

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 50 People Pleasing

Episode 50 people pleasing. 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.

Hello, everyone. Welcome back. So glad you're back with me. Let's pretend we're sitting in a living room with a nice fireplace, maybe a Christmas tree near us. Let's just sit around and talk. Well, I guess I'll be doing all the talking, but I'd love any reviews, any feedback. What I'd really like from you guys is to send me some topics that you would like me to address, and you can do that by contacting me at bonnie@bonnielyman.com. And that address will be in the show notes.

But we're going to talk about people pleasing today, and I think people pleasing kind of gets a bad rep. There are some of those cliché topics that keep coming up, and this tends to be one of them. And when we take it to either extreme, it's not shed, it's not discussed in the light that it was intended. I think it's a good thing to please people when we're helping others out, when we're doing service for others, when we're making life more comfortable for someone that we love. I love pleasing my husband because I think there's a lot of things I do that irritate him. But I like helping my friends out. I like helping my adult children out. If it's something that I want to do and it increases my love and I feel love from doing it, then it's really not an issue at all. But sometimes when we talk about people pleasing, when it's done in a negative way that's even harmful to us, is when people have a strong urge to please others, even if it costs them something. It's something they do that is going beyond what they're really capable of doing or maybe even wanting to do.

A people pleaser is someone who cares a lot about what other people are thinking about them. They say yes because they want people to like them or they want others to approve of their actions. As in if you were asked to make supper for somebody, a dinner for somebody that needed dinner, but you were asked that day, and there was just no time in your day to do it, but you feel like the other person would think the person requesting you to make that dinner. You were just being selfish and just making up some lame excuse. If you thought that they would disapprove of you if you didn't do it, then that is people pleasing. I have a friend who I've always idolized as being just. Not only is she a great cook, but she's high energy, she's a great mom. She serves her husband, they're retired. She still makes him breakfast, lunch, and dinner. And when her

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kids come at Christmas time, if there's somebody there that needs a meal she's fixing it for them.

But I said to her because after everybody leaves she's so resentful and she's so glad that they have left. And so I just asked her the other night because they're starting to come into town next Monday. I go, So do you have the courage to tell everybody that breakfast is on their own? And she goes, no. They just like it so much when I fix their breakfast. And I really think that she does like it. But she says it's a clean up that makes me resentful that nobody helps with the cleanup. And I said, Why don't you just request people to help clean up? Why don't you make a list and say this person's job every day, every meal this day is in charge of cleanup. This person this day, when we're eating together, is in charge of setting the table. And then everybody kind of has an all their own day and they know what's expected.

It kind of goes back to that idea that if we don't put the vegetables on our children's plate they don't know they're supposed to eat them. If we don't tell them that we need the help they just assume that Grandma is going to do it because that's what Grandma always does. And Grandma helps. But it just gets where she's into that pleasing people mode because she has such a strong urge to please them even though it completely wears her out and she can hardly enjoy their company there. She even has one daughter that has told her dad oh, I can't wait to come home because I just need a rest and I can relax. And I know mom will watch the kids fix all the meals. Well, until we take the initiative to do something about that we're just a people pleaser. And Brooke Castile has said people pleasers are really liars because they're so resentful that they're doing it out of obligation. Maybe some insecurity and fear I'll talk about a little bit later that they won't be approved of.

Every Monday we go out to dinner with some friends and we've just always done it. And so my son, whose wife's parents live in town and there's something about daughters and mothers being a little bit closer in this situation. I know they see more of each other than they see us but I'm okay with that because I decided several years ago that doesn't mean they or my grandkids, their kids love me any less because they see me less. But anyway, my son asked me to watch his kids this last Monday night so that he and his wife could go to a basketball game. And usually he'll preface it with I know it's late notice and if you can't, I understand. But this time he didn't say that. He just went right to do I want to come to their house and watch the kids or should I bring the kids to my house to watch the kids? And I just sent him a text, sorry, I have other plans. I didn't even feel the obligation to tell him why. But at that moment, with Christmas and all, especially, I get really tired in the evening. And I wanted to go out to dinner with my friends, even though I love being with those grandsons because I don't get to be around

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them very much. But I didn't go to the place in my mind, oh, here's a reason that they'll like their other grandma more because they're around her more. I didn't go to the place in my mind. Maybe he won't ask me ever again. And I didn't even go to the place. He doesn't ask me often. Am I really making the right choice? Am I missing an opportunity to be with those boys? Which would I rather do? But in my heart, I would rather go out to dinner that night.

