

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

144. You May Be Living Distracted if You Cannot Focus

You are listening to episode 144 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast titled, You May Be Living Distracted if You Cannot Focus. Welcome to the podcast today. Thanks for joining me here! When I speak on or share in conversations about the subject of living distracted, I continue to get the same question, "How do I know if I'm living distracted?" Because frankly, many of us women don't realize just how distracted we are living. Years ago, I knew I was. I knew I had a problem. Because I was missing important moments happening right in front of me. (Read the introduction of my book *Right Now Matters* for the one moment that completely altered my life.) And I was tired of missing these priceless moments. (We discussed this in episode 142 of the podcast.) If you are asking the same question, "How do I know if I'm living distracted?" we are digging into some indications over the next few episodes to help you become aware. We're starting with the first one--if you cannot focus. So let's get into this episode and find some hope and encouragement for our real lives today.

I have a few questions for you. Are you ready?

Do you find your mind wandering often?

Are your thoughts scattered much of the time?

Do you ever walk into a room and forget what you went there for?

Or have you ever driven to your destination, but you couldn't fully remember driving there?

We may chuckle at these as we answer them, and every time I ask these questions, they do make me smile. Because I can relate to each of them! I experience them--and maybe you do, too! How did you answer them? If you answered yes to any of these, you are, I believe, like most everyone else in this world. We can each relate, right?

Why is it that we cannot focus well these days?

There may be many reasons depending on our situations and circumstances, but the biggest culprits that I see of why we cannot focus are everyday distractions. These distractions bombard our thoughts, our daily routines, our very lives! And not just one or two, but we can experience an onslaught on any given day!

In fact, some experts say our thoughts are wandering nearly 50% of our waking hours! That's alarming to me, but I believe it to be true, don't you? We have difficulty with our focus. In fact, I devote one entire chapter in my book to this very subject, including some tools to help us keep our focus.

Our focus matters, and once it's distracted or interrupted, it doesn't always lead us to what's best for us or to God's best for us. We will always follow where we focus. Good or not so good.

Think about it for a minute.

When we're immersed in a project or a task, we can be very focused. Focus helps us stay on track and finish what we need to do. But something comes in to distract that focus. Maybe it's a buzz from our phone telling us someone or something on that phone wants our attention. Or maybe it's a noise outside or a knock on our office door. That distraction interrupts our focus and causes us to pause what we're doing.

In fact, as I was preparing for this episode, this happened to me. I was deep in prep work and writing some notes, and my phone rang. On the other end was a friend inviting me to go with her for a couple hours to a festival in a nearby small town. Oh, I really wanted to go with her, but because my work time is limited this week, I had to decline.

After ending the phone call, it took me some time to return back to what I was doing. My thoughts were centered on the possibility of going with her and not on my work. Even though this distraction wasn't a negative thing, it took my focus off of what I was doing and placed it on something else. I think we all agree staying focused on one task is much easier than losing it and trying to regain it.

Isn't it interesting that this happened at the perfect time to be an appropriate example for us today?

Focus makes all the difference.

How is your focus today? Do you feel like it's all over the place? Are you distracted by what's going on around you or what's happening within you?

Distractions aren't always necessarily from our environment or what's external. Some of our biggest distractions are internal ones--the ones that come from within us. Such as our thoughts, our feelings, or emotions. It's easy for me to be writing my next piece and find my thoughts switching to what I'm going to make for dinner later in the day. Or recording my next podcast episode and my mind takes me back to an incident that happened earlier in the day.

Some days my thoughts are my biggest distractions!

To take it a step further, it matters what we focus on.

The book of Colossians contains one of my favorite Bible verses on this subject. It's in chapter 3, and verse 2. In the Voice translation it reads, "Stay focused on what's above, not on earthly things." I focus on the earthly things, not on the things above, far too often. We dive deep into this in Day 19 of the *Right Now Matters Bible Study* where we examine exactly where our focus is--on the earthly things or on the things above. When I focus on the things above--the heavenly things--I'm much more at peace and I stay on track much better. But it's the earthly things that tend to entice me off the best path.

What are you more focused on today? The things above (those that will never perish or disappear) or the earthly things (those that are only temporary and will pass away)? The earthly things will always blur

our focus. They will always entice our focus away from what's truly important. We'll go deeper into this subject on focus at a later time, but for now, it's wise to remember what we focus on matters.

Today, let's just examine where we are right now. Can we remain focused or not?

Bottom line, if we find we cannot focus, we may be living distracted.

I invite you to take notice today. To pay attention to your focus or your lack of it. Notice if you can stay focused easily or if you feel like a pinball with your focus going in every direction. You don't have to have all the answers today. You just need to notice. You'll soon see how focused or unfocused you are.

Please know, it's not a terrible thing to come to the realization you may be living distracted because you cannot focus. It's actually a good thing. This realization can be an immense blessing--one to help you make changes to live a more fulfilling and hope-filled life. The day I realized I was living distracted was the day my life changed for the better. I'm grateful God got my attention and has been helping me live an undistracted life every day since. It's not been perfect, and I haven't followed Him flawlessly, but I'm living far less distracted than I used to live. Awareness is the first step!

We're taking this conversation over to our Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook. I invite you to come on over and join in the fun we have over there. The link to this group is in the show notes.

Also, if you found encouragement and hope in the episode, would you please leave a rating and/or review from wherever you're listening today? This may help someone else find this encouragement as well. And be sure to subscribe so you never miss a new episode.

We have hope!

Friend, if you're understanding for the first time that you cannot focus and you're thinking you may be living distracted, please know you're not alone. I've been there and so have many others. You can live differently. I'm proof of that. Hang with me here in the weeks to come and I'll do all I can to help you live the abundant life Jesus came to give you. You don't have to live distracted one minute longer. You'll find in my free Resource library tools that will help you live focused and undistracted. The link to this library is in the show notes. Let's do this together. Life is too important to live it distracted. Thanks for tuning in today. God bless you.

Links in this episode:

Episode 142, [Are You Tired of Missing Out on Life?](#)

[Right Now Matters book](#)

[Right Now Matters Bible Study](#)

[Colossians 3:2 Voice](#)

Check out our [Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook](#)

[Access my free Resource library](#) for tools to help you live an undistracted life



