit. There's actually a conversation that I need to have with my pastor that I'm like, actually, the Bible doesn't say this. Can we look at this in Greek? Yeah. Can we study this together? What translation are we reading where we read that? Because that's not what it originally said. Yeah. So. Yeah. Which is the importance of needing to know. the Bible to be able to have those conversations. Um, and then to obviously have a place where it's safe to have those conversations where you're not going to get shouted at because you disagree.

Katie Axelson: Um, so let's talk about, Spiritual abuse. How would you define it? Yeah, let's just start there. How would you define it?

Amanda Turnbull: Okay. Um, spiritual abuse is where you take anyone's faith and you use it against them for the purpose of controlling or manipulating them. So this can include pulpit shaming, standing on a stage and telling a story, whether you say someone's name or not, but telling enough of a story that everyone in the room knows that you are talking about someone and how they did something wrong.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, this also can include using scripture against people. You know, why don't you just have more faith? What is wrong with you? You know, we're called to love people. Why wouldn't you want to do this? And, and things like that. It's all meant to control and manipulate you. And when you, when your faith, the way you view God, the way you view yourself, the way you view your eternity is all wrapped up in that it becomes a very deeply personal thing when someone uses that to control and manipulate you. Yeah.

Katie Axelson: Why does spiritual abuse cut so deeply?

Amanda Turnbull: I think just for that, that right there, I mean, your, your soul is entangled in that, you know, someone can say something rude to you on the street and you could be like, okay, yeah, whatever.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, you know, someone could physically hurt you. Um, but when it's tied to how you view God and how you view your salvation, um, and your, Being is wrapped up in that, um, it's just a whole nother level of hurt and pain that comes from that.

Katie Axelson: I think hurt and pain that God is involved with, for me personally, always hurts worse than anything that doesn't involve God.

Katie Axelson: Somebody may have an example or an experience that's different than mine, um, but for me, once the Lord is involved, it's gonna hurt ten times worse. Yeah. What else have we not talked about that we should talk about?

Amanda Turnbull: I think If you are just in a situation where there's red flags and you don't really know what to do, um, I know I, I, when it came to the point where I was ready to walk away, I knew there was no point in having a conversation with my pastor.

Amanda Turnbull: I knew I was beyond the point of, you know, sitting down and being like, you said this and it hurt my feelings, or you said this and I don't really agree, or I see this happening and it is not God honoring. Um, I knew we were well past that point. And so, um, there's no hard and fast rule on how you have to do something.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, Nowhere in scripture does it give us the step by step plan for, um, going through something like this because I think this is something that God never intended to happen in his church with his people that claim him. And so, um, you need to do what is right for you and for your family and know that if you are doing it and you are seeking God, then that's all that matters.

Katie Axelson: Hmm. Yeah, that's. That every person's response or what they need out of a situation is going to be different. Uh huh. What do you wish everyone knew when it comes to church?

Amanda Turnbull: Uh, that we are called to go. A lot of times in church, we have turned it into a social club where it's somewhere that we go and we expect people to come there.

Amanda Turnbull: And if we are really, truly going to be the church and be that represent representation of Jesus and his kingdom, um, then we need to be willing to go and we need to step outside of our own comfort zone and we need to, um, look at what we were commanded to do. And the biggest commandment that we have is to love God and love people.

Amanda Turnbull: And if your church has more emphasis on how you should behave or things that you should or should not do, um, or has more times where you are to invite people to come to something, then you are going to, um, support people, love people, encourage people, give to people. Then you need to ask yourself if you were a part of a church or if you were a part of a social club.

Katie Axelson: Mmmm, That's a good point. What are some examples of going to? Like, I think what came to mind when you first said that for me was like, missions type things, which are hurtful in a different capacity.

Amanda Turnbull: I agree!

Katie Axelson: So I'm curious, what are some practical examples that are not hurtful?

