

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Come On Barbie Let's Go Get Divorced

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Hi Mumma Mia listeners, Beck Melrose here dropping into your feed to talk about our new Mumma Mia podcast,

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I'm M. Burnham and I'll be the first to admit we obviously still have some things to learn, but that is where our show comes in.

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Mumma Mia out now!

Hello and welcome to Mumma Mia Out Loud.

It's what women are actually talking about on Wednesday, the 27th of September.

I'm Holly Wainwright. I'm Mia Friedman. And I'm Claire Stevens.

And on the show today, a very polarising premiere has resigned.

So what makes some politicians a cult figure and others just bleh?

Also, there's a reason why there are so many high profile divorces right now and it's all Barbie's fault.

And the unhappy medium, why things being very, very bad might be a blessing.

Before we get started though, out loud, I've got exciting news for all the subscribers amongst you.

And for anyone who's like wondering whether or not it's worth being a subscriber,

we are starting to run giveaways and prize draws that Mumma Mia subscribers are automatically entered into.

So you don't have to enter these competitions, go to all the drama of actually filling anything in, pressing buttons, thinking about it.

Because you're a lazy girl probably, yeah.

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If you are a Mumma Mia subscriber, you will automatically go in the draw.  
And the first one of these is to win a two and a half thousand dollar voucher for bed threats.  
Oh my God, I can't even, I love bed threats.  
There's things I would spend that money on.  
I could subscribe again, I would.  
That prize draw is on October the 3rd.  
So if you're a subscriber, your name is already in the draw, you don't need to do anything.  
And if you're thinking maybe I'll become a subscriber, maybe if you want some new sheets.  
Get the splinters out of your bum bum and just do it.  
Anyway, over to you Claire Stevens.  
In case you missed it, if you're a man who wants some attention,  
all you need to do is spend some time with Taylor Swift.  
Of course, it seems obvious.  
But over the weekend, Swift went to watch an NFL game.  
The Chiefs against the Chicago Bears.  
Sports, sports, sports, sports.  
Don't know anything about either of those teams.  
But it was to support the new guy she's seeing, NFL star Travis Kelsey.  
Reportedly seeing.  
I'm very, very cynical about that.  
She's doing pap walks with him.  
She sat with his mother in the bleachers.  
When he scored or whatever it touched down, she yelled, let's effing go.  
So I think that is a big sign that they are seeing each other.  
Oh my God.  
There's quite a cute story of how he got her attention  
and how he invited her to come and watch him play.  
But what's particularly interesting is that following her appearance  
at Arrowhead Stadium where he was playing,  
Sales for Kelsey's Jersey,  
he's number 87 for the Kansas City Chiefs, if anyone's curious,  
soared by roughly 400%.  
That's a lot of jerseys.  
It's the Taylor economy.  
And she has a very unique ability to sell merch and tickets, which we know.  
We saw recently with tickets for her ears to our...  
She's got a lot of my money.  
Yeah, she's got a lot of all of our money.  
I bought merch as well.  
Me as Helen invested in the Taylor economy.  
It'll probably be the highest grossing to our of all time.  
It's on track for that.  
And clearly that Taylor economy extends to the people she spends time with  
because what if this is just a one-off date and she's not that into him

