TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 201-LINGER

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

This is Episode 201.

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.

One evening at dusk I was walking to the porch from the driveway when I spied a toad on the sidewalk. I almost stepped on him, so I felt compelled to get up close and personal with him, and speak to him about his unfortunate choice to sit in the middle of a sidewalk. I told him that I understood it was a lovely evening, and I was glad to see him, but he'd best get off the walk before somebody with shoes on came along and flattened him. I actually said these things out loud because—well, no one else was around, and why not? And, come on, tell me you don't talk to your dog or your cat or squirrels who are stealing food from your bird feeder.

Anyway, I spoke to him for a little while, and he just sat there, totally unmoved to move. So I bent down to see if I could make eye contact and intimidate him enough to get him to hop along. That's when I saw that I'd actually been having a conversation with a piece of pine bark mulch for the past minute and a half.

Yes, I felt a little bit stupid. But I was somehow strangely invigorated from lingering that extra little bit of time outside, time to connect with a little nature—even the unexpected kind.

This episode is your invitation then, friend, to practice the linger—sometimes defined as *remaining or staying on in a place longer than is usual or expected, as if from reluctance to leave. Dwelling in contemplation, thought, or enjoyment.*
Sounds nice, right?

But how often do we take time to linger? In a world where rushing is the norm, what prevents us from taking these moments to simply be present in the lingering? Courtney, the author of "Let's Linger Longer and Fall in Love" *shares this insight:*

"Guilt impedes our ability to linger longer, and so does busyness, or the habit of busyness. Guilt tells us if we do more, we can be more, have more, and prove to everyone else that we are more. We think if we have free time, our house should be cleaner, or our children should be involved in more activities, or we should be finding ways to fill up all of our time. Those are the lies that guilt tells us, ***but guilt doesn't stand a chance when we are fully present****. When we turn our attention to the meaning of the moment we are in, we don't trust the lies, or feel the pull to do more."*

And while this wasn't always easy for me to do, asks Laura, "Learning to Linger: Finding Beauty in the Ordinary in the Midst of a Busy Life," *I now live for these moments of lingering. Whether it's lingering with someone else or the sweet gift I simply give to myself. The gift of watching a sunset for just a few moments longer. The gift of spending a few moments chatting in the checkout line at the grocery store with perfect strangers. The gift of seeing the beauty of a cold snowy day through the lens of my camera. The gift of just sitting quietly with myself and God over a hot cup of tea. The gift of dancing solo in my living room to just one more song.*

Please don't put off the lingering, she urges. *It's not a check list item. Instead it's a way of being that is mindful of these often simple opportunities to linger.* ***The extraordinary of the ordinary can easily be missed in the busyness of life.***

But how do we find the time?

First it's about realizing that we will never be "done" all that needs to be done. However, we can certainly lessen those tasks that need to be done.

As for learning to linger, this can be difficult at first if it's not something you are used to doin, she says*. It will require an intentional daily practice of finding those bursts of happiness that you are reluctant to leave. And it may also be an intentional daily practice of choosing not to rush to the next thing that has to be done. The dishes can wait. Put down your phone. Don't be so quick to fill every single moment with stuff and activities. Be present in whatever you are doing. And most importantly lose the guilt. This daily practice of learning to linger has now turned into an immense longing for me. Something I crave and need in my life daily.*

I once asked my mom, when she visited my home, how she could sit at the kitchen table and just look out the window. Didn't she want to hop up avail herself of the menu of activities I'd listed as possibilities for her when she visited? "I'm just enjoying the view," she said, and don't you know, I then decided to sit down with her, look out the window…and enjoy the view with her.

So I was intrigued when I read about a lady named Diane Shiffer—a grandmotherly type of lady on Instagram who often urges younger folks to slow down to notice and nurture.

