

Encouragement for Real Life Podcast

Episode 210

Summer of Abundance Week 8: You Are Not Meant to Run on Empty

[00:00:00] 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.

Julie Lefebure: I am so glad you are joining me here today in week eight of our Summer of Abundance series. Welcome, i'm so glad you're here.

Do you have a hard time believing that we are in week eight already? I don't even know how the time has gone so fast, but it has. And we have covered a lot of territory so [00:01:00] far in this Summer of Abundance series. We've explored seven elements of living an abundant life so far, and I'll just name 'em quick. They are identity in Christ, renewed mindset, intimacy with God, spiritual surrender, purposeful presence - one of my favorites - joyful gratitude, and physical wellness.

And today we are taking a deep dive into the element that takes wellness to a whole new level and furthering ourselves and honoring God with every part of our lives. And that is healthy rhythms. How is the pace of your life today? If you could summarize it in one word, how would you describe it? The pace of your life? Is it more of, um, a life of hurry and hustle, or more of, would you say pace and peace?

You [00:02:00] know, we were not created to run at full speed all the time, right? We know this. In fact, part of living an abundant life means learning to live in rhythm. God's rhythm. Not our rhythm or the world's rhythm, but God's rhythm. And so today we are exploring what healthy rhythms look like and why they matter. Not just for us, but for our peace, our purpose, our presence, and even the people around us.

We are not meant to run on empty, my friend. So if you're ready, let's get into this episode and find some hope and help and encouragement today.

Julie Lefebure: Running on empty. It's not only a song sung by Jackson Brown from 1977. No, it is that. But it's also [00:03:00] not a fun pace of life. Right? You have been there, haven't you? Maybe you haven't. I hope you haven't. Yet so many women are operating in this kind of manner, day in and day out. They are running on empty. And if you are, I think you're going to find some help here today.

These women, they... And I can be right there with the rest of 'em. I have done this and I understand how it feels. They're doing all the right things. All the things. But still feel exhausted, overwhelmed, and spiritually dry. And maybe that's because our culture glorifies hustle. I mean, what does the world call something that say you add on, um, a second job or you are, incorporating maybe a new business in your life. They call it a side hustle. It's not a hustle. But the world glorifies hustle.

And these, these women that [00:04:00] are, are feeling this way, are living this way, they're like cars sputtering with their gaslight on blinking and chiming and warning them that they need fuel. And if you've ever run outta gas in a car, you know what that feels like. But the lies, the lies drown out the warnings. The lie of, well, if I stop, I'll fall behind. Or there's the lie of I'm the only one that can do this. Or the lie of, well, if I rest, that means I'm lazy. And another one is I'll rest when everything is done. Which never happens, right?

And what comes next? Well, maybe you've been there, like I said. I have, and I don't care to return there anytime soon. That place is burnout. And that is accompanied by irritability or numbness. It's exhaustion that sleep cannot [00:05:00] fix. It's a disconnection from God and others. And when we're burned out, we lack joy and peace and purpose. And our bodies, even physically react to burnout with headaches and insomnia and lack of energy, mood swings and all those sorts of things.

Friend, you and I don't have to look too far to see how our culture glorifies it all. Glorifies this hustle. But God invites us to a different kind of pace. We weren't made to grind. We were made to grow in Him. And growth requires rhythms, right? We often think of rhythms as say routines. But Biblical rhythms are more than just checklists. They're sacred patterns that allow us to live full, free and faith-filled lives.

A life of [00:06:00] abundance includes margin. Margin is the intentional creation of unscheduled or unstructured time within our daily or weekly routines, which includes healthy rhythms. We are not machines. We are souls in

need of rhythms. Rhythms of rest and reflection and solitude and Sabbath. And trusting God means believing that He works even when we rest.

