

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 116: How To Solve Any Problem

I'm Bonnie Lyman, and you're listening to the podcast, Loving on Purpose, episode 116, How to Solve Any Problem. 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 everyone out there in cyberspace or wherever you are. I hope you're in a place of the world that you enjoy being. Some of you may be having grandchildren or with family members in some sort of capacity because of spring break and we have Easter coming up, but welcome, welcome back to the.

I sure appreciate all of you that listen in every week and that share it with others. And that I just ran across a site that I'll share one or two in another episode of some reviews of your opinion of my podcast. Excuse my voice. You know, I think it was almost a month ago. I completely lost my voice and I haven't gotten it back yet.

So I don't know what's going on there. But welcome to another episode. Some of the things that I'm going to talk about today. I have mentioned in some way or another on previous podcasts, but I have some different examples and I, I just can't reinforce this thinking, this concept, this perspective what I truly believe to be the root of.

all of our problems, you know, outside of getting weird diseases and such. But, you know, I purposely titled this, How to Solve Any Problem. Because what I talk about today, you can apply to weight problems, money problems, um, health problems, you know, any type of problem that we have, because it's, it's not what's happening in our lives, but it's how we respond to what's happening that creates Whether we get the result, the experience that we like having in our lives, it, it seems like maybe too many of us are shooting for a more, not a more than perfect life, but more of a perfect life than what we're experiencing.

And that can create. A, a false sense of longing of really what life is all about and what really makes us happy and what makes life so amazing. From the time we were little humans, just little people, we were raised to think that the cause of all our problems is what is happening to us. And so, in, in working with clients, I refer to that as the situation or the circumstance That is happening in our life and these situations and circumstances is what we believed and were raised to think that caused us suffering, discomfort, despair, sadness, whatever.

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We always thought it was something outside of ourselves. And so we grew up believing that the way to solve problems was to change the situation. If this were true, we would all have the same thoughts and feelings when we were all experiencing identical situations. But that is not true, and as you know, that is not how it happens, and I'm going to give you a different example than the weather, but the weather is such a classic example of a circumstance that is happening, a circumstance we have no control over.

Such as the weather, and we will all have different thoughts and feelings about it. So, my husband and I, were in Africa for 18 months on a mission for our church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints. And my husband now will talk and refer to this experience as one of the greatest circumstances in his life.

But when we were there, I, I was in awe and I just couldn't believe everything I was being afforded to experience to have this opportunity and he was having little different feelings. He, he loved the reason we Help set up some classes to for, to train people how to teach people how to make more money to help them in some small way, raise their standard of living.

All of that was fine. But some of the conveniences that we were going without were not disturbing, but he was just really missing them, where, for some reason, I wasn't missing them at all. And I remember We went to Samburu in Kenyan, Kenya, and we went to this little, small village where these people lived in, you could say shacks, but I will call it homes because that's what, you They called it and they, they were made with corrugated tin, I mean, just pieces, pieces of cardboard, pieces of tarps, just, I mean, they were, I would say, very artistically put together that they weren't offensive.

It looked like there was some intentionality when they were planning out these homes. And I had the courage to make the comment to my husband, I could live in a place like this. And when I told him that, he quickly answered. Well, just to keep things straight here, I don't think I could. And so, these homes in particular, not every place that we visited in Africa, but this place, they were living off the grid.

You know, there was no electricity no TV, none of the conveniences, washing your clothes or cooking or things of this sort. But they were happy people. But what I want to point out, it was the same circumstance that we were both experiencing Yet we had completely opposite feelings about the situation.

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So, it's never the circumstance that causes our problems.

Circumstances are neutral. Circumstances happen. We don't have any control over changing them. Now in that little village, I, I guess, you know, we could go on a campaign to find bricks. find money to buy bricks or whatever huge service project to build these homes for these people. But they were totally satisfied with what they had.

They, they didn't need. To live in a different life. And because the weather was cooperative there for this kind of a dwelling, they didn't have to worry about the elements of nature. So it's, it's not the circumstance. It's not the type of house that we live in that causes us to be happy or content.

It's our thoughts. That we have about the circumstance that causes us to feel a certain way to feel satisfied and content and find peace in life. The problem comes from. Sentences in our brain. Sentences that we choose we maybe didn't create, but they came into our minds, and we decided whether to focus on those thoughts, to hang on to those thoughts and these thoughts usually turn into a story we're telling ourselves.

