

# Jill Baughan

## TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 112-GIVE A COMPLIMENT

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

This is Episode 112.

Hey friend, do you know someone who's going through a tough time right now? And maybe you'd love to be an encouragement to them, but you aren't sure how? If so, I have something for you that can help with that. Just click on the link in the show notes, and you'll get a free gift from me: ideas for making a joy box that will definitely brighten the day--and maybe even the life--of someone you care about. And--bonus--getting that little bit of goodness will automatically sign you up to receive these podcast episodes in your inbox every week. You just might need a boost yourself.

Because 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 might inspire a way to uncover a piece of joy you've been looking for. Then, we'll consider how it could 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.

One day a while back I was at the baggage claim in the Fort Lauderdale airport, sitting on a bench facing some automatic doors that opened up to the outside. I'd been watching people for a while--such a fun thing to do at an airport--when I noticed something: Everybody--and I mean every body--who came through those doors was smiling. I knew there had to be something afoot, because so many random people in the same place are not generally smiling for no reason. So I stood up and walked over--and instantly found out what the source of all that joy was.

Every time someone strolled through those automatic doors, a deep voice from somewhere purred some kind of compliment, like "You're beautiful!"--or a woman's voice would say, "You're looking good today." Or "Hi there! Good to see you! Give me a big smile!"

# Jill Baughan

It was brilliant, and made me laugh out loud. “Who,” I wondered, “was sitting around one day, bored (a strong case for the value of boredom. Listen to Episode 109), and thought, ‘Hey, people need cheering up around here. Let’s give them a few compliments and see what happens!’”

Obviously joy happened, judging from the smiles coming through those doors.

And it’s probably no surprise to you that I couldn’t resist. Even though I had no reason to go outside, I walked out through that breezeway and heard, “Hi there! It’s a beautiful day! I like your shoes!” which made me laugh, because I was wearing really crummy shoes, so I knew this voice was not attached to a set of eyes. Even so--what a joy shot.

Then I walked back in through the doors, and a woman chirped, “Hello there! That’s a great outfit!” And it made me feel so good, I walked back out and back in and back out and back in, just to get a little pumped up. I hoped nobody was watching, but oh well. I’m telling you, it made my day.

Those compliments were so therapeutic. And they were from FAKE PEOPLE, for crying out loud. Surely, I thought, a real compliment from a real person with a real face would be even more uplifting.

And I was not wrong.

Writer Ama Sriver tells us, *There’s something powerful in giving and receiving compliments. Studies show compliments have the ability to create positive energy in people and, for lack of a better word, light up your brain in all the right places.*

*We all can agree genuine compliments are always nice to hear, but they don’t always come easy. We can get caught up in what it means to be honest and sincere and wonder if our delivery matched our intent. It’s a real skill, but also one we don’t necessarily have to overthink. Still, it might be helpful to have some guidelines for giving compliments that really do sincerely nurture someone.*

Psychotherapist Lindsey Liben (and others) recommends the KISS method for giving compliments: Keep It Sincere and Specific. *For example, she says, telling your friend that the party she threw was ‘Literally the best night ever,’ might come off as less meaningful than something along the lines of, ‘I love how you had icebreaker games ready to go so we could all get to know each other as soon as we got there. Hosting seems to come so naturally to you and I really appreciate you always introducing me to new people.*

So with that in mind, here are a few guidelines you might find helpful in giving simple, sincere compliments.

# Jill Baughan

**1. Give a personality affirmation**, making other people feel good about themselves, saying something like, "I love your laugh" or "I love the way you think about things."

**2. Reflect happiness.**

Actress and screenwriter Jen Ponton says, *Whomever we choose to compliment, we should really shine a light on who they are as a human being.*"

So you might say

-- You make me want to be a better person.

--You set such a great example for others.

**3. Emphasize their impact and your growth.** For instance, you could say

--Your presence and support made this possible for me

--Your patience is such an inspiration for me to practice kindness too.

