



### Episode 3

## Roane and Eva Hunter: Time, Tears and Talking (Part 1)

**Craig:** Welcome to the Robertson and Easterling podcast. Thanks for listening. I'm Craig Robertson.

**Matt:** And I'm Matt Easterling. Craig and I are board certified Family Law specialist or simply, we're professional storytellers. Together, we run one of the most successful boutique law firms in Mississippi.

**Craig:** As divorce lawyers, we are creative problem solvers who worked with real people during the most difficult seasons of their lives. So, sit back, relax, take a deep breath. Everything's going to be okay. You found us and what you're about to hear is going to help.

I'm excited about our guests today, because I think what they have to talk about is so relevant. We talked about divorce and Mississippi and the components of divorce and you can't have a conversation about divorce really anywhere. And not talk about sexual brokenness and infidelity. Our guests today are my dear friends Roane and Eva Hunter, Roane and Eva, have an amazing story that has inspired so many people. They are certified sex addiction therapist, but more importantly, they're my friend. So, Roane and Eva, welcome. Thank you for being here.

**Roane:** Glad to be here.

**Eva:** Yes. Thanks for having us.

**Craig:** So, guys, you'll have a great story, one that's inspired so many people, one that served as the catalyst for your career. Eva, I'd love to hear in your own words, a little bit about that.

**Eva:** Okay. Let's see. It will be thirty years. In February of 2020. That discovery happened. And discovery for us was just one morning Roane had been really down somewhat depressed and so I just asked him one morning I was... I asked, you know, what's going on what what's happening and the words that came out of his mouth were addicted to pornography.

**Roane:** Well, I said, I have a problem with pornography.

**Eva:** That's right? you said, I have a problem with pornography.

**Roane:** And that was a God thing because if it had been me, I would have said, I have a problem with geography because I wasn't going to tell it for nothing.

**Eva:** So, at that moment, I made my world shattered because we were very involved in our church. We were living in Marietta, Georgia. We were sound so funny, but we were Sunday school presidents. So, we were in leadership, and we had this image that we thought was real. And so that was really the hardest part for me was not really knowing who he is.

**Craig:** So Eva, I think you're speaking to the heart of many women who might be listening right now. Did you not have any indication that something was going on? that just wasn't right. One thing I've learned I don't know much. I do live with three beautiful women and I'm learning to trust my wife's intuition. So, did you not have a sense that something was wrong?

**Eva:** Absolutely. I did. From the time that even when we had been dating, at this point, we were married for... had been married seven years, two small children. And I had seen things. It was more of eye contact, you know, kind of checking women out I had never found porn in our home. It was before the internet. So, I'd never discovered anything on the computer or on a phone. I had, we did not go to R rated movies at that time at all. And so the only thing I had seen was more behavioral. That's really all I'd seen more checking women out.

**Craig:** And at that point, neither of you guys were your counselors at that point, right?

**Roane:** Oh, no, I was in corporate sales and at that point was a stay at home mom. are two-year-old and basically three-year-old boys.

**Craig:** So, what happened, then?

**Eva:** So.

**Craig:** So, there was discovery.

**Eva:** Discovery in that he confessed he did tell me which is extremely rare. I mean, we sit with couples every day, multiple times, multiple hours a day, and it's very rare that a man just comes out and confesses.

**Matt:** So, you said that, you know, something just didn't seem right something to off. How long have you felt that way?

**Eva:** You know, it would come and go. Roane was really good at convincing me that it's called gas lighting that I was somewhat jealous or I was insecure I was all those things, but in my heart, I knew that I really wasn't that kind of person. At times, I would go well, maybe I just need to work on myself. Maybe I'm... it is all my problem. I would also

convince myself that I was wrong. So, see, this is a double-edged sword because there's on the one hand he's telling me I'm wrong. So, it's hard for me to trust myself. So, no longer trust becomes broken because I can't trust him and I can't trust myself. It's a double-edged sword.

