

Jill Baughan

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 63: FIGURE IT OUT

I'm Jill Baughan, and you're listening to the podcast called Find Joy...No Matter What.

This is Episode 63.

If you're in a tough place right now, your joy may seem like it's hiding—or gone.

I understand. But it's still there, I promise, just waiting to be resurrected. And this podcast is designed to help you do just that...no matter what else is going on in your life.

For just a few minutes each week, I'll tell you a story—one that just might inspire a way to uncover a piece of joy you might be looking for. Then, we'll consider how it might speak to your life, because even though you'll hear quite a few of my stories during our time together, I believe you'll find your own in every one of mine.

Finally, I'll offer a benediction to send you into your day—or into your night.

So. If you're up for doing joy shots with a friend today...have a listen. (Music fades)

Hey, you got a problem?

Just figure it out.

That's the advice of Marie Forleo who describes her mother, who had a difficult childhood, as one of the most resourceful humans she's ever known.

"One of my mom's most prized possessions," she says, "was a little transistor radio she got from Tropicana orange juice, for free. The radio was the size, color, and shape of an orange, with a red-and-white-striped antenna sticking out the side like a straw. She loved that little radio.

My mom is one of those people who is constantly busy. As a little girl, I knew I could find her somewhere around the house or yard by listening for the tinny sound coming out of that Tropicana orange. One day I was walking home from school and heard the radio playing off in the distance. As I got closer, I realized the music was coming from above. I looked up and saw

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my mom perched on the roof of our two-story house. "Mooom! Is everything okay? What are you doing all the way up there?!"

She yelled down, "I'm fine, Ree. The roof had a leak. When I called the roofer, he said it would be at least five hundred bucks, probably more. That's friggin' nuts! I remembered seeing some extra asphalt in the garage and figured it would just take a few minutes to fix it up."

Another time, I came home from school and heard the radio buzzing from the back of the house. Mom was in the bathroom, surrounded by tools and exposed pipes. Dust particules filled the air. "Mom, what's going on?!"

"Oh, I'm just retiling the bathroom," she said. "I saw a few cracks and didn't want it all to get moldy."

You've got to understand, my mom is high school educated and this was the 1980s. It was a pre-internet, pre-YouTube, pre-Google world. I never knew where I'd find her or what she'd be doing, but all I had to do was follow the crackle of that radio.

One fall day, I came home late from school and something was different. Everything was dark. There was an unusual silence. Something was wrong. I quietly walked through the house afraid of what I might find. Where was the sound of the Tropicana orange? Where was my mom? Then I heard clicks and clacks. I followed that sound and saw my mom huddled over the kitchen table. It looked like an operating room. I saw electrical tape and screwdrivers, and spread out in front of her were countless tiny pieces of a dismantled Tropicana orange radio. . "Mom, are you okay? What happened to your radio? Is it broken?"

"It's fine, Ree. No big deal. The antenna got busted and the tuner dial was a little off, so I'm fixing it."

I stood there for a second, watching her work her magic. Finally, I asked, "Hey Mom, how do you know how to do so many different things that you've never done before, without anyone showing you how to do it?"

She put down her screwdriver, turned to me, and said, "Don't be silly, Ree. Nothing in life is that complicated. You can do whatever you set your mind to if you just roll up your sleeves, get in there, and do it. Everything is figureoutable."

Everything is figureoutable.

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Marie never forgot this philosophy of life, and says it helped her land every job she ever had, from selling glow sticks at megaclubs to trading on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, and to meet every challenge she's ever faced, like climbing out of debilitating debt.

Here are her rules of play:

1. All problems or dreams are figureoutable.
2. If a problem is not figureoutable, it's not really a problem—it's a fact of life or law of nature
3. You may not care enough to figure this problem out or achieve this particular dream. That's okay. Find another problem or dream that ignites a blazing fire in your heart and go back to Rule 1.

Now I can hear your objections already, situations you're thinking about that might be exceptions to these rules.

And she does admit that *"sure, there's no scientific evidence to confirm my hypothesis that everything is actually figureoutable, **but you'll never grow beyond your current circumstances if you're closed off to everything except what you currently know.**"*

What an empowering mindset!

Maybe you know people who are gifted in this way.

Maybe you could be inspired by them...as I was with my own mom, a figure-outer if there ever was one.

When I was in middle school, we lived in front of a cornfield, and thus we always had plenty of mice, which I hated. Even though mice are tiny and shy and furry—all prerequisites for a good pet—they gave me the creeps, skittering around like little cowards, leaving me calling cards in inconvenient places. One night in particular when I was a teenager, I had a small conniption when I pulled down my bedspread and discovered a little grey lump under my loosely-woven, see-through blanket.

Of course, I screamed. (Why I screamed, I don't know. Was he capable of hurting me? Did I expect him to leap from the bed in a vicious attack?) I ran into the kitchen, yelling at Mom, "There's a mouse in my bed! Oh gross! How did he *get* there? Ew, pleeeeee just get him out of there!

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Well, this posed a small dilemma for Mom in the role of Rescuer. If she went in and yanked the blanket off, the little varmint would probably dash away to hide somewhere else in the house.

She couldn't really throw a mouse trap under the blanket and expect him to take the bait.

Shooting the little booger was a possibility, but the only gun we had in the house was a German Luger my dad had brought back from the War, and mom had no idea where the ammunition was. And besides, firing a pistol at a rodent seemed pretty extreme.

While she considered the options, obviously in "this is figureoutable mode," I continued my freakout.

Finally, she really did figure it out.

She would whack him with something that would at least stun him long enough to get him off the bed, into a bag of some sort.

But what would she whack *with*?

She considered a broom, but that seemed too gentle for this quick and evil little creature, so she went for the hard stuff: a hammer. Yes! She would smash his little skull, and he'd never know what hit him.

I chose to stay in the kitchen, unable to witness the violence. (Such a wuss.) So Mom secured her weapon and crept down the hallway to my room alone, hammer poised over her head. Gingerly, she pushed the door open, tiptoed in and, with the furtive skill of a stealth bomber, approached her target. Then *wham!* I heard the hammer hit the bed once...twice...and a third time.

Then there was a long silence, as I waited for her to emerge with a lifeless little body.

She, however, came out of my room empty handed. Laughing.

I thought she'd taken leave of her senses, and cracked under the pressure of the kill.

As it turned out, she told me when she could catch her breath, that when she lifted the blanket, she found that she'd just beaten the living daylights out of one of my hair curlers.

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Okay, so maybe you'll get a few surprises on your way to figuring things out. Still.

There's most likely a challenge in your life right now that needs some problem-solving skills. Maybe it involves

- A relationship
- A life change
- A move
- An obstacle standing in the way of a goal or desire
- A health issue
- Finances
- Care needs for loved ones
- Sanity savers for yourself
- Or so much more...

Whatever you're encountering these days—from the smallest tasks to life-altering issues—consider using the brain God gave you, and being willing to stretch it and open it up to the possibilities beyond your past experience and your immediate gaze.

And so, my friend,

May you find new energy in taking on challenges, big and small,

May you dig into resourcefulness that you didn't know you had,

And in doing so, may you find joy in discovering that—if not totally everything, at least a whole lot of stuff--really is figureoutable.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who need a little encouragement to get creative in their approach to a current challenge, I invite you to share this podcast with them, and subscribe yourself on Apple Podcasts, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Or you can go to my website at

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jillbaughan.com, click on a podcast episode and sign up to receive episodes in your inbox. Just don't miss a single one, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Figure it out, my friends. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTE:

Forleo, Marie. *Everything Is Figureoutable*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2019.