

# Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

## Episode 115: Different Groupings of Family Members Can Cause Different Results

This is Bonnie Lyman, and you're listening to the podcast, Loving On Purpose, episode 115. Different groupings of family members can create different results. Welcome to the podcast, Loving On Purpose. I'm your host, Bonnie Lyman. If you're having trouble navigating through your relationships with your adult children, if you are struggling to connect with them, or having specific challenges, you're in the right place.

Hey my friends, how's it going out there? It's going pretty good here in the northwest. Had two 70 degree days in a row. It's wonderful. I love that sunshine. You probably wonder why I live here when I talk so much about the weather, and I really need to not focus on it, but I do love that sunshine. So, I hope you're all doing well.

I hope you are becoming more aware of the thoughts that are causing you to feel the way you don't want to feel. And if you can't understand that, go back and listen to some past podcasts or hop on a call with me. I offer a free, I call it Relationship Strategy Call, where we get on a Zoom call, just you and I one on one, and we talk about what's not going right in your life, and to see if I can be of any help to you.

The subject that we're going to talk about today has to do when we get together with either everyone in our family, parts of our family, and which of those parts, and how. It is really my opinion. I don't have any scientific proof that this is gone on, but in my experience of trying to navigate life with my adult children, There have been some very interesting things I have found how our conversation goes and what we talk about and what we share often has to do with how many family members are in the group when we are sharing, exchanging information, ideas, experiences, whatever I want to say.

After I put this together that I realized that first off, I have a couple children that we are much more open with each other, much more vulnerable, much more real when we either talk on the phone or through an email or a text. The reason for this Well, I don't have a really good reason, but one of the things I, I think we feel like we're not hiding behind a wall, but it would be like, If I'm talking on the phone, I, I could be completely naked and not feel anything, or I could be in the bath with my AirPods in, and it's not quite as vulnerable as when we are sitting there face to face.

I guess it's because we can't see each other's body language. Now, if we're talking on the phone We can still hear intonations in each other's voices, where you can't always understand or know exactly what that intonation is in a text, an email, or a letter, but I think they both have good qualities.

good purpose in staying connected with our adult children. The one thing I really like about texts is I know my children will always see it. So if I get too lengthy and I feel what I want to tell them or ask them,

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I need to put in an email, then I always send them a text. Hey, check your email. Cause they don't always do that, but they pretty much always check their texts. Now we can be the type of person that we get so many texts that those texts messages go way below our screen. Now there is that little red dot that shows up or maybe it's a white with a number of how many texts we have that are unread.

But sometimes we can get some pretty frivolous texts, even some advertising that I tend to ignore. So we can't get too excited We can't get too judgmental when they don't answer our texts or even our phone calls as fast as We would like, but we're going to start out first by talking about the advantages of having our entire family, all of our adult kids spouses, and Our grandchildren together, and there are advantages to this, but I've come to believe that there's also advantages to just one on one with just our adult child, or if we're trying to build a stronger connection with a grandchild, adult child.

a one on one time with that grandchild. So, when we get the entire family together, to me, I think the greatest benefit is cousin time. Now, that is assuming that there's still grandchildren at home in each of our adult families. children's homes, and there, there is a bond with cousins that goes a step beyond friend friendships with friends, but it's different and it's almost like more fun than perhaps the relationship, the connection we have with.

a sibling or even friends. I know I have some granddaughters that connected, oh, probably at least 10 years ago. They're sophomore and juniors in high school. And You know, I don't know if it'll happen, but they decided a long time ago that they wanted to go to college together and room together. But there is something, there is a pull, it's like a, a glue or a magnet that Attracts families, there may be some disagreements between their parents, but that attraction will cause the parents to soften their hearts and come join the family.

gathering. I, I think it's it's a good time for sibling time together also. My adult children don't always make the point to call up all of their siblings to get together to do something unless it's an entire family gathering. And so it It strengthens that relationship. I, I think it can also be a good time if you have an unmarried child.