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and then everybody's got this weird NFL jersey taking up space in their wardrobes?  
The most polarising state Premier in Australia and perhaps in history has resigned.  
Victorian Premier Dan Andrews on Tuesday afternoon  
announced that after nine years as Premier of Victoria, he'll be stepping down.  
Here's what he had to say.  
Every day has been about the only thing that really matters, getting things done.  
Today I will again visit Government House and resign as Premier  
and member for Mulgrave.  
It's not an easy decision because as much as we've achieved together,  
there's so much more to do.  
But when it's time, it's time.  
It's not an easy job being Premier of our state.  
That's not a complaint.  
That's just a fact.  
It requires 100% from you and your family.  
That of course is time limited and now is the time to step away.  
Now the media and social media have immediately been completely dominated by Dan Stans  
and also those who refer to him as dictator Dan  
due to the restrictions that he imposed on Victorians during the pandemic.  
Restrictions that the Dan Stans who love him insist saved lives and kept them all safe.  
But his critics insist that they were a massive overreach  
and caused irreparable damage to the lives and mental health and businesses of Victoria.  
Now, brief disclaimer, we do not live in Victoria.  
So who cares what we think of Dan Andrews?  
It doesn't matter.  
But we wanted to talk about this idea of polarizing leaders.  
A few facts about the pandemic in Victoria  
because that's what a lot of people are sort of writing about and talking about  
and remembering today.  
Melbourne spent more time under COVID lockdowns than any other city in the world.  
It was 262 days.  
Among all the states, Victoria had the highest death toll of COVID deaths  
that were reported by a really, really large margin.  
They were also the state in Australia that took the longest to return to normal financially.  
The Victorian economy was sort of quite a far away behind other states  
that opened earlier and had less strict rules.  
And Dan Andrews also stood every day in front of reporters in those daily press conferences,  
which a lot of state premiers did, but he did 120 days answering questions,  
sometimes for up to one to two hours.  
So, Claire, why do you think that Dan Andrews makes people feel such big feelings  
more than almost any other Australian politician I can think of?  
In Australia, he is quite a bold politician.  
He is left. He is socially progressive.  
He is not necessarily centrist in the way that other politicians position themselves.

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Is he hard left? He's from the hard left faction.

Yes. And he's also not your typical leader, especially when he was campaigning in the early days to be premier.

A lot of people pointed out he's not charismatic.

He's a bit of a nerd.

For those 120 days, he approached media with his glasses and his North Face jacket and answered questions.

And it was sort of his work ethic that I think really resonated with Victorians at that time.

There was something about seeing their premier stand there and engage with all the questions that they had that made them feel safe.

Interestingly, during COVID, it was Dan Andrews who formed an alliance with Gladys Berejiklian to adopt the really tough measures in the individual states.

Oh, there was a lot of infighting between them. They were not friends.

But Dan Andrews was one of the, in terms of state premiers, he was one of the state premiers who was very much here for the premiers taking back power and making decisions for their state.

You've got to remember it evolved, right?

So at the beginning, they were friends.

They were united in their approach.

And then what happened is over the course of that time, they kind of parted ways on their practical measures.

Let's put it that way. Gladys was like, open up and Dan was like, lock it down.

But they started off actually quite in locks.

And it was sort of that Dan Andrews approach that then galvanized someone like Mark McGowan to completely shut down his state from the rest of the nation.

And so it was quite a radical time in Australian politics.

I mean, Mark McGowan was like, we're just closing the door.

But West Australians all thought that was fine, pretty much.

Dan Andrews was more polarizing within his state, as well as outside his state, I think.

Because the hard measures affected everybody, like everybody's real lives.

And I would say in terms of work ethic, I think in an extreme situation when there's a crisis and people are scared, that's when leaders can shine.

But it's also when they can take a lot of power.

I think there were a lot of people who were maybe not in front of a podium every day, not in front of cameras in all states who were working a lot harder than Dan Andrews.

And I'm sure to be fair, he would say the same thing.

Like there were health workers and there were emergency services providers and all kinds of people, particularly health workers, who were also working hard.

So do you think it was his work ethic or just that he was the face of...

It's not even necessarily work ethic, it's perceived work ethic.

There was something about his effort during that time that clearly the state of Victoria responded very strongly to because his approval ratings stayed quite high throughout that whole time.

He won re-election after the pandemic, whereas Gladys Berejiklian was forced to resign

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because of a corruption inquiry. Mark McGowan didn't run for re-election, I don't think, in West Australia.

Anastasia's still there, but she's in quite a bit of trouble at the moment.

I think the thing is, it's become such a cliché to say we live in polarising times, but we do.

We've been talking about this, we talked about this on Monday around the debate about the voice and Claire made the excellent point that what gets traction on social media is extreme feelings either way.

