

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 60 Mother/Daughter Perspectives On How to Feel Loved

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. You're listening to Bonnie Lyman, and this is Episode.

60 looking at life. With adult children from a daughter's perspective and from her mother's perspective. Hello everyone. Welcome back. I am on my second week in Hawaii and it is certainly heavenly I. I feel very privileged that I am able to do this, and I don't like to flaunt this. I'm almost embarrassed sharing it with you because I know not everybody gets that opportunity, but it.

It has been a wonderful way to get through February today. I, as you could tell, I had difficulty changing the naming the, uh, title of this episode, and it may be different than what I said when I go to publish it, but I am going to interview. An adult woman and asked her some things about how her parents handled things when she became an adult and.

She will tell you how old she is. She's in her thirties and she's still single, and so we're gonna talk about that a little bit of. The support, whether she liked it or not, and what could have gone better. And then I'm going to interview her mom and so we can see her perspective of what's going on in her daughter's life right now.

And. Struggles and what she has found has worked and what she wish was different. So hopefully, um, it'll be helpful to you and it'll give you some firsthand knowledge as to the struggles that we go through with our adult children. All right. I am talking with a friend of mine and we're just going to keep this anonymous.

So I am going to, um, refer to her as Julie. So, um, Julie, will you tell us. How old you are and tell us a little bit, only spend about two to three minutes and tell us what you did when you turned 18. If you went to school or just whatever you did. Just give us a little background. Of your life from when you graduated from high school.

Okay. Um, what did you ask me to say? How old I am now? . I'm 39 and let's see, when I was 18, I graduated high school and then I worked for a year before going to college. Did a little bit of college, quit college and worked again and did cosmetology. Served an LDS mission for 18 months and then when I got home, started in on my career.

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Okay, great. So thinking back when you were making some decisions, as in you went to school and then you, um, you went to college and then you stopped going to college and, um, Worked a little bit just, you know, your various choices, just trying to figure out what you wanted to do with your life. Um, what did you like?

Of how your parents reacted to your decisions. So first of all, I want you to tell me what you thought they did, right? That made you feel supported, um, but you were still independent. and if there was anything that, uh, they could have done that maybe would've been helpful, um, just supportive or more motivating, just whatever thoughts come to your mind.

So first of all, let's just focus on what you liked, um, that you felt really helped you make that transition. To becoming an adult and when you just didn't go to college like some kids do for four years, you made several changes in those, um, first 10 years of your life. Well, I feel really fortunate cuz my parents are always supportive of my life goals and decisions.

Um, and so just, I had certain dreams and goals I wanted to accomplish, and I wrote them down on a list of a hundred things I wanted to do with my life. When I turned 18, I made that list and so when I expressed an interest in first going to college, they were really excited, totally on board. They drove me down to college.

They helped me financially in as much as they could and were really excited and took an interest in what classes I was taking and all of that. So I think just really supportive that way and excited for me. When I decided to drop out of college and pursue beauty school, they were really, especially my dad was really encouraging of that, of that.

My mom was a little hesitant of me going to cosmetology school. She really wanted me to get a four year bachelors. , but I really felt like it was right for me to continue or to go to cosmetology school. So we discussed things and she has supported me ever since. So I think she gave an honest opinion and her concerns, but um, then ended up loving it.

And she loves that I can do her hair, but . But, um, I really felt like. They've always just whatever I've wanted to do, they've been there for me and which that means a lot. And I've felt like from a young age, they've trusted me to make my own decisions and then given me guidance or their opinions. And that's been from a young age, I really feel like getting that trust.

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at as a young teenager to make my own decisions with their guidance has been really a great thing for my personality. Cuz had they've been real forceful, I think I could have been a little tougher, maybe more rebellious, and I haven't been that way. And I think that's largely in part because of their parenting and letting me make my own choices, like I said.

