

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 79-TELL YOUR STORY

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

This is Episode 79.

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.

Who are you? I bet you have a story to tell.

What would be the cost to you in your life if you choose not to tell your story?

What would you like to share with the people who know you--and those who don't?

Author and coach Christopher Connors asks those questions, and goes on to say this:

Of all the things that you can do to make the world a better place, few things are more valuable and beneficial than telling your story. No one can tell your story better than you can. Chances are, you will help others and yourself in the process.

Where have you been and what have you learned? What have you endured and what has made you tougher? How have your experiences enlightened you and in turn, inspired and informed you to produce positive change for others?

Past, present and future, we have adventures, trials, failures, journeys and epic wins to share with people. There isn't an excuse, really, if you don't let others know your story. There's so much to gain from the knowledge you possess. You will know your story--and the lessons that accompany it--better than anything else you'll ever know in this world.

The worst mistake we can make in life is thinking that other people don't care what we have to say. There's so much to lose by living in fear and passing on the opportunity to impact the lives of others.

And, in my opinion you shouldn't feel like it's only your whole life story that can help someone else; often it's just a story from your story.

Essentially, much of this podcast is my story...or my stories, not because I just have an obsessive need to talk about myself, but because I want you to find encouragement and joy in your own life by listening to pieces of mine.

Personally, I found so much hope from author Dawn Barton who had the courage to tell about losing an infant child, her divorce, her rape, her stage 3 breast cancer and...unbelievably...more. And yet, she says, *I have found joy in places you'd think it was unfindable. I want to share my stories with you because I have discovered how joy is a choice that makes life worth living.*

And she has helped hundreds of people, in person and online, by being willing to use the experiences of her personal journey to help people find joy even in dark days. And she says, ***I wholeheartedly believe that the obstacles in our lives should not beat us down, but give us reasons to more fully embrace joy wherever we can find it.***

As in this story:

After a mastectomy, Dawn went shopping for a prosthetic breast. She says, *We tried lots of prosthetics, searching for the perfect fit. Then I met Lucky. Just the right size and weight. He was a perfect fit...I didn't know when we met that his name would be Lucky, but after a very comprehensive and well-thought-out Facebook poll, the decision was made. A determining factor in the decision was that every day I wore it, I could say I was "getting' Lucky. I know, childishly bad, but it made me laugh. And I needed laughter...*

Every year we enjoy several days of boating and beaching [with our friends, the Hembrees]. This particular year, the Summer of Lucky, we rented a large sailboat in July...On this particular afternoon, we decided we were going to jump off the boat and into the water. From our perch near the ladder to the surface of the water below, it a good eighty-nine feet. Or maybe a little less--maybe like ten feet. Regardless, it felt really high. We were daredevils and about to show the youngsters what it was like to dance with danger. We sat the four children in a perfect row along the edge of the boat so that they could have a prime view of our parental awesomeness.

John [her husband] was instructed to film every second of it; we needed proof to show generations to come. Casie and I were fearless and ready. We smiled at each other and counted, "One...two...three..." And we jumped! Screaming like banshees, with legs and arms flailing all the way down, Casie and I (and Lucky) plunged into the water.

The moment I hit the surface, I felt Lucky slide) out of my swimsuit. The lower he sank into the water, the more thoughts raced through my head. "My boob! Where did my boob go?!" I opened my eyes underwater, searching. I can't lose Lucky! Will insurance cover another one? Oh my gosh, I love Lucky! I NEED Lucky. I am not whole without Lucky. Lucky, where are you?!

But the water was far too deep and dark to find him.

My head popped out of the water, and I looked right at John, who had his camera in hand and was still filming. I yelled to him, "I lost Lucky!"

For a brief moment, we looked at each other. Dumbfounded. Then, suddenly, about fifteen feet away, we watched Lucky burst victoriously out of the water. It was like a torpedo darting up from the depths of the sea.

I was elated. "My boob!" I yelled, and I began swimming to it. Prior to this incident, I had no idea Lucky knew how to float.

I also had no idea the children were watching every single second of this unfold. The little row of four-and six-year-olds sat, perfectly still, their eyes wide and their jaws resting on their laps. "How on earth will I explain that my breast just came bursting forth from the water to these innocent children?"

John Hembree, filming it all, was laughing so hard he could not speak.

Chances are I scarred the children for life, but it was worth it. I laughed so hard tears were streaming down my face. I couldn't catch my breath, and neither could Casie. It was a fabulously hilarious moment, and it's a story we tell over and over. "Remember when Mrs. Dawn's boob shot out of the water?" And, of course, the video gets pulled out about fifty times a year.

And why wouldn't we tell that story over and over? It's certainly as good as Free Willy. And Lucky has at least as much start quality as Wilson from Castaway. So I'll take it. There have been a lot of little wins in this story of girl meets boob, and I'll take them all--from the moment we met to his dramatic near-death experience. I'll pump them up and celebrate them like

we're in Rocky and we just made it to the top of the stairs. All the little wins--I'm going to go ahead and call them epic wins. Movie-worthy wins. And I'll delight in them all. Because in times like these, each little win is worth replaying over and over again. (57-59)

And so this remarkable lady chooses to tell her story of traveling through the unwanted journey of breast cancer--to give people hope, to help them through.

And in her book, *Laughing Through the Ugly Cry (and Finding Unstoppable Joy)* she doesn't shy away from dealing with more hard stuff in her life--the death of her infant daughter, her rape, her divorce, her breast cancer, her sister's breast cancer that eventually took her sister's life.

So many people have been heartened by Dawn's descriptions of walking through so much, and coming through on the other side able to find joy.

You may think your own stories are not important or exciting enough. But consider who you might inspire by sharing about your career or your schooling or your parenthood, your marriage, your divorce, your singlehood, your health, your struggles and triumphs, your failures and what you've learned and how you made it through, your story of coming to faith and losing your faith and then getting it back again in a whole new wrapper. ..and more.

Just keep this in mind, and tell your stories when the time is right. And tell them more than once, even if *some* people in your life are rolling their eyes in recognition of THAT one again. Because you are teaching them, encouraging them, letting them know they're not alone in their struggles, as well as their joy.

And so, my friend,

If you are resisting telling your story

May you understand what Frederick Buechner is talking about when he says

My story is important not because it is mine, God knows, but because if I tell it anything like right, the chances are you will recognize that in many ways it is also yours...It is precisely through these stories in all their particularity, as I have long believed and often said, that God makes himself known to each of us more powerfully and personally. If this is true, it means that to lose track of our stories is to be profoundly impoverished not only humanly but spiritually.

In other words, may you generously share your remarkable life, secure in the knowledge that **every stupid thing you've ever done is a story that may help someone else.**

God bless you.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who need to help the rest of us with their life experiences, I invite you to share this podcast with them, and subscribe yourself on iTunes, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Or you can go to my website at 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.

Tell your stories, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...