

243 10 Things That Help You Feel Like You Again

[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 the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. I am Julie, and I am so glad that we could spend just a little bit of time together today. We are wrapping up our Top 10 series, today. We've been doing this all month long, and this episode might be my favorite [00:01:00] one of the whole month. Because we're talking about something that I believe many women quietly feel, but don't always know how to talk about it or how to admit it or how to even address it.

That feeling of thinking, I don't quite feel like myself anymore. Not in a dramatic way. Not in a crisis way. Just in that quiet, subtle way where life has been full, way too full, uh, that responsibilities have been really heavy, and somewhere along the way we started living mostly in survival mode. And we don't even realize that we're doing it.

Sure we're showing up. We're doing all the things that need to be done. We're taking care of the people that we need to take care of. [00:02:00] We're managing the day to day activities and the schedules and the meals and, and everything. But we don't always feel like the version of ourselves that feels light or hopeful or fully alive. Especially like we used to.

So friend, if this is you today, I just want you to hear something very important - that you're not lost. Sometimes you're just tired. Maybe even more than tired, maybe exhausted. Sometimes you're overwhelmed and sometimes life simply has just been a lot.

But the good news is this. We can find our way back to ourselves. And I wanna say that to you today. You can find your way back to yourself. We're gonna get into this and we're gonna share some ideas [00:03:00] and we're gonna look at

the top 10 things that help you feel like you, again. That's what we're talking about today.

You know, this whole top 10 series has really been about releasing pressure. In the first episode, we talked about the 10 things that are not actually emergencies. Then we talked about the 10 things that you can stop doing the hard way. That was an enlightening episode. And last week we talked about the 10 things that you are allowed to be bad at. And that was fun too, just to realize that it's okay, that we don't have to be good at everything.

And so today we're ending this series with this hopeful, hopeful thread. Just small, simple things that help you reconnect with yourself again. So if this sounds good to you, I say, let's get into this [00:04:00] episode.

Julie Lefebure: Maybe you used to laugh more. Maybe you used to feel more creative. Maybe you used to have more energy. Maybe you used to enjoy things that now feel like another task to cross off the list. And it's not that you've changed as a person, it's just that life has been full. Too full. But the version of you that feels alive and grounded really hasn't disappeared. She's just waiting for a little space again, for a little margin in life again.

Many women that I work with through Abundant Life mentoring can relate to this. And one in [00:05:00] particular comes to mind. And, and she gave me permission to share her story, a little bit of her story. But, um, this really fits with so many of my abundant life mentoring clients. That, um, she was once full of life and exuberance and overflowing with joy. And when she reached out to me and we started working together, she shared how she was someone that she now barely recognized. Not recognized in the mirror, but recognized in how she felt in everyday life. She felt different. She felt empty and almost hollow, and just going through the motions. And the zest that she had for living at one point just somehow quietly disappeared.

It didn't take long though for us to pinpoint the main [00:06:00] issue. She was over committed and she was under rested. And so we came up with some ideas and some tools that just to help her commit less and to add more space for rest and for more fun in her life.

You know, I think we all could use a little more fun in our lives. Why has life gotten so serious? And maybe that's a word for us today, to add more fun into our lives. But she's not the only one who has stopped feeling like herself. And

there are many of us out there that are feeling this exact same way. We're not the woman we used to be. We're not the one that that used to be full of life and joy and passion for the things that we love to do. Goodness, the list can go on and on.

And I believe that there are [00:07:00] many reasons why we stop feeling like ourselves over. Commitment is a big one. Constant responsibility. That weight is heavy. Another one, um, emotional load that we're carrying. So many emotions. A lack of margin and, and just space to breathe. Comparison, it's a big one. Uh, burnout. Living on autopilot. And also our physical health. Of course, our physical health can, can really impact that as well. And as we age, our bodies change. So yeah, that can be a big one too.

But the thing is, you don't lose yourself all at once. It usually happens slowly. One hectic season at a time and feeling like yourself again [00:08:00] doesn't require a complete life overhaul. It doesn't. It usually just comes from small shifts that reconnect you with who God made you to be. Instead of thinking that we need a brand new life, sometimes we just need to come back to the life that we already have. To, to the one that God has blessed us with.

