

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 141-SNIFF OUT AN ADVENTURE

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

This is Episode 141.

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.

Have you ever had the crazy feeling that you were on the edge of an adventure?

And have you ever heard the phrase, "If everything goes perfectly, it's not an adventure"?

A few years ago, my niece, Becky and her now-husband, Martin, decided to get married in Italy, just outside of Rome. I described in Episode 31 how our family excitedly flew out to help them celebrate in this romantic setting, and how we could hardly wait for the fairy tale to begin.

And, from my own personal view, all was pretty doggone Disney-worthy until Friday morning—the day before the wedding.

Because on Friday morning, I woke up feeling funny in my right eye. And when I looked into the mirror, I saw why: it was almost swollen shut, red and gunky.

A slight panic set in when I realized I probably had an eye infection that needed attention, which would have been easy to get at home. But I was in a foreign country, for crying out loud. Where were the doctors? Where was the Walgreen's?

All I knew to do was cover up my eye so I wouldn't gross out the hotel desk clerk and explain my dilemma. To my relief, she was wonderful, and told me she would call a cab, tell the driver what I needed and make an appointment with a doctor she knew in the nearby town of Orvieto.

I must tell you at this point that several members of my family volunteered to come with me. But for a couple of reasons, I declined all offers. First, I knew they had fun plans for the afternoon, and I didn't want to keep them from those, since our time in Italy was limited.

But second, in spite of the wicked and offensive condition of my right eye, I had a delicious feeling that an adventure was about to happen, and I wanted it all to myself.

So the cab driver, (a sweet 40ish lady named Indira, who spoke limited English) showed up, and we took off, careening down a few narrow streets, just like in the movies. When we finally stopped, it was in front of a building that had no indication of occupancy--only a barred front door that looked like something out of *Young Frankenstein*. Indira, sensing apprehension in my wide eyes (well, eye) said she would go in first.

She pushed the door open (it took two hands and a serious lean), and we walked into a dark, empty hallway. Suddenly, out from a door on the left, popped a smiling man--the doctor, apparently, although who knew?-- who greeted us in Italian. Indira told him who I was, found out how long the appointment was going to be, then headed out the door, telling me she'd be back soon. Yes. She left me all alone.

The doctor and I sat down at his desk, and it was immediately clear that this wasn't going well, because he spoke no English and I spoke no Italian. There was only gesturing. LOTS of gesturing. Suddenly, he got up, left the room ("Where in the world is he going?" I thought)...and came back with his daughter, who spoke a little more English than he did--a translator! Then he pointed to the examining room: down some stairs to a cavern-like space with some equipment and a table to lie on.

Okay, this was the part where I was feeling way out of control, questioning my own judgment. (As I said before, I had declined multiple offers of people in our group to go with me. "What could possibly happen?" I thought. At this point, however, "spiral mind" took over, and I imagined myself tied to a chair, the victim of a mad doctor's heinous experiment.)

But he merely examined my eye, pronounced it indeed infected, prescribed some cream, drops, and an antibiotic. The instructions for using these came with a lot of translating and more gesturing. He told his daughter, she told me, I didn't understand, she spoke to him again, he told her something, she told me...repeat, repeat, repeat, with all three of us pointing, miming and making relevant noises. Occasionally at the same time.

We finally got it straight; then there was the question of payment. "How much?" I asked. "70 euros," his daughter said, which sounded very reasonable to me. Just one small problem, then: I didn't have 70 euros, and he took no credit cards.

So. Just as I began to panic because of my insufficient funds, Indira the cab driver arrived, reached into her purse, pulled out 70 euros and paid the doctor *herself*. Then she said to me, "I take you to farmacia to get medicine, then I take you to bank." I nearly cried with gratitude as she said, "Is okay. No problem!"

I then said my goodbyes to my new best friends, and after taking a photo of my angels--the doctor, his daughter and Indira--together, I hopped into the cab. We did some more careening down more narrow streets, stopped at the farmacia (where Indira translated again, this time for the farmacista), then at the bank, where I got cash and thanked her profusely.

She then dropped me off in town where my family was roaming around somewhere, and I sent them all a text that just said, "Well, THAT was an adventure!"

Yes, it could have gone all wrong, but had I not accepted that little invitation to adventure, I never would have experienced the extreme kindness of strangers, and to use a cliche that I now know to be true, it restored my faith in humanity in this nutty world.

Also, I never would have had the opportunity to imagine I was in a James Bond movie in a car chase down narrow streets in Italy.

Just sayin'.

Anyway, I tell you this because that experience revisited me recently in a most unexpected way.

A couple weeks ago, I went in for a routine mammogram and a week later, after a needle biopsy to a suspicious mass on my left side, I got a call from the doctor's office to come in and "discuss the results of your biopsy."

"You mean right now?" I asked, and the assistant said, "Yes, as soon as you can."

We all know what that means, right? Heart pounding, I fairly flew into the office. When the doctor came in, I sat down, she looked at me and shook her head, telling me that the lump they found was cancerous.

I will tell you, I was very proud of myself. I looked like the picture of composure on the outside, asking about next steps.

However, my insides were going wackadoodle.

By the time you hear this, I'll know more. But as I'm writing and recording this episode, I have appointments with two different surgeons and consultations with a host of other medical professionals to discuss options and treatments and prognoses.

I won't lie, I alternate between peace and panic at least fifty times a day, and often fight the urge to go around hitting things at random.

I've debated and dreaded sharing news like this, because I hate the thought of well-meaning people looking at me with pitiful sad eyes and asking how I am, and trying not to

stare at my chest which may be altered in some way before it's all over. I don't want this disease to become like my identity, because it's not.

Part of me wants to hide the whole thing and pretend that nothing is going on, just to go undercover and emerge treated, so people at large will be none the wiser. But another part of me wants to take you with me on this journey—not to focus on my specific challenge, but rather to share what the whole experience is teaching me about joy.

What to do, then?

I asked my wise coach, Kathi, what she thought: Go through this under the radar, then talk about it with my community when it's "over," or maybe not talk about it at all? Or should I take my people along with me? And she quickly advised, "As you feel led...take them along."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because," she said, "If you wait for the red bow at the end, how would you see the hand of God along the way?"

So.

Please know that the coming days will not be a blow-by-blow of dealing with a disease. But I'm praying that God will show me a few new things about navigating the hard stuff of life with joy. And a sense of humor.

And I must tell you: There's an added dimension to this saga that surprised me: When I first heard the diagnosis, as upsetting as it was, I told my husband, Ben, "I have the oddest sensation deep in my soul. I've been remembering that time in Italy, that even in the middle of that eye infection nonsense, that physical challenge I never would have chosen, I smelled an adventure and I knew it was mine to have. And somehow, some way, I feel the same way about this."

I know. It's so totally weird.

And yet, as you know, God is prone to working in ways that may seem totally weird to us.

You too are going through something today. Something you didn't choose, something you wouldn't choose for yourself in a million years. But as counterintuitive as it sounds, maybe God is calling you to an adventure, too—one where you might take a risk to experience something remarkable.

If that is so, my friend,

May you accept His invitation to travel this road with Him,

And may you accept my invitation to travel this road with me,

And together, may the three of us spend the journey looking for remarkableness from the hand of God all along the way.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who are dealing with unwelcome stuff today, 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.

Sniff out an adventure wherever you are, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTE:

Baughan, Jill. *Find Joy No Matter What Podcast*, Episode 31: "Have Yourself an Adventure."
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