

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 120: How to Enjoy Mother's Day

This is Bonnie Lyman, and you're listening to the podcast, Loving on Purpose, episode 120, How to Enjoy Mother's Day. 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.

Thank you for joining me on my podcast today. Where I'm going to talk about one of the heaviest topics that any of my followers, my clients deal with every year, and that is the topic of Mother's Day. I think you will notice my voice is kind of hoarse. I've kind of been vacant. For the last couple weeks, uh, it was somewhat of a trying time, but it was also a miraculous time.

I know many of you know that seven years ago, I was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, which is a cancer of your Plasma in your bone marrow that is incurable, but very manageable. And so two weeks ago, my doctor, uh, decided to try a new treatment with me. Not that my cancer had flared up or really changed, but it's something new that's only been around for the last, uh, Two years and I get an injection once a week of L rexfeo is the name of the drug and I'm even considering buying stock in fitzer who makes this drug and What this drug does is I get a shot and this shot tells my T cells, which has to do, which I can't fully explain.

Many of you probably know more about it than I do, but these T cells have to do with my own immune system and this. Injection of Elrexfiel, it's just a shot subcutaneously given, targets the myeloma in my blood. Now, it can't completely cure, um, kill them and wipe out the myeloma. But it can put them to sleep that I can live a very high quality of life.

And so for the last two weeks, That's what I've been doing. This, this um, injection, the first two doses can only be given in a hospital. There can be some adverse side effects that they have a medicine to give to you. to combat those side effects that can only be given in a hospital. So, I actually was in the hospital for 10 days, but really just under observation.

But for some reason, it has affected the hoarseness in my voice. So I hope I can still share the message that I so badly want you to wrap your head around of how to have an enjoyable life. Mother's Day. When we are not having an enjoyable Mother's Day, it is not because of our children's inactions.

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It's not because of our husband's inactions. It's always because of our thoughts about the behavior that we are expecting from our children. But I want to give you some things to think about. But bottom line, and this may sound very judgmental and very harsh, and I do hurt for you, When you are hurting on Mother's Day, but you are hurting on Mother's Day because of your thoughts.

In other words, You are the cause of your suffering on Mother's Day. We can't control our children's behavior. We have these high expectations, whether we get them from Hallmark, whether we get them from observing other mothers and how they are being treated on Mother's Day. We May get them from feelings or thoughts that we must have not been a good enough mother to be a little more recognized on Mother's Day.

But this is only your brain trying to help you find reason as to why things are not being shown to you. Or that the way you want to be shown love on Mother's Day. Or if my children loved me, they would act a certain way. Or if I had been a good mother, they would have wanted to show more respect and gratitude to me on Mother's Day.

But we have to help our brains have different thoughts. I want to share a story with you about a boss I had. And it had to do with his birthday. He loved life so much and was so excited. He was so grateful that he got to be born and live life on this earth in whatever capacity that was, whatever road bumps came to him, he was just so grateful to be alive that he intentionally planned his own huge birthday party.

So he would tell us weeks ahead of time. My birthday is coming in two weeks, and this is what we're going to do. I am going to cater a lunch of all my favorite foods. I'm going to have a birthday cake. And at 12. 30 on my birthday, My wish is that you will all stop what you are doing and come and let's enjoy each other's company and celebrate life and enjoy our time together and this food, and we are Celebrating Rick Steltenpol's birthday.

That filled us with so much joy. I so respected this man for the gratitude he had for us. For just being alive, just being able to come and experience the human experience here on earth. So I have talked about probably in every Episode where our feelings come from, whether it's feelings of gratitude, whether it's feelings of feeling appreciated by others, whether it's feeling loved or love for somebody else.

It always comes from our thoughts. It doesn't come from our past. It doesn't come from the circumstances or the happenings in our life. Our thoughts are the source. Of all of

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our feelings, good or bad. And the best news about that, I can't control other people's behavior. I cannot control other people's thoughts.

I cannot control the weather. I cannot control what's happening in my life, but I can. control my thoughts and the meaning I put to all these circumstances. I sent an email out a couple days ago asking you, and I can't, sorry, I can't remember exactly how I worded it, but you know, what would be the perfect Mother's Day for you and what can you do

And these were, I sent these out to people that follow me, and I'm sure many of them listen to my podcast, where I talk about where all good feelings come from, and yet they still had these expectations of what their children should be doing on Mother's Day if they were decent human beings or if they truly love them or, you know, why it was their responsibility for them to have an enjoyable Mother's Day.