So, okay. So did you. Did you see or have any friends, just maybe one or two you could talk about where, uh, they were. Making different decisions. You know, you just had quite a few decisions there that quite a few changes you were making where their parents weren't as supportive and what do you think? Or you could even just talk about yourself, you kind of mentioned.

As you as a teenager that, um, they were always supportive, so you weren't super rebellious, but what do you think it would've done to your relationship if they had not allowed you to make your own choices? Um, I think that that would've caused me anger and resentment towards. . Um, I think that it would've made me closed off to talking with them and asking for their advice and opinion in my life.

Um, I think it would've just made life a lot harder for me and for them, cause I would've been mad at them I think. Um, So, yeah, I mean, I think as I've watched some of my friends make decisions and their parents weren't supportive, sometimes I agreed with the parents on my friend's decision, and other times I agreed with my friend's decision.

It was, it's just interesting to, and even today, uh, being a single adult, Watching some of the conflict that my friends have with their parents, cuz I have a really closer relationship with my parents. Some of my friends do not because their parents have consistently not approved of their decisions and it makes them feel untrusted, kind of unworthy to make their own decisions if that.

Makes any sense. So did I get ? Did I answer your question ? Yeah, no, that was good. And I had a thought come to my mind. One thing that comes up when I'm working with clients, they go, like, your college thing and your, you said your mom was kind of disappointed there. Mm-hmm. . For a little bit, and so maybe you can tell why or how you think she was able to work through that, but I will.

I often have clients say, but they're afraid that later on. Their child is gonna come back to 'em and said, I wish you'd forced me to stay in college, cuz I really regret it now. What

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are your thoughts about that, just regarding your life? Um, I'm not one that likes force. I don't think force is a good thing.

And to me, when we make our own decisions, then we're the only one to blame for the results or the outcome of that decision. Um, and I think if people try to force their kids to, whether they're still kids or whether they're an adult, if they try to force their kids, Yeah, like I said earlier, I just think it creates a gap and a divide in the relationship and it's just, I just don't think it's good.

And so I think when we make our own decisions, then we are to blame. Um, my younger sister, never, my older sister and I took piano lessons and we loved it. My younger sister didn't really stick with it, and she said that to my mom. I wish that we, I would've kept stuck with piano. I wish you would've had me sing piano longer and.

But she was the one that didn't wanna do it and my mom didn't force her. So, and it's, you know what, as an adult, it's never too late to pick up things that maybe we quit. So, but that was an example. My sister, she's always envious that my oldest sister and I play the piano, but my mom listened to my younger sister and she let her quit and she regrets it.

But again, that was on, that was on her. Cuz it would've been miserable to stay in lessons. So, okay. Now you're, did you say you were. 38, 39. Okay. You're 39 years old and you are single, and I know that you know the truest desire of your heart and you thought you'd be married by now and, and that hasn't happened.

How have your parents helped you with, um, This part of your life. I mean, they would like you to be married too. Mm-hmm. , you know, they would like to have more grandchildren. They would just, they would like you to be married because they know you want to be married. Mm-hmm. , and this isn't so much about how you have worked through that, but how.

How have they been supportive to you without, I don't know if you wanna say coddling to you or over, uh, compensating, uh, trying to. You know, make you happier or make up for that lack in your life. Mm-hmm. , you know, what, what have they done just to be supportive and yet, I guess just be kind of normal about it.

Well, the first thing that comes to my mind is just that they have been really my best friends in my adulthood. Um, they're very, Loving, um, and expressing ex, excuse me,

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they're very loving in their expressions to me. They express their love for me. They express their support for me. They listen to me when I cry or feel lonely or discouraged.

But then they also, um, encourage me and they appreciate, um, , the life I've had, even though maybe it wasn't what I had pictured. They are always so complimentary in supporting me in my career, my hobbies, my friendships with other people. I like to travel. They support me in that. And so in many ways, you know, they're never trying to pressure me.