It's, they, they can feel included even though they may not have a spouse or they don't have children. But it, it can be a fairly natural time to get together. and catch up on what others are doing. I have one daughter that is divorced and when we went on vacation, she invited a girlfriend to come along who she roomed with in college and they worked at the same place that she has known for years that is unmarried.

And invited her to go along as there were lots of couple events that we were going to. And it, she was taking responsibility for fulfilling her own needs. We, the parents, in an entire family gathering are pretty much sideliners, or you could say we end up kind of being the fly on the wall, unless there is a game involved, or, you know, Or maybe a movie, or in, in my case our

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church has a conference twice a year and sometimes we'll get together and watch conference together.

Some, something that is causing us to all be involved, but if we're just hanging out talking, oftentimes we. We find ourselves talking to ourselves than with them. But, when it comes to, like, having a meal, and there's enough in my family that when we get everybody together, we can have a meal. Say, just for a Sunday dinner, we have to set two tables, and as those grandkids get older, I notice that we hang out, all the adults will sit at one table, and the grandkids will sit at another.

table, but the grandkids that are now in high school, I, I see that they are wanting to hang out with the adults more than the younger grandkids. You know, unless there is a baby there or a very young cousin that one of the older grandkids has become especially attached to. I find that when all the family is together, the conversation between myself and my children is very important.

And my children in law is semi superficial conversation. We talk about movies we've seen, or what we heard on the news, or some TV series they're following. Or something, some funny reel they saw on Instagram. I don't get much personal information about how their life is really going for them, which as their mom, I'm very most curious.

So, the next type of information. Family gathering is when we get together just with a single family, just one of our kids and their spouse or significant other and their kids. When this happens, there seems to be more personal exchanges in our conversation when we just get together. with only one family at a time.

Our time seems pretty much equally split, depending on the age of the grandchildren, between our adult children and their spouse or their significant other, and time spent with our grandkids. But as the grandkids get a little bit older, They tend to just hang out with adults or at least be close by. There's also a difference if we're meeting with that single family at their house or at our house.

If they come to our house. And say they were just in the neighborhood, and they stopped by, all the grandkids will, they'll pretty much hang out with us, unless they're still in school. school and then they'll go downstairs where we have a foosball machine and just some activities that they can do down there.

So single family gatherings can be of great benefit, especially when you have an adult child that doesn't get along with one of their siblings. The gal that cuts my hair talked about a trip where she had a daughter from her first marriage, and I think this was, this daughter was about 10. She got a divorce, remarried when this The daughter from her first marriage was 10, and she and her new husband had a set of twins.

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And so she grew up with them for about eight years. And you know, from hearing from her mother, they, they were really close. There wasn't any joint custody where they were spending half the time with their, father in another family, but they were all just being raised by their mom. But she said her, her daughter from her first marriage is now, oh, she must be 28 years old, close to that.

And they went on a trip to Mexico. She And her husband and her one little girl and her mother was telling me she had the best conversations with her, her daughter, because the other girls weren't there. The other girls being eight years younger, always needed a little bit more of her attention. So she felt like she had.

a better quality visit with her daughter on that trip.

One on one gatherings with your adult child and their spouse or significant other is another circumstance. in which we interact with our adult children. Again, I find the conversation is not as open or personal than if you were visiting with just your child. But this is with your child and their spouse.

and no grandchildren. And it kind of depends on how healthy your child's relationship is with their spouse or significant other. At that time, without their children there, they tend to discuss goals that they share together or challenges that they share together. It's quite a bit more personal than the family gathering as to what's going on in their life and it's more personal than when you have them and their children over or at their house just in that kind of situation.

One on one time then is the next circumstance you could have with your adult child and this is exactly that. There are, their kids aren't there. There's significant other isn't there and at this time it seems both you and your child have a more natural and a more personal conversation. Now there's also the situation.

Where you have one on one time without even my spouse, without their dad there. And those can be two different conversations than when they meet with just their dad and not me. Now, in my case, and this is only my case, for you, it could be the complete opposite. But I find they feel much safer. They get more vulnerable and personal when they have this one on one conversation with their dad.