If I want to have an enjoyable Mother's Day, I can totally make that happen. By managing my thoughts, and remember our thoughts cause our feelings, and our feelings cause us to behave a certain way. So I'm going to share some thoughts and some concepts of how to have an enjoyable Mother's Day. And I have a couple examples, and I have part of a letter that I received that I want to read to you of this particular follower's understanding of how she is guaranteed an enjoyable Mother's Day every single year.

So, the obstacle in not having An enjoyable Mother's Day is not choosing the right kind of thoughts, of not choosing grateful thoughts, of not choosing loving thoughts, of not choosing, um, uh, appreciative thoughts. most of our thoughts. Go to disappointment and resentment, even to the point that weeks before we are already having resentful, disappointing thoughts about Mother's Day, but that is our choice.

We can think about Mother's Day. in any way that we want. So, hopefully, I'm going to throw out some thoughts that will give you a little bit, um, different perspective about this day. And I'm also going to give you some actions you can start doing that I will guarantee you that this year you can have the best Mother's Day that you could ever imagine possible.

So, in these responses, I got to my Emails were, had a lot to do, several of them had to do, that they felt their children were contacting them out of obligation. That, um, they were only getting a phone call because it was Mother's Day. I had one follower tell me that she only hears from her son once a year, and that is on Mother's Day.

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And she said, I'll take it. I'm not going to have any resentment or judgment. I am going to appreciate that I at least get that one call, and I'm going to savor every minute that I get to talk with this son. So, it's how we look upon that call. We can look on it as judgment. We can have a judgmental thought that they only called out of obligation.

And maybe they did. But can it be enough that they were still at least willing? to make a call, there was something that prompted them to make that call to you. And maybe it was not wanting you to again be disappointed in them. I think I've mentioned this before, but usually when I go anywhere, and there's a period of time where I'm in somebody else's present, and I'm thinking of an adult child.

Something will come up about the work I do, that I help moms change their relationships with difficult adult children. Yes, I will agree. When there are no obstacles in the way of having an open, loving communication relationship with a child, it's easy, and it gets more difficult when they don't open up to us, when they don't contact us, but we can always go to compassion.

We can go to compassionate thoughts of, or even curiosity, why I wonder why it's so difficult for them to reach out to me. But when I'm talking to these young adults and I tell them what I do and I can remember I had to go get some stitches and it came up and this young doctor that was working on my hand said to me, oh I wish my mother could talk to you.

It doesn't matter what I do, it's never enough. So, number one obstacle, we are expecting our children to fulfill our needs. They can hardly fulfill their own needs, much less take on the responsibility for fulfilling our needs. It is my responsibility. To fulfill my own needs and if I have a need to celebrate somehow or to have a special day.

On Mother's Day, it's my responsibility to make that happen.

Now, I realize there is the obstacle of when our children have cut us off, and they have told us they want nothing to do with us, and they don't want us seeing them. Or their children are grandchildren, and I know that is a painful thing, but I also know that what my adult child does, or whatever restriction they put on me, or what they say to me, That perhaps is not kind, tells more about how they're feeling about themselves than how they are feeling about me.

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There is something unresolved in their life where they feel like this huge victim too. And so I get villainized. But if I understand that, or if I even choose to have that thought, and yeah, maybe they do hate me. For some reason, I can still have compassion when someone hates somebody else, it does not make them happy.

I have compassion that they are dealing with something they may not even know what the issue is they're dealing with, and they certainly don't know how.

I know that's a hard thing, but do we love our children enough that we are willing to wait for them to work through whatever challenging issues that they have in their life? Instead of spending our energy of why they are treating me this way, let's use that energy. To figuring out what they need from me right now, that they will most be able to feel that I will always love them.

And that may mean giving them years of space to heal, because there is something in us as mothers, that it's just how the relationship is, that we are the circumstance in our children's lives, and often we trigger them. I mean, it's, it's nothing that we can even change, or it's nothing that we did. But we trigger for them to have certain thoughts that cause them to feel a feeling they don't want to feel.

And the only way they can get any relief, and it's just not even permanent, it is so temporary, but it is at least five seconds worth of relief, is for them not to be around us.

So, did we,

one of the obstacles in not enjoying Mother's Day, it is not being shown appreciation, but it's like when someone tells us that they sure appreciate us for all we did, all the sacrifices we made, that is kind of a reward. I call it a little paycheck and yes, it feels wonderful and I don't have to change my thoughts.

They're telling me Expressing their love and appreciation triggers me to have thoughts that cause me to feel loved. And so, I don't have to make a choice. I just accept it and move on. But I want you to stop and think, is that why you had children? To get a reward. Now, I'm thinking, way back when, when I first started having children.

And I had five. What was the reason I wanted to have children? I wanted to have children because I loved my husband. So much. I love this little family that we had, and I could only imagine how wonderful it would be to have a child just to love on and just be given the opportunity to see what kind of a mother I could be.

