

**Julie Lefebure:** [00:00:00] Dusting Off Weariness When You Are Exhausted

Welcome to the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. I'm Julie Lefebure. Your host life is remarkable, sometimes raw and always real. And some days we could use a little extra encouragement for our real lives. Here you'll find that along with personal life impacting stories, helpful life hacks, timely inspiration, biblical insight, and a fresh perspective.

The encouragement for Real Life Podcast equips you to be a light in this world and to shine bright wherever God has you. I'm glad you're here today.

Today on the podcast, we are discussing something that I think most everyone in the world can relate to. Exhaustion. Not just physical tiredness, but emotional, mental [00:01:00] and spiritual weariness that can make us feel like we are running on empty. What do you do when you are exhausted?

All month long. Our theme on the podcast here is Spring Cleaning for the Soul. And we might intentionally do some sort of deep spring cleaning in our homes, and so why not do some deep spring cleaning for our souls this year too? I invite you to journey with me this month as we do some important soul care and life refreshment in making room for God's life giving and life transforming power.

Last week we discussed clearing out the cobwebs when we feel dead inside. So you don't wanna miss that one. And next week we have another one coming up, which is gonna be really good. I'll share that more at the end. But if you're feeling overwhelmed and like you just can't keep going, well stay with me here. [00:02:00] We're looking how to dust off that weariness and to find refreshment for our souls today. Sound good? Well let's get into this episode.

Last month I was exhausted. It seemed like it was a fast month for me, but for a couple weeks throughout last month, I, yeah, I felt exhausted. I began the month sick with some sort of virus, and our yearly March vacation to Florida was canceled almost at the last minute due to delayed inspections from the hurricane damage that happened last fall.

So that was a disappointing thing. And then to top it all off, my mother-in-law [00:03:00] unexpectedly passed away on March 10th. Which sent us into a tailspin of funeral preparations and plans. Something that we just didn't expect. Grief consumed us, and as I attempted to be the one to hold everyone in my family together, I began to feel the weight of weariness and exhaustion set in.

Yeah. You know, I, I felt emotionally spent. Physically drained, mentally empty and spiritually hollow. Have you ever been there? Excuse me. That's not a fun place to be. One can only function like this for a, a short time before breaking completely down. You know, in my head I could hear my mother's familiar words of Julie, you're burning the candle at both ends.

You know, this was her, her kind, [00:04:00] gentle way, her loving way of reminding me that I needed to hop off the hamster wheel of life and to take care of myself. I think mom was pretty much right about everything that she said and everything that she thought. And yes, if she was here, she'd be right in this circumstance too. She would be telling me the same thing.

Now I know that I can't be the one to hold everyone and everything together like I tried to last month. Only God can do that. But when my family needs me, you better believe I am going to be there for them. As my overwhelm was mounting on one specific day, I didn't think that I could really go on, but I had to or so I thought. I finally got to the point that I knew either I needed to proactively take care of myself or I would be forced to. [00:05:00] I removed everything off my calendar for a couple days after the funeral, and that was when I finally found some refreshment. Some beautiful lasting, saving refreshment for my soul.

And maybe you're in this place now. I hope you're not. But maybe you are near what you feel is your breaking point, and you feel like you just can't take one more step, make one more decision or do one more thing. You've come to the right place today, my friend.

To start off, I would like to share a Bible verse with you to encourage your heart. I shared it in last week's episode, but it's worth repeating again. However, this time I'm gonna share it in The Message paraphrase. And if you're feeling weary or you are exhausted today, Jesus invites you to come to Him. He says in Matthew [00:06:00] chapter 11 verses 28 through 30. Again this is The Message translation.

"Are you tired, worn out, burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me. Watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Gosh, that sounds good, doesn't it? That sounds so inviting. Almost like a refreshing swimming pool to jump in head first and you just know is just gonna

be the refreshment that you need. Getting away with Him is the only way that you and I can find refreshment for our souls. Weariness can come in varying forms. So let's look [00:07:00] at some of these.

Uh, physical weariness is one, , which is we just we're tired from work and lack of sleep or illness. Emotional weariness is another, where we're drained from relational struggles or disappointments or stress. Mental weariness is a whole nother one. That's experiencing decision fatigue or brain fog or lack of focus, and even mental depletion. And spiritual weariness is feeling disconnected from God or feeling like our prayers are not being heard, let alone answered.