Jesus modeled this for us so well. There is just example after example in the Bible where Jesus withdrew often to lonely places. And one of those places that it's referred to is in Luke chapter 5 verse 16. And He told his disciples, uh, to come away with Him and rest. And that was in Mark chapter 6:31, which we're gonna get into in a minute. And He modeled margin. [00:07:00] He didn't model hustle. No.

So this takes us right away to our first key scripture for today. Which, both of these scriptures point us to margin and to healthy rhythms. So the first one here is Exodus chapter 20, verses 8 through 10. And in the New International Version, it reads, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it, you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son, nor daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns."

Okay, so this is the 5th out of the 10 Commandments, given by God to Moses and, and also the Israelite people of the day. And the Sabbath day is [00:08:00] a day of rest and worship. It's set aside during the week. Uh, some people observe it on um, Saturday. Some people observe it on Sunday. Some people might even take a Sabbath midweek.

So if you wanna look more into detail about that, of course, find that in your Bible. Open it up and read it, those two verses in that chapter. But this is God's invitation to step off the treadmill of striving and step into His rhythm of rest.

Sabbath, it reminds us that we aren't defined by what we do, but by whose we are, which we already talked about earlier in this series. And it's not about rigid schedules or guilt over to-do lists. No. It's about making room for renewal. Room for, for just to breathe. And room to be with God, and also room to be reminded that He is God [00:09:00] and we are not. We don't rest because everything is done. Because is everything ever done? No. We rest because God is enough and because we can be enough in Him and in Him only.

Sabbath is what I call soul care. It's it's surrender, which we've already also talked about. And Sabbath is abundance. It's simply a way to pause on purpose, not because we have to, but because we get to. So Sabbath can be a gift. It's not a rigid, like I said, it's not a rigid scheduled thing. It's a gift that God gives to us

and encourages us to take a Sabbath. So we can spend time with Him and worship and just rest.

And then our second scripture is Mark chapter 6:31, which I just mentioned a minute ago. And in the NIV [00:10:00] translation, Mark shares how Jesus modeled margin and healthy rhythms. Jesus didn't do it to do it for Him. But I think He modeled it also for His disciples and even for us today. So here's what it says. "Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

Can you imagine Jesus saying that to you today? Maybe He's saying that right now. Come with me by yourself to a quiet place and get some rest. Yes, Jesus modeled rhythms of retreat and prayer and connection and rest, and that's our invitation too. Absolutely.

When was the last time that you and I went away with Jesus to a quiet place and got some rest? Maybe that quiet place could be [00:11:00] on our front steps, sitting there on the porch. Or even laying in our bed, lying in our bed. Or just sitting on the couch quietly with Jesus. Has it been a while? You know that God-shaped hole, that God placed in each one of us, it can only be filled with Him. And may we find a quiet place today, even if it's just a few, few moments just to rest in His love and grace. Oh, it's so important. And this world and our schedules are never conducive to it. But our soul becomes parched and weary when we neglect this important practice. So I pray that this encourages you today. It certainly encourages me.

Friend, we were never meant to run on empty. Never. So let's, let's, let's break this down even further. If you don't mind, we're gonna take it a little step further. When I think of healthy rhythms, [00:12:00] I, I think of more than just rest. I think of the whole sphere of my life. I think of healthy rhythms in my day-to-day life. And maybe you do too. Maybe something deeper, something more foundational in our lives.

So one thing that I've learned about myself over the years is that I function better and I have a, a more positive mindset when I have healthy rhythms in place in my life. And so I've categorized 10 of them for my own life, and I'm gonna share them here. Some of these might pertain to you and maybe some of them don't. And maybe you could create your own. You could replace one of mine with something else that you feel is important. But no matter, healthy rhythms keep us aligned with God's heart continually returning and recalibrating and responding to His still small voice.[00:13:00]

So here are the ones that I've come up with, the 10 healthy rhythms for abundant life today. So here we go. Are you ready?

The first one is rest rhythms. Meaning to unplug, slow down and, and just to Sabbath with intention.

The second is spiritual rhythms to stay rooted in prayer and scripture and in worship.

