

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 49 How You Can Influence Your Adult Children

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. Welcome back to my podcast, Loving on Purpose, and I hope all of you are in the throes of the holiday season. I sound kind of froggy today because I've been able to fight off a cold, but it's kind of gone to my throat. But I'm going to talk about today how you can influence your adult children. We don't have control over them, but we can influence them.

I know there's a lot of you that are especially hurting this time of year because your holiday season for whatever circumstances are going on in your life, are not going to be like the ideal we see on TV. Families don't always get along. There's often times when we are by ourselves, but it's our responsibility to fix that by fulfilling our own needs. And if you're physically unable to do that, my heart especially goes out to you. And my heart goes out to you that haven't tried to get help. If it's just for emotional reasons of why or how your children are treating you, either estranging from you or not being very kind when they are around you, maybe they're not including you. But there is a way to fix that.

And that's what I do every day, every week. I help women. I just finished up with a client today, and she told me that she's been in over seven years of therapy and this coaching has helped her more than anything else that she has had. There's some tough situations out there, I know, and they're difficult. Like I said, I believe that God is full of Jesus Christ has all the answers, as in to love everyone, to not judge them, and to forgive them. But it's pretty hard to know how to do that, especially how to start. And so today I'm going to talk to you about how you can influence your adult children in you managing your thoughts, which cause your feelings, which cause your actions. So it's mostly going to be having to do with your actions and how you act around your children can influence them. Circumstances are neutral. What happens in our life, whether it's something our adult children said to us, whether we are or we aren't getting together with family for Christmas, or whether it's whether these happenings in our life and everything that's happening in the world around us is neutral. Circumstances are neutral because they don't in themselves have the power to make us feel a certain way. I know that to be true because if it was the situation that was causing us to be happy or unhappy, we would all be either happy or unhappy. If it was a circumstance that caused us to feel good, then that circumstance would cause everybody to feel good. But that is not the case.

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

And the best example I can give is the weather. When it's snowing, some people are happy, and when it's not snowing, they're unhappy. Or to say that in a better way. If the snow causes you to be happy, it's your thoughts or opinions about it, about what you're able to do. Go skiing, play in the snow, go sledding. But if you're unhappy because it's snowing and you might be thinking it's so cold, it's so hard to drive around, then you're going to be unhappy. It's when you put meaning to your life or thoughts about the weather that causes you to feel a certain way.

So many of my clients have blamed themselves for not having a close relationship with their adult children. I guess you could say that's true. Not because of any action they did or didn't do, but because of their choosing to think if they had raised their kids a different way, perhaps their adult children would love them more. Or if they acted differently around them, if they said exactly the right thing, then their children would love them more. But that's just a story that we tell ourselves. We can all have a close relationship with anyone we want just by choosing to have loving thoughts about that person.

I have a close relationship with Jesus Christ because I have loving thoughts about him. He never visits me and I'm not quite sure what he expects of me. But I choose to think he loves me because I believe I am doing my best and this will please him. Take that same sentence and replace the name Jesus Christ with one of your children's names from whom you are feeling disconnected. In other words, I have a close relationship with we'll say John because I have very loving thoughts about him. He never visits me. I'm not quite sure what John expects of me, but I choose to think he loves me even though he doesn't show it to me. Could that be believable to you? How does that new thought make you feel?

To feel love without receiving love takes practice. Practice thinking first. I can love and connect with my children regardless of whether they accept it or reject it. What often comes up for Moms is I don't know how to love or connect with them if they don't show me any love back. But you are a circumstance in their lives. You are a person that is a part of the world. You cause them to have thoughts about you by them watching you and listening to you. If circumstances trigger them to have opinions about you, you get to decide what kind of circumstance you want to be. In other words, you get to decide how you want to show up to your children. How do you want to act and speak to them? That comes from a place of loving them first. What they think about your actions or words is their business, not yours. They have the gift of agency and they can think of anything they want.

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

To show your children you love them can only be done from acting, from a feeling of love. To get to that place of love, you have to accept their failures and successes and love them wholeheartedly. Sometimes we show our children we love them by setting boundaries. Showing love may be saying to them, if you don't apply for at least one job a day, you're going to have to start paying rent in our house. Sometimes we show our children we love them by acting and talking from a place of kindness, understanding, consideration and curiosity. I haven't heard from you in a while. How was your week? I think of you often. How are you feeling about losing your job? Do you think I should buy a new phone? I'm curious how you got started taking drugs. What does it feel like when you are on drugs? Your words are the circumstance to your child. He or she interprets those words however he chooses.

Your words are also the circumstance to you. You put meaning into them however you choose. If your thoughts about what you said caused you to feel love, then you have learned to love on purpose. Loving, kind, considerate, curious thoughts cause you to feel love. What we want to learn is to manage the type of circumstances we want to be to our children. If you say something kind to your adult son, for example I like your girlfriend. It's his choice of how that statement makes him feel. If he feels approved, he might be thinking, I'm glad my mom likes her. If he feels offended, he might be thinking, So she didn't like my last girlfriend. But the only opinion that matters is the opinion you have about yourself. I was kind and considerate in my words and my deeds.

Brooke Castillo said the more strongly I opinionated about myself in a positive way, the more people follow my lead. It's almost like you show them how to think about you. Behave as loving as you can love. Your children will either choose to accept it or reject it. But either way, you showed up as a mom that loves them like crazy. When you learn to manage your brain in a way that causes your thoughts to default to loving thoughts about anyone, you will always feel love. No one else can give you this feeling or any feeling for that matter. It is a gift you give yourself when you love another person. It is a gift because of all the feelings available to feel love is always an option and love always feels the best. When you feel love, you behave in a way love behaves. Your result is love wins. And that means you have won. The struggle over needing your children to behave in a certain way for you to feel love.

I can remember a time when my son was very standoffish to me. He distanced himself. He never contacted me when we were in a group. He never spoke to me. He never greeted me as he came in the door or said goodbye as he left. And my feeling was, I think I repulse my son. And that was a horrible thought. And so I got tired of thinking that. So then I chose to think, he loves me. He just doesn't know how to show me that

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

he does. And from then on, I didn't withdraw from him, but I could just be my kind, loving self around him and not be judging his thoughts or judging his behavior. Because love wins, you win. Because love is available and always the best option, you can learn how to love on purpose, but it takes some guidance and some help. I would be honored to help you. If you want to know how you can work with me, how you can live without regret, by being an influence in your children's life, of showing what an unconditional, loving person acts like. If you really, really have the desire to change this painful relationship you're in with your child or adult children, I can help you. Go to Bonnielyman.com and let's just talk. I hope you have a great week, and I look forward to talking to you next week.

If you're frustrated because your relationship with your adult children doesn't look anything like the way you thought it would, I can help you. Moms who are in a painful relationship with their adult children tend to just spin in their sadness and in their pain because they're waiting for their adult children to change or they don't know what to do to instigate this change to have a peaceful relationship. My program is called Loving On Purpose, and I help you fix what's not working in your relationship so you can feel love and peace with your adult children and then be able to move forward in your life. I can help you feel that peace that will cause you to know exactly what you need to do to maintain that peaceful connection with your children. I can help you feel secure and confident in your role as a mom. I can help you be able to choose how you want to feel at any moment, and that means being able to move forward, to live a satisfying, fulfilling life that includes always having love for your children. If you want some help, if you just want to get on a call with me and see what my program is all about, or how I can help you, go to Bonnielyman.com and click on the little button that says Book a Call.