Amanda Turnbull: Well, I think that's where, you know, I think over the, over time we have seen like, Oh, we need to go and do things.

Amanda Turnbull: And so it's easy to go and do something on a spectacular level, um, and make your, and, you know, feel good about yourself. And it, Have this really great like postable moment. I went, you know, I went to Africa or I went to you know Bosnia or I went to all these places right and I did this work But it's it's simple things You know being kind to like when you go out to lunch after church service Like service workers hate working on Sundays because of the Christians, because we, we go to our churches, we, we worship God, we love each other, we hug each other and greet each other in the Lord, and then we go and we treat the waitress at lunch like trash.

Amanda Turnbull: And so being that, um, representation. Of who Jesus is that doesn't involve just leaving a Bible track on the table, but really honestly loving someone and being kind to them. Um, making loving people a whole part of just who you are in your being. Um, I started working at a middle school and

just, you know, Being able to just talk to the kids on their level and not judging them and, you know, having kids be able to come up and, and share, share things with me that they're struggling with.

Amanda Turnbull: And, um, you know, have kids open up to me. It is amazing. And it's all because I took the time to just get to know them as a person. Um, it could be something as simple as, you know, helping. Your neighbor, you know, shovel their, their sidewalk when it snows or something like that. If you are going and you're doing more for people, um, then you, then you are inviting people to come in and be a part of what you're doing.

Amanda Turnbull: Then I feel like that's a much bigger representation of what Jesus, Jesus did when he was on earth. He, he spent his time going and meeting people where they were and meeting their needs in that moment. Then he did inviting people to come and join his inner circle.

Katie Axelson: There's a phrase that I heard that I like to use: it's partnering with God and what he's already doing in that space, like in your neighborhood, in your school, in your workplace, whatever it is, um, partnering with God and what he's already doing there.

Amanda Turnbull: I love that. Yes.

Katie Axelson: So one of the fun things about the show is that we are always learning. We're listening to different perspectives. We're learning from someone whose perspective may be different than ours. It may be similar. Um, what is something that you have learned recently?

Amanda Turnbull: Ooo, That is a great question. So, uh, My, I have older teenagers and they, they bring their friends over and, you know, we kind of hang out and, um, you know, learning, learning the kids slang and, and things like that is, is always a new adventure.

Amanda Turnbull: Cause they'll say something, you'll be like, what does this mean? And so I had a middle schooler when I was, teaching a few weeks ago, I had them say something to me and I didn't understand what it meant. And so I was like, "what is that?" And they couldn't, they were like, "Oh, you wouldn't understand. You wouldn't get it."

Amanda Turnbull: So I had to text my high schooler and his friends and be like, what does this mean? I need to know, like, if this kid is making fun of me

or like, was it a compliment? Like, what is it? And so they were like, Oh no, it means like you're super cool. And so I was like, Oh, awesome.

Katie Axelson: That's great.

Amanda Turnbull: Yeah. Yeah.

Katie Axelson: And It's cool that you had the resource to be able to learn it and not, and like actually figure out if that middle schooler was being respectful or not.

Amanda Turnbull: Yeah, Exactly. So yeah, I was, that's something I, I have learned recently is. The new slang words. And then I, the other day I told a kid like, "Oh, that's like super rad." And they're like, "Oh my gosh, how old are you?"

[Both laugh]

Katie Axelson: Oh I love that!

Amanda Turnbull: It's like rad is still a word. That's still a thing.

Katie Axelson: Sure I don't know. Um, so you work at a school, but then you're also the co founder of Asha Media. Tell us a little bit about that.

Amanda Turnbull: Yeah, so Asha is something that Melissa and I founded together. We discovered that, you know, there was a lot of things that we really felt like God created us to do and was calling us to do.

Amanda Turnbull: And we spent a lot of years not having any support in order to be able to do that. And so when we branched out and we started podcasting and we started doing things, we really discovered that. We did have gifts and we had talents and we just needed people to believe in us.