And Dan Andrews inspired very extreme feelings.

Any journalist would tell you, and Lee Sales did actually tell everybody this,

that if you criticise Dan Andrews, not in an off-hand way, but as a journalist asking questions, pushing on these measures, then you will get absolutely slammed

in a way that you wouldn't necessarily in other political arenas

because the Dan Stanz, as you referred to them, are very, very passionate and so they would come in hard.

That doesn't happen all the time in politics.

What do you think that was about? Because I really loved Gladys, right?

But if someone was critical of Gladys, I wouldn't go on social media and send them death threats.

And yet that is what happens with the Dan Stanz.

I think it's because his politics were, extreme is the wrong word, but they were incredibly clear.

So he, being a left-wing politician, he was unapologetic about certain things

like rejecting church positions on abortions, supporting marriage equality, that sort of stuff.

Illegalised euthanasia, he made same-sex couples able to adopt.

What I think is that we like or hate, but we respond to and engage with politicians who we know what they stand for, right?

And whether you like Dan Andrews or you don't like Dan Andrews, you know who Dan Andrews is.

Ideologically. There's some kind of ideological affinity that people had with him

and I found it bizarre when the Commonwealth Games news came through

that Victoria was cancelling the Commonwealth Games.

I was like, you're cancelling the Commonwealth Games.

Like this is an awkward, uncomfortable decision that surely no one wants to make.

Whichever way you cut it, something's gone wrong.

And there were people saying, what a leader, cancelling the Commonwealth Games.

And you're right, it's because people had this really strong protective instinct around them.

But he did things, right?

He did do things.

And I don't say that to defend him.

Like as me ever said at the top, no skin in this game, personally.

The thing about knowing who a politician is, is they act and they don't equivocate, right?

And so at the moment, Albo's our Prime Minister, I think, let's give him his proper name, Anthony Albanese.

He is not really a polarizing figure, right?

And he has been popular, but his popularity is on the slide.

Because I think that, and this might also be why Dan Andrews has been very smart to step out at the moment that he has.

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Because obviously Albo stands for things, of course he does.

We know who he is.

He's a Labour man.

He always has been.

But he's not an aggressive doer in the way that Dan Andrews is or at least perceived to be, right?

And I think the thing is that will get you so far and people love it if you're an aggressive doer.

But Andrews, probably the Commonwealth Games was really damaging for him, even though the dance dance will say not.

And what better way than to step out before you have to contest again after that happens, before you have to clean up all the mess of all the bajillions of dollars that they have to pay for that decision.

By all accounts, the Victorian economy is in trouble.

It's in the highest debt.

And so it's smart politically again.

And he is a very savvy politician, the Dan slide.

He has won elections by margins that politicians only fantasize about in their happiest moments.

And so he's stepped out at a time where that legacy will remain intact.

And also the polarizing position, I'm sure he can argue,

well, if you're going to do things, you're going to piss some people off.

So is that what you have to be to be a successful politician in 2023, 2024?

Do you have to be polarizing?

Because if you look at the rise of Trump, Dan Andrews,

like people who people felt really, really strongly about.

You know, when you look at Gladys Berejiklian, Julia Gillard's different

because the haters, unfortunately, were a lot about her gender.

But then I remember when she had that thing about, oh, the real Julia, who's the real Julia?

What does she stand for?

And people couldn't quite work it out because she seemed to be from the left.

But then, you know, she was opposed to same-sex marriage.

But then she said it was for feminist reasons and people just couldn't quite get a handle on what she stood for.

I think we oscillate between the two quite radically.

So even if you look at American politics, you look at someone like Donald Trump.

Obviously, lots of feelings about Donald Trump.

But again, he is somebody who, in terms of a leader, polarizing, bold, did stuff that a lot of people agree or disagree with.

But then you end up with someone like Biden.

You end up with somebody that people don't necessarily have strong feelings about and that isn't a radical leader.

And I think that that's what we see.

And he ran on that basis and won, which is enough of the chaos, enough of the drama.

And also you're tired of the big personalities.