They don't bring up the single thing much. I mean, we laugh about funny things in the dating and singles world, but. I think they're just my sincere friends. We have fun times together and they love me for me, whether or not I'm married or have provided them grandchildren, . So I think what I'm kind of hearing through that, um, they're your friends, like in my situation, Uh, I, I don't know if I would consider my relationship, um, with my children as friends.

Um, maybe because, um, most of them are married and then one child has a partner. They have a significant other. In their life. And so it's like, you know, that significant other is their friend. Mm-hmm. . Um, and you know, it's, and yet I know that there are people that have married kids and they. They call their mom every day or whatever.

And that just happens not to happen in my life. Um, so, you know, I, I just wouldn't use. The word friend, but I think that's fantastic that you know, you do have this relationship. So if you could give any advice to my listeners whether it doesn't matter if their child is married or not, I mean, you are. You are an adult now, just exactly like your parents are an adult.

Even though you're younger in age, you, you've become equals, you know, they, they are still your parents, still your mother. We're gonna talk to your mother in a minute, but they're not so much parenting you. They're supporting you, but if you could give any advice, To people that are struggling, you know, to have as good a relationship as you have with your parents.

What kind of advice would you give? This is advice to the parents, not the child, to the parents. That's kind of a loaded question. Let me give it some thought here for a second. . Um, I just think being genuine in the relationship, even if it feels strained or awkward or uncomfortable, but being genuine, being supportive of.

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Your children, even if their life or their struggles are, even if their life hasn't gone the way that they or you had hoped for. Um, and. Not letting their struggles or trials in life define who they are. I think it shapes who we are, but I think if we feel this pressure, especially from parents, oh, you need to get married, or, oh, you need to have a better job, or, oh, you need to have kids, that kind of pressure will only, I think, Make the relationship worse if it's already struggling.

So I think, um, supporting , not putting pressure or your opinions unless asked for, and just genuinely loving and having a friendship with your children. , um, and letting them know that they're loved regardless of what their struggles are in life. And maybe, maybe things will get better. Okay. One last question.

Um, do you have friends who. Have that are similar in your age, um, and have left the church? Yes, I do. . So what, what kind of advice would, and you know, maybe you've seen how their parents have handled it. , but what kind of advice would you give, you know, to my listeners, if they had a child that had left the church that would keep their, um, relationship close and be supportive without, um, you know, not particularly liking what they.

But still loving them. One thing that I've had friends that have left the church, um, have shared with me is how they feel like once they let their parents know that they're in the process or have already left, um, they get frustrated and angry when parents try and send them general conference talks or articles relating to leaving the church or repentance or, or whatever.

That seems too, with the people I've spoken to and the friends I've met doesn't really do anything but create more division with the parents and with the church. Um, so I think that's one thing. Don't shove the church articles into your kids' faces cuz that they're not, they don't want that. And usually people are pretty hardhearted at that time, I think.

Um, establishing boundaries as far as, you know, making sure that if the kids aren't saying, Unkind things about the church or church leaders to you and that you don't try and force the church on them. And I think that's an important boundary to establish. Um, some people don't want to hear about the church at all, um, which I don't think is fair cuz it's part of our lives, but also, I think it's important for kids or people that left the church to not bash on the church around the parents.

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So I think there needs to be a mutual respect and a boundary there. Um, and then I just, again, just not making any disparaging or negative comments towards. Lifestyle choices that there's the kids are making.

Okay. This is great. This is perfect. And Julia, I just wanna thank you for your time. And if you notice, this is kind of the theme of my whole coaching program. The name of my podcast is Loving On Purpose. and if you notice when she, when Julie was talking about all the support, it pretty much was nothing but love.

It always came back to love that her parents loved her, even though her mom wasn't real excited about her. Quitting, um, college and or changing, um, to a different type of training, and she was able to put her desires aside and support the desires of her. Daughter, which remember, she's an equal, she's an adult, and we all have our agency.