Amanda Turnbull: And so that's what we really set out to do.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, we say that we, um, are creating a place and a space for women to share their voices. And so we do that. We have a separate podcast called Tablecasts , where we have women come on and share what they're doing. And it could be podcasting. It could be writing, um, starting a business, things like that. And then we also come alongside of them and we help them in

things like social media management and building a website and branding and things like that.

Amanda Turnbull: And then we have connections. So if you wanted to write a book, we could help you with that, or we could help you. Uh, we just signed a client to be able to help her edit and produce her podcast. So. Um, yeah, whatever women are doing and following their dreams and doing what God created them to do. We want to be their biggest cheerleader and just support them in that.

Katie Axelson: Oh, I love that so much. Um, if people have benefited from this conversation today, where can we connect with you, your podcasts, your company online?

Amanda Turnbull: So you can find us, we are on, uh, Facebook and Instagram and TikTok . Um, Asha Media is Ashamediaonline. com and we are in all those places. And Burning Butterflies, um, we have we're on Facebook and Instagram and TikTok as well.

Amanda Turnbull: Um, and then we have a link. We use Podbean to be able to produce our podcast. So we have a link there, um, that you can find all of our channels. We're on pretty much anywhere you find your podcasts. That's where we are. So, yeah

Katie Axelson: awesome. Well, thank you so much. I'm excited to get to go, um, connect more because I know that there's so much more to learn.

Amanda Turnbull: Yes, thank you.

Katie Axelson: Yeah, absolutely. Amanda, would you be interested in praying for us today?

Amanda Turnbull: Absolutely.

Katie Axelson: Cool.

Amanda Turnbull: All right. Heavenly Father, we just thank you so much for each and every listener, uh, just being willing to learn new things, um, is just such a gift. You have given us the ability to be able to learn and to grow from the things that we learned from and to be able to see just how different you created each and every one of us.

Amanda Turnbull: Thanks, and We might not always agree and we might have different perspectives, but you are at the core of every single person. And so we just thank you for who you created everyone to be. And I just pray for those who are hurting, who maybe have been in a toxic church situation and walked away. Um, or people who are there now and don't know how to leave.

Amanda Turnbull: And so I just lift them up to you. And I just ask that they seek your guidance. And that you show them what is the right next step for them to do. And so I just thank you for this opportunity to share, um, the journey that you have had me walk on. And hopefully be able to help others through that. In Jesus name.

Amanda Turnbull: Amen.

Katie Axelson: Amen. Amanda, thank you so much for educating us, for trusting us with your story. Um, for sharing with us. There are a lot of things that I need to go sit in process with the Lord. That's how I, how I always consider content good is like, do I need to go sit with Jesus for a little while after this?

Katie Axelson: And yes, I do. So thank you so much. I appreciate it.

Amanda Turnbull: Thank you!

Katie Axelson: As always a big thanks for listening. If this episode resonated with you, make sure to connect with Amanda on all of the different platforms. If you're looking for another episode on church hurt, dive back into the archives of episode {83} where Emily shares her experience with church hurt. Everyone's story is a little bit different and so it's good to hear from somebody else's perspective even on the same topic.

Katie Axelson: Make sure you hit subscribe because new episodes are coming regularly again! Thank goodness! I appreciate your grace and your patience and I have moved across the country and paused the podcast to invest in my local community. Episodes are coming back at every other week, same cadence as we had before but maybe on a different day though, you may have noticed.

Katie Axelson: If you wouldn't mind reviewing the show, I would really appreciate it. It's how other find the podcast as well and it's how guests know that their stories are going to be safe here: they can share them with us because they know that other stories have been appreciated as well. That is an important part of being part of the Have Hope; Will Travel podcast family.

Katie Axelson: Until I see you again my friend, I hope you have a great day. I hope you know that you are loved, you are cherished, you are seen, and you are known. Buh-bye.