Sometimes that's exactly what you don't want.

And I think that's part of Albo's appeal, right?

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Is that particularly in Australia, we're not necessarily massively engaged with that level of drama. We don't like it.

I'll repeat.

I think it's, you know what you're getting.

We respect it when we know what somebody stands for.

Do you think Scott Morrison started out as polarizing?

Because he certainly finished as polarizing.

But I can't even remember when he was first elected and he was first prime minister.

Scott is from marketing.

I think that was always his brand.

I don't think people thought he was authentic.

No.

No, but they didn't have strong feelings about him really, did they?

Until the end in which they really did.

And the people who felt strongly negatively towards him ultimately triumphed and he got kicked out.

Politics will always be a little bit about personality, but mostly about politics, right?

So we've had this conversation many times.

We don't actually vote for leaders.

We vote for parties.

The leaders are just the faces who do the talking, like really they are.

But when we live in a world where we are so hyper-engaged with social media and opinion polls and algorithms, then extremities will always do well.

But when you look at it, not anymore because Trump got voted out.

Boris Johnson got voted out.

But he's on his way back.

Dan Andrews went.

Trump hasn't actually gone anywhere, unfortunately.

Intensely polarizing human that he is, but he's still banging on, isn't he?

He's still there.

And I think that Dan Andrews, the interesting thing about him is, as Claire said, he didn't necessarily start out as what you would call a big personality.

A lot of the examination of him today is like the accountant in the glasses, the North Face jacket.

Like they became iconic, but they weren't at the beginning.

It's a really interesting political study.

Out Louders, tell us what you think, particularly Victorian Out Louders, because as we said, it doesn't really matter what we think about Dan Andrews.

But if you had to come up with one word, Victorian Out Louders, about how you feel about the Dan Andrews resignation, what would it be?

Tell us.

Come on, Barbie, let's go break up with our boyfriends.

So starts an article in the Huffington Post that's part of a whole theory around how Barbie is to blame for relationships falling apart.

You would know that in the northern summer, there have been a lot of celebrity divorces.

There was Hugh and Deb.



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There's Joe and Sophie.

We could go on, but we won't, because that's not what we're talking about.

And one very famous divorce lawyer called Laura Wassers,

she has literally divorced everybody.

Kim Kanya, Ariana Grande, Kevin Costner.

She is the person that you call if you think your divorce might be a little bit messy.

Has cited Barbie, along with other big, female-focused pop culture moments

that we're living through right now, as the reason for every celebrity getting divorced.

She said this about the mood of particularly American women right now.

They're angry about our reproductive rights getting rolled back.

They're feeling their power by going to see Barbie and Taylor and Beyonce,

and they're like, I don't need this.

For some, it's even more literal than that.

There's a whole movement on social media that's about how people broke up with their boyfriends

after watching Barbie with their boyfriends,

and their boyfriends not understanding why the women were so moved.

So they're typified by this particular post that's like,

did anyone else watch Barbie and suddenly want to break up with their boyfriend?

Because he's like, why are you crying?

And you're just a guy, and you'll never understand how difficult it is to be a woman in a man's world,

and there's a lot of attention to detail that men don't get.

Another viral TikTok said,

Today, I ended my relationship of two years.

I broke up with him.

Thank you, Barbie, for empowering me, for giving me the confidence,

for making me realize that I deserve better.

In other examples, it's not so literal.

It's just a kind of handy hook for discussing something very real,

which is that these days, statistics show in both Australia and America and in many other places,

that about seven out of 10 heterosexual divorces are instigated by women.

Mia, did you want to get divorced after you watched Barbie?

No, I didn't, but I guess this idea of empowerment is a really interesting one,

because there's a book coming out by feminist Clementine Ford,

and she's big on leave your husband, leave your husband,

and it's all about how terrible marriage is.

There's this idea that a woman doesn't need a man,

and that she's better off alone, and I'm sure in some cases that's true,

but I don't know if it's true in every case, Claire.

I have found the rhetoric around this very interesting.