**Craig:** So, what did you do after discovery?

**Eva:** After discovery, I actually came home to Mississippi. I was here for maybe a week, I went and saw a counselor and the counselor said, you know, a lot of men look at pornography, it was really bad advice. A lot of men look at pornography doesn't mean anything. You know what one of the things she said was, maybe you he wants to try to find out more. So, on the way back home, to Marietta with my boys, it was the Holy Spirit asking me, you know, just really prompted me to think, well, maybe I do need to sit down and just ask questions, be curious.

**Craig:** Now, I don't know that I know the answer to this question. Had you ever been to a counselor before the day that you step foot after discovering.

**Eva:** No.

**Craig:** In a counselor's office.

**Eva:** No, and my mother went with me.

**Craig:** So, discovery happens. have a problem with geography. I mean, pornography is what was going on with you?

**Roane:** Well, the thing of it was it was much more than pornography. What we know today is it was a full-blown sexual addiction.

**Craig:** Now, I want to stop you there.

**Roane:** Yes.

**Craig:** The... that's a I don't buzz word is the right phrasing. But I mean, is there such a thing as sexual addiction?

**Roane:** Well, from where we sit and from our own experience, absolutely. However, in our field, it is still debated as to whether or not it's a would be defined as a true addiction. But the millions of people that are getting help now would probably argue that it really is an addiction.

**Craig:** Right. Well, I want to circle back to that later. But...

**Roane:** Yes.

**Craig:** But for now, you said it was full blown sexual addiction and...

**Roane:** Yes, I started looking at porn when I was eight or nine years old. My mother's attitude was boys will be boys. I had two older brothers, we had porn, on our bedside table. And of course, thank goodness. This was back in the days when it was magazines like these things with paper and ink and prance weird. Nobody knows that anymore. With the high-speed internet and cell phones, everything has changed.

But I got hooked on it is probably the first time that I looked at it. I mean, the parents divorced when I was eight. The trauma you know, and again in 1990 we were... when this came out, we didn't know any of this. We were just clueless and lost, trying to figure out how to deal with this or to do something and my addiction had progressed and which is it's always progressive when it moves into full blown addiction. And I'd gone to strip joints and massage bars and ultimately prostitute, in all that all I told Eva that day was I had a problem with pornography and there was a whole lot more.

**Craig:** So, Eva, you said you had gone to see a counselor, you took your mama with you. You're heading back to Georgia. Maybe you need to find out more what happened then.

**Eva:** So, let me back up a minute, because when I... after my counseling session, a few days later, I'm still in Mississippi. And at that time, Roane had gone to our Sunday school teachers, which were an older couple, and he had confessed everything to them too. So, she, the female, the wife called me in Mississippi and said, hey, Roane has told us everything and we're willing to walk through this with you. So, that gave me some hope that Roane number one had told somebody else and also that there was someone that I could lean on if I needed to. So, I went back to Atlanta Marietta, and we got the boys in bed. We sat down on the kitchen table and I started asking questions that I was not prepared to hear the answers for and just absolutely. Again, my world shattered.

**Matt:** Use some adjectives to describe what was going on with you internally while that discussion was happening.

**Eva:** It was really rage for me and other people react differently. But for me, I was unbelievably angry. I could not believe what I was hearing. I couldn't even allow myself to feel the hurt and the sadness yet. I couldn't, I wasn't ready to feel that.

**Matt:** So, was I guess that interaction? Was that more of like the true discovery as opposed to what had been what you had teased out several days before?

**Roane:** Yes, because it's you know, so common, we call it the kitchen table disclosure, which we do not I recommend and in that he was just totally unprepared to hear all of this that was hidden and completely hidden and secret. I mean, she, you know, I was good in my addiction and covering up and hiding and look good on the outside. Nobody that knew me from a work standpoint, church anything would ever have any indication that you know this was going on. So, it's like the person that she loved the most has now hurt her the worst.