I don't take that personally. I don't take that as meaning they like their dad better, but they do feel very, very safe with their dad. And you know what? I think the number one reason is he doesn't voice his opinion as often as I do about anything.

What is healthy about our relationship with our adult? Children is remembering the thought that nothing has gone wrong. So, I, I am looking at the big picture. I am looking at these. What did I give you? Five different scenarios. Of how you communicate with your children, or if it's through a phone call you know, that may be even more personal.

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One thing I didn't mention was FaceTime. For us, it's fun to see everybody, but we, we don't really know what's going on in each of those families lives, whether things are going well or not so well. But like I said, we just have to keep telling ourselves that when things go up, when somebody loses their job, or, you know, when, They discuss feelings of maybe something antagonistic about one of their siblings that it doesn't really mean things go wrong.

Challenges. And people not getting along, and sometimes for very long periods of time, is often very natural in most families. We have to remember to not resist reality. We We just can't go to the place that that needs to change or that needs to be fixed. Because when you resist reality, you will lose every time.

If you want an open, loving connection with these children, do not compare your children with each other, expecting them all to be as engaging and engaging. with you in the same way. If you struggle with comparing them to your friend's adult children, you're going to end up feeling a lot of despair. If you have adult children who don't get along or refuse to be with each other, remember, you can't fix this problem because it's not your problem.

It's their problem. Keep it simple when it comes to navigating life with your adult children. Your responsibility is to love on them just the way they are and tell them as often as possible what you admire for them. It was a game changer for me when I learned What was the cause of my hurting in my relationships with my adult children?

It wasn't their behavior. It wasn't not returning phone calls. It wasn't what they said or didn't say. When I learned I can't change them, but I could change how I think. About what was happening between us, it made all the difference. Further, to add to this, I feel I would be remiss if I didn't share with you that I feel all answers to our problems can be found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

My coaching program is called Loving on Purpose. For a reason, if we can learn to choose love, if we can learn to opt in to thoughts that cause us to feel love for as many people as we can, we're going to live a lot happier life. And this is possible even if we feeling rejected, attacked. It doesn't mean you have to be around those people that are mean to you, but I think we still can find at least have compassion for them.

When Jesus Christ asks us to love everyone, do we know why? Do we know where to start? And how to do that, especially when it involves someone who doesn't deserve to be loved. But, that really isn't true. Because everyone is deserving and needs to be loved. And sometimes of our children, our grandchildren, those that are the hardest to love are the ones that need our love the most.

We deserve to be loved also. And we need to learn. to practice loving ourselves better. Love is always a choice. It's not something someone gives to us. And love, it just feels the best. It's

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warm and it's whole and it's complete. And it's peaceful and content. To always choose love, though, we need to learn how to choose kind, compassionate, and loving thoughts.

I'm not saying that we tolerate abuse. But we can separate ourselves from an abusive person, and we should if necessary. But there is still something in that person we can find. It's been great talking to you. If you found this valuable and helpful to you I invite you to share it with some friends. I just want to help as many women, as many individuals.

Mom's as I can stop suffering and hurting in any type of relationship, but especially those with family members. Have a great week and I'll be talking to you next week.

If you like this, this episode and you felt it was of benefit to you. I ask you to share it with somebody that perhaps it could also benefit. But if you're still feeling kind of stuck in that you don't know how to apply what was talked about or where to start on, on changing your thoughts, on changing your perspective, on bettering your relationship.

Get on a call with me and we can have a discussion and I can tell you how to apply it and where we start and then you get to decide what you want to do about this relationship that maybe you're struggling with with your adult children. There is no reason to go on the rest of our lives struggling with our relationships.

With our adult children, let's assume the best. Let's assume that we all love each other, and we're just trying to figure out how to maintain our own boundaries and respect another one's. But I can help you with everything. So just go to [BonnieLyman.com](http://BonnieLyman.com) and book a call. I can't wait to hear from you.