The depths of weariness could run deep, especially when one kind of weariness piles upon another. You know what that feels like, if you've ever experienced it.

It may help us though to realize that it's not just us who gets weary and feels exhausted. We see examples in the Bible of people who have experienced the same thing. And I think of [00:08:00] Elijah in 1st Kings chapter 19 as one example. He was physically and emotionally spent after facing the prophets of Baal and how God ministered to him in his exhaustion. God didn't just ask him to keep going. He provided rest and sustenance first, not only for Elijah, but God provides rest and sustenance, for us too .

I invite you to look that up 1st Kings Chapter 19, and I put a link in the show notes. But it's a story that encourages us and a reality that God is here for us to provide us what we need.

So friend, if you are exhausted, take heart. Dusting off weariness doesn't just remove the dust of fatigue and exhaustion that settles down upon us, but it also revives your soul and mine. It's then that our souls are finally able to [00:09:00] breathe again.

But how? How do we dust off this weariness when we feel exhausted, too exhausted to do anything, let alone grab a dust cloth. But first, you know, we just have to acknowledge, we have to acknowledge the exhaustion instead of just pushing through it or sweeping it under the rug. Now I'm one to keep going and keep going until I get to the point of burnout. And let me tell you, that's not a fun or healthy place to be. It's better to catch ourselves, to catch it early than to dig ourselves out of burnout. It's better to prevent it than to try to, to resurrect ourselves after we're in the burnout stage.

And I, I don't want that for you or for me. And I've been there and I don't care to go back. And if you've ever been there, you probably don't care to go back either.

So I invite you to ask yourself today, ask this [00:10:00] question, what is wearing me out right now? Is it your workload, your relationships, or the constant demand on your time? Could it be distractions? What is it? What is it that's wearing you out right now?

Begin with acknowledging your exhaustion. That's the first place to start. And then the second, second part is will we give ourselves permission to rest, to find the rest that our souls need? It's not always the easiest thing to do when we are the on the go type of women. But rest is not a luxury, nor is it a reward. Rest is necessary. And if we're not getting enough of it, it will affect every area of our lives and our humanity.

When we're exhausted physical rest often comes to mind first, right? It is important, [00:11:00] but I'm gonna suggest something else. I suggest seeking out spiritual rest first. To draw away with Jesus, to find rest for your soul. When you and I commune with our Creator and with our Savior, we find a rest that we cannot receive in any other way. A true abiding, lasting rest. One that we can only get from spending time with God as He refills and refreshes our souls, just like Jesus said in the Matthew passage that I just shared. Here the dust begins to clear and our souls come to new life. And that just is so refreshing and we can feel it. We can feel that dust lifting and our souls feeling refreshed.

And of course, yes, our bodies need physical rest too, including sleep, taking breaks from our tasks, and filling our bodies with food that nourishes us and [00:12:00] refuels us. And I think that's a, part that people don't even realize, how much our food determines how we feel. This is so vitally important for us. Finding rest is critical when we're exhausted.

And the third thing is maybe it's time to unload the extra stuff. Is there an area of your life that , you might be overcommitting or running in circles in? Maybe it's time to say no to some of those things that just aren't serving your peace or your purpose any longer. And you'll have a better idea of what those things might be after drawing away with God, because He'll show you, especially if you ask Him. So give yourself permission to let go of what you're not called to do any longer. It's okay. And when we switch our focus from our fatigue to God's faithfulness, we [00:13:00] experience His profound presence and His profound peace, which we talked about last week.

So last month in my exhaustion, I spent some time journaling and seeking God. 'cause you know that journaling is a part of what I do. I turned off my alarm a couple mornings, which was fantastic. It was hard to do at first, but. I really needed that extra sleep. I just let my body rest. And I chose to eat nutritious food when I wanted to gorge myself on sweets and comfort food, that wasn't gonna be healthy for me. And I just pictured myself healing from the inside out, allowing God to, I guess, just restore and refresh my soul. And that, that picturing of that really helped me too.

