

INTRO: This is the elegant warrior podcast. It's the podcast about elegance in all of its forms. We're talking about our definitions of elegance and how we maintain it in times of trial. We're also talking about how we can advocate for ourselves with elegance and in a way that makes us most likely to win.

I'm your host, Heather Hansen, author, speaker, consultant, trainer and self advocacy expert.

Let's talk elegance.

HEATHER HANSEN: Hello, my elegant warriors. Today, I have an interesting podcast for you and it's all about lying and liars. And how to tell if someone is a liar and how to prove if someone is a liar. I have a lot of experience with this because in the courtroom I often have to prove that someone is a liar and I have to do that on cross examination. I do that by asking questions and that's why I often tell you that questions are so magical because you can prove that someone is a liar by asking the right questions. And it's a skill that is often helpful to have, being able to prove that someone is a liar is a skill that is valuable in all aspects of life. But more valuable is the skill of being able to tell that someone is a liar. Because even if you don't have to prove it, if there's no one to prove it to, being able to tell it, being able to know whether you can trust someone or not, is a very important skill. And there is a difference there.

So a lot of times, I'll give you an example. In the courtroom, we're going to take the Johnny Depp case as the example in this case. In the Johnny Depp case, Johnny Depp and his attorneys are trying to prove that Amber Heard is a liar, and the people that are trying to prove it to are the jury. There is a third party who will decide whether or not Amber Heard is a liar. That is a great place to try to prove that someone is a liar.

Another example is, I have a coaching client, she is lovely and she has someone who is out there disparaging her in her professional world, and telling lies about her and telling lies to her. And it's enormously frustrating to my client and she is a little bit obsessed with proving that this woman is a liar in all aspects of her life. And she will find all kinds of ways that this woman has lied, and she wants to confront the woman about being a liar. And that rarely works. You can rarely prove that someone is a liar to the liar. The liar will very rarely say "you're right, I'm lying." In the courtroom, I've never seen that happen. On cross examination. I've never seen one of those Perry Mason moments where the person says, "okay, I lied." They will try to find their way around it. They will continue to lie their way around it, but the jury decides whether the person has lied.

So for my client to want this woman to say, "okay, I lied" is not very likely to happen. In those situations, if it ever comes up where there might be a third party deciding whether this woman is lying about her, then she will have the opportunity to prove it. And that is why it may make sense for her to collect some evidence to have in her pocket in case she ever has to prove that this woman is lying about her. But to try to prove it to the woman is not going to be helpful. So this difference between proving and just being able to tell and collect evidence is an important one. Because the skill of being able to tell that someone is lying, it's helpful as a parent. It's helpful as

a partner. It's helpful when you're negotiating. It's helpful when you're selling, if someone says they don't have the budget for that and you can tell that they're lying, that's some good information to have. It's helpful as a leader if one of your staff or team tells you something and you can tell that they're lying. That's great information to have. And so this skill applies to proving and to telling, but we use the ability to tell that someone is lying a whole lot more often. So that difference is important and it's going to come up again when we're talking about inconsistencies.

But before we get to inconsistencies, I want to start with one of the ways- the first way, to be able to tell that someone is lying, is in the words that they use. Words are magic. Words have enormous power. There's all kinds of neuroscience about words that the words that we use have an impact on our brains and our chemistry and on our hormones. And the words that we use also have an impact on the listener, and whether or not it sounds like we're lying. In the courtroom, I'm very particular about words. If a word is read from a deposition and read incorrectly, I will immediately note it to the jury and make sure that the jury knows the correct word.

And I thought it was really interesting as I taped this, it was yesterday in the Johnny Depp case, Ellen Barkin testified and she was talking about her relationship with Johnny Depp, and she said that initially it was a friendship and then it turned into a romantic relationship. And then the attorney asked another question, and then Ellen went back and said, "can I change that answer? I want to change romantic too sexual." So it wasn't a romantic relationship, it was a sexual relationship, and that is a difference, right? Some things can be romantic and not be sexual, some things can be sexual and not romantic. And those words have different meanings, and Ellen could have theoretically been proven a liar if she had stuck with the word romantic. So that change, which might seem like a minor one to those who aren't obsessed with words like I am, was a major one to me because it could have meant the difference between her being proved a liar and not being proved a liar. So words are important.

