

RISE UP AND SHINE – Episode #13: The Mean Girl In My Head



FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

Ashley

Welcome to rise up and shine. We are two women at different stages of life who have overcome feeling stuck, and are now living life fully with peace and joy. Join Us Weekly for a real raw and faithful conversation about our trials and triumphs, bringing hope, insight and weekly tips that you too can rise up and let your light shine bright.

I am nobody special. I am such a loser. I can never accomplish anything. I'm a failure. I am unlovable, I am not good enough. Nobody cares about me. Nobody loves me. If you guys are wondering what in the world we are talking about? These are the words that we hear in our head all the time. on repeat. I mean, if you guys are like us, and I'm pretty sure we all can relate is we just have that negative voice inside of our head that's always reciting negative talk in our head. What we like to call chatter.

Claudine

Yes, right. That negative inner chatter that really affects us in ways we don't even realize and really keeps us stuck. And not going forward.

Ashley

Absolutely. And I think of the word chatter, it's like senseless talk, you know, right. There's nothing really beneficial coming from it. You know, it's just these voices in our head that just keep recycling certain words. But it's really affects our life that we don't even realize we can be completely unaware.

Claudine

Yeah, in fact, in my experience with most women, I've talked to you, there's very few I've come across that don't struggle with these thoughts. Whether you're a mom, a wife, a friend, an employee, a worker, there's just those thoughts. I'm a failure. I'm not good enough. I'm not worthy. I'm not doing a great job. And it really keeps us down.

Ashley

Absolutely. I think of a big one is I can't write probably started many sentences in my head with I can't write I will never dot dot dot.

Claudine

Yeah. And it's so limiting. And it's shocking how big a part of our lives it is. And I know you and I actually, we've talked about this. And we've learned so much about the brain and our thoughts and really living life to the full and rising up and shining from the things we struggled with in the last few years. And this is an area that affected us so much. It was the thoughts in our head that weren't helping us to rise up, they were actually keeping us down.

Ashley

Yeah, totally. I didn't realize until I was going through counselling, what was going on in my head, I never really paid much attention to it. You know. And funny story, I think I probably mentioned this before, as well as I would have music on in the background or TV to drown out what was going on in my head. But I never, I never put it together that I did that because of the thoughts in my head. I thought I did it. Because I don't want to feel alone in the house. I know. It's like there's company, you know, there's someone else in the house with me. But I did it because I didn't want to hear what was going on in my head. And I never really sat down and thought about what my thoughts were, you know, and listen to it. I just didn't, I wasn't aware.

Claudine

Well, and there's so automatic, this negative chatter that goes on. Sometimes it's so automatic that it's our default mode. I don't know about you ladies out there. But Raise your hand if it's default mode for this negative chatter. Two hands up for me. I can't see your hands. But we are confident that there's quite a few hands up right now. Today, we're going to talk about how we can change that. Because there's no way to rise up and live life to the full, if that's going on in our minds.

Ashley

And how can we possibly experience peace and joy, when that's going on in our head. And unfortunately, everything in our life could be in place, right? We could be living this quote unquote, dream life and we could have all these things, you know, that we ever dreamed of. But still we could be suffering in our, in our own minds, and we don't realize why am I unhappy? Why Why am I unhappy? And that is a huge thing. I think for me a big turnaround in my life was recognizing that our thoughts are optional, right? That was so empowering. Because I thought like, Well, you know, whatever's going on on my head must be true. Right? You know, I mean, it's, it feels true. And I just couldn't wrap my head around like, Oh, this is actually optional. Like, I can change what I'm thinking in my head. But what does it start with? Right? We have to be aware, we have to actually listen to the voices, that chatter that's going on in our head and pay attention to it and just like Okay, why am I saying this to myself? What I say this to my friend, but I say this to Claudine when I say this to my children, and just really start paying attention. Oh my gosh, like we are mean we're mean ourselves.

Claudine

Yeah. You know, the mean girl in our head. What and I like what you said I would never talk to my children the way I think talk to myself, I would never talk to my closest girlfriends the way I talk to myself. And yet there's something about us that it's kind of, I don't know why. And if you out there don't struggle with this more power to you, my friend, but a lot of us do. And I don't know why we do it. I don't know if it's this, like, we're scared to be arrogant or prideful. If I think positive thoughts about myself, it's wrong. But yet, we think these negative thoughts and don't find a problem with it. And one thing he said, is having awareness. And it's funny, because once I started becoming aware of the negative thoughts, then I started judging myself for that. It was like, Oh, my gosh, I have so many negative thoughts. And so there's this process of becoming aware without judgment, just observing going, Oh, that's interesting, but not judging is the amount of negative thoughts that I.

Ashley

Oh, I like that. Well, absolutely. Because when we're trying to be aware of that inner chatter, what we don't want is to be harsh with ourselves even more, you know, and cause more shame. And then you're just in this downward spiral. And, you know, and I would do that, like, when I was kind of starting to pay attention, like, Oh, am I saying that, Oh, that must be true, you know, then I would just kind of think myself into depression, I was just so I mean, there's so much negative talk in my head. But it feels so true. Because over years and years, we would recite these words to ourselves, right, over and over and over, even subconsciously, you know, I mean, yeah, we would just, I mean, we trained our brain to think that way is actually.

