

Encouragement for Real Life

236 What We Think but Do Not Say

[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: Welcome back to Encouragement for Real Life. I could not be happier that you are here today, so thanks for joining me. I, um, am excited about our new series that we are starting today. It's a new series for this month called The Stuff We Keep Inside. Yeah. The stuff we [00:01:00] keep inside.

We're gonna get real this month. Mm-hmm. Um, and in this first episode today, we are talking about something that I believe each one of us carries, but not many of us are willing to talk about - what we think, but do not say. Yeah, what we think, but do not say. Because some of the heaviest things that we bear don't show up in our circumstances, in our schedules, in our photos, even in our conversations. They live quietly inside us, in our thoughts, in our worries, in our questions, and the things that we replay over and over in our minds. Things like I can't stop the negative self-talk or I don't think I'm doing enough or I'm tired, but I don't know how to rest or even I love [00:02:00] God, but I am struggling. We don't say these kind of things out loud, not because they don't matter, but really because they matter so very much. We're afraid of being misunderstood or, we don't want to sound ungrateful. Goodness, no. Uhuh. We don't want to look weak, and so we show up smiling. We keep going. We keep pretending that life is just fine.

Yet inside we carry these thoughts that are getting heavier by the day. And left unexamined, these kind of thoughts that we keep inside they don't stay quiet. No. They just slowly shape our joy, our peace, and even how we see God. And they shape it, not in a good way, but in a negative way. And actually they [00:03:00] steal our peace and our joy.

So today we're, we're talking about this, we're talking about the thoughts that we've been holding inside. Why, why, why are we doing this? Well, because it

matters. Not, not to shame. We're not gonna be shamed by these thoughts, and we're not gonna pretend that they're small. But we're gonna bring them into the light of God's truth because that's where healing and peace and freedom begin. Because we can't live lives of abundance if our thinking is keeping us stuck. We can't live lives of abundance if our thoughts are smothering us.

So friend, wherever you are right now, I invite you to take a deep breath with me. You don't have to to hide here. You don't have to pretend here. You don't have to be someone that you're not here. You can be honest, especially with God and even with yourself. [00:04:00] Because He is already meeting you in the place that you've been keeping quiet. So if you're ready to venture into this like I am, then let's get into this episode.

Julie Lefebure: What is consuming your thoughts lately? Which thought is the one that, that you wouldn't want anyone to know. That you would be so embarrassed about. That you just, just don't even wanna admit that it's there?

Well. Somewhere along the way, you and I, uh, either directly or indirectly, were taught to keep our thoughts to ourselves. We weren't born this way though. I mean, look at toddlers. They easily just verbalize every thought that they have, right? Oh my goodness. My, my [00:05:00] young grandsons, they often blurt out what they're thinking sometimes even in public, for everyone to hear and it's quite amusing.

They might say something like, uh, Mana, which is what they call me. Why is that man walking so funny? Or Mana, I have to poop, out loud in a restaurant, oh boy. Or Mana, that that woman looks angry, as they're looking at someone who has a, a not nice look on her face. I don't know. There's varying things that they've said and done, um, in public where they've just let their thoughts come, come, come out very freely and it's very, it's very comical. Yet it's also very serious. Or it can be at times. But they say whatever comes to their minds.

And we used to do that too. We used to do that, but something changed along the way. [00:06:00] Now we edit our thoughts and we do it so much that many of us have really taken this to an extreme. We've taken this too far.

But of course, yes, it's wise to discern our thoughts and not be like toddlers and just blurt out everything that we think. But, some of us never, ever share any of the thoughts flowing through our brains. Ever. We just keep them to ourselves.

We bury them. We, uh, try to believe that they're not there. And they are quietly keeping us stuck. They are.

So why do we do this? Well. I think it's because we think that we're the only ones who have these thoughts. We're the only ones that, that believe the things that are, are not believe necessarily, but think the thoughts that are in our heads. Yeah. We're the only ones that have these [00:07:00] thoughts. We are afraid of what others might think of us if they really knew what we were thinking and we, we want to avoid their judgment.

Another reason I think, is that we don't wanna sound ungrateful. Because we know that God has given us so much already, so why would we be thinking the thoughts that we're thinking? And we certainly don't want to be misunderstood by someone else because that can happen too.

But I believe the biggest reason is this, is that we don't want to admit that we're not okay. We do not wanna admit that we are struggling, that we are fearful, that we are worried, that we are depressed, that we are, whatever the situation might be. We don't wanna admit that, and we certainly don't want to voice that to someone else. Especially when everyone else seems to be excelling and succeeding and living amazing [00:08:00] lives. We don't wanna look like we're the, we're the weird ones that aren't doing those things.