Back when I was a young mom, she says, *there was a lot of pressure to get up very early in the morning for Bible study and prayer—have a quiet time.. I tried—[but] during those early morning quiet times, I often found myself sitting and staring blankly into space. My eyes gravitated toward beauty; my heart gravitated towards the peace I felt when I sat in appreciation and gratitude.. Instead of talking about my "quiet time," I started referring to it as my "sit and stare time." At first it was a joke. But then I began to see the benefit of unashamedly taking a few quiet moments at the start of my day. We don't need to be productive every minute, my darlings. But we do need beauty and peace and joy.*

In answer to the question "How do I go slow?" she says, *I can remember for years when I was working, then coming home and supervising my kids' homeschooling, then doing all the cooking and the cleaning, it's just mind-numbing. So hard. In the morning I'd get my coffee and I would sit someplace where I would have something I could look at that was beautiful to me. .And I would just sit with my coffee for ten minutes, five minutes, fifteen minutes, whatever I could spare that day and I would slow myself down, focus on the beauty, enjoy the coffee,*

Diane Shiffer is no longer a young mom. But she still starts every day…with just a minute of "sit and stare time." And that, apparently, has made all the difference.

What might sit and stare time look like for you? Even for a minute?

Where might a conscious decision to linger in a moment take your spirit?

What might happen if you decided to linger…

Outside at night: Just last weekend we were at a ranch in the mountains with a group of friends. One evening, we all gathered on the porch, mountains on every side, and watched the moon rise over the mountain. We enjoyed it so much, we made it a point to haul our chairs to the porch the next night to linger, talking, waiting for another show. Finally, to our surprise that evening, we saw nothing for quite a while, and thought the clouds were hiding the prize. But finally, just above the mountain, the bright red-orange tip of the circle peeked over the horizon, and in 90 seconds, we watched a brilliant strawberry moon rise out of hiding and head up into the sky.

What might happen if you decided to linger at the table? If you ever travel to Europe, you may notice that the waitstaff are prone to repeatedly walking right by you when you think it's time for the check. But in many places, the restaurant staff assumes that you want that table for the evening, not for the hour. They expect you to enjoy each other's company and enjoy the food, not to wolf the food down get out of Dodge as efficiently as possible.

And what if you decided to linger over your food? Why do so many of us eat so fast? As someone once told me, “Remember, your stomach can’t taste, so there’s no reward for putting food in your mouth when there’s already food in your mouth!”

What if you decided to linger in a shop that smells good, or has great music playing

Or over a phrase in a book, a photo in your phone, a piece of art.

What if you chose to linger—and enjoy the weather. One morning I walked out to my car, noticed what a beautiful day it was, opened the door, then got in and shut it. But immediately I thought about the fact that no matter what unknown wackadoodleness the rest of the day held, it would always hold the beauty of that sky and those trees and that air. So I opened the door back up, stepped back out of the car, and just looked up. At the sky and the trees. I took a few breaths of that air. And lingered. For maybe 30 seconds.

What if you made a conscious choice to linger—with gratitude?

One day my husband Ben went for a short hike alone. When he came home, I asked him about his time on the trail, and he said, “Actually, I came to a bench about halfway and sat down for an hour.”

“An hour!” I said. “Why? That’s a long time. What were you doing? Were you tired?”

“No,” he said. “I just sat and thought about all the things I’m grateful for.”

And so, my friend, whether it’s for a few seconds or a few hours,

May you, too, find space in your life

To pause

To savor

To listen

To see

To sit and stare (even if it’s at a hunk of mulch)

And to offer a prayer of thanks to the God who has gifted you with all the good things.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who are missing a lot of goodness these days, 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.

Linger a while, my friend, whatever that means for you. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTES:

"How to Avoid Burnout with Diane Shiffer." *Unfiltered Friends Podcast*
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80P7ogD4EUk

"Learning to Linger: Finding Beauty in the Ordinary in the Midst of a Busy Life." October 12, 2018.
https://orgjunkie.com/2018/10/learning-to-linger.html

Shiffer, Diane.
https://www.tiktok.com/@shifferdiane/video/7207395751607930158