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What could I offer this human in protecting them and offering them a family life that was full of love? How could I help another human? Grow up and know how to choose where true happiness came in life, you know, and there are no guarantees that my child, that that child will turn out to be happy

because they have their agency. And they are going to make choices, whether it's in their actions or their thoughts, that is going to cause them unhappiness. But what a magnificent opportunity it was in my life to experience being a mother. And sharing the joys and the sorrows of these human beings that were placed in, in my care.

Of all the people, of all the schooling, which isn't a lot that I've had, I have learned more from my experience as a mother to my children. Anything else I have learned in my life, I have had the opportunity to be able to learn to love my children as God loves all of his children. If you choose only this one day all year to manage your thoughts, Not let your brain run away with all those negative thoughts, but first of all, get curious.

Why you're having these expectations of your children, focusing on, is that really the most important thing in your life about having these children is how they treat you on Mother's Day? But if you could change your expectation thoughts to thoughts of gratitude and just focus on why you are grateful to be able to have been a mother to these children, maybe your chance to be a part of their lives.

It was only the first 18 years, and for some reason, they decided they didn't want anything to do with you. We have no control over them, but we have control over how we want to view this situation. A happy, mentally healthy person. Usually does not make the decision to cut themselves off. from their mother.

So we can be sad, but let's not be sad of, because of everything we're missing. Let's be sad that our children are hurting so bad. So I want to talk just for a minute about some actions you can take That will help you perhaps find more gratitude, or if nothing else, have a more enjoyable Mother's Day.

Number one, just like my friend who told everybody exactly what he wanted to do on his birthday, Why don't we give that a try? Tell them what your expectations are and be okay if all of them don't get met.

You know, it's if, if you want to have dinner together as a family, tell them that. If you want something specific for dinner and you feel that's very doable, then do it. I can

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remember many a Mother's Day. We had macaroni and cheese because I knew that was my kid's favorite meal and I was fine with that and, you know, my husband isn't the best cook, he can't even botch up a box of Kraft macaroni and cheese, so I would just fix it and I was with my family that I know not everybody.

would get the opportunity to do. The other thing is, if you are all alone, and let's just say you told your kids what you wanted to do, and there's been no response, I mean, you can plan the dinner, and say, Hey, we're eating at five. Anybody that wants to come, I'd love to have you over. This is a way I would like to spend Mother's Day.

And if you get some negative responses, or you don't think anybody's gonna come, or maybe nobody shows up, go out and find somebody that's lonelier than you are, and invite them over for dinner. We just can't focus and keep refocusing on what's not going right. So,

make it happen. Be involved in making the kind of Mother's Day you want to have.

Again, we have to start focusing on What our children are doing right. You may be only able to come up with one thing, but focusing on that will help you be able to have more loving thoughts. Another action we can take, instead of feeling This is my day for somebody to serve me. I like to serve them. I get a little gift for each of my daughters and my daughter in law, thanking them for the sacrifice that they are making to be such a great mom to my grandkids.

And then I write my sons and share. Some fun times I had with them being their mother.

Another complaint that I often hear from my followers, well, they should be calling me. And I go, why? If you want to talk to them, then maybe you're going to have to call them.

You have to get in the habit of showing that you care about them. You have to get in the habit of validating yourself for all the good things you did as a mother. And maybe that's making a list, but we just can't have the expectation. That we're going to get all this gratitude and appreciation from them.

That is not the reason why we had children. Our children did not ask to be born. They did not ask to be born into our family. So there is no entitlement to us. They don't owe

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us anything. that we sacrifice to raise them. Yes, is it nice if we are shown some appreciation? Of course, but that is not the purpose for having children.

I hope this These, this message that I'm sharing with you today has not been offensive. If we want to feel full of love for the children we were able to have. We're going to have to start focusing on what we love about our children. We do have a responsibility to our adult children, and it's different than the responsibility we had when we were raising them.

Our responsibility is to choose love. over judgment, and to tell them as often as possible how great and wonderful we think they are. I know this is hard and this is why I do the work I do.

If you really are stuck in this and can't have more loving thoughts toward your children, of having more gratitude just for the idea of being able to be a mother. I encourage you to get some help. This is so fixable, but it takes knowing the right tools, it takes knowing how to use these tools, and it takes practicing them.

I have been where you have been. And I am no longer there. I am so grateful that I got to be a mother. I am grateful for a day that I can show a little extra love and appreciation for all the meaning and learning and growing. That they have offered me for being their mother.

If you want to change how you feel about Mother's Day, you have to be willing to change your thoughts about your children.

If you liked 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 I'm changing your thoughts, I'm 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's 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 and book a call. I can't wait to hear from you.