But there's one truth though that we must remember before we go any further today, is that God already knows what you and I are thinking. He does. He's not surprised by our thoughts. He's not scared of our honesty, nor is He thinking that we are failures because of the things that we think. The abundant life that Jesus came to give us well, this includes our minds, not just our behavior, not just our actions or attitudes. It includes our thoughts.

And I love how Psalm 139 verses 1 through 4 just shares this so beautifully, this truth, and , I'll read it in The Voice translation, it says this, "Oh, eternal [00:09:00] one, you have explored my heart and know exactly who I am. You even know the small details, like when I take a seat and when I stand up again. Even when I am far away, you know what I'm thinking. You observe my wanderings and my sleeping, my waking, and my dreaming. And you know everything I do in more detail than even I know. You know what I'm going to say long before I say it. It is true, eternal one that you know everything and everyone." Amen.

God knows us so intimately. I love that. I love that, that scripture passage because it just shows that He knows us and He still loves us anyway. He knows

the thoughts that we think. So if we recognize that, that God knows us this intimately, even the things that we think, but never say out [00:10:00] loud, why is it that we slip into believing that we can hide our thoughts from Him, or that we should hide our thoughts from Him? Why is that?

Yet we do it. Pretending to hide them just keeps us stuck. But what if we instead gave Him these thoughts that we have? What if we just surrendered them to Him and say, here you go, God, these are yours. I, I don't wanna think them anymore. Or, God, what can I do with this thought? I don't like it.

Because silence doesn't heal us. It never does. But the truth does. Silence makes things worse, but the truth brings things to light, brings the the hope to light. And when we open ourselves and our thoughts to God, He brings healing and [00:11:00] wholeness that we could not even possibly have imagined. But that's the result. And it's beautiful when He does this.

So I'm gonna get real with you today. I'm gonna be very transparent with you, and I hope that that's okay. Uh, there's a thought that has crossed my mind more times than I, I care to admit, and it's, it's one that I don't usually say out loud. In fact, I don't know if I've ever said it out loud. Maybe I've shared it with a real close friend before. But, I don't know if I have. But that thought is simply this - I'm running out of time. Yeah. I'm running out of time. Hmm. Didn't expect to get a little teary here. Not, not so much about time on the clock. Even though many days I feel like, huh, I'm racing against the clock. But, [00:12:00] but time in life. Time to do what God has placed on my heart. Time to become who I believe He's calling me to be. And I guess even time before I miss something that I can't get back, because I've experienced that more than I care to admit too. But I don't say that thought out loud because I guess it feels really uncomfortable. It sounds dramatic. It sounds faithless. And it definitely doesn't sound peaceful or faithful. It doesn't.

So in instead of bringing it to God, I have noticed how easy it is to let that thought just sit quietly in my mind, creating pressure, creating urgency, and a sense that I need to hurry, I need to push harder or to figure things out faster. [00:13:00] And let me tell you, that all feels heavy and oppressive. So much so. I don't like it.

But what God has been just gently reminding me regarding that is this, that that thought does not come from Him. God is not rushed. He is not anxious and He is never late. And I know that. I know all of those things. But when I finally brought this thought into the light, when I just revealed it that, God, I just, I feel like I'm running outta time, I wasn't met with correction. I was just met with

truth. A reminder that He orders my steps, not my timeline. He orders my steps. And that my life is not behind. I am not [00:14:00] behind. And that His purposes aren't threatened by or determined by my pace. And I'm learning that abundant life doesn't come from racing the clock. It comes from trusting the One who holds all time in His hands.

And I, I found a scripture that encourages me in this. It's Psalm 31:15 in the New International Version, it states clearly that, "My times are in your hands." This verse, it doesn't rush me. It steadies me. It reminds me that, that God is not counting down the clock on my life. I really needed that truth more than I thought I did. But He's walking with me through it. And that just reassures me and encourages me and just gives me such hope.[00:15:00]

You know, maybe the thought that you haven't said out loud, but you've been thinking over and over and over sounds different than mine. It probably does. It's probably different than mine. But maybe like me, you felt the pressure of time in ways that you just haven't known how to name. The thing is God can't heal what I pretend isn't affecting me. But He can do something with it once I acknowledge it and name it. And that's been very powerful for me lately. To acknowledge all of my thoughts. The ones that I would never wanna share with someone, but the ones that I know that He is desiring to heal me of.