So I just, I have such a strong belief that that love always wins and just the beautiful story that Julie shared with us of the closeness that she had with her family. So thanks a lot, Julie. Thank you. Okay. I hope that was helpful learning from an adult child in her perspective of how her parents supported her and what helped her most in, um, keeping a good relationship with our parents.

Now I realize. Even if you did it that way. Exactly. Um, it could backfire. It's not going to help you, but it's just showing you that she went through a period of time there where she made several changes, made several decisions, and how her parents reacted. So now we're going to. To her mother Jane. And it may not be all exactly the same topics, but we're going to get her perspective of what went well or perhaps what she struggled with and how she overcame, um, being a mother to an adult child who.

Kind of went through some different decisions. So I wanna welcome you, Jane. Thank you for being here. Thank you. Happy to be here. Um, okay. So Julie told us that when she got outta high school, uh, and I can't remember the exact order, but she tried out some different things in her life to find out. Figuring out her life in what she wanted to pursue.

So one of the things she talked about was she went to college for a while and she figured out, no, that wasn't what she wanted to do, and she said that you. Were a little bit disappointed, but it seemed like it wasn't for that long, and that you supported her in her decision then to go on to, um, No, it's not beauty school.

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What do they call it? I think it is Beauty school. Okay. Yeah, beauty school. So tell us about what your feelings were when she told you that she was going to quit going to college and make this other change. Or maybe she didn't even know exactly at the time what she wanted to do, but how are. , how were you able to overcome that disappointment?

Or just tell us how you felt when she told you that and what you did from there on? Well, I was not disappointed totally. I. Could see the wisdom of her completing her degree. Um, but I knew that she had always had skills and talents that she didn't feel she was able to use while she was in college. and she, um, was ready to move ahead.

And so even though I, I kind of thought, well, she doesn't have to do it all right now. She could have time in the future where she would wanna get her degree. And so then she decided to do, um, the hair styling and beauty school, whatever. And, and actually, Came to real, really know that that's was what she should do at that point in her life, it, she had such fun coming home when she'd come home and she'd tell us about it.

She was having these really great experiences. Meeting with different people and different types of people than she would find in her colleges, for instance, her college classes. So I was happy for her. Um, and I know that she felt like, you know, we were disappointed, but we, I. Just when I first heard it, I was , but then I thought, no, this'll be great for her.

And as it turned out, it's, it was her. It was her talents that she needed to do. She's blessed the lives of so many people. She's able to counsel people because they open up. To her when she's doing their hair and, um, they feel close to her on a monthly basis when they come. So it's actually been a, a really great thing.

Okay. Were you ever tempted to say to her, you're gonna regret. If you quit college and you don't get your degree now, I mean, you know, there's all sorts of reason you could get married and start having kids. And I mean, you could do that while you were in college also, but you know, it. , it seemed like you weren't disappointed for very long.

So number one, why? Why do you think you weren't tempted to say to her, you, you're probably gonna regret this. And then number two, how were you? Able, I'm just assuming you weren't stewing in this disappointment for very long. How were you able to move ahead and just support her? I think I was able to do that.

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What you're saying, just kind of move ahead. Um. because I trusted her. I loved her and I trusted her that she knew what she wanted to do more than I did. I'm just her mother, but I'm not the one that has all the deep feelings that she has. And I knew because of who she is, that she would be successful, what whatever path she went down.

Obviously you always want, um, A college education. If you can do it, it's always, uh, gonna benefit you, benefit you. But the other thing is you can go to school the rest of your life. And so sh as she came home, um, after experiencing the classes that she was taking, and she was just so thrilled that that just, it made me at peace.

I'm like, that's where she is, that's where she's supposed to be. So it really wasn't, You know, sometimes I think, well, you know, that's, if you don't do it right now, you'll never do it. And that's not true. She's continued to get, take classes and be educated and travels and has experiences and so it's opened the way for her to do that.