The third is physical rhythms to move my body, to nourish it well and to honor sleep.

The fourth is relational rhythms, to make space for real connection with those who, who feel you, who you love, and who you want to spend time with.

The next is mental and emotional rhythms, creating margin for reflection and boundaries and renewal.

The next is margin rhythms. We're combining those two words. And that means just to protect space in your [00:14:00] schedule to to breathe and to hear from God.

The next one is celebration rhythms. Not to skip the joy. We get to pause and mark the wins and and to celebrate holidays and God's faithfulness.

The next is simplification rhythms. To regularly declutter your home, your calendar, your inbox, your soul.

The next is seasonal reset rhythms. And this is important because we get to pause every few months to just reevaluate your pace, your purpose, and your priorities.

And then the last is reflection and repentance rhythms. To ask God to search your heart and to lovingly course correct when needed.

So there we go. There's the 10. Now, I don't keep these perfectly in check every single day and all the time, I don't. Because I don't live in that rigid kind of space. [00:15:00] And these aren't meant to be a rigid thing. But they're meant to just use as a reference. Um, so I use these just to, to keep myself in check every now and then. Because when something is off in my life or I'm feeling like I'm out of sync or out of sorts, I come back to my rhythms. Because then I know something isn't right, something's off. And then I ask myself, okay, in

which one am I depleted or feeling really low in? Or, which one have I neglected? Because there's usually one when things are off. At least one. And then praying about it and asking God to show me always reveals what's truly happening underneath the surface. And then I can make adjustments where needed.

So for example, um, I remember a time, not really that long ago when my schedule was so jam packed that I felt as if I was literally running from one thing to another. And maybe I was. Maybe I, I think [00:16:00] about it now. I, I think I actually was running from one thing to another. And one can only do that for so long before burnout comes knocking on the door. Right. And I knew that knocking was close. I knew it was coming. So I took a day off. For just a break and to just do, do some soul and God searching. It was perfect timing. And it didn't take me long to realize that in that time drawn away that God was pointing me to the reality that I had no margin in my life. None. I had packed my schedule and each day's schedule, my daily routine, so full that I had no time to breathe, let alone live an abundant life. And you know, it's just something that you don't set out to do, but it sometimes just happens. It's just like a slippery slope. That all of a sudden you're caught in something and you're like, what is happening? And that's when it's so important to take a break and just to [00:17:00] reevaluate.

And so God also revealed to me that God and my relationship with Him and Jesus were more than just an appointment on my calendar. Yeah. They were more important and are more important today than something to squeeze into my daily schedule. They deserve more time than a time slot in my day, and that's how I was treating my relationship with them. I just had them marked in my day.

That changed of course. I, I've talked about how that, that has kind of morphed and now I just talk to God throughout my day, throughout my whole day. So I adjusted my margin rhythm back then, and found peace again. It didn't take long. It was just a simple thing. But if I wouldn't have paused, I probably wouldn't even realized. I probably wouldn't have noticed that that was off.

So this list is just something that I can refer to often and and use to recalibrate whenever I need to do it. So feel free to use [00:18:00] these 10 rhythms yourself, uh, in the same way or maybe in a different way. And you don't need to adopt all 10 at once. You don't have to adopt any of 'em if you don't want. But it's just a suggestion as to what I do. And you could just simply ask, okay, where do I feel most depleted? And then you could start there.

So I made this really easy for you. Good news. I, I've made these 10 healthy rhythms for abundant life, I made it into a printable, and it's in my free resource library in the Summer of Abundance section on there. So you can find it, um, by clicking on the, the link in the show notes. You'll find it there. You can print 'em off. Feel free to print 'em off or use it, uh, however you want to. You can just refer to it, save it on your phone, whatever you wanna do. But refer to it as often as needed and use it as often as you want.