**Matt:** So in that moment Roane I mean, are you basically at a place where you want to figure out how to fix this how to address your issue or is this I want to figure out how to make this blow over so that I can go back to doing it everything that I was doing?

**Roane:** Oh, yes, no, I was... I wanted help. And I wanted this thing. I wanted to deal with it. I mean, I've been sitting in church for years. I came to Christ when I was twenty. I didn't grow up in church. But I would sit in church and I would hear all the things that you need to do for your sin. And nobody would ever talk about lust because they can't talk about that in church. But this thing that was eating me up on the inside, and that was the addictive nature of it is like, I'm never going to do this again. But then I go do it again. And then wanting to be free from it.

And then, you know, it's like, God knew what had to happen. It had to get out into the light, it had to be exposed. And it was horrific experience of having to admit that and to begin to tell the truth, but it's exactly what needed to happen. And then yes, I wanted freedom, and began to really, you know, started going to Christian counselor and kept plugged into support groups and I began to do my work because I wanted freedom from this thing that had been plaguing me for since I was nine years old basically.

**Cassie:** Hey guys, I'm your new friend Cassie. I'm a paralegal and the client care coordinator at Robertson and Easterling are things not working out for you at home. I am so sorry. What you need right now is honest feedback and wise counsel about how the legal system works in Mississippi and how it can impact your future, click on the link on our website, or just give me a call. After meeting with one of our attorneys, you'll feel like the weight of the world has been lifted from your shoulders and you'll have guidance about what you need to do next. When you're ready to talk, just give me a call. I would love to talk to you the fact that he even spoke to me it's totally confidential. Until then, take care and enjoy the second half of our show.

**Craig:** Someone who might be listening to this is contemplating what they need to do next. Maybe there's been a discovery. Maybe they... their intuition is telling them that something is not right. Either I know that you did in fact, go see a lawyer during this season of time. Could you talk about that?

**Eva:** Well idea but it was probably about a year later. I did get... we did get into counseling together as a couple. They didn't know a whole lot about what the partner goes through at that time. It does mirror Post Traumatic Stress Disorder PTSD. They call it trauma now, but that's what was going on inside of me. I was just at the... because who I thought he was, was not who he really was. And I could not put those two people together.

So, it just rocked my whole world. About a year after discovery. We'd been in therapy. I was not improving at all. I was not and in fact, I was getting angrier and angrier. I did not understand and Roane wasn't getting the help as far as how can he comfort my hurt? How can he do that?

**Roane:** Yes, back then. I mean, this was 1990 in there were very little known in therapy world made a little bit but not a whole lot in dealing with how do you deal with sexual addiction and the trauma of the partner.

**Eva:** So, I didn't really have other couples or other women in my life that were going through the same thing that I was going through. No one I knew had ever gone through something like this. So, I made the decision. I was like, I cannot do this anymore at we need to separate I'm, I'm just the rage inside of me is so great. And I really wanted a legal separation. I wanted to be protected financially.

**Roane:** Well rage inside and outside.

**Eva:** Yes, he said, it was great. So, I went to I made an appointment with a female lawyer thinking that you know, she would get me and I would connect with her I would feel safer with her.

**Craig:** How did you go about finding the person that you wanted to share this part of your life with, do you remember?

**Eva:** I think I'm just probably looked through the yellow pages, you know, we had yellow pages then.

**Roane:** Yellow pages.

**Craig:** Do you recall on a decision you labored over or thought about for a long time or would you just have a break,

**Eva:** A few months.

**Matt:** Okay,

**Eva:** A few months and I just wanted to be protected financially, that I really did not want a divorce. I wanted to really what I wanted was a legal separation, I go and visit with a lawyer a consultation, and I find out there is no legal separation in the state of Georgia. And I think that's the same way in Mississippi. I know it is there is no legal separation. So, what she said to me that day was, you know, what, the only way you're going to be able to protect yourself financially is to divorce and get Child Support alimony, possibly, and you can always remarry him if there is reconciliation in the future.