Another aspect of words being important is study show, research shows, that if someone starts using the word "you, yours" or more about "they, theirs" as opposed to "I, mine, my" that might be a sign that they're lying. Liars like to distance themselves from the lie. So they tend to start using the words "I, my, mine" less often, they're less likely to say "I" they're less likely to see say "my" they're less likely to say "mine." And that is because they want to distance themselves from the lie. So that's a place that you have to kind of know the person. Because if they're a person that rarely uses the word "I", then not using the word "I" might not be a good sign. But if there is someone who uses the word "I" a lot, some sort of narcissist or something, and then they start using it less and less often, it might be a sign for you to pay attention to that it could be that they're lying.

The last thing, and this is something that's big for me and I think it's because of my background in the courtroom, is the use of passive voice. If someone starts using the passive voice and says "I was told I could be here" "I was given permission to be here" "I was instructed I could be here", my liar antenna automatically go up. Because I want to know who told you, who gave you

permission, who instructed you. If you don't tell me who, I can't ask that person, I can't prove that you are lying. And a lot of times liars take advantage of that, and they speak in the passive voice in order to avoid being found out. And so anytime someone says to me, "I was told", I will say "by whom, who told you, when did they tell you? Where did they tell you?" And those types of questions are good ways to prove that someone is lying. So if someone is talking in the passive voice, you want to be aware of what they're talking about and whether or not it could be something that they are not telling the complete truth about. And that's another way to use words to be able to tell whether someone is lying.

The third way, well the third thing, the second way, is inconsistencies. And this is the most important way to tell if someone is lying. It's the most important way to prove that someone is lying. It's the most effective in the courtroom. It's the most effective outside of the courtroom. And one of the things that we tell jurors in the courtroom is that if you find inconsistencies in one area, and you find that a witness is lying about one thing, you can assume that they're lying about other things. And we do that in life as well, right? If someone has lied to me about one thing, I am more likely to think that they would lie about something else.

And that's where my client gets caught up in trying to prove that this woman lies about a lot of things. There was a period of time where she was obsessed with it. This woman lives in the same town as her, and this woman likes to talk about how she's never had filler in her face. Now no judgment to people who have had filler in their face and it's no big deal to have filler in your face. But from my client, it's frustrating because this woman runs around town and tells everyone that she's never had filler in her face, that she's always had these beautiful full lips and she's so grateful that her lips were naturally full. My client goes to the same injector as her. And so she knows that she has filler in her face. She also has seen on their injectors instagram page, a picture of this woman's lips pre and post injection, with the woman's name in the tag. So she has proof, right? She has an inconsistency. There is what the woman says, and then there is a picture of the woman's lips pre and post injection with the hashtag with the woman's name. So now you have an inconsistency, that too many would prove that this woman is a liar. That is an example of inconsistencies.

The same exact example, in one way, has come up in the Johnny Depp case. Amber Heard said that he punched her in the nose and broke her nose. There are pictures from the next day that don't show a broken nose. That is an inconsistency, and that may be enough to prove that Amber is lying. And so those inconsistencies, and especially if you collect them, like one by one, like my client has collected the inconsistencies of this woman that has told lies about her in case she ever needs them. And I have no problem with that. I think that you can spend too much time with that and we'll talk about that as we wrap up. But I think that collecting inconsistencies is a great way if you ultimately have to prove that someone is lying. And noting inconsistencies is a great way to tell if someone is lying.

The best kind of inconsistencies, the inconsistencies that are best at proving that someone is lying, is when the person is inconsistent with their own words. So in my cases, we take depositions, and we saw this in the Amber Heard/Johnny Depp case, there's deposition

testimony and then there's trial testimony. My dream is when a witness says something at deposition and says the exact opposite thing at trial, because that is an inconsistency that is very difficult to get around. People will try, they'll be like, "oh I changed my mind. I was wrong in my deposition. I wasn't remembering things correctly in my deposition." But juries don't like that. They don't like inconsistencies between what you said at one time and what you're saying now. So that's the type of thing that you want to look for, is this person consistent? Are they consistent with what they told you in the past? Are they consistent with what they've emailed in the past? Are they consistent with what they've written in the past? And then you can also look to, are they consistent with pictures of them? Are they consistent with what other people say about them? Are they consistent with other pieces of evidence that might be out there in the world? Inconsistencies are the best way to prove that someone isn't telling the truth. They are the best way to tell that someone is lying.

