

TRANSCRIPT OF EPISODE 31 “HOW TO FEEL YOUR FEELINGS”

Hello, podcast universe!

Welcome to Episode 31 of the 100% Awesome Podcast and welcome to December, the very last month of the decade. I'm April Price and I'm so happy to have you joining me here on the podcast today. And I want you to know that I've been thinking about you this week. This little podcast reached over 20,000 downloads and that is so amazing to me. I am so grateful for your support—for subscribing and sharing the podcast and for just being out there listening.

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And I really wanted to be able to give you a little gift and say thank you. So here are a few gifts and you can take your pick. Or you can enjoy all three. So first, of course, is my offer of a free coaching session. And I want you to know that it really is free and it's available to everyone of you. And you'll be amazed at what you can learn about yourself and your own brain in a single coaching session. And I want you to know that I do my very best to give everyone who signs up for a free session some real relief and some thoughts and tools that allow them to move forward and make progress in their lives. So sign up and take advantage of that!

Second, you might not know this about me and my family if you don't live by me, but we have a talent for Christmas albums. And every year we compile the very best Christmas songs and we put together an album we deliver it to all our friends and neighbors. And I'm telling you these Christmas albums are the best albums you'll find. And everybody we know looks forward to getting them. So I created a Spotify playlist called the 100% Awesome Christmas Playlist that's a compilation of our very best Christmas song choices and you can just get on Spotify and search for the 100% Awesome Christmas Playlist and listen to it and enjoy it all season long.

And then finally I'm also giving away two mini-coaching packages. And so the mini coaching package includes 4 one-on-one coaching sessions with me. They're 45 minutes each and we can work on anything you want in these sessions—your relationships, your money, your time, your health, your goals, your confidence—any area of your life. So to be eligible for one of these two mini-coaching packages, you just need to sign up to get my weekly email that goes out every Monday morning. And I call it "Your Weekly Shot of Awesome" and it's just there to give you a little like shot in the arm, a little thought to help you throughout your week. And if you sign up in the month of December, you'll be automatically entered to win one of the mini-coaching packages.

So you can go to my website and sign up at aprilpricecoaching.com or you can just text the word "awesome" to 6 6 8 6 6 and you'll be entered to win. So I will contact the winners at the beginning of January, and we will do some life-changing coaching for you. So sign up either on my website or text the word "awesome" to 6 6 8 6 6 and you'll be entered.

[03:36]

Okay, so today on the podcast we're gonna be talking about something that I've wanted to talk about for a while now and it's something that I've been working on with many of my clients and I think it's a subject that can make a huge difference for so many of us in our lives. And that is really knowing how to feel our feelings. Now, as you know, on this podcast we talk a lot about our thoughts and how our thoughts create all of our feelings and how important those thoughts really are in creating the life that we have, the life that we're currently living. And sometimes with all this focus on our thoughts, we kind of forget about our feelings and how critical they are in the creation of our results.

All of our feelings fuel our actions, right? They create the power for whatever actions or inactions we're taking in our lives. And so they're so important. Our feelings are actually at the heart of the model. The feeling line is right in the middle of the model. And so it's important to understand how to feel those feelings.

So I want to start today by telling you that by and large most of us are really really bad at feeling our feelings—actually feeling them, right? So a feeling or an emotion is just a sensation or vibration created in our physical body when we have a thought. But for the most part we haven't ever really learned how to process and notice and allow those vibrations to occur.

And there's a saying in coaching that says thoughts are the language of the brain and feelings are the language of the body. The brain and the body communicate to each other through this exchange of chemicals. When the brain thinks a thought, chemicals are released to notify the body of what is happening, right?

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When we think scary thoughts the brain releases chemicals that produce fear and adrenaline and cortisol hit our bloodstream and we get ready to act. When we think loving thoughts, the brain releases chemicals that produce love and contentment and oxytocin enters the bloodstream and we're filled with feelings of goodwill and peace and joy. And when you really think about it there are thousands of available emotions and thousands of combinations of hormones and chemicals and physical responses that get triggered in our body whenever we feel any of these feelings.

