

# ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

## 50. The Truth About Our Limiting Beliefs

You're listening to episode 50 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast, titled, *The Truth About Our Limiting Beliefs*. Welcome back to the podcast! Thank you for joining me today. It's been said you and I are only as limited as our beliefs (Jennifer Ho-Dougatz). And if you think about that for a moment, it's so true, isn't it? So often it's our beliefs and what we tell ourselves that hold us back and prevent us from realizing our full potential. Well, in this episode we are exploring this a little more. What are these beliefs, what can we do about them, and how can we live encouraged in spite of them. I'm excited to get into this episode! So, let's get to it.

"If you accept a limiting belief, then it will become a truth for you." --Louis Hay

So, what do you think? Are your beliefs limiting you? Do you have any that are holding you back? These kinds of beliefs are called "limiting beliefs." A limiting belief is a state of mind or belief about ourselves that restricts us in some way. These beliefs are often false accusations we make about ourselves that can cause a number of negative results, and unfortunately, we each likely carry around with us some of these kinds of beliefs. They often arise out of negativity and fear, and our brains use them to protect us from pain in the future, which keep us from experiencing new opportunities and growing in new ways.

### Some examples of limiting beliefs are:

"I'm too old or too young."

"I don't have enough money."

"I'll never be successful."

"I'm not smart enough."

"I'll never be able to do that."

"I don't have enough time."

"I'm not a good \_\_\_\_\_ (mom, person, leader, speaker, writer, cook, painter, etc.)."

And the disturbing thing is, we may not even be aware of the limiting beliefs we carry with us every day!

### Recently something challenged one of my limiting beliefs.

Not only did it awaken me to the reality of just how many of these beliefs I'm holding on to, but it also made me aware of how much my limiting beliefs have been holding me back. It was a startling realization, and one that I wanted to change immediately.

If you listened to episode 46, *How Tandem Bicycling Is a Little Like Following God*, or if you follow me on social media, then you already know my husband and I are tandem bicyclists. Yes, we ride a bicycle built for two. And we have a blast together. But interestingly enough, while on our bike, God continues to teach me life lessons. Including some lessons about my limiting beliefs.

On our ride a couple Sundays ago, my husband (the driver, the Captain of our tandem) unexpectedly led us up Mount Trashmore, the highest point in the largest city near us that is an overlook atop years of solid waste. It's 950 feet above sea level, and it's the closest thing to a mountain near us here in Iowa. For years we've biked past the entrance that leads to the top of Mount Trashmore, and I've consciously thought, "That's something we'll never be able to do on our tandem." So, it was never on my radar.

### **But it was on Bill's.**

So, when Bill steered us through the entrance gate, I sternly asked what in the world he was doing. Because I was shocked we were even peddling through the gate. He said he just wanted to check out the area. (Yeah, right.) Before I knew it, however, we were climbing Mount Trashmore! On our tandem! On gravel. (Let me tell you, gravel and tandems don't mix so well.) As we peddled up the steep gravel incline, plenty of limiting beliefs filled my mind. But I didn't let any of them slip through my mouth. I kept quiet, with my head down, and focused on my peddling. One foot, then the other. Our tires slipped on the gravel at one point, and I thought we were done. I thought we would have to stop and walk the rest of the way. But we kept going, higher and higher. And of course, the higher we went the harder it became. One foot, then the other. I thought of Dory the fish. Instead of saying, "Just keep swimming," I was saying to myself, "Just keep peddling."

Well, wouldn't you know?? We didn't break any speed records, but we made it to the top of Mount Trashmore!! And if you follow me on social media, you might have seen the photos I posted. It was glorious up there! I felt a little like Rocky after he ran to the top of the Philadelphia Museum of Art steps! Standing up there looking over the city, I was in awe. I thanked God for the strength to climb such a hill. I thanked God for Bill leading us to the top. And I questioned why I doubted we could tackle such a feat. Why did I think we should never try it? Because if it would have been up to me, sadly I never would have attempted the climb to the top. And I would have missed the view, the experience, and the reality of how my limiting beliefs were holding me back.

Because I really had no idea until this experience.

### **You know? God uses experiences like this to teach us and to transform us.**

He uses all we go through for our good. And He used that moment to wake me up to the reality of my own limiting beliefs. I'm so grateful He did. Because it led me to examine all areas of my life (not just climbing Mount Trashmore) and how these beliefs have prevented me from so much! Like from trying new things, from stepping beyond my comfort zone, from growing and expanding through experiences, from becoming the person God wants me to be.

Because truly, bottom line, that's what our limiting beliefs do. They stop us from receiving all God has for us and from becoming the people God desires for us to be.

Yikes! That's scary, isn't it?