When I do say yes to watching kids, it's because I really want to. Or maybe there's sometimes it's something I don't want to, but I feel there is a need that I want to help fulfill. There might be an emergency or like it was last Monday also it was a couple of days ahead of time. She asked me, my daughter asked me if I could pick up her kids from school. Two of her kids come back 45 minutes later and pick the third daughter up from school and then take them home, take them to their dad's house because she didn't want them walking home alone. And I said yes because I felt like she really needed the help. There was no agenda behind helping her in that she's going to like me better. And so I'm going to say yes. And if I were to ask myself, is it something I really wanted to do? Not really. It's freezing cold outside. It's half hour today. But it wasn't out of fear of her being disappointed in me. If I said no, I did it out of love because I know she really needed me to do it. And I love her enough that it made me feel wonderful that I could help her out with that.

When I got really sick with cancer, my daughter Jodie told me I can't be home every day wondering if you need me. So I'm asking you if you need something, even if you just want me to come over and sit with you. Tell me. Call me and ask me, and I will tell you if I can do it or not. So I didn't have to sit home wondering, oh, I'd really like her to come over and visit, or I need her to do some grocery shopping for me. But I know she's too busy. She's running a business and she's got her kids. I just know she's too busy. No, it just cleared the air. We knew what was expected of each other and that was that if I needed something or I just wanted to see her, I would ask. And if she could, she would, and if she couldn't, she'd be honest with me. I just think we need to live in the space of being honest and truthful in a kind and loving way. When we are saying yes out of fear, they won't be able to find anyone else to help them, or I'm the only one, or if we're doing it out of insecurity, they'll be angry or disappointed with me. If I don't say yes, that's when we're actually lying. We aren't telling the truth. When we say yes from fear or insecurity, we'll probably be resentful, maybe even angry that we said yes.

I was asked to host a puzzle exchange activity. I said no. I wouldn't ever go to a puzzle exchange party, much less host one. It was so against anything I wanted to do and I couldn't see how I would pull it off that it didn't last more than 15 minutes or I really couldn't see the benefit of bringing people out in this wintery weather just to exchange a

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puzzle. And the person requesting this responded to me. I appreciate your honesty. Our children may want to abandon all our family Christmas traditions. They are not going to abandon you if you disagree or still want to carry on that tradition. You just can't expect them to agree with you or to join you in carrying out that tradition. Just because traditions change doesn't have anything to do if family members still love each other or not, or it doesn't have anything to do with whether they enjoyed that when they were growing up, but it's just not in alignment with what their family wants to do. My son, who is dealing with same sex attraction, is living with his partner. My love for my son hasn't changed. I love his partner. Our whole family loves his partner because we choose to. But also I love his partner because my son loves him. I just don't worry about eternal consequences. That's really none of my business.

But I am so glad that I am able to do that. Being honest and truthful is loving ourselves and being self confident enough to not always say yes because of the thought. Maybe we're hanging on to good people, responsible people, nice people always say yes. It's part of learning how to fulfill and take care of our own needs. And sometimes being asked to do something that we feel we have to say no to is a way that we take care of some of those needs. We can be confident, self, respectful and humble all at the same time. Family members don't stop loving each other because they were turned down by their parents to watch their kids. If you have feelings that you have to say yes to, every request made by your children, and if you don't, that they'll be disappointed in you. That tells more about what you think of yourself than what they think about you saying no to stop saying yes when you want to say no. Just be sure you say no kindly, respectfully and lovingly. This will help you work on respecting yourself first. Why do you like yourself if you don't know this work has to be cleaned up before you can have a better relationship with an adult child or anyone else for that matter. Say yes when your heart says to say yes. Even if you have to make a sacrifice to say yes. In other words, you say yes when your gut feeling, when you're prompted. When your heart says to say yes. Say no when your heart tells you to say no. I think of it this way: it is more important to my well being often to say no.

Also, I'm giving somebody else the opportunity to qualify for a blessing that maybe is someone that is too often overlooked and it's a benefit to them to be noticed. Remember, you can say anything you want as long as you say it lovingly and respectfully. Love trumps everything. Love always wins. But most important, love always feels the best. I hope you have a wonderful week. I hope that you can focus on all the good things that are happening this time of year and keep them in your heart and in your soul that they will carry you through the rest of next year. I look forward to talking to you next week. Have a good day.

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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 in 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.