And I think the greatest thing is she's able to help other people. You know, she loves them and through the touch, like, you know, when they're, when you're doing hair styling, and you're in contact with people. It's, it pulls you together. It brings you together. And so they feel comfortable and it's all types of people that she sees and they all have this open feeling, not necessarily teenagers.

Um, but, but older, um, adults are able to visit with her and she's learned so much. That's great. That's great. It's. and what I picked up on that, if you noticed, she loved her daughter. She trusted her daughter, and she made the comment, And she said it better than what I'm saying, but she didn't know what was best for her daughter.

Only her daughter knew what was best, and she was able to let go of that parental grip that, no, I know what's best because I've lived more years than you have. And, you know, sometimes that's true. But you know, just as Julie kind of said to me after we were done, she said, you know, if, if my parents had tried to tell me what to do and kind of inferred that, You know, they knew better.

There just would've been this contention. They wouldn't have the relationship that they have. So Jane, I'd like you to tell us a little bit on how you. Deal because you just seem at peace and you seem happy that, um, I know you would like more than anything, maybe even more than Julie for her to be married because that's such, I mean, it was a desire of her heart for so many years.

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That, how have you, um, been able to accept that and not just, you know, focus on that? How have you, do you feel you. Are supporting your daughter when she is not married and, um, you know, not fulfilling one of her greatest dreams. You know what has made that hard? What has made that easy?

Um, I love her so much and I'm able to give her physical, touching, hugging, um, and try to make her feel not lonely and not missing out. And, and she, we have open talks and she gives me her advice on things, which I so appreciate, and I give her advice when she wants it. And sometimes when she's not, you know, in the right, hard or discouraged so that I will give her advice on just, um, being at peace with your path right now and that it will change.

This is not gonna stay like this. Um, if she mar. Then that'll happen. But she's at peace with her life at this point and. You know, she has such trust and, um, in, in God, and she knows that she lives righteously. And so all things bring her joy. Um, not all times, but she has, uh, a vision of what's ahead and, and hope.

and, um, she just does her best each day and takes it one day at a time and makes those changes that she feels like she needs to, and she's given it a, you know, she's gone on dates and tried to, uh, be optimistic and do her part. And I think the greatest thing that she can do is just keep optimistic and, um, not.

Fret over her future. She's already made plans for not marrying, but she also keeps an open eye for opportunities as well to date . So what I am hearing is. We've got two adults here acting like adults, taking responsibility for, for fulfilling their own needs. Jane is not dependent upon Julie getting married.

For her, Jane to be married in this life, she is focusing on what is making her daughter happy, and it's, it's really what we've focus on that makes us feel a certain way. And so, yes. Of course she would love for her daughter to be married and bring more grandchildren into this family, but she's also willing to accept what is, she's not resisting this, and she's just, it's just two adults here supporting and loving each other and what happens.

We have a beautiful connection. We have a beautiful relationship and you know, Julie talked about being such good friends, but I also talked to you about, um, you know, I just wouldn't use that word in. I would love to use that word, but I don't feel like that's the type of relationship I have with my children.

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But everything, you know, every relationship is different. But if you go back and listen to this episode, you will see. The bottom line is it's loving each other. It's respecting each other. It's allowing the other person to figure out their own life. It's staying out of somebody else's business of how they should be running their life.

It. Knowing that we don't know what's best for another individual, and that's what makes relationships complete and whole is this one. I hope you will, um, share this episode with anybody that you feel that it might help. Um, if you're struggling. Any way and you want further help on this, I encourage you to go to bonnie.lyman.com and sign up for my free resource, how to Be Yourself Around your Adult Children.

And I will also get you on my email lists that you can get my um, weekly. Couple extra emails every week for, for their encouragement. I thank you. Thank you. Thank you for listening, and I hope you have a wonderful week and I'll talk to you next week.

If you like this, be 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. 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 ones, but I can help you with everything. So just go to bonnie.lyman.com and book a call. I can't wait to hear from you.