About what we're making that particular situation mean. It's the story that causes our feelings. And so, if we think negative thoughts, if we have a negative story in nature, then we're going to feel negative feelings. My children. And it, it changes year to year. My, I've had children called more often that don't call as often now, and I have the reverse.

I have children that hardly ever called that call me more often now. Now, the circumstance is how often They call me, and I don't have any control over that, but I do have control over my thoughts about it. And yes, sometimes you know, I, I can get sad over them not calling me and I can take it upon myself to call them, but maybe the conversation is hurried.

Or it's Kurt, or you know, they don't pick the phone up at all. And I can remember one child in particular, it seemed like every time I got on the phone, I'd start out by saying, hey, do you have time to talk? For five minutes, and they would say yes, and, and then after a couple minutes, you know, I was told.

Hey, I'm sorry, but I gotta hurry and I'm, I'm headed out the door to do something important, I'm sure. But I used to feel hurt. I used to feel perhaps I irritated them. I felt that I wasn't important. And I, I started to feel that my role as their mom was obviously

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over and I felt our relationship was way too different, distant than what I thought it would be.

And I don't like feeling that. But when I was tutored in using the model, And it's a formula I use in my coaching practice. It's a formula to solve any problem created by my mentor and coach trainer, Brooke Castillo, that my child's behavior is not the source of my hurt feelings. And so I was able to fix that.

My suffering without changing my children at all. And so, the, the model is made up of circumstances cause our thoughts, our thoughts cause our feelings, then our feelings cause us to behave or to withdraw in a certain way. And however we respond or behave is going to determine our result or the type of experience that we're having right then with that particular situation.

And so when I changed the story, the thoughts I was having. It was the same circumstance, and I won't go through the whole scenario of the phone call. I'm sure you've all gone through that. I, in changing my thoughts to be more compassionate, more understanding, to want to have it be different, but not need it to feel to be different, to have more positive thoughts.

feelings that I actually started feeling closer to my daughter in the connection that I had. I find my kids when they talk to me, they never share as many details about their lives in my grandkids lives as what I would like. My husband reminds me. That it's none of our business, a lot of their life, and they will share with us what they want to share with them.

I would never want them to feel obligated or duty bound and so that's what motivated their thoughts behind their behavior.

So, instead of thinking they don't share enough, or they don't call enough, or they don't keep me up to date on my grandkids comings and going, I started thinking about how much I love them. And all the good things that they do in their life. I stopped thinking thoughts that were causing me to be in pain.

So, really, you could almost say, I started thinking less about me and what was not going right. And started focusing on more of, hey, they've got challenges that they're dealing with, and focusing on how well they were meeting those challenges. And part of that could have been that they needed more time involved in their own life And I like

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to say, as an adult, acting like an adult is willing to put our desires aside for our children's needs.

I begin focusing on what I could do better to show my children that I love them, and quit thinking about how I felt she wasn't showing love to me. It, if it was the circumstance and factually we could say what our children do or don't do or say or don't say, that if it were the circumstance that was causing me to feel distant in my relationships with my adult children, everyone would be feeling exactly the same in similar situations or, you know, pretty much exact circumstances.

As you and I were both feeling,

but there, there are some parents, and I think it has a lot to do with personality, just as they are with some children. And if we're, if we're in despair over not having enough association, either by visits or phone calls from our adult children, we can hardly imagine that any parent would like that much distance in a relationship.

But, they, there are people out there, because of, you know, this love language thing, how you like to be shown love, is kind of a personality trait, and we're all different in our personalities, and how we like to be shown love. Showing love and I'll have to give you an example with my husband, I felt was pretty cute as I started my coaching business.

I found a lot of inspirational quotes, you know, just a way to, nice thought to have as you start your day. And I started writing these on little cards and leaving them on the front seat of his car before I went to work. So after four days, he says to me, that's really. that you leave those quotes, they, they don't really touch me in any way.

And yet I know they're very meaningful and motivating to you. And, you know, I, I was thinking, oh, he would just be so grateful to get these little snippets of inspiration and he wasn't interested at all. And so you know, there are people out there that are totally satisfied with having a semi distant relationship with their adult children.