And I wanna say here before I go on any further about the thing about health. You know the thing that I've noticed, I haven't struggled with this as much as, as some of my friends have that are my age, but when we get to a certain point in life, uh, menopause can kick in perimenopause and our, we do not feel as the same women that we were years ago when those seasons of life hit. And so if this is part of it, if you're in, in this age group and [00:09:00] you're, you're trying to figure out why do I feel different, I would certainly, um, go check with your doctor, with your healthcare professional and just to see if, your physical, changes in your life and your body are causing you to feel not like you used to. So I wanna just put that in there too, as just a little, a little, uh, parentheses. We'll put it that way.

But I wanna tell you about a season um, when I realized that I was not myself. It was last spring and I didn't feel like myself. Nothing dramatic had happened, but life was just full. Too full. There were responsibilities and schedules and things that needed my attention. And when you're in full-time ministry and you're, um, taking care of two beautiful grandsons and you're, [00:10:00] you're keeping a home going and you're working part-time and you're doing all the things that I was doing back then and I'm still doing those things today. It, it became a bit much.

And doing all the things that I needed to get done um, I remember one day just thinking, excuse me. Just thinking, why do I feel so flat? Flat was the word I came up with. Not sad, not in crisis. Just like I was running on autopilot. And I realized something. That I had slowly stopped doing the little things that used to bring life back into my day. I wasn't getting outside much. I wasn't laughing much. I wasn't really having much fun or adding fun into my life, and I wasn't giving myself breathing room. [00:11:00] I had just started to just move from one responsibility to the next to one item on the list to the next item.

And once I noticed that, I just started making small shifts. Like when the weather was warm. Again, I really started making these shifts in the summer. Because I, uh, of last summer, I did things differently last summer. I ate my lunches outside. I would sit outside on my patio and take my lunch, take my lunch out there, excuse me, and eat it. And that just brought me, um, just a midday kind of pick me up. Um, I started my day in a different way. I had gotten in a rut in my time with God, and I started my day differently with Him.

So there were no big dramatic changes, but just an example of some of these small shifts. But these reminded me of just the truth that I shared just a few [00:12:00] moments ago, that you don't lose yourself overnight and you don't usually find yourself again overnight either. It just happens through small things that bring life back to your day. Bring life back, bring joy back to your life, bring life back into your soul.

And so if you're finding yourself in a similar space right now, feeling flat and not yourself, maybe it's just time to return to that person that you used to be and to the life that God has given you.

So let's look at these 10 things that help you feel like you again.

Number one is to start your day with God before the world starts talking. Because the world's gonna start talking right away. Before the news. Before you open your email. Before you look at your texts. Before everyone else's needs. Even just five quiet [00:13:00] minutes with God can reset your perspective for the whole day.

And I just heard recently, um, a doctor say for the first 45 minutes of your day, don't look at your phone. That's one of the worst things you can do for your brain. And also to not look at your phone the last hour of the day. Now, not looking at it like you can look at the time and that kind of thing. But not to scroll. Not to spend that time immersing yourself in your phone. And so I've been trying to do that and it's been interesting to see some changes. But your

soul remembers who you are when you spend time with the One who made you. I'm gonna say that again. Your soul remembers who you are when you spend time with the One who made you.

Number two is to step outside and let God's creation bless you. Oh, I just love being outside. [00:14:00] I love it. Especially 70 degrees or above. Last month, um, we went to, um, actually no, this month. Yeah, it was this month. We were in Florida for, um, about 10 days. And, um, it was so refreshing for me to be outside in the sun and 85 degree weather. I just needed, I needed some outdoor time. Some time with God's creation, some fresh air, sunlight, you know, even if you take a short walk. God designed our bodies to respond to nature. And it slows your mind and it grounds your heart when you get outside. And sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is to go outside. So maybe take a spiritual walk today and go outside and just to soak up God's creation.

Number three is to laugh with someone who knows the real you. Not the polite [00:15:00] kind of laughter, which we know what that is. But the real laughter was someone who you can be yourself with. The kind of laughter where your cheeks hurt and you forget about your to-do list for just a few minutes.

Who is that person or who are those people in your life? Maybe text her and say, Hey, can we meet for dinner? Can we meet for lunch? Can we meet for coffee? Hey, do you wanna come over? It might be a good time to spend some time with that person. If not this week. Do it soon. But joy, when we, when we embrace that joy, welcome that joy into our lives again, that joy reminds your soul that life is still good.

Number four is to return to something that you used to love. What is that thing? Is it music, reading, [00:16:00] painting, baking, bicycling, gardening, writing. When life gets hectic, the things that once brought joy quietly disappear because we don't do them anymore when life gets hectic. We do what we feel is the urgent thing, which must be the important thing, and that's not always the case. Which we talked about last month.