**Matt:** So, coming out of this consultation where you've been told, you know, the best thing to do is just go ahead and get a divorce. How did you feel about that? And where did you guys go from there?

**Eva:** I felt really, like I didn't have any choices. That felt like my only choice to protect myself. And at this point I really just wanted to protect, I just needed financial protection for myself and, you know, my future my children. That was really my motivation. When she said that I thought, you know what, this is really what I need to do. And so, I did, we went through with it within sixty days, we were divorced. And I began to really think about what it was going to be like to be a single mom. I was a single mom at this point.

But it was a beautiful thing for me because I had been so dependent on Roane, he had really been my safety and security. At this point, I really began to work on me. I had grown up in an addictive family system. My father was an alcoholic. And so, I had a lot of things to unravel and to learn about myself. As I did that, I began to see my own brokenness. And we believe and I see it every day brokenness meets brokenness. My brokenness looks different than Roane, but I have my own things to work through heal from. And so, I began a journey on that. I became open to reconciliation.

**Craig:** Eva, what I heard you say was, it took being independent for you to do the introspective work required to move forward as a single person. But as it turned out, it opens you up to the possibility that there could be restoration and reconciliation.

**Eva:** That's right.

**Roane:** Yes. And, and I think one of the things that happened when we were divorced as you went to the adult, children of alcoholics meeting, and you began to realize that your dad's alcoholism had had an effect because in our counseling sessions prior to the divorce, basically the counselor would ask a bow about her history with dad, alcoholism. And Eva would just say, we're here because of him, fix him.

**Eva:** That is so true because I could not see my own staff, my own issues.

**Roane:** And so the ACLA, that when they handed you the laundry list of the characteristics of an adult child of an alcoholic was kind of the light bulb moment that the kind of opened your eyes and you began to look at kind of your contribution to the dynamics of the relationship, not that I realized that what I did was on me, it was nothing about what Eva was doing or the relationship. I made those choices.

**Eva:** That's right. And what I know today, what we know today is that and we say this to couples all the time is the three C's. I did not cause it. I can't change it. I can't control it. But how did that contribute to it?

**Craig:** Roane, I want to hear from you. So, you know, either is and these are my words, not hers putting on our big girl pants and going about the business of raising two sons and being a divorced single mom, what's going on with you?

**Roane:** Man, I at that point was devastated because I'm just beginning to get into counseling beginning to understand the impact of my parents' divorce when I was eight years old, how that impacted me. You know, that was the fact the divorce when I was eight, the impact of own that, for me was like the main ripped every foundation of security I had away and then the track that it sent me on was basically just kind of figured out in my life. I had two older brothers and I figured out a lot of bad stuff along the way.

And so, at that point, I'm looking at my two-year-old three-year-old sons, and I'm just devastated and angry with God because it's like, okay, God, you know, I've admitted it, I've come clean. You know, this is not supposed to turn out this way. You know A, plus

B did not equal C, certainly the consequences of what I done was just that was all part of it. However, it's like, I didn't sign up for this stuff at you know, eight or nine years old, but the consequences were real. And it was it was a difficult time.

**Craig:** So, you guys talk about talk about the road home. So, either you said you were open to reconciliation. Roane was mad. God. Okay, hold on a second. I came clean. Now you've ripped away everything that's important to me. This is not fair. This isn't how it supposed to be. How did you guys find your way back to each other?

**Eva:** Well, I think it takes or you know, do trauma that the three, there's three T's it takes time, tears and talking. And so when I began to share about what I was learning about myself with him, I mean, that's really what intimacy looks like that vulnerability between the two of us. And we just began the journey of really beginning to know one another.