So I wanna pause here for just a moment. What is that thought for you? What thought keeps coming back for you? What thought just keeps playing in your mind over and over and [00:16:00] over again. That thought that you keep pushing away, that you keep pushing down, that you just want to ignore. The thought that would make you so embarrassed if you ever had to share it with anyone. Even that thought that you try to hide from God. Well, don't fix it. Don't judge it. Just notice it. And quietly acknowledge that God already sees it. That's important. Just acknowledge it.

And then I, I started to look at, well, what else does God say? What else does God say about our thoughts? And I found a lot of scriptures about our thoughts. I just, I Googled, um, or I did a search, I don't know which, which app I used, but I did a search and said, what are, what are some, uh, bible verses regarding our [00:17:00] thoughts?

And, uh, Romans 12:2 came up, which talks about how God transforms us by changing the way we think and renewing our mind in that process.

Um, 2 Corinthians 10:5 talks about taking our thoughts captive and, and making them obedient to Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:8 talks about thinking on the things of what's true and life giving.

And Psalm 62:8, uh, just reminds us to, to tell Him about the troubles in our thoughts. That's so perfect for this episode.

And I, I wanna say this again, even though we've talked about this before that, that we don't need to believe every thought that we think. In fact, it would be wise for us not to believe every thought that comes through our minds. Because some of our thoughts do not come from God, plain and simple, but they come from the enemy of our [00:18:00] souls who desires to, to seek and kill and destroy. And one way he can do that effectively and and subtly is through our thoughts. It's such a powerful way that he can get to us. So it's wise to pause and think to ourselves, when we have this thought, we can ask, is this thought based on truth or not? If it's not based on truth, then replace that thought. But if it is based on truth, we can still give it to God and say, what am I to do with this thought?

Because the thing is, a, a thought can can be real without being true. And a feeling can be valid without being a guide. And a, a lie can sound convincing without coming from God. And that's really hard to discern sometimes, but it's so important to do that. And God invites [00:19:00] us to bring all of our thoughts to Him. All of them, without cleaning them up first. We don't have to clean up our thoughts. We can give them to us and watch what He does in and through them.

So what do we do with these thoughts that we think, but we, we do not wanna say? Well, I've come up with some steps that may help us. And the first step is just to bring them to God. Plain and simple. Bring the thoughts to God. Just to pray honestly. Not perfectly. It doesn't have to be perfect. But it's just like talking to God like you would talk to someone who, who truly loves you and wants the best for you. Simply saying, God, I am thinking these things that I don't like and I need your help. Something simple but so important.

We don't bring our thoughts to God to earn peace or His presence, but we bring them because Jesus already made a way for us to live [00:20:00] free. And bringing those thoughts to God allows us to live in this freedom in our mental space, and that just that touches every part of our lives. So that's the first step.

The second step is to compare your thoughts to God's truth. That's it. Compare your thoughts to God's truth. Is this thought from God or from fear or from my past? Does it, does it bring life or steal peace? Just a simple check. Compare them with God's truth.

Step three is to replace, not just remove. This is one that I really have, have had to learn. To, to not just fight the thought or ignore it or try to just eliminate it. But to replace it, to put something else in its place.

So for example, a thought could be, I am failing at whatever. I'm [00:21:00] failing at this, whatever. Instead of just ignoring that thought, we can, we can replace it with truth, which is God is still working in me. God is still working in me. I'm not failing. God is still working in me.

The fourth step is to speak it out loud. And this is so powerful. Spoken truth is powerful. It's just like you're claiming truth and you're speaking it out loud into your environment and it's, it's a way you can speak scripture and there's such power in scripture and truth and, and even prayer out loud. You can speak those things out loud and there's, just something that happens when you speak it and you hear your own voice, say those things.

And you know, I have this resource. It's in my, my free resource library. I created it last spring, last last summer, last spring. I don't remember. But, um, it's a, it's a printable and it's there for you for free. And I really wanna encourage, I wanna encourage you to go print it [00:22:00] off. Because it has helped hundreds of women. Um, I've taken it to some speaking engagements. I've used it in my different courses, my classes. Um, the, the classes I've, I've spoke and taught. This is such a powerful printable that I think you'll benefit greatly from it. It's called lies we believe versus Biblical truth. Um, and it's a, it's right there on my website or in, in that, that resource library. You'll be able to find it. Um, the link is in the show notes. But yes, it's called, let me say that again 'cause I didn't say that so, clear. Lies We believe versus biblical truth. And it, it walks you through some common lies that we believe, the scripture to replace that and then what words you can say, um, to actually replace that lie with truth. So that is there for you and I invite you to just grab that resource and use it. Um, it has helped me immensely and so many women, I continue to hear how that has helped them as [00:23:00] well.