So for example, even saying Barbie playing a role in women getting divorces,

Barbie came out a matter of months ago, so we have absolutely no idea.

Of course.

It's statistically that's had any impact.

But it's more of a vibe.



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It's more of a vibe, and probably the feminist movement has had the biggest. Is the bigger vibe.

Yes, is the bigger vibe that is leading seven out of 10 marriages ending being initiated by women.

Now, being able to leave the shackles of a suffocating relationship that you are not happy in is one of the true successes of feminism.

I really, really believe that.

Or an abusive one.

And women leaving men who don't make them happy is something to be applauded and celebrated, and the fact that financially women are a lot better off on their own than they were a generation ago, a few generations ago.

But how happy does it have to make you?

I mean, I know that's a side point, but like, you know, anyway, sorry, go on, Claire.

But I want to acknowledge that we're really in this moment of celebrating divorce.

And Em Rada recently did a TikTok about how great it is to be divorced in your 30s.

She was responding to Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas and basically saying,

there is nothing better than being in your 30s, still being hot,

maybe having a little bit of your own money,

figuring out what you want to do with your life, everything.

And having tried that, married fantasy and realizing that it's maybe not all it's cracked up to be.

And then you've got your whole life still having you.

There is definitely a validity to that.

And I have friends who have been through divorces young and say,

I have learnt so much that I'll be able to apply to the rest of my life.

I think the conversation we're not having is that the way our society is currently set up is that women have disproportionate losses when it comes to divorce emotionally and financially.

And when divorce becomes this really flashy celebrity thing,

that's not what divorce is for most people.

So Sophie Turner getting divorced from Joe Jonas, that's one thing.

Financially, they're both going to be fine.

But we know research shows over and over and over again that women are affected by divorce in a chronic way and in a significant financial way.

I just wondered that if we're enjoying the kind of glittery yay yay yay divorce,

we really need to be having the second part of the conversation, which is,

okay, so divorce, yes, empower women to leave marriages, but what happens after that

and how can we keep women safe and protected and financially independent after that event?

This is just a cultural reset, right?

Because single mothers in inverted commas has always been almost a derogatory term

that is thrown at women as an insult and used as like a political football

to explain lots of things that are wrong with the world,

to describe people who are hungry for benefits they don't deserve.

Like it's always been a slur, right?

And divorced women have always been a bit of a symbol of pity, right?

Think about movies like The First Wives Club.

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I want a divorce.

But we just made love!

I mean, you asked me.

Think about the fact that culturally, certainly when I was growing up and certainly for most of my life, it's been the idea that men do the picking and the choosing and then the women hold on and there's something really tragic about a woman who's been left by a man

and oh, she's on her own and she's on a shelf and she's...

All this is about is resetting that narrative just a little bit.

All of the things that you're saying are true.

I don't know a single sane human who goes,

Yippee! Divorce is so cool, I should do it and everything will be great on the other side.

It's incredibly difficult, particularly if you've got a family.

It is almost impossible to raise a family on a single income in a capital city in Australia, no matter what your circumstances are.

So all of those things are true.

However, the resetting of the idea that you're not some kind of sorry, sad figure of pity if you've chosen to end your marriage and try and build a new life for yourself being celebrated, I am 100% here for it.

100% here for it.

Because anecdotally in my life, it is mostly women who are doing the leaving.

It really is, which I think is a shift.

And they are doing it because they feel stifled in their relationships or they feel like they've just got another person to look after all the time.

They feel like their needs are at the end.

We all know that women still don't earn as much as men, but certainly that is changing.

And they're like, I've got economic independence.

I'm earning the money and yet in my house, I'm still at the bottom of the pecking order all the time.

To be really flippant about it, what this vibe is expressed by the Barbie outcome is, I'm sick of this shit.

That is basically what so many women are saying.

They're like, I'm sick of this shit and I want to change it.

And I think that if we're going through a bit of a cultural moment where that is not,

I don't mean celebrated in a really frivolous way,

but we're sort of redrawing the lines of what we think about women post-divorce.

I think that's great.