But I also did one other thing, which I believe was crucial. I allowed myself to have some fun 'cause it had been a while. I engaged in activities [00:14:00] that restored my soul. My husband had a couple days off, a few days off actually, of work, um, for, for bereavement. And so we were able to spend some dedicated time together, which was really wonderful. And on St. Patrick's Day, he had that day off 'cause that fell in that timeframe. He and I attended the local parade with my daughter and two grandsons, enjoying lunch first, and we had time with some friends after and it was so fun. We left our home at 9:30 in the morning and we returned 12 hours later. And it felt good to laugh and to let the wind blow through my hair as we sat outdoors near a fire pit, and just to simply enjoy life as God intended us to. I just felt God's presence with me that whole entire day.

Friend, what's something that you can do for fun, even if it's just for a [00:15:00] few minutes? What do you enjoy doing? Do you like walking outdoors or something creative like painting or writing or singing or playing a musical instrument? How about hanging out with friends and family? Find that one thing and do it. Because sometimes God meets us in the things that bring us joy and He heals us through them.

Thankfully, you and I aren't expected to walk through exhaustion alone. No way. God walks with us through it, and when we draw near to Him, He is always with us. And He's always with us no matter what. But when we draw near to Him, we feel His presence always.

And sometimes when we let, this might be another option too, when we allow a trusted friend or two to know how we're feeling, if they're really a trusted friend, they'll not only encourage us, but maybe they'll help , point us to [00:16:00] God's truth, the truth that God really wants us to remember in this season.

So could it be time for a little dusting in our lives? It's amazing what a little dusting can do in our homes and in our souls. We know what dust looks like and we know how good it feels when it's gone.

My exhaustion subsided after our St. Patrick's Day escapade, but my heart is still on guard because I don't want it to return. I don't wanna go back there. And I'm grateful that Jesus calls us to come to Him and will help restore us and refresh us. Aren't you glad for that too? If you are exhausted today, remember it's okay to rest. Jesus offers you rest and He doesn't want you to keep going until you burn out. He wants you to find peace in Him.

Friend, if you've been weary and exhausted and you are looking for a trusted confidant [00:17:00] to come alongside of you and help you through this season, allow me to be that person. I can relate to how you may be feeling, and I can help you live the abundant life that you are created to live. My one-on-one Abundant Life Mentoring program is designed to help you refresh your spirit, renew your mindset, and to embrace the abundant life that Jesus came to give you. Check out the link in the show notes for details, and you can also go ahead and schedule your appointment from there too. Or book a free 20 minute connection call just to see if Abundant Life mentoring is for you. I look forward to hearing from you, and I look forward to working with you one-on-one and to help you live the life that you've always desired to live.

And thank you for leaving a rating or review from wherever you're tuning in today. And make sure that you subscribe so you never [00:18:00] miss an episode. Connect with me on social media. I would love to hear from you. And be sure to share this with a friend who could use some renewal and encouragement in her life too.

Do you have any questions that you'd like me to answer or do you have a subject that you'd like me to dive deeper into? Well, I am all ears and I would love to hear from you. Fill out the encouragement for Real Life podcast question form. There's a link in the show notes there, and I'll do my best to cover your question and your content requests.

I invite you back next week for our next episode in this series of Spring Cleaning For the Soul. We are discussing decluttering your heart when you are distracted. So if you're feeling way too distracted these days, it's easy to do, we live in a distracted world, or you know, someone who is then this episode will be timely. It'll drop next [00:19:00] Tuesday.

In closing, if you are exhausted, friend, take care of yourself in this season. Okay, so let's recap how we're gonna do that. We acknowledge the exhaustion, we acknowledge that we're exhausted. We find physical rest, physical and spiritual. We simplify our lives. We engage in soul refreshing activities. And we lean into our people. I encourage you to take one, just one, one step today

toward finding rest. Whether that's saying no to something on your calendar, taking some moments to pray or read your Bible, or simply sitting still and breathing deeply for a minute or so, inviting God's presence and power. Your soul will thank you for it. I am cheering you on, friend. Thanks for tuning in and God bless you.

Thank [00:20:00] you so much for joining me here today. You can find more@julielefebure.com and until next time, stay encouraged.