Some of the less good ways that people talk about, and the next one that I want to talk about, we've got words, we've got inconsistencies and I want to talk about tone of voice. Because if you look at the research tone of voice is actually a pretty valid way to be able to tell if someone is lying. In fact, that's what lie detector tests are measuring, to some degree, is does your tone go up? There's research that shows that if your tone is higher, it might be more likely that you are lying. Do you speed up in your rate of speech? There's research that shows that if you speed up you might be more likely to be lying. The problem with this though, is you have to know someone's baseline, because it has to be inconsistent with their baseline. If their baseline is to talk fast and high, then them talking fast and high isn't a sign that they're lying, it's a sign that they're talking. And so you need to be aware of someone's baseline when you are measuring their tone of voice as a signal of whether or not they're lying.

And baseline is even more important when we get to the fourth thing, which is the body language and facial expressions. People think they can tell whether someone is lying by body language and facial expressions. A lot of the things that you think tell you that someone is lying, in a lot of the articles and books about it, are not backed up well by the research. So there's an idea that if someone looks up into the left, they're probably lying because they're looking up into their brain to see, to recover some story. That is not well documented in the research. A lack of eye contact, too many people think that that's a sign that someone is lying. That's also not well documented in the research. There are what's called micro expressions on the face, which research shows can give you a signal that people are lying. But you need to be really practiced and very aware and very present to be able to read micro expressions. And you also need to know someone's baseline. So when it comes to telling that someone is lying, that is not the best way to do it. The best way to do it, whether you want to tell that they're lying, is to look for inconsistencies. And when you want to prove that they're lying, it's to collect those inconsistencies and use them when there is a third party deciding.

So all of this talk about lying reminds me of a quote that I once heard that I think about all the time. And the quote is "if you're looking for reasons to be offended, you will always find them." And so I really make it a practice to not look for reasons to be offended. And it is also true that if you're looking for lies, you will find them. I don't want you to spend your time looking for lies. I've

told him that client that I worked with, who was always looking for the times when this woman was lying, and she was collecting inconsistencies and she has a file full of inconsistencies on this woman. And I think that makes her feel better and that's fine. But I've encouraged her to stop, to stop looking for lies all the time. It's not a fun way to live your life, and also it can be destructive. If you look for lies, you will find them. But I would much rather you spend your time looking for things to believe in and things to believe. And I would love it if you start with yourself.

If you spend that time looking for reasons to believe in yourself and reasons to believe yourself and reasons to have credibility with yourself, you will become your own best advocate. You will become more persuasive. You will build credibility with yourself and others and you will be able to change people's perspectives. That doesn't happen by looking for lies. And so the tools that I've shared today, yes, they will help you to look for lies and to find lies and to prove lies. But be careful of spending too much time there and spend at least equal time looking for reasons to believe.

I do dive deeper into how to look for lies and tell that someone is lying and prove that someone is lying in this week's private podcast. Now, for those of you that aren't subscribed, I'm gonna just tell you a little bit more about the private podcast. The way that it works is once you subscribe, that private podcast pops up in your podcast feed the same way The Elegant Warrior does. There's nothing else you have to do. Every other thursday when the podcast is updated, you will just see it in your podcast feed. It's called Advocate with Elegance. You can click on there and you can listen to the private podcast. In that private podcast, I normally share three Q's, a question, a quote and a qualified recommendation. Those three Q's this week are about how to tell if someone is lying. And every time that I do a private podcast, we dive deeper into how to become more persuasive, how to build credibility and how to change people's perspectives, including your own.

And so that is the work that we do there. I would love to have you join us there and I would love to hear what you think about that private podcast. Just like I'd love to hear what you think about this podcast. You can email me heather@elegantwarrior.com with comments, concerns, questions. You can also leave me a voicemail. The number is (856) 390-4831, and let me know what you think. I would love to hear from you.

In the meantime, have a great week and take good care.