I have one of my clients mentioned to me when I was asking her, what kind of a person does she want to be? And she said, I have this friend that is so optimistic. She can find good in everything. And yet we know there's opposition in all things. And yet she could focus on the good. And she could hang on.

to the good thoughts. That's what she was doing. As a result, her life was happier and she was inspiring so many people and everybody wanted to be around this woman

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because she had that optimistic energy about her. The good news is that we don't have control or be able to change our circumstances. I mean, sometimes we can, you know, if you're living in a place where it's very cold winters and you're tired of it, you know, especially as people get older, they move to Arizona or St.

George or wherever they go to, to have more. Sunshine year round in their life and yet in my situation, if every day is the same every day, that is not as satisfying to me as the change of seasons. But most of the time we don't we can't get rid of the circumstance. Now a lot of times people, they, they want to get revenge and They cut their children out of their inheritance.

They stop making any initiative toward reaching out to them.

But we can, we can change our thoughts. And when we change our thoughts to thoughts that are positive, And I'm not talking about Pollyanna thoughts, but just maybe even peaceful thoughts, understanding thoughts, compassionate thoughts. We do have the power to feel any emotion we want to feel. even in the worst of circumstances.

And so that's why I call my coaching program loving on purpose. Love always feels good. So if we learn how to not judge other people, to at least like them, we're, we're going to have a much more content, peaceful, satisfying life.

So, yes, when our children don't treat us, don't call us as often, don't see us, don't share stuff with us as often as we like, we can get sad. And, oh, by the way, if you're not on my email list, you need to go to BonnieLyman.com, and you can get on my email list by signing up for the free resource I believe it's BonnieLyman.com.

BonnieLyman.com. How to be yourself around your adult children that will automatically put you on the email list or there's a place just to get on my email list. If you like my podcasts, I think I send out some pretty good ones. Thought provoking little snippets or whatever you want to call them each week.

But I, I had a woman respond to reply to me on one of my emails. Talking about how sad she was that her kids, or one kid a son, didn't call her very often. And I responded to this subscriber that, yep, she just needs to be sad. In fact, she's gonna get really good. at knowing what sadness feels like.

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Because we don't want to resist those feelings. When we're sad, we just need to be sad, and it will fade. But another great way, I suggested to her, to get over being sad, was to go help somebody else be less sad. The circumstance is always neutral. A circumstance, and I think you guys know what I'm talking about, we'll just say your children's behavior.

is a fact that can be proven in a court of law. That they did it, that they said it, or that they didn't do it, or they didn't say it. When we say my, my child makes me feel unimportant is a thought. Sorry, I lost my train of thought there. What our children say and do Do and don't say, is the circumstance.

We can prove that that happened, but we can't put meaning to it, in that they make us feel unimportant. We can't name that as a circumstance. The circumstance caused us to have thoughts that caused us to feel. to feel unimportant. A circumstance then is a fact that can be proven true in a court of law.

The past, other people's behavior, world events, the weather, our circumstances. The circumstance is not the problem. The problem is sentences in our brain. We hang on to

And I've made up a story about what we're making our children's behavior mean.

So, if, if you did not understand this, or if you're, I call it, stuck in the weeds, you can't see how to make the turnaround. Or how to let go of those negative thoughts when it's blatantly your children's behavior is not what you're expecting and you could, you could get a hundred people agree with you that they were being rude, that doesn't solve the problem or make you feel any better.

The way we solve. Every problem is to change our thoughts. As I started to say, if you're struggling with this, you need to jump on a relationship strategy call, and there's a link in the show notes to this. You and I get on and talk. I give you a little bit of help, and then we decide what to do. Where we want to go from there.

It's complimentary. You have nothing to lose. I, I want you to think of this At this Easter season, if you're a Christian, think of one teaching that Jesus Christ has given to the world that helps all of us have better relationships and helps us feel better in our lives. I believe choose one and commit to getting better at following out, living up to that teaching.

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I believe when he asked us to love everyone, forgive everyone, and not judge anyone. It's, it's just not to the benefit of the other person, because a lot of times all of that is rejected. As I know many of you know, and I have felt often, but it will benefit us loving another person. is always an option and it always feels best.

So I, I admonish you to have a good week this week. Choose those thoughts, choose loving thoughts that you can choose to love everyone, but especially your difficult adult children that may not even deserve to feel loved. Have a great week, have a great Easter Sunday, and I'll talk to you next week.

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, on changing your thoughts and 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.