

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 119-DEAL WITH DISAPPOINTMENT

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

This is Episode 119.

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.

Not long ago, we were cleaning out our attic, when I stumbled onto a priceless treasure.

There, buried under a bunch of memories, was a scrapbook I had made in middle school, full of pictures and memorabilia of my favorite musical group, The Monkees.

I loved these guys beyond reason. I refused to miss one single episode of their TV show NO MATTER WHAT, to the utter frustration of my mom who "just didn't understand" my obsession. The album was full of pictures and info about each Monkee, but one article titled "A Date with Davy" was way more worn out than the rest.

So when I read in my latest issue of *Tiger Beat* magazine that The Monkees were coming to Indianapolis, Indiana, the summer of 1967, I was ecstatic and determined to get to that concert. The trouble was, *Tiger Beat* provided no information about the location. So I took matters into my own hands, figuring "Where else would they be but the State Fair?"

And I wrote the Indiana State Fair a letter. It went like this:

May 13, 1967

Dear Sirs:

I recently read that the singing group, The Monkees, were to be in Indianapolis on July 26, 1967 to perform. I would like to know if they are to be at the State Fair Grounds, how to get tickets, and at what cost. If you are able to give me any information at all about this, I would be extremely grateful. Thank you.

Sincerely, Jill Ellis

Okay, give me points for correct business letter form, politeness, good grammar and succinctness.

In response, they sent my letter back to me with a message at the bottom--in all capital letters which, even way back then, coming off a typewriter, felt like I was being yelled at: *DEAR JILL: WE HAVE NO INFORMATION CONCERNING AN APPEARANCE OF THE MONKEES IN INDIANAPOLIS IN JULY. THEY DEFINITELY ARE NOT SCHEDULED TO APPEAR AT THE STATE FAIR COLISEUM.*

I was disappointed but undeterred because I had read this announcement in *Tiger Beat* magazine, and could not imagine that such a prestigious publication would toy with the emotions of middle school girls everywhere by printing false information.

So I wrote another letter to the Chamber of Commerce. It went like this:

May 13, 1967

Dear Sirs:

I recently read that The Monkees, a singing group, were to appear at Indianapolis on July 26, 1967. I then wrote to the Indianapolis State Fair Grounds, as that would be the typical place for a performance. I got a reply saying that they had no information about it. I was suggested to write to the Chamber of Commerce, so I did. If you can give me any information at all about this, please respond immediately. Thank you.

Sincerely, Jill Ellis

Note my budding anxiety, evidenced in the command to act on my request right away. Time was a-wastin', and I wanted those tickets now.

In response, I got my letter back with a message at the bottom, typed in all capital letters:

DEAR JILL:

THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SENT YOUR LETTER TO US FOR REPLY--AND OUR ANSWER IS STILL THE SAME. THE MONKEES ARE NOT SCHEDULED TO APPEAR AT THE COLISEUM ANY TIME IN THE FUTURE--AND WE HAVE CHECKED THE INDPLS AREA--AND NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT AN APPEARANCE HERE ON JULY 26, SORRY.

INDIANA STATE FAIR

Points to the Indiana State Fair for being so courteous as to respond to this second message from a middle-school girl, and also for actually checking the area for information.

But by this time, not only was I disbelieving, I was desperate. I wrote the Indiana State Fair Grounds a third letter that said this:

May 28, 1967

Dear Sirs:

It's me again. (I can imagine a major eye roll on their part by this time.) Please don't get the impression that I'm a bad, pesty kid. Just consistent and determined. I just read in 16 Magazine that the Monkees (underlined) were to appear at the State Fair Grounds on July 26, 1967. Two (underlined) editions aren't wrong are they? I can understand why you might resolve to secrecy, (Wut?) since it is almost two months away but please, please, oh please (each word underlined four times) tell me the truth. Are they or aren't they? Thanks a million.

Determinedly yours, Jill Ellis

Give me no points for this lame attempt to control the universe.

In response, I got my letter back again with the handwritten words THEY ARE NOT underlined three times in red at the bottom.

I finally cried "uncle"--and I mean literally cried. I locked myself in my bedroom closet and wept with abandon for at least an hour, bitter tears of disappointment, as I pasted those letters in the back of my scrapbook.

It makes me laugh now, because in the grand scheme of things, that disappointment was small. And yet, it wasn't small to me then, and I wonder: How do you handle disappointments now that you're all grown up?

The past two years have been full of disappointments: cancelled graduations and proms, weddings postponed, trips cancelled or put off indefinitely, all manner of letdowns.

I'm guessing you've had your share of these, and I think it helps to take a long view of what's really happening when things don't go our way.

According to Maggie Wooll, Managing Editor for *BetterUp*, *disappointment is a complex emotion that stems from sadness. It's what we feel when our expectations for the desired outcome are dashed.*

We all instantly recognize the feeling of being let down and the anger we might feel when something we thought we deserved didn't happen. Or the grief we experience when we miss out on an opportunity.

Disappointment is less useful as an emotion and far more useful as a data point. Like failure, experiencing disappointment tells us that something was "off." Be it the circumstances, the process, or our expectations.

In other words, Wooll says, it's time to look for a different way. And the best place to do that is the place James Clear calls "The Valley of Disappointment." If you persist with your actions in this valley, you can reach a breakthrough.

Here's how it works:

- *We set a goal or outcomes we desire.*
- *We overestimate the good things that might happen when we first start a task leading to the realization of this goal.*
- *Simultaneously, we underestimate the “negative” things that might also happen.*
- *This is why the first part of any goal attainment can feel so treacherous — you're living in the valley of disappointment.*
- *But if we keep our expectations steady through time, the same things that disappointed us end up leading us to the other side.*

In order to get there, though, Wooll offers a few suggestions to deal with it:

1. Let it out

Whether it's disappointment or anger, you need to feel it and let it out. A healthy way to achieve emotional health is to confide in your friends, family, or even a therapist. You could also channel this kind of tough emotion into a creative outlet. Try writing in a journal or doing something physical.

The point is to regulate your emotions by feeling whatever you're feeling and allowing it to pass.

Research has shown that emotional suppression can hinder our personal growth. Without the ability to feel emotions and actively express them, you have trouble adapting to new and unfamiliar situations.

2. Get perspective

Communication with friends and family about your disappointment can bring some much-needed clarity. When you get an outside perspective other than your own, you can begin to see things for what they really are, rather than how you feel about them.

3. Don't let it fester

Accepting the present moment allows you to acknowledge what is real.

Like breath, disappointment comes and goes. So breathe into it and let it pass.

The worst thing you can do is brood over negative experiences.

Again, the variable here is time. You certainly don't have to “bounce back” from disappointment right away.

But, once you've given yourself some time to come to terms with your circumstances, it's time to begin again.

As I look back at my own experience so long ago, I followed these guidelines pretty well for a kid. I let it out by crying in my closet; I gathered my Monkeemaniac buddies for a corporate whine regarding the unfairness of life, and then..well, then I got my act together and fired off two more letters, one to *Tiger Beat* and one to *16 Magazine*, demanding to know where they got their false information.

They did not reply.

No matter. That disappointment put me on high alert for some real opportunities to see my favorite group and in time, I finally got to see the Monkees in concert--over 40 years later.

And so, my friend,

If you are experiencing disappointment right now,

May you find yourself a closet to cry in,

Then may you find some special people who can offer you a new perspective.

And then may you find the strength to breathe into it, let it pass, and ask God for a different way...

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know someone who's experiencing a significant letdown right now, 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.

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

Till next time...