And I'm so here for that.

And I am so here for the rebranding of the single woman, the single mother.

I'm so like personally have seen people in my life who end up just so much of a better version of themselves

living their best life post-leaving the wrong man.

Like I totally agree.

I think what you said about there's been sort of a narrative of pitying single mothers.

I think that needs to demonizing them.

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That needs to shift to looking at absent fathers.

That's what I'm thinking when I see all the celebration of divorce, which I think is empowering.

I am looking at the next step, which is post-divorce.

Where are the friggin men?

Because post-divorce so often it is women who do all the sacrifices in order to keep the family unit as together as possible.

And men f off and do whatever the hell they want.

And that's the part that I don't think is being considered when we talk about divorce and the empowerment of it.

I just realized that the Barbie movie is a litmus test.

If you go see it with a guy who's like,

Ken did nothing wrong, patriarchy good,

then you know that you need to get rid of him.

Greta's trying to save us all through...

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I haven't stopped thinking about a concept I stumbled across recently.

Explained in a sub-stack post by Hailey Naaman called Unhappy Medium when worse is actually better.

She explained the concept using what sounds like quite a dry anecdote, but is actually quite profound.

So she was doing her laundry, and every time she did her laundry, she noticed that her lint tray didn't quite fit in its spot.

And after every load of washing, there'd be a strap stuck in there, or something random from a piece of clothing that had made its way in there.

Bit frustrating, not enough for her to do anything.

Then she did a load of washing and realised that the sleeve of one of her favourite shirts had got stuck in that gap and it had completely disfigured the shirt and ruined it.

And she went, oh my gosh, this is so bad.

And so she pulled out the lint tray and realised there was compacted lint, got it out, cleaned it out, put it back in and thought, I have just solved a big problem.

The sense of achievement, the sense of euphoria.

I was bored with the lint until you got to the end and now I'm like, that's a great story actually.

And so basically her lint experience is what is also known philosophically as the region-beta paradox. And it describes the phenomenon whereby sometimes a person may benefit from being worse off versus just mildly off,

because being worse off may mobilise them to take action to address the problem, whereas being mildly off can lead them to doing nothing.

Complacency, I get that.

This means that strangely people might heal or recover or move on more quickly from experiences

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that are more intensely negative than experiences that are just a little bit unpleasant. So if she hadn't had the acute pain of the lint trap ruining her top, she never would have replaced it. So it's like acute versus chronic.

Exactly.

Now you can apply this philosophy to relationships.

Sometimes you stay in a not quite right relationship for five years, because it's not that bad even though it's also not good, whereas you leave a very bad relationship quickly.

Same goes-

Not always.

But when a relationship is-

The choice is more stark.

The choice is more stark.

Same goes for a job.

We can tolerate an unfulfilling or hollow job for a long time, but if the situation was worse, you'd be galvanized much sooner.

So Narman points out that medium bad situations make great fought out for advice columns.

They're pretty much what all advice columns are, something where something's a little bit annoying, but you can weigh up that things could be worse and maybe you shouldn't do anything, and therefore you're paralyzed in terms of action, and that's why you're asking advice.

Whereas she's like,

when things are very bad,

people are too busy dealing with them to write into advice columns.

Very true.

Her ultimate point is that the region beta paradox highlights the value of rock bottoms and implies they have bounce.

Basically, they make you do shit.

They do.

What are your examples of this in real life?

The most obvious one for me was a relationship where I now recognize that it was emotionally abusive, but I didn't know that language back then.

It was the early 90s because there were parts of it that were great.

Like, you know, this guy was also very charismatic and very funny.

And so I was feeling these extremities and I thought,

oh, I'm crying a lot, but I'm also laughing a lot.

And so therefore maybe this is just love and maybe this is my fault.

Maybe this is just what like a love relationship is.

That was in my early 20s.

And so I remember I stayed in that relationship for two years.

I didn't recognize it for what it was.

The insidiousness of it.

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Yeah.

Because it's like a frog in boiling water, right?

Or a lobster, whatever.