And for some reason these chemical reactions and vibrations can be uncomfortable to us and we often try to avoid them. We try to avoid feeling. We try to resist the feelings that we're having and not feel them at all. And we do this in lots of different ways that we're going to talk about.

And I want you to know that this can happen even if they are happy feelings. So a few months ago I interviewed Jody Moore for my podcast which was such a thrill in and of itself, and when we finished the interview, she asked if she could air that interview on her podcast. Which meant that a whole bunch more people would be exposed to me and my coaching work. And I was so

excited. And I was the only one home at the time and I was just like filled to the brim with excitement, and so I started running around the house and kind of squealing, right?

And suddenly I thought, "I should eat something" right? Like my brain just offered this thought out of nowhere. I wasn't even hungry. I was excited, but I was so uncomfortable with that much emotion coursing through my body that my brain thought we should probably eat something, we should probably dull this emotion and we should distract from this a little bit. Even though it was a very happy emotion.

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And the truth is we really don't have a lot of practice feeling our feelings. And we really don't have the skill of feeling our feelings. And one of the biggest changes in my life since I found thought work is, of course, knowing that I am creating my feelings with my thoughts and so that causes me to pay a lot of attention to the way I think. But also it has taught me to pay attention to the way I feel, and it has made me more willing to really feel all the feelings that my brain creates.

And I find that this skill is so important especially when we understand that we are creating our feelings. Because when we know we're creating our feelings that leads some people to think that they should only be feeling positive feelings. And that kind of it kind of makes sense, right? Like if you create your feelings wouldn't you always want to feel happy? Wouldn't you always want to feel good? But what I want you to know is No, right? We don't always want to feel good. And being really good at feeling our feelings can change so much for us.

And so today I'm going to try to make a case for feeling bad. That should be awesome. Actually let me just rephrase that slightly. Like today I want to make a case for feeling all of our feelings and how really being open to every human emotion is the way to create an amazing life.

So the first thing I want to talk about is what happens when we don't feel our feelings. So a couple of weeks ago we had this really big rainstorm in Arizona. And where we live in the Phoenix area, just under the surface soil there's this thick clay called caliche. And this clay prevents water from soaking into the ground, which is why it is a desert, right?

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And so when we have a big rainstorm, where we get a lot of water in a short amount of time, the water doesn't absorb into the ground because of this clay and the water starts to pool and flood very very quickly. And within a few minutes the roads can be completely flooded because there is literally no place for the water to go.

So a couple of weeks ago as I was driving through these pools of standing water, right, where the streets used to be, I thought about this idea of resisting our feelings. And just like with the rain when we resist our feelings and not let them be absorbed or processed in our bodies, it makes kind of a mess just like the rain did, right?

So there are three main ways that we try not to feel. And the first one is just by avoiding our feelings by doing something else, right? We try to numb or soften the feelings we're having by buffering them with other activities. And often it looks like overeating, overdrinking, shopping, overworking, sometimes we use pornography or drugs or exercise. We're trying to use another activity to avoid feeling and if we're avoiding our feelings with negative behaviors like overeating or over drinking or shopping or pornography it makes a mess in our lives. We have, in a sense, avoided our feelings by creating other negative consequences in our lives.

So let me give you a little example of this. Every time I go to write an outline for my podcast my brain starts thinking about how much people are not going to like it and how I don't really have anything to contribute and I don't have anything to say that's gonna be a worth to anybody. And how I'm going to sound dumb or ridiculous or uncaring or a million other things, right?

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And when I start thinking like this, I start to feel ashamed. I start to feel scared and when I feel ashamed and fearful my brain suggests that we go get a snack. Rather than feeling ashamed. A bowl of Lucky Charms is like the cure to shame, you know. And I happen to have a year's supply. Instead of feeling ashamed of my work and just letting shame sit on my chest in a heavy lump or climb up my cheeks in a warm heat, I often instead try to avoid feeling the shame by raiding the pantry.

