TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 216-BE NICE TO YOUR HURT FEELINGS

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

This is Episode 216.

Friends, I have exciting news! My new book, *No Matter What: 90 Devotions for Experiencing Unexpected Joy in Tough Times*, releases soon—on April 1! (And that's no joke!). And I can't wait to share with you bite-size shots of joy for your first thing in the morning, before your feet hit the floor, for your last thing at night before your head hits the pillow, or any time during the day when you need a little encouragement from a friend. You can pre-order it on Amazon and get as soon as it comes into the world, 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.

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.

I once had a blind date with a boy named Bruce. I was particularly excited when mutual friends set us up one spring evening because Bruce was a college "man" at Purdue University, where I would be attending the following fall. It was a double date with our matchmaking friends; I have no memory of where we went, only that he seemed like a nice guy, and we had a nice time. In fact, Bruce said, "I'll call you when you get to Purdue; we can get together."

I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "Riiiiight, Bruce. Oldest escape line in the book. Don't call us, we'll call you," and envisioning me as a lonely, naïve little college freshman, wringing my hands, staring at the phone, and saying, "They say they'll call, they say they'll call, they never call."

But he wrote to me that summer (A letter. I know. This was a hundred years ago.), asking about what dorm I'd be in, asking about my roommate, and classes I'd be taking. Of course, I wrote back, and soon after I arrived on campus, our room phone rang one evening; I picked it up and heard, "Jill, this is Bruce. How're you doing?"

Of course, my heart jumped and thumped at the mere notion of a call from an upperclassman. We talked for about twenty minutes—twenty minutes, mind you—about all sorts of things, the conversation easy and relaxed. Then he said, "Hey, our dorm is having a dance next week, and I was wondering…."

Pause right here. You need to know that there was a book published on campus called The Freshman Register with photos of all the freshman who chose to be included in it. You can only imagine how popular that publication was.

"I was wondering," Bruce said, "do you think your roommate would go with me?"

I was literally speechless for a few seconds.

What would you have said to him?

Finally, I found words: She's not here right now. Why don't you call back sometime and ask her yourself? Bye.

He never did.

My feelings were hurt, yes. A lot.

Surely you have a story of hurt feelings, too. Think about that story for a minute. How did you deal with them? How DO you deal with them?

The editorial team at counseling service Better Help has a little advice and encouragement for all of us who might be licking a few wounds right now. They say, *Most of us experience **hurt feelings** at some point due to an interaction with a friend, family, romantic partner, coworker, or another person. While this pain is real and your emotions are valid, the emotional pain you're experiencing doesn't necessarily have to negatively affect you in the long term.* They suggest a few steps to help you cope when someone steals your joy by stepping on your emotional toes:

Step one: Discover the root of the hurt

Better Help says, *When someone hurts your feelings in some way, your initial reaction may be to eliminate your negative feelings as quickly as possible. You may feel like avoiding the issue altogether, which can be normal. You might bury yourself in other activities, like work, a vacation, a relationship, online gaming, or watching TV. However, research shows that blocked emotions can negatively affect our mental and physical health, such as heart disease, headaches, insomnia, and digestive problems. Also, using distractions keeps you from learning from your experience.*

*Instead, in order to grow from your experience, you might try to fully **experience your emotions**. You might take some time to think about why you are feeling the way you are. You could ask yourself why the situation is affecting you so deeply.*

I wasn't so insightful at the time, but I can now see that my feelings of being an unattractive "loser" were partially rooted in my own insecurity about not having been "chosen" much in high school; I never had a boyfriend, and only a handful of dates, and always felt that something was at least a little bit wrong with me. My college roommate, to be honest, was very pretty, prettier than I was, and so I assumed I was just too unattractive to appeal to anyone. Talk about being too critical of yourself!