But refuse to let that happen. Don't let those important things that bring you joy that you love, don't let them go by the wayside. Sometimes the way back to yourself is revisiting something you once loved. And I'm gonna say that again too. Sometimes the way back to yourself is revisiting something you once loved.

Number five is to create space in your schedule. If every hour of your day is filled, I'll just say [00:17:00] this, that your soul has nowhere to breathe. And I

used to live like that. Oh, I had everything from just hour to hour packed full. I'm so glad that I woke up to the reality of how devastating that is. But white space in your schedule isn't laziness, my friend. It is wisdom. And if you have to schedule white space, if you have to schedule white space, I mean like a, a, a spot in your calendar where you have nothing but just space. I call it white space because my calendar's white.

Um, and so. If you have to schedule space where you do nothing, then schedule it. But have some space in your calendar where you're not running from one thing to the next. And you know it's so freeing to just have some space to breathe. You can't feel like yourself when you never slow down long enough to notice and [00:18:00] enjoy your life. God has given you this abundant life. So take some time today to notice it and to enjoy it.

Number six is to move your body. I'm a big one on this one. And you know, when I was sick in February, excuse me, um, I didn't move my body because I couldn't move my body. And boy did I feel it. And, and the effects of not moving my body and being so sick for two weeks really impacted my physical body itself, and now I, it's, it's hard to get back into that, not as in a habit, but my muscles aren't quite there yet. So moving your body, not because you should, but because you're blessed to. Movement shifts your energy and your mood and your perspective. And maybe it's walking or stretching or dancing in the kitchen. I used to have dance parties with my kids and I [00:19:00] miss those days. So maybe we'll have some dance parties with my grandsons. But do something that reminds your, your body that it's alive. Movement wakes up parts of you that exhaustion has put to sleep. So get out there. Do something to move your body today. And if you go outside, you're doing two things at once. You're allowing God's, um, creation to fill you, to bless you, and you're moving your body. That will help you feel like yourself again.

Let's go on to number seven. Spend time with life-giving people. And this can probably go along with, uh, the earlier number about, being with someone to laugh with someone who knows the real you. But these are the people who see you. Who want God's best for you. The people who you laugh with, who pray for you, who remind you of who you are when you forget who you are. [00:20:00] I have a handful of these people in my life and I can always tell when I need to go spend time with them.

The thing is, the right people don't drain you. They restore you. They refresh you. They renew you. They help you be the person that God desires for you to be. So be with that person today if you can. Tomorrow. This week. Schedule some time with that person.

Number eight, to do one small thing just for you. And only you know what that is. Maybe it's a, a quiet cup of coffee, or a long shower, or a hot bath, or a favorite TV show, or a favorite movie, or 10 minutes of peace in your car before you walk in the door. You're allowed to enjoy your life. In fact, God wants you to enjoy your life. [00:21:00] And if you don't do it no one else can. No one else can enjoy your life. It's yours to enjoy.

Number nine is to change the way you talk to yourself. Friend speak words to yourself that you would speak to a friend. That harsh inner voice that we sometimes, uh, that we sometimes use on ourselves, that we talk to ourselves, it just steals joy faster than almost anything else. Voices like, I can never do anything right. Or I'm so dumb, or, you know, those kind of things that we say to ourselves. Oh, you should be farther along by now. Oh, why'd you do it that way? No. Replace that kind of criticism with God's truth. God would never say those things to you, and God would never say those things to me. So why are we saying them [00:22:00] to ourselves? We can't feel like ourselves when our own thoughts are working against us. So let's change the words that we say to ourselves.

And number 10, remember who you are in Christ. Not what you accomplish today. Not what you failed at today or yesterday. Not even what others say, who others say you are, or even who you say you are, but who you are in Him. You are chosen, you are loved, you are called, you are redeemed, you are His. That's who you are. And when you remember Whose you are, you start remembering who you are. I'll say that again. When you remember whose you are, you start remembering who you are.

So let's pause here. Right here. [00:23:00] Just after we looked at these top 10 things of how we can feel like ourselves again, which one of these stood out to you the most? Which one? Because usually the one that your heart responds to is the one that you need most right now. And I know what I need right now. I need some, some time with, with, uh, someone who really knows me, who really loves me, who, um, just a friend. A friend that I can just be myself with. That's what I need right now. I know I do. And as soon as I said those words, I'm like, that one's for me.