And we all do this in various ways, right? We all have ways that we try to avoid the feelings in our lives. Like I often tell my clients we all have our buffer of choice, but in the end all of those things are there to help us avoid feeling our feelings.

Another thing that we can do with our feeling is that we can react to them instead of feeling them, instead of absorbing them and processing them. We react to them. And this also makes a mess, right? We yell at the people we love. We stomp around. We slam doors. We don't show up as our best selves. We're reacting to the emotion.

So the other day my husband was putting up the Christmas lights and I didn't want him to put up the Christmas lights because I hate it when he puts up the Christmas lights. And every year I say, "Please can we hire somebody to put up the Christmas lights?" And every year he's like, "I'm putting up the Christmas lights," and the feeling that I have when he's doing that is usually fear and annoyance. Right?

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I'm always scared that he's gonna fall and hurt himself or kill himself. And I will have to raise four kids alone with a paraplegic husband because of the dumb Christmas lights. And then I actually feel annoyance because they are never straight, and they always look pretty janky and I get irritated that it looks terrible. And he had to risk his life to make something look so terrible. So do you see? see? When David hangs the Christmas lights, I feel scared and irritated. Because of my thoughts— that he will die and that the lights look terrible.

So the other day David was hanging the lights and I was feeling scared and irritated, but I didn't want to feel either of these things. So instead of just feeling scared or just feeling irritated inside my body, I reacted instead. I raised my voice. I slammed the door. I made a mess. Do you see? And so, David, said, "Ap?" And I said, "WHAT!" And he said, "Can you come look at these lights?" And I was like "Grrrr!" and I slammed the door, right?

And at the time my brother and sister-in-law were over at our house visiting and my sister-in-law turns to by daughter and says, "Are they okay? Are they fighting?" And my daughter's like, "Yean, they're fine. This is just what they do." Right? David hangs the lights. I have thoughts. Then when I resist my feelings and react instead of feeling them, I don't show up as the best version of myself.

Now, for a just a minute, I want you to imagine how different that scenario would be if I simply decided to feel my feelings rather than react in order to avoid feeling them. I could just stand there and feel scared. I could just look at the lights and feel irritation across my shoulders and up my neck. It's just a vibration, right? That feeling, that vibration can't hurt me. The hurt and the mess come when I react to it. And keep in mind it was all created by my thoughts.

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Okay, so the last way I want to talk about the way we deal with our feelings sometimes is called resistance. And resistance, in scientific terms, is when there is a material that blocks the flow of electrons, so the electricity can't pass through, right? And in exercise, resistance is adding weight and making things harder and heavier. And so both of these ideas can apply when we think about resisting emotion as well, right?

When we resist our emotions, we try to stop their flow. We try not to have the feeling course through our bodies, and we try to push them away. And it takes a lot of energy and power just like it does in exercise to keep pushing that emotion away. And the emotions actually become heavier the more we resist and push against them.

And a lot of us resist our emotions when we think we shouldn't be feeling a certain way right. We often judge our actions as bad or good or healthy or inappropriate or we label them in some way and then we think we shouldn't be feeling them. We think we shouldn't feel sad. We shouldn't be discouraged. We shouldn't be scared and then we push against that and resist the fact that we're having that emotion. And what I want you to know is this added layer of judgment adds another layer of like heaviness and pain to what we're already experiencing.

For example I have a client who often has feelings of jealousy and these feelings of course, just like your feelings and just like my feelings, are created by her thoughts. Her brain which is always on the lookout for problems and dangers offers her thoughts. that creates the feeling of jealousy in her body. Which is totally fine.

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The trouble comes when she resists or judges these feelings. If she feels jealous and then thinks she shouldn't then there is a layer of shame that gets added on. If she is just willing to feel

jealous and notice how that feels in her body, she will most likely decide that she doesn't like how it feels. It might feel achy and graspy and hollow inside her. If she just allows herself to feel jealous, then she can decide that she doesn't want to feel it anymore and she can curiously look at the thought that created jealousy in the first place. Do you see? Without resisting the feeling, she then has power to see the thought creating it. Once you can see the thought, you can then choose to change it when you are ready to feel something else.