The thing is though, God doesn't want just to quiet our minds, but He wants to renew our minds. That's where healing happens. But I wanna make sure I'm clear here that the things that we think but do not say, they don't disqualify us from living an abundant life. They don't limit our ability to love, serve, and bless God and others. And they certainly aren't something that we need to be embarrassed about. We are fallen people, my friend. And we live in a fallen world. So it is no wonder that our thoughts are "fallen" sometimes. That's that's our humanity, and I can't help but think how God must rejoice when we just bring our imperfect, unpleasant thoughts to Him and we allow Him to align

them with His perfect truthful thoughts. [00:24:00] That's where healing happens, and that's where we just find that this is something we can't do on our own. But when we align our thoughts with Gods , we start to think the way He thinks.

And it also encourages us to remember this, that, that even throughout scripture, we see faithful people, faithful people like David and Hannah and Job, um, Elijah, uh, Paul and Mary, who, who didn't hide their thoughts from God. But they brought them to Him and God met them with compassion, not condemnation. And friend He does the same for us. He does the same for us. Remember that scripture that says there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. He's gonna meet you with compassion, not condemnation.

So let's just take one action this week on this. Let's just take one step. Write down [00:25:00] one thought that you have been hiding lately. Just one thought. Write it down. Pray over it honestly, sincerely, humbly. Just pray over it. Find one scripture that speaks truth over it. It can be in that, that resource that I have for you or another scripture. But find a scripture that speaks truth over it. And then say that truth every day out loud this week. Watch what God will do. It'll be amazing, friend. I think you'll be amazed.

You, you don't have to fix everything. Just take one step forward. Take that one truthful step and watch what God will do through it. I can't wait to see what He's gonna do. I may never know. But if you ever wanna share with me, you can always contact me through social media or my website and let me know what God is doing through [00:26:00] you, through the things that you're doing and how He's healing you, friend. 'Cause He will.

But let's pause right here and pray. Would you pray with me?

Heavenly Father, I just thank You for this time together that we can just be, um transparent and real with each other. Lord, the, the words that we, or the thoughts that we think, but never say, Lord, the stuff that we keep inside, it all keeps us stuck. It keeps us stagnant. It keeps us ineffective. And it, it just smothers us sometimes, Lord. But You have a better way for us. You have a way that, that You invite us to, to give these thoughts to You so You can heal them, You can bring truth over them, You can show us truth instead of the lies that we've been believing and living out, because we know these thoughts, Lord, they affect us. They even affect our relationship with You and with others. We [00:27:00] cannot be impactful or effective women when we are stuck in our thoughts that that just keep us, us held down and spiraling in a way,

Lord, that You do not want us to. You have good things in store for us. You know what's best for us, Lord.

And so I just ask that You would help each one of us to give, give You the thoughts that we think. To surrender all of these to You and to watch what You would do with them. To trust You in the process. I thank You, Lord for this opportunity. I thank You for the one listening right now, and I pray that You'll meet her right where she is, that You'll encourage her heart, that You'll remind her that You are with her this journey and that You're never gonna leave her.

Thank You Lord. You are so good to us, and so gracious, and so generous, and we love You with our whole hearts. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Thanks for praying with me. And as we [00:28:00] wrap up today, I just wanna remind you that you don't have to carry your inner world alone. You don't have to carry any of that stuff alone. The thoughts that you keep editing, the thoughts that you keep pushing down, the thoughts that you're embarrassed about, and even the falseness underneath them, the questions that you don't know how to, to say out loud. Friend, God cares about all of it, and He wants you to come to Him.

And sometimes walking through things with someone else just makes all the difference. And I've lived this and I, I, I. I can vouch for that. If you feel that God is stirring something in you through this episode and you'd love some support as you sort through what's going on the inside, I would love to walk with you through Abundant Life Mentoring. It's a beautiful space where we slow down, we get honest, and we let God do the deep work together.

[00:29:00] And you can find all the details and you can schedule your free connection call with me at the link in the show notes. So check that out.

And if this episode spoke to you, would you just do me a favor? Would you like it and subscribe to the podcast and, and leave a review? I know everybody says that, but it really does help more women find this space of encouragement.

And maybe if you know someone who has been carrying quiet thoughts and heavy questions and not sure what to do with them, share this episode with her. It might just be exactly what she needs in this moment.

Next week, I am really excited about it. We continue on in this series of the, the stuff that we keep inside, and we are looking at addressing the weight that we're carrying that no one ever sees. And what happens when God says, you don't

have to carry this any longer. [00:30:00] This will be a powerful episode, and so I invite you back next week, next Tuesday. It'll drop bright and early.

Until then, friend, be gentle with your heart. Be gentle with yourself. And let God meet you in the stuff that you keep inside. He is with you, my friend. 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.