It's that if you put it in the boiling water and it's extreme, it'll jump out.

But if the water's just warm, they don't realize and they'd still die, but it's like they stay there.

And I think it's that.

Yeah.

I always stay at a party too long.

Like always.

Like whether it's an actual party or a job or a relationship or a friendship, I am an absolute chronic overstayer at a party.

Wow.

Because when I've made up my mind, it's over.

When I'm ready, I'm like gone and you can't do anything about it and you can't talk me out of it and I've made up my mind, but it'll take me forever to do that.

Is that an unusual thing or is that just life?

It's a normal human thing, but I guess the question is, is it actually the best thing for us?

So my example is that I've had back pain forever, bad posture, hunching over laptops, phone in hand, like just ruined, ruined back. But pregnancy has meant my back is well and truly fucked on an unbearable level.

So I've started seeing a physio who is incredible and has taught me all these exercises that will be better for my back in the long run than had I done nothing.

So it's like feeling that gratitude for the extremity of the badness. You had to hit rough bottom.

Exactly.

It's like my teeth.

Like I didn't do anything about my teeth for ages and then they're like literally almost falling out and I'm like, now I should do it.

But then what happens is, so there's a crisis point and you deal with a crisis point, but it's not really dealt with.

So like my teeth still aren't fixed, but now I'm back in the middle zone and I won't do anything about it again.

So you're not on a path that didn't set you on a path to get fixed.

I started on that path and then there were too many barriers in the path.

And so I went, I'll deal with that later.

And now I'm just back in the middle zone again.

## [Transcript] Mamamia Out Loud / Come On Barbie Let's Go Get Divorced

So it's going to take another crisis.

100%.

If things aren't at the panic stage, if I'm not code red going to be ushered through the doors of emergency like straight away, then it's kind of fine.

Yeah.

I think I live in that state nearly all the time.

Do you know when it's bad though?

I don't think you do.

You've never stayed at a party too long.

You make quick decisions.

You move on quickly.

Yeah, I do because, and I don't know if it's my ADHD, my personality, whatever.

It's kind of irrelevant, but that state of stasis is very uncomfortable for me.

So that liminal state of it's not terrible, but it's not great.

I find that really difficult.

I can deal with crisis.

I'm good because the adrenaline kicks in.

I can deal with obviously things being good because it's lovely, but in that middle, I find it not good.

So sometimes the bad side of that is that sometimes I'll create a crisis where there isn't one to give me a reason for action.

And also to force the issue, which might sometimes be a good thing and might sometimes not be a good thing.

Yeah.

It's interesting.

And also where that can be really bad is for things like, because what you say about priorities and burnt chop, and I think for women often when we're triaging our lives, our needs will go down the bottom.

And it's not until it's like, I need to get a mammogram.

I need to get a mammogram.

Oh shit, there's a lump.

Yes.

And I don't think we should sort of glorify our crises are good because they spur you into action when there's a lot of needless suffering involved with not getting out of that middle state.

Exactly.

That makes sense.

I'm torn between, on the one hand, I think what this hopefully does is reframe our experiences so that there's a little bit of gratitude for hitting rock bottom.

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So I know in times of my life when I've hit rock bottom, there is so much self loathing, there is so much shame, but there's something to be said for the galvanizing effect of hitting rock bottom.

That's a really nice way to look at it.

And I mean that genuinely because I think that also though, shouldn't there be a life lesson in it, which is God, if I'd have gone earlier, I could have saved myself and like with Holly's teeth.

Like it would never have got to Christ's point.

And I think that's what it teaches you.

I think that's the lesson is that when we're in that unhappy medium, we should really acknowledge that either it's going to eventually get to a crisis point and do we want to let it get that far before we take action?

Or that being in an unhappy medium is enough.

People sometimes doubt themselves as you're in a relationship and you're like, but it's fine.

It's not that bad.

It's like, if this isn't a relationship for you, leave.

Don't wait five years for something to go wrong.

Back to what we were talking about in our last segment, when Mia said, how unhappy does he have to make you?