A similar thing happened to me a few weeks ago. I was struggling with feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt as I built my coaching business. My Facebook ads got shut down for a couple weeks and I started to think that maybe I was just not cut out to be an entrepreneur. And as I was really wrestling with how much harder it was to grow a small business than I ever thought it would be, I felt inadequate.

But then I thought that I shouldn't feel inadequate. I knew this feeling was created by my thoughts and I got frustrated and angry with myself for thinking them. I didn't want to feel inadequate and so I resisted the fact that I was.

And my coach pointed out that I couldn't ever change the thoughts that created inadequate unless I was first willing to feel "inadequate" and just allow the feeling to be there. The truth was that I was too resistant to feeling inadequate to be able to look at the thoughts long enough to question them.

And the judgment of myself was creating all the pain. Inadequacy was one thing but thinking that I shouldn't be feeling bad just made me feel worse. It added heaviness and resistance to already negative feelings and made it even messier. Resistance only ever makes the thing we are resisting grow.

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Now in each of these cases whether we're avoiding whether we are reacting or whether we're resisting we don't actually escape the feeling we're trying not to feel. The feeling is always still there waiting, right? It's always there waiting for me to stop avoiding, stop reacting, stop resisting. And then because I've avoided reacted or resisted, I usually have some secondary emotions that come with avoiding reacting or resisting.

For example when I overeat Lucky Charms to avoid shame, I still feel shame when I go to make the podcast, because that's just part of the deal, and then I get to feel even more ashamed that I didn't stick to my eating protocol. When I react to fear and irritation when David's putting up the Christmas lights, I still feel scared and irritated, but then I feel even more irritated at myself because I wasn't the wife I wanted to be. When I resist the feelings of inadequacy, I still feel inadequate doing Facebook ads, but then I also feel angry that I'm feeling that way.

So do you see? I have not escape the original feeling in the first place. I've just made more of a mess of it. I've flooded the streets, in other words, like there's no place for those feelings to go and I've made the situation worse. So avoiding reacting and resisting is never going to give us the results that we want in our lives. It's our instinct. We want to avoid the feelings, we want to

feel better, and so that's our instinct. But never makes us feel better and usually actually makes the situation worse.

So what do we do instead? I want you to know that your body was designed to process your feelings and as a human being you are supposed to have all of the feelings. So some of the most important work that you can do for your own mental and emotional health is to learn how to process and allow all of your emotions.

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So I want you to know first of all that processing our emotions is always an internal activity that happens inside our body. And that means that when your brain releases a chemical inside your body to alert you and notify you and give your body information about what is happening you can simply see those vibrations as information, as a chemical reaction a vibration that has a very specific frequency.

For example when I feel shame, instead of reacting to it and I just decide to feel it and process it, I feel a heavy weight in my chest, and I feel heat in my neck and my cheeks. And that's all it is. When I really think about what the feeling is, it's a heaviness and it's a heat. And when I open to just feeling my feelings, I can just sit with that and allow it and not make it mean anything about me or my worth or my contribution or my lovability, right?

It's just a physical sensation that I can feel in my body because I'm having a thought. Another example is when I feel irritated. It feels hot and fast and bubbly along my shoulder blades. My heart rate goes up a little bit. I breathe a little bit faster and like sometimes I can feel like a tingling in my fingers. These are just reactions inside my body that I can just feel inside.

So when I teach my clients to do this, I teach my clients to close their eyes and take a deep breath and relax. You want to relax into the feeling which means you don't want the feeling to go away; you kind of just want to explore it for a minute. And I want you to notice when you do this what part of the body the feeling is located—is it in your head? Is it in your chest? Is it in your stomach? Is it in your extremities? Where is it? Find it in your body.

