

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 137-CELEBRATE EACH OTHER

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

This is Episode 137, and the last episode of the Fall 2022 season. So in the coming few weeks, catch up on some episodes you missed, and I'll see you back here at the beginning of the Winter '22-'23 season on December 19 with a very special Christmas episode that will calm your soul and ease your mind and delight your senses and make you smile and help you focus on Hope. 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 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.

Then 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.

Holidays are upon us, and maybe this year you need a little help in keeping a group of people entertained for the better part of an evening.

Often, it's true, when family or friends or colleagues come together, the presence of free food is enough to keep everyone quite happy.

And time to talk is precious, for sure.

Not every gathering, however, is stress-free and easygoing. Sometimes the conversation, for whatever reason, doesn't flow. Maybe people are tired or stressed. Maybe they're so familiar with each other, there's nothing new to say, or maybe they don't know each other at all, and the chemistry isn't cookin'. Or maybe you'd just like to have a little fun with some people you love.

Whatever the reason, if you might be looking for a little more joy in your gathering these days, please know: I am here for you with an idea that will help you celebrate everyone in the room. Here it is:

Okay, fast, try this: Name something about yourself that you think almost nobody knows.

If you can do that, you have the key to helping an unsuspecting group of people break down barriers, relieve stress and amuse each other for hours.

It's fun, nonthreatening, easy and the best ice-breaker ever invented: "Stuff You Don't Know About Me."

Here's how it goes: You need at least 10 or 15 people, but you can play with a lot more. Everyone has an index card, and you write down something about yourself that you think nobody else in the room knows. It can be something about you (like "I was born in the back of a taxi."), something you can do ("I can kiss my own elbow."), or something you have done ("I once won a limbo contest."), a weird habit you have, someone you've met, someplace you've been, something you love, something you hate, something you said, something you believed as a child...You get the idea. The index cards are then given to a "reader," who reads them out loud; then the group tries to guess who owns the action. (Note: Always ask for an explanation. A detailed explanation.)

One variation of the game is this: Write down something about yourself you think nobody else in the room knows, and also write down two lies about yourself (like "I have a twin." And "I got a concussion in a skiing accident when I was 17.") Each person or a designated reader can read the statement this about you and the group tries to figure out which statement is true. This version is a little more complicated. If you have a roomful of simple-minded people, the first version would be the easiest, my preference.

Side note: This is a great activity to pull out of your hat if you're even with a small group of people who are stuck, say, in an elevator or in an airport waiting for a delayed flight, or anywhere people tend to get bored and cranky.

However, if this is a planned event, it's often to everyone's advantage to prep people ahead of time by telling them about the game, and giving them a little time to think about their response. It takes some pressure off, anyway.

In playing "Stuff" over the years, I've heard about, among many other things, people who met famous people (someone had dinner with Herschel Walker; someone else was hugged and kissed by Roman Brady from Days of Our Lives and Mr. Peterman from Seinfeld); somebody who used to be a Rockette; somebody who saved a person's life; someone who placed second in a beauty pageant; and lots of people who went skinny dipping in places they shouldn't have.

One of my favorites is the dearth of body tricks that seem to surface when there's a captive audience like this one.

For instance, in one round of "Stuff," my friend Gail claimed to be able to cross one eye. Of course we begged her to show us, and everyone circled up and leaned in to get a good look. When she actually did it, we all jumped back with a big, collective "Whoaaaaa!!" and our respect for her and her talent skyrocketed.

That there is some quality fun on a Saturday night, let me tell you.

And only a handful of people in the world know that I myself can stack ten pennies on my clavicle.

You may wonder how I came to discover this gift. Simple, really. I lost the back of an earring one day years ago, and after searching everywhere in the house for it, I finally found it sitting happily in the indentation on the left side of my collar bone. I had no idea that I could hold anything there, and started wondering what else would fit...like a stack of 10 pennies. And there you have it.

Of course, now a whole bunch of people know this fun fact, and I can no longer use it to play the best ice-breaker ever invented. But that's okay. There's plenty more material where that came from....and I'll bet there's plenty of material in your own life, if you think about it long enough.

Some of you will only have to think a couple of seconds.

But I digress.

One of the best parts of the game is the fact that, once someone confesses to be the one who did this thing, they almost always tell the story behind it. And thus, you end up with an evening full of tales you never heard about new friends and friends you thought you knew.

It's a great way to spend time with people you're just getting to know, people you know pretty well, and even people you've known all your life. In fact, one of the best groups of players might be members of your family—especially older members, since they always seem to be pulling out spicy details of their lives that nobody's ever heard before.

When the stories start rolling, you'll find yourself in the middle of an evening full of surprises.

And I can almost guarantee you will come away with a stomach sore from laughing, and maybe even a heart that's a little bigger and more appreciative of the folks in your space.

And you will probably also find yourself saying things like, "Wow, I never knew..." and "We really should do this more often."

Yes, you should.

Because celebrating each other is a priceless gift. Not to mention super-entertaining.

And so, my friend, this oh-so-loaded time of year,

May you thank God for the people who populate the room you're in, whether you know them well or not,

And may you thank God for the people who populate the room you're in, even whether you like them much or not.

And may you delight in the life stories of all the people around you...this season and beyond...

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who are looking for a way to liven up a room, 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 an episode, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Celebrate each other, wherever you are, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...