Claudine

Exactly it is default, because the brain is preconditioned and trained. Well, what's interesting is I was reading that, you know, thoughts are things and every time we have thoughts, and we think upon them, then the neural circuits are created or strengthened. And when we start to change our thoughts, and start to release those negative thoughts, the ones that no longer serve us, because that's the truth of the matter. Negative thoughts do not serve us they don't help us in any way. No, but once we start releasing them, and they lose their strength, it takes about three weeks for a neural circuit to lose its strength, and then it's not in default mode anymore. So it is a training, kind of like going to the gym. Like, we can go to the gym one time, but you know, my biceps aren't formed after one time. No, it's not. So same with our thoughts. And so it became really a mental exercise. Every time I caught myself telling myself something negative, I had to really stop it. And one scripture that helped me was Philippians 4:8, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is trustworthy. Think about such things, and I had to start stopping with my thoughts. Is it true? Is it noble? Is it trustworthy? Is it going to get me where I needed to be? And most of the times is no, right? And I just shared with you a couple weeks ago, I did make a mistake, I made a mistake with a client and it could have really had some negative consequences. And I started going down that road, Oh, my gosh, I'm such a loser. How could I do something like that I should know better. And I was really harsh with myself. And it kept me up most of the night. And the truth of it was, yes, I made a mistake. But I am a human being. And it's part of the human experience. I made a

mistake. I'm not a loser. I'm not a failure. I just made a mistake. And thankfully, God's grace was sufficient. And my clients were protected and everything came out as it should have been. And it was a small mistake, but my head made it so big. And it became about me, like, who I was as a person instead of this one action that I, you know, made a mistake on and a lot of times I think we do that our thoughts become who we are. Instead of Okay, I just made a mistake or Okay, I did this action, our actions, our circumstances, they're not who we are. They're just what we do.

Ashley

I like how you pointed out you know, your mistake that you made and you took ownership of it, and you were telling your brain that it didn't define you, you know, you're human, you make mistakes. And for myself, I live in a place of shame. You know, like I could be queen of shame. That is my realm. I am the shame Queen and I realized that I am just being so hard on myself. It's not true it's not positive it's not noble, you know, I mean, I'm just listing off all these things in my head and I just cycle and cycle and cycle in this pit of shame and I get worse and worse and worse because all the words I'm telling myself just compound on top of each other, right? And then it does I did feel like it defined me my mistakes defined me my fear, right find me, you know, especially having children or you know, and being married and my husband like, any time they were upset like you know, or even just Moody, just normal, you know, like, they're talking they might be Moody, I would take it on like, Oh my gosh, what did I do? You know, and I very much was in a victim stage, you know, like I just I lived in a place of being the victim. And so I had so much inner chatter going on in my head, that I would take responsibility for other people's emotions, and other people's actions or behavior. And I was just taking it, I'm like, oh, I'll take that from you. I'll carry that for you. Oh, you know, while like, I'm having all these thoughts in my head. Once I finally was starting to become aware, I realized that I was taking all this responsibility on and it's not, it's not my responsibility, but I was just compounding all the shame. And I was living in that place. That's where I was functioning, I was not fulfilled, I was not happy, I was not at peace, I was just miserable and depressed, you know, are anxious all the time, because I just had so much of that negative chatter, that was just keeping me stuck.

Claudine

Exactly. And that's where I was, a few years ago, it was this negative, the negative voices in my head or keeping me so stuck, and so down, it's really hard to lift yourself out of depression, when you're having all this negative talk. And it for me, I had to really dig deep and reclaim an identity that I hadn't had before, which was I was fearfully and wonderfully made, that I was made in the image of love. And for me, once I started doing that, I started realizing these thoughts are dark, they're not of light, they're not of love. They're filled with fear, they're filled with guilt, they're very dark. And when we have those dark thoughts, it's really hard to rise up. It's really hard to live in the light and to live our best life to live that life to the full. And it was learning how to transform those thoughts to let the light in, so to speak, that disperse the darkness. And it's not easy. It's simple. It's really simple. But it's not easy. And it took a lot of work to get there. But now my default mode is brother protective interest. Yeah. those thoughts like, Oh, my gosh, I blew it. Oh, yeah. They never just never, ever, ever, but now I have these other neural pathways that my brain has built that now go, No, and they're there. It's like my little coach inside that

coaches me and it's more that's becoming more default, more instinctual. So that's been a blessing, just understanding that and learning the power of it and applying it.

Ashley

As you're talking, I was thinking about our past experiences, you know, I mean, the experiences we went through from childhood growing up, we were influenced by everything around us, you know, we were influenced at school, you're influenced by other kids were definitely influenced by our parents or siblings or TV, you know, anything that was being thrown our way we were influenced. So whether someone was saying very negative hurtful things to us, and that is the case for some, or we were not specifically told, you know, some of these harsh words, maybe we didn't get enough attention that we needed. And so then our brain kind of, well, I must be a bother, you know, or that. I mean, as a kid, we're