Step two: Put yourself in their shoes

Better Help's advice: After you have experienced your feelings and thoughts for a while, you might take some time to explore the situation more deeply. It may be helpful to try to understand why the other person did or said what they did. This may be easier said than done, but you may find that ***understanding the other person's perspective*** *makes it easier for you to accept the situation. It may not take away the pain you experienced or lead you to automatically forgive the person who hurt you, but it may reduce the intensity of your feelings.*

For instance, let's suppose you are hurt because a friend snapped at you. You may know they are going through an intense breakup. Although this may not excuse their behavior, it may help you understand why they acted the way they did. They may be experiencing a lot of distressing emotions themselves.

In my case, this was really hard to do. I actually tried to make excuses for Bruce's obtuse, thoughtless behavior. The best one I could come up with (then and now) was, "Well, he's a 19-year-old guy whose brain hadn't finished growing yet."

Step three: Forgive

Regardless of whether you decide to continue having a relationship with the person who hurt you, it may help you to forgive them. Research suggests that ***forgiveness*** *can lead to a number of physical and emotional benefits.*

According to Harvard Medical School, "Observational studies, and even some randomized trials, suggest that ***forgiveness is associated with lower levels of depression****, anxiety, and hostility"*

You can go through all the steps listed above, but you may never receive an apology for the hurt you experienced. It may be helpful to accept that fact and take steps to move on. Holding on to feelings of shame, anger, or guilt may make you feel worse, and it isn't likely to affect the person who hurt you in the way you might want it to.

Well, the next semester , believe it or not, Bruce called back. He mentioned a dance—this time a formal dance. (Inside, I thought, oh man, he's gonna ask me out this time. Should I forgive him for hurting my feelings, for that terrible social gaffe from the previous semester? "And I was wondering" he said, "if you'd like to go…with a friend of mine? I have a date, but he doesn't. (Can you hear me rolling my eyes?)

My first thought: ARE YOU KIDDING ME? But then in just a few seconds I decided two things: I needed to reframe the situation (he must have like me enough to recommend my company to someone, and to spend an evening in proximity to me), and I thought, "Well maybe I SHOULD forgive him. Who knows? His friend and I might hit it off and have a great time. Plus, it was an opportunity to get a nice dress.

So I said yes.

And I'm glad I did. Now the evening turned out to be…perfectly awful. Bruce's date was a blonde bombshell. (Apparently I wasn't his type.) Let's be nice and say that my date, whose name was Ephraim, and I were totally incompatible. He was Just. So. Weird. Wild manic dancing, eyes on other women all night. But—even without Better Help's help that night all those years ago, I mobilized and launched

Step four: Set boundaries
They say*, After you've decompressed and gained better control of your emotions…you may need to set boundaries and stand up for yourself to avoid further hurt.*

Apparently, I was "decompressing" all evening, because at the end of the night, when he dropped me off at my dorm, he said something about getting together again. And I…I just shook his hand and said, "Thank you, Ephraim. It's been a real experience."

I guess my hurt feelings were somewhat redeemed at that point, but the real reward came from

Step FIVE: Practice self-care
After you've discovered the root of the hurt and have an understanding of where the person who hurt you was coming from, it may be beneficial to focus on yourself for a while, spending extra time on self care…And part of self-care may also involve ***seeking support and discussing the situation with a friend.***

Wise advice, Better Help. Because by the second semester I had developed a group of close friends who were following the whole story, and were anxious to find out how that evening ended. When I told them, we all had a good laugh, and "It's been a real experience" became the buzz phrase for all our unfortunate relationship events.

It also made a great story to tell you.

And so, my friend, when you've been wounded by someone's insensitivity,

May you look for the true root of your hurt.
May you exit your own head for a minute and put yourself in their shoes.
May you find the grace to forgive them, and the fortitude to set necessary boundaries…

And may you thank God for a great story to share, even many years later.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who may have had their toes stepped on lately, 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.

Be kind to your hurt feelings, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

Thanks so much for joining me.

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Create. Order. Reach out. Enjoy. And for Pete's sake, so something ridiculous, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTE:

Better Help Editorial Team. "Five Steps to Help You When Someone Hurts You Emotionally." October 14, 2024.
https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/relations/5-steps-to-help-you-get-through-when-people-hurt-you/#