He desires more for us than we can imagine, and we can trust His desires for us are good! But the thing is, God does not have any limiting beliefs, about Him or us. So, if these limiting beliefs aren't from Him, we can gather that the enemy of our souls uses them to keep us from flourishing in God's plans and purposes for our lives. He uses them to prevent us from stepping out in faith. And he uses them to stop

us from living the life God gives us to the fullest. So, not only are these limiting beliefs, they are ungodly beliefs.

And they don't belong in our lives.

Now, I know you may be doing something else while you're listening today. Like driving or cleaning your home or cooking or some other activity. Because that's often what we do, right? But I encourage you to pause and ponder right now. What are your limiting beliefs? Pause this episode if you need to. But what are you saying to yourself that isn't true or that is based on fear or negativity?

### **What is something you want to do, but you don't think you can do for whatever reason?**

Start there. What is something you'd really like to do, but you're too scared, too nervous, too old, too young, too busy, too strapped for cash, too whatever to do? Let your mind wander and do not allow yourself to squash any thought. If you're at a place where you can write, grab a piece of paper and write down whatever comes to your mind. Let your thoughts flow. And if you can't think of anything, then come back to it later. Ask God to show you any limiting beliefs that are holding you back from experiencing all He has for you.

Because once we find and name our limiting beliefs, we can then eliminate them from our lives.

If your limiting beliefs don't appear today, pay attention as you go throughout the next few days. Be aware of what comes up that you say to yourself or that you don't think you can do/should do.

### **So, how do we get rid of these limiting beliefs?**

After we've awakened to the reality of what's holding us back, when can then begin to reframe them in our minds. We can tell ourselves a different story. We can choose to think different thoughts. But the thing is, this will take some time and some work. But the effort we put forth will be greatly beneficial.

We can remove limiting beliefs from our minds!

How do we do this? We replace the limiting belief with truth. For example, one limiting belief I realized I was carrying around was "I'm not a good cook." Because cooking isn't my favorite activity. Maybe because I've messed up more meals than I care to share here. So, instead of thinking and saying, "I'm a terrible cook," I can now say, "It's not true that I'm a terrible cook. I'm giving myself grace and am learning how to become a better cook."

Another example could be for someone who has told herself for years, "I cannot love nor receive love." She could change the narrative and say something instead like, "It's not true that I cannot love nor receive love. God loves me, and through His love, I can love others and receive love from them."

This is Romans 12:2 in action. Do not allow this world to mold you in its own image. Instead, be transformed *from the inside out* by renewing your mind. As a result, you will be able to discern what God wills and whatever God finds good, pleasing, and complete. (VOICE)

The key is to write these new statements of truth down in a journal or somewhere visible so we can read them daily. Because reading them daily will dissolve these beliefs as we change our thoughts. A great place to put them is wherever we spend lots of time. On the mirror in the bathroom. In the kitchen so we can read them when we're making dinner. On the treadmill when we're working out in the

morning. Or on our nightstand so it's the last thing we read at the end of the day. You choose where is best for you.

But this activity will make all the difference in transforming our limiting beliefs. And make sure we add the words, "It's not true..." before our current limiting beliefs. Our minds need to hear that what we've been telling ourselves is no longer true.

"Free yourself from the imprisonment of your own limiting beliefs and prejudices." --Steve Maraboli

Pretty soon, those limiting beliefs will be no more. They will be replaced with truth that better represents how God sees you and me.

### **Amazing things happen when we dissolve our limiting beliefs.**

Not only do we see ourselves in a whole new light, we see our lives and the world in that light as well.

So, let's do what it takes to let go of those limiting beliefs and replace them with truth.

We're discussing this further over in our Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook. All week long we're looking at how our limiting beliefs affect us and we're encouraging one another to let them go. Come on over and join in the conversation. The link is in the show notes.

I first shared this story about my limiting beliefs to my email friends. This wonderful group of friends are pretty special to me. They receive my monthly email update, full of hope and encouragement, and they also have unlimited access to my free resources on my site. Plus, each month I do a fun drawing through my email, and someone receives a fun gift. If you'd like to be a part of this elite group, click on the link in the show notes and you'll receive access.

If this episode encouraged you or if you found some help and hope in it, would you consider rating it and/or reviewing it. This makes such a difference in how others will be able to find this episode and podcast. Also, I invite you to subscribe to the podcast, so you never miss an episode.

In closing, that Sunday as I stood on top of Mount Trashmore, I vowed I would never let another limiting belief hold me back. But every day we're faced with the choice to challenge our beliefs and our fears. And this is something we can pray for daily. For God to make us aware of and help us remove any limiting beliefs we are holding on to. 1 Chronicles 16:11 NCV says, "Depend on the Lord and his strength; always go to him for help."

May you and I be people who are willing to always step out of our comfort zones, to try new things, to embrace adventure, and to partner with God to experience all He has for us.

Thanks again for joining me today. God bless you!

*Julie Lefebvre*