The tricky part of using this for relationships is that we've been taught that relationships should be skippingly happy every day.

And when you've been with someone for 20 years, every day is not skippingly happy.

So, and I literally do do this in my head, right?

Is, you know, when you go through a bad patch in a relationship and you're getting on each other's nerves and everything is that sometimes you're like, how long has this bad patch been, you know, and you kind of make little deals with yourself in your head about...

I give my marriage a year.

Exactly.

I give my marriage a year.

That's what my book was about, is this idea of like, how long am I willing to put up with this, but also put up with it is the wrong word because sometimes you're not putting up with anything.

It's just right now we're in a moment.

I don't mean that.

I'm more mean.



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I guess my question is, how do you know if you're in an unhappy medium or just a medium?

Well, so I had a friend call me a couple of weeks ago who was in a fairly new relationship and she was crying and basically saying, oh, I think there's something wrong with me.

Clearly there is something where I just don't connect with people properly and I feel hor...

And she went on this whole thing and I went, pause.

I don't think you like him.

I don't think you like him.

And that's actually okay.

And you're allowed to pull the plug when things are not at rock bottom.

You're allowed to look at a situation and go, I'm not feeling it and actually pull the plug.

And that goes for jobs and that goes for lots of situations in life.

One thing that really kind of made this concept stick out to me is that last week I interviewed Kate Campbell, the Olympic swimmer for, but are you happy?

And that'll be coming out tomorrow.

We talked a lot about her race at the 2016 Rio Olympics where she was the favorite and she ended up losing.

She came sixth.

Biggest disappointment of her career.

She calls herself Australia's poster girl for failing.

We talked a lot about that experience and it feels weird to talk about her one moment of failure when she's had such a huge career of success.

But if you look at that story in the context of her journey as an athlete, that moment needed to happen in order for her to interrogate her relationship between achievement and happiness and achievement and having any value on herself.

Like you actually need that rock bottom moment.

And it's also the idea that your failures teach you more than your successes ever will.

So I just think this idea of the unhappy medium and this paradox, I do hope that what it teaches people is that we should be grateful for when things get so bad that we're motivated to act.

I've got a recommendation that's a mascara.

Out loud as I have rediscovered.

It's really funny that I've rediscovered it now because it's the supermodel era mascara.

When I was working in magazines, I had to do a lot of beauty

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products that supermodels use.  
And backstage at the fashion shows, there used to be all these photos of them getting ready and being made up.  
And there would often be this tube of Maybelline mascara called Great Lash and it was bright pink and bright green.  
I did a whole, often would dress green and pink just subliminally because it's clearly had such an effect on me.  
But God, it's good.  
You can get it at chemists or price line or whatever.  
It's \$12 because I'm a big slut when it comes to mascaras.  
I'll try all different mascaras.  
I like it because it doesn't go clumpy.  
I don't like a big, heavy mascara on my eyes.  
It's not tubular.  
I know that you like tubular mascaras and I also like tubular mascaras.  
Because I've got watery eyes.  
Which that's the ones that when you cleanse it off, it looks like you've got little spiders all over your face, comes off in little clumps.  
But it's the only time it will come off.  
It's a really good one.  
Great Lash Maybelline mascara.  
If you're looking for something else to listen to, on yesterday's subscribe episode, we had a little disagreement, which is my favourite conversations.  
We talked about networking and whether it's the way to get ahead in the workforce.  
And I brought my opinion.  
It was idealistic,  
Claire meets capitalist Mia and realist Holly.  
Yes.  
So I have, by the way, had a lot of messages from out louders who agree with me.  
I have had many that say your view is silly.  
Okay.  
Well, to listen to that argument, a link to that episode will be in the show notes.  
Thank you for listening to Australia's number one news and pop culture show.  
This episode was produced by Emily and Gazilla.  
The assistant producer is Tali Blackman with audio production by Leah Porges.  
We'll see you tomorrow.

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Bye.

Shout out to any Mamma Mia subscribers listening.

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There is a link in the episode description.