

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 143-DO A LITTLE THING

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

This is Episode 143.

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.

Little things can make a BIG difference:

There was a story in my hometown newspaper one day long ago—over twenty years. It was a photo of a young lady proudly holding up a plaque and a ribbon—livestock awards she won during the 4-H fair. This kind of article wasn't unusual in the paper during Fair week—but apparently the text under the photo caused quite a stir. The heading in bold letters? **EROTIC GOAT**.

I know. I had questions too.

Exactly what does one of these animals DO, anyway, to deserve this title? Was it something in the way he moved? Had he been cast in a grainy film of questionable content? Was he guilty of indiscriminate mating habits?

But that wasn't all. You were absolutely compelled to read the text that followed, which announced the young lady as showing off her plaque and ribbon for being the grand champion in the *erotic goat division*.

Oh my gosh, there were more of them. It was a *group*, for crying out loud. An entire division, a classification for errant/wayward livestock. What was 4-H world coming to, anyway?

And then with a sigh of relief concerning the moral fiber of the farm animals in the county, most people realized it was a typo—that should have read *exotic* goat in the *exotic* goat division. Which I'm still not exactly sure means what, but whatever.

One little letter, friends. One little letter can make a world of difference.

All they had to do was put a little X instead of the R, and it would have saved somebody on the newspaper staff some major embarrassment. But oh what the heck, as it was, it provided decades of smiles...

Likewise, a little thing you do can make a big difference—maybe now, maybe years down the road, in serious and in light-hearted ways.

Take, for instance, beloved New Jersey teacher Ruth Reed who wrote on her Facebook page: “I have made a resolution to once a week treat someone at Wawa. Occasionally it happens more than once a week. This man was short a few dollars. He asked a lady with him if she had money. I jumped in and said I would pay and explained why. He thanked me and asked my name. I asked him his and he told me it was Keith.”

“I said that he did look like Keith Urban,” she said.

And when he told her that he was, she didn’t believe him.

“He finally said that I could ask his bodyguard. It was then I realized what an idiot I was. He graciously allowed me to get my picture taken with him,” she added of Urban, who performed at the BB&T Pavilion in Camden later that night as part of his Graffiti U tour.

But in fact, Reed is the gracious one in town. She revealed that she has been helping pay for other people’s Wawa goods for three years.

And of course, Reed’s photo with Keith Urban went viral on Facebook, after it was posted on her city’s Local page.

Just a little thing. That ended up being a pretty doggone amazing thing.

And then there’s just about my favorite example in the world:

My grandfather was a humble man with a humble occupation; he and my grandma never had much money, but he made the most of his job as a road grader in rural Indiana.

For the uninitiated, this work entailed driving down unpaved roads, smoothing out the places where the cars forced the gravel to pile up in the middle and make a hump.

He had a regular route that he traveled, so he knew a lot about what was going on with whom in the county. And the people who lived on his route knew a lot about him, too—for a very good reason—because he did a little thing that spread a lot of joy.

If you are of a (ahem) certain age, you may remember Chiclets from your childhood—famous little white squares of candy-coated gum that came in a little yellow box. (They've actually been around since 1900.)

Well, my grandfather evidently thought they were the best ever, and bought them by the case—but not for himself. He kept them with him on his rounds every day, and whenever he saw people—in particular, children—in the yard as he drove past, he would throw Chiclets out the window for them to run and gather up.

As you can imagine, he had quite the reputation as the treat-hurling “Grader Man,” and kids of all ages looked forward to his rounds like it was Christmas and he was Santa Claus.

Which seems like a very little thing to do.

But over sixty years later, a man named Bill remembers the extreme kindness of my grandfather when he tells the story of the day his mother announced to him and his two siblings that they were going into town that morning. The kids threw a fit, because that would mean that they'd be gone when the Grader Man drove by lobbing little pieces of joy at them, and they didn't want to miss that.

But their mom insisted that they must go, so off they trudged, cranky when they left and just as grumpy when they arrived back home.

Until.

Their mom went out to see about the day's mail, opened the mailbox and found...three tiny white squares of gum waiting for the three children who missed the grader man's rounds that day.

A Chiclet measures less than ½ inch in diameter. So tiny. But in the hands of a humble man with a big heart, the memory of that “little thing” still brings joy over 60 years later.

And so my friends,

May you remember the words of writer Ralph Marston when he says,

Little things done often can be more effective than big things done occasionally. Make a little positive difference enough times and you'll soon discover you've made a big difference.

A small kindness is a little thing you always have the opportunity to offer. Do it a hundred times, or a thousand, and you'll change your life, as well as the lives of others, for the better.

Little things are simple, easy, accessible, repeatable. Little things give you a continuing way to invest in the goodness of life.

Little things provide a way to take action without the need for elaborate planning or resources. And the more action you take, the more value you create, the more fulfillment you experience.

Look around eagerly with kindness, respect, understanding and good cheer. Notice all the little things you can do today.

And watch as life grows in richness and meaning by the [little] minute.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who need to be reminded that big stuff isn't all that counts, 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.

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

Till next time...

NOTES:

Marston, Ralph. "Power in Little Things." *The Daily Motivator*, March 23, 2022.

<https://greatday.com/motivate/220323.html>

Mizoguchi, Karen. "Keith Urban Seemed Short on Cash at a N.J. Store so Local Teacher Graciously Picked Up the Tab." *People*, August 6, 2018.

https://people.com/country/keith-urban-short-on-cash-wawa-ruth-reed-picked-up-tab/?utm_source=emailshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email-share-article&utm_content=20220626