So whichever one is for you, do something about that today. That might be the thing that will help you feel like yourself again. Try it and see.

Now a practical reset tool. I always like to give a [00:24:00] little tool. Some sort of thing that we can use. Um, I would suggest to ask these questions. There's three. So ask these three questions.

What used to bring me life? What used to bring me life?

Another one is what has been draining me lately?

And the third. What small step could I take this week to reconnect with joy?
What small step could I take this week to reconnect with joy?

Friend, you don't have to change everything. That's exhausting to change everything. Just start somewhere. Just start with one thing. And that might be the thing. You change one thing, you re return back to the thing, whatever it is, that might be the only thing that you need to start feeling like yourself again.

I found some scriptures that just really speak to this and will [00:25:00] encourage our hearts today. And one of 'em is one of my favorites. It's John 10:10. And it's kind of like my, my ministry verse, my mission verse. Um, but Jesus says in that verse that He came to give us life and that we may have it abundantly, that we may live life abundantly. I will link it in the show notes so you can find the full verse.

And Psalm 23. Um, I love that, that psalm too because it says that he restores my soul. And when we, when we accept this abundant life that Jesus came to give us, when we live it out, it's not gonna be easy, but we always know that we have it, even when we don't feel like we have it. Even when we don't feel like we are the women that we used to be, we don't feel like ourselves. We still have this abundant life that isn't gonna leave us. Because Jesus came to give it to us and He's not gonna take it away. [00:26:00] And the Psalm 23 part, I love it when, when we just know that God is with us in every part of the day and He restores our souls. He restores them. He doesn't replace them. He restores them. He restores our souls. He's never gonna leave us. I'm so thankful for that.

You know, Jesus didn't come so we, we could just survive our days. He came so we could live. To really live and thrive. So if you've been feeling like you're, you're just getting by in life, I want you to know something. The life God has for you isn't found in pressure or people, or any of the physical things that we see in this world. It's found in His presence. It's found in Him. And sometimes the path back to yourself isn't a dramatic thing, it's [00:27:00] just one small step toward life again, found in your Creator.

If this episode resonates with you, I would, I just encourage you to give it a like,, give me a follow, subscribe. Um, the more that you subscribe, the more that the algorithms will push it up. You know, all that stuff. And you're probably tired of people always saying that, but it really does make a difference.

But along that line too, if this episode resonated with you, if you've been feeling like you're just getting by instead of thriving in the life that Jesus came to give you, I wanna tell you that's exactly why I wrote my new devotional Made For More, which is releasing April 14th. I'm so excited about it. It's a 365 day journey designed to help you just move outta survival mode and into the abundant life that Jesus promises. [00:28:00] It's not an overnight transformation. It's just daily truth, encouragement, and just reminders of who you are in Him.

And as we get closer to, to the day when it, when it, uh, it releases and I, I get to share it with the world, I don't wanna do this alone. So I'm inviting a small group of women into what I'm calling the Made for More Inner Circle. It's a simple, low pressure way to just be a part of helping get the message to, to, to reach it out to the women who need it most.

And some women will want to read an early copy and leave a review. Some will desire to just share it with a friend or on social media, and some will just simply want to commit to praying over the lives that this book will touch. So I would love for you to be a part of this, and I [00:29:00] invite you to be a part of this. It's kind of like a launch team, only it's not a, it's not a stressful, expectant type of launch team. It's not like the one I did last time. And it's, it's just stressless and low key. And if it sounds like something that you would enjoy, if you would enjoy being a part of this, I would truly love to have you in it. It's open for just a limited time and, um, you can find the link to join in the show notes. All the details are there, and I, again, I would love to have you be a part of it.

And next week we look to next week already. And um, it's our guest episode for the month. Goodness, seems like it just happened, we just had a guest episode. But I've invited someone on the podcast who has directly impacted my writing life. And through that, um, over the years, she has become a wonderful friend. And so you'll be inspired by her words, uh, just to [00:30:00] apply to your own real life. Especially regarding how you begin your day. So come back next Tuesday, bright and early, and you'll find the, the encouraging episode right here.

And so, friend, I just wanna remind you as we close out, remind you one more time, you don't have to chase the woman that you used to be. God is still shaping the woman that you're becoming. Someone beautiful. Someone amazing. Someone he loves dearly. And she's more alive than ever. So thanks for journeying through this life with me. It's an honor to do this. And until next time friend, stay encouraged.

God bless you.

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