**4. Mind your body language**

"When it comes to giving a great compliment, how you say it just as important as what you say," etiquette expert Diane Gottsman says. "For a compliment to feel authentic, it needs to be delivered in a meaningful tone of voice, with a genuine smile, and eye contact," she explains. "This is also why a compliment given in person is more effective than one given over a text," she adds.

**5. Say it as soon as you feel it**--because we all know that if you wait...you probably won't do it, and the compliment (and its benefits) will be lost.

It also pays to talk about how NOT to compliment:

**1. Nix the body talk**

"Who doesn't like to hear that you find them attractive? A lot of people, it turns out. Commenting on someone's body may be appropriate when you're talking to someone you have a close personal relationship with, like a family member or best friend, whom you know will appreciate it. But you should avoid all body comments with coworkers, casual acquaintances, or strangers," says Dr. Wyatt Fisher, a licensed psychologist in Boulder, Colorado. "Comments about their body or general looks can make them feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, or even harassed," he explains. "Plus, it's kind of a lazy compliment and may make you seem superficial."

About 110 percent of pickup lines fall into this category, like,

"Besides being gorgeous, what do you do for a living?"

# Jill Baughan

“Where do you hide your wings?”

“Hi, how was heaven when you left it?”

“Is it hot in here or is it just you?”

“I’d say God bless you, but it looks like he already has!”

“Did the sun come out or did you just smile at me?”

Okay, I ran these by my husband who claims he has *never* used *any* of them; however, he just couldn’t recall a single line he did use back in the day.

But anyway, they’re pickup lines; if you’re looking to give a genuine compliment, again, try to stay away from the body talk.

## 2. Avoid back-handed compliments at all costs

These are intended to be compliments that actually end up sounding like insults. For instance:

“Your new hairstyle makes you look so much younger!”

“You look great for your age!”

“You’re so pretty! How are you still single?”

“You are a saint for having so many kids!”

“Wow, you look so much better since you lost weight!”

Or this poor guy’s attempt: *Years ago I told my wife that I was glad she doesn't have a scrawny figure, that I appreciated her Rubenesque build, and I didn't understand the popular attraction to skinny models. My comment didn't go over well.*

I totally understand this unfortunate kind of “flattery.” Someone once described me to a potential date as “She no Miss America, but she’s a lot of fun.” Never forgot that one.

But even that’s not as bad as the GRANDDADDY of awful “compliments” a woman shared on Reddit.com, when an older gentleman said to her, *You know... you might not be much to look at in today's day and age, but in my day we'd have painted you on the side of a plane!*

**3. Avoid giving compliments that imply “I’d hate to be you,”** such as, “I could never do what you did, because I just couldn’t stand (fill in the blank): Going through chemo, infertility, losing a spouse, getting a divorce, parenting a special needs child, having adult children who live far away.

## 4. Don’t put yourself down in the process

Ama Scrivner says, *When you're trying to give someone a bit of shine, [this is] the last thing you should do. It makes them feel like they'll have to pick you back up in return.* In other words, don’t say anything like, “You have a beautiful home. You must feel like you’re at the dump when you come to mine.”

# Jill Baughan

But when you use a little care in giving people compliments, you can lift up spirits, and maybe even change a life or two.

***(Expressive Piano eases in.)***

And so my friend, when you affirm a fellow human,

May you remember to be 100% sincere,

And may you remember you have permission to keep it simple and specific,

And, really, in your efforts to say something nice, may you never, ever make reference to the side of a plane. Ever.

***(Expressive Piano gradually fades out.)***

Thanks so much for joining me.

***(Feeling Happiness eases in.)***

If you know people could use some encouragement to offer encouragement, 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](http://jillbaughan.com), click on a podcast episode and sign up to receive episodes in your inbox. Just don't miss an episode, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Give a compliment, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

***(Feeling Happiness fades out.)***

NOTES:

**Make a Joy Box for Someone You Care About: <https://jilbaughan.com/joy-box>**

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# Jill Baughan

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