**Matt:** How long were you guys divorce?

**Roane:** We were separated for about... separate and divorce for total of about a year. Yes, almost a year.

**Matt:** So, did you guys so you're divorced? Did you date?

**Eva:** We did.

**Roane:** Yes.

**Matt:** Did you do it better the second time around?

**Roane:** I don't know about that. Yes, the first time was at hot pursuit. I think the second time was more adult because we were like, we started dating we were fifteen. And part of it you know, we started having sex. You know, we were fifteen sixteen years old. And in part of what we were dealing with, or Eva was dealing with, was just kind of complex. PTSD because she we'd had an abortion, going into our freshman year in college. That summer, she gotten pregnant and there was an abortion and so that it never been dealt with. And so we had that grief. And then the dad's alcoholism addictive family system, and then the betrayal trauma and so we would call that today. We didn't know it at the time, but it's really complex, PTSD, probably full blown post-traumatic stress disorder.

**Matt:** Roane, talk about Eva, you have been betrayed, you're married to this man you don't know it opens you up to self-discovery, more self-awareness. I've heard you tell me and others as well at least you're aware so but you become more aware of yourself, it opens you up to intimate communication with the father of your children. Talk about the moment where you decided, you know what, let's, let's do this again.

**Eva:** And, you know, it was such a process of, we both wanted the same things. And we were both willing. And I think that's really what it takes. For all couples, it takes two willing people to begin to know themselves and to know one another. And so when we work with a couple, that's really what we work on. And we you know, we've got to help



the partner, or I do a lot of work with the partner really validating her pain, helping her get connected with other women who are going through the same thing, because we're going to heal in community with other people who are maybe a little bit further along on the journey.

**Matt:** Roane I will love to hear about your wedding day. Not the first one.

**Roane:** Yes, the second.

**Matt:** But the second wedding day because I've heard the story before and I think the listeners would just recognize the beauty in it.

**Roane:** Yes. We when we decided that we were going to remarry we went up to Clarksville, Georgia. And we're actually tent camping because I mean, we've been divorced. Yes, we have no money at that point.

**Eva:** Yes.

**Roane:** It's so we got to Clarksville, Georgia. And we're going to camp at one of the parks up there and went to the courthouse, and we're just going to do the justice of the peace thing. But we ask, is there somebody that can do a wedding ceremony in town? And they said, well, as a matter of fact, there's a retired Baptist minister right down the street. And so they pointed us to his house. We walked down there knocked on the door, they were at home and we tell them our story.

**Eva:** He and his wife.

**Roane:** He and his wife

**Eva:** And they were probably in their seventies I would think.

**Roane:** And it's so anyway, there he did the ceremony and she was the witness. And it was probably one of the most beautiful weddings I've seen, been a part of. It was amazing. They cried, we cried. It was just a really neat part of our story.

**Craig:** And guys, we're totally out of time. And I have so much more I want to talk to you guys about but I don't want to end the episode without giving our listeners an opportunity to get in touch with you if they need to either. How can they do that?

**Eva:** The easiest way is through our website. And our website is [lifeworksms.com](http://lifeworksms.com).

**Matt:** Guys, thank you for being here today. I can't wait to hear the rest of the story. And we'll get you back real soon. Thank you.

**Roane:** All right. Thank you.

**Craig:** You've been listening to the Robertson and Easterling podcast. Thanks for spending time with us.

**Matt:** We'd love to hear from you. If you need our help, you can request a consultation from our website in less than five minutes. If you liked our show, please subscribe to our podcast so you'll be one of the first to know what our next steps drops

**Craig:** Have a great rest of your day and remember, there's nothing wrong with arming yourself with information. On behalf of Matt and our entire team. Thanks for listening.

**Matt:** This podcast is not a substitute for an attorney all information is provided as a general reference and public service. Listening to this podcast is not created professional relationship with Robertson and Easterling or any of its attorneys or guests. This podcast may be considered advertising under applicable rules, and free background information is available upon request for a full disclaimer, please visit our website [www.robertson.ms](http://www.robertson.ms).