So, so, pausing here for just a moment. How might your pace today reveal [00:19:00] your spiritual state? And do, do one of these 10 rhythms stand out to you? Maybe there's one that God is highlighting for you. Maybe it's something that you just didn't think about, but you just know hmm, I think God's really pointing this out to me today. Jot down any new revelations in your journal or in your Summer of Abundance companion pages. So that way you'll be able to, to take it a step further and just ponder it and, and just see maybe what God's pointing you to and to make any changes necessary. And those companion pages, they're linked in the show notes.

So, you know, I, I enjoy giving Biblical affirmations. I love to just share truth. I love to speak truth. And so, uh, one for this week is, I honor God through healthy rhythms. I am not made to run on empty. He fills, restores, and strengthens me. [00:20:00] Yeah. Amen.

Some, um, reflection questions that you could use to just reflect on today. First one is, what rhythm is currently missing from my life? And how have I believed the lie that busyness equals worth? And the third is, how might my life feel different if I lived from rhythm instead of rush?

Some great action steps that we can take, just simple ones. Uh, just to choose one area from the 10 rhythms that I just shared and focus on that this week, just one, just focus on one.

Another action step could be just to create 30 minutes of margin in your calendar and protect it. Just 30 minutes where you don't have anything scheduled. That sounds kind of nice, doesn't it?

And another one is just to practice a mini Sabbath rest this week. Even four to [00:21:00] six hours of unplugged time with God. Even one hour. Start somewhere. But have a mini Sabbath rest. Do what, what God is telling you to do. Just just listen and be obedient. He'll show you. He'll show you.

Alright, so let's, let's just pause right here before we go any farther and let's pray. Oh, heavenly Father, I just thank You for Your rhythms that You have for us. Lord, You don't want us to just be running from one thing to another. You don't want us to be running on empty. You don't want us to be so weary and so worn out and so over-taxed that it's just impossible to, to live the abundant life that You want us to live. And so Father, we surrender ourselves to You here today. And I just ask that You would show us what area, what rhythm in life You would like us to, to dig deeper in. To make some [00:22:00] changes in just to, to surrender to You, to give to You, so You would be able to show us what that is and help us make the changes needed. We want to live these abundant lives for You, Lord. Not, not for us, but for You. Because we know when we are in alignment with You, that we are in Your will, that is the perfect place to be. So Father, show us, strengthen us, encourage us today. Help us to live out these rhythms according to Your plans and purposes. And Lord, I just ask that You would meet the one that's here today listening, right where she, is 'cause she needs You today. We all need You. Thank You lord. In Jesus name. Amen.

Oh, it feels good, doesn't it? Just to pause and pray. Just do that throughout your day, this week, every day. Just pause and pray. Doesn't have to be elaborate. Doesn't have to be fancy. Just everyday words to God.

So healthy rhythms don't make life perfect. We know that. And [00:23:00] these healthy rhythms aren't listed in scripture. But over my experience, they have become what I need to do. Checks for my own life that I can look to and just say, God, help me. Show me where I'm off. And these rhythms just really help me do that.

So these rhythms, they don't make life perfect. Only God can do that. But they do make life sustainable and sacred. You were made to live full, not frantic, my friend. Let's remember that. We are made to live full and not frantic.

So if you're longing to design a more intentional, faith centered life, abundant life mentoring might just be the thing for you. It might be the next right rhythm for you today. And I offer that. So you can find more details, uh, in the show notes. Just click on that link for Abundant Life Mentoring.

And if you were encouraged in today's episode, I invite [00:24:00] you to share it with a friend who could use this encouragement too. We just never know how someone just needs a little extra inspiration today.

And I invite you back next week. We are gonna discuss another element, uh, of abundant life, abundant living. And we're gonna talk about contentment and

how to know when enough really is enough. That's gonna be a good one. And I look forward to continuing our journey together in living the abundant life that Jesus came to give us.

So I thank you for tuning in today. I'm cheering you on. God bless you.

Thank you so much for joining me here today. You can find more at julielefebure.com. And until next time, stay encouraged.