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And then is it moving? Is it fast or slow? Describe it, right? Is it hot or cold? Does it have a texture, like is it prickly or is it soft and smooth? Like if you are trying to describe the vibration that it's making inside your body to someone who has never felt it what would you say about it? What's its name? You can even say "hello" to it, right? I do it all the time. I'm like "Hello, shame. It's been a really couple hours." Right?

So as you will allow it and describe it and try to get close enough to see it, you'll see that you can just observe the feeling—that it isn't actually who you are. It's just a feeling that you can watch and observe and allow. So why do you want to do this? Why is any of this important? important? Why is processing your emotion preferable to avoiding or resisting or reacting to your emotion? And why is it an important skill?

So I think there's a few reasons that this is really important. And I want to just talk about them really quick. So the first thing is, and this is really important, when I can just allow the emotion, rather than trying to escape it or resist it, when I can just feel it, I can so much more easily access the thoughts that are creating it.

So I gave a talk a couple of weeks ago that I felt truly terrible about. So anyway I just felt like such a failure after I had given this talk and had all kinds of shame about what I had said and how I had presented it and how I wished I was more prepared and all this stuff.

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And instead of resisting that shame and trying to talk myself out of it, I just stood in my closet and I just felt the heavy weight and the heat in my neck and I just allowed it to be there. Hello, shame. And as soon as I relaxed into it and just allowed myself to feel it, I could see suddenly oh I'm just feeling this because I thought, "I could have done better." And when I saw that was the thought, I realized that's not even true, right?

And because I could just see that thought for what it was, that it was just a lie my brain was giving me, I could just so easily replace the thought with "It went exactly as it should" and the shame was able to leave. The only reason I had access to that thought though was because I wasn't resisting the shame. I was just allowing myself to feel it and then I could just look at the thought creating it.

What I want you to know and really understand is that you are not your feelings, right? You are just in a body having feelings and those feelings, I'm telling you, aren't good or bad. They are just information in the body about what is going on in your brain. And when we think that we are our feelings, or we are our thoughts, and we think that we should be better or higher or holier in some way with our feelings and that we should only be having positive emotions, then it's really hard to access the thoughts and question the thoughts that are creating them.

Our emotions don't tell us about what kind of people we are what we're worth or any of that they just tell us what we're thinking. And the more we can allow the emotion and just look at it for what it is—it's information in the body about what I'm thinking—the more access we will have to those actual thoughts. The less judgment you can have for your feelings the more access you have to the information that is creating it.

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When we think we are shameful or we are jealous or we are angry or we are irritated, when we think that's us, then we want to hide from those negative feelings and push them away and that never allows us to have the awareness that we need over our thoughts. So that's reason number one why you want to feel and process your emotions: because it gives you access to the thought that created it in the first place and then you have the power to change it if you want.

Okay, the second reason that I think allowing your emotions is so important is that it does offer relief and release. So like I said before your body was designed to process emotion and you will find that as you allow your emotions and find it in your body, notice it with curiosity, describe

it—that our feelings have a natural rhythm. They increase and intensify and then as we look closely at them and really get in there and feel them, they'll fade away. And then it might intensify again and as we look closely at it, it will release and retreat again—kind of like an ocean wave. It just comes and goes and fades until the emotion has been processed through.

Pushing away at it is what is hard. Fighting against that wave is what is hard. But just experiencing it allows you to just process the feeling and let it pass.

So when my kids were here for Thanksgiving, we went to a movie called *Jo-Jo Rabbit* which is the strangest movie, but it was just like so heartbreaking, right, about World War II, and this little boy's experience. And it's kind of a satire but anyway at the very end of the movie they show a poem by Rilke on the screen and it says:

*Let everything happen to you.
Beauty and terror
Just keep going.
No feeling is final.*

[28:39]

And I love that because as bad as it can be in this earth life, in the human experience, no feeling is final and all of it is part of your experience. The beauty and the terror, right? You need both of them for this experience, for the learning, for the growth. In order to become who you need to be, you need both. And what if you could just let those feelings happen to you? The beauty and the terror? terror? And recognize that no matter what, no feeling is final.

This is the human experience, the 50/50 experience, and what if you were just willing to feel all of it? There is a sacredness to it, right? These are feelings that you can only feel as a human because you have a human body that has a brain that creates these chemical reactions inside your body and that is sacred. That is the learning experience. I was reminded of a quote recently by Russell M Nelson where he said, "The only way to take sorrow out of death is to take the love out of life.

And I really think like that's the point, right? Like we get to experience all of it—the love and the sorrow, and the all of it is part of the deal. And how much richer and fuller our experience as a human will be if we don't try to avoid and resist. But we just open ourselves up to the entire human experience. As much and as deeply as we love, on the other side of that of course, is the grief and the sorrow, but that because we want the one, we're willing to have the other.

So another reason I think it's so important to learn to feel your feelings is that when you can learn that skill, when you can be willing to feel negative emotions, then you have access to be able to do really hard and scary things in your life. Because in order to leave the cave and go after our goals and be vulnerable and try new things and try scary things, we have to be willing to experience negative emotion. We have to be willing to experience positive emotion.

So I was like doing kind of like a personal evaluation of my year and seeing what I did this year, what I've accomplished, and like I started thinking about how it this time last year my little coaching business didn't even exist in my mind. It wasn't even an idea yet. I've had this whole year where I've grown a little business. And like I'm feeling things I never thought I would feel in this earth life. And not all of it is positive, right?

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Sometimes it's really hard and sometimes it's really scary and it's really vulnerable and being willing and able to process those emotions gives me so many more opportunities in my life and allows me to become a more capable version of myself. It allows me to be able to confront my own brain and my own limitations right.

And it's the same for any goal we have. Like when I went to lose weight, I had to be willing to experience the negative emotion of deprivation and discouragement and lack, that just comes with that process. And so whatever it is you want in your life, if you really want to expand yourself and your abilities and your skills and grow in any area with any goal, you have to be willing to experience some negative emotion that comes with the growth.

The last reason that I think is so important that we learn to process our emotions rather than avoiding them or resisting them or reacting to them, is that it truly does allow you to take responsibility for your own feelings. When you are just willing to sit with the feeling you suddenly recognize that you have created it and you don't have to blame anyone else. You see that it's just you and your brain creating all of it. And it's okay, right?

Like when I was scared and irritated about David putting up the Christmas lights, when I was reacting to that I felt like it felt like in that moment it was all his fault because he wasn't doing it the way I wanted. He wasn't hiring it out. He's like choosing to do it himself and so that made me like angry at him because I thought "He's to blame. He's the one making me feel scared and irritated."

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But when I'm willing to just sit with the feeling and recognize, "Okay, this is what fear feels like. This is what irritation feels like." Then I can recognize and have access to the thought that's creating it. I see I'm only thinking this because I think he's going to get hurt and that would be bad in my life if he gets hurt. It will be bad in his life if he gets hurt. And so when I recognize that, then I can see like "Oh I'm making me angry. Oh I am making me irritated. Or I'm making me scared. It's not what he's doing. It's my own head."

And without being able to process those emotions, that's really hard awareness to get. When we can process our own emotions, we can suddenly see our part in it, our creation of it, and take responsibility and ownership for our own feelings. And that is so powerful.

So that's what I have for you today. I really want to encourage you to try this on this week, to really try and process your emotions, to go inside your body rather than avoiding the emotion, reacting to the emotion, or resisting the emotion, and wishing it wasn't there. Simply allow it.

Say "hello" to it explore what it looks like, what it feels like. Become acquainted with your own emotions, and I think it will have a powerful effect in your life.

First, I think it gives you access to your thoughts that are creating it. Second, I think that feeling your emotion is the only way to feel true relief and release and our bodies were designed for it. Feeling your emotions also allows you to do hard and scary things. And maybe most importantly, really feeling and allowing your emotions allows you to take responsibility for their creation and get ownership over your own life...and that my friends is 100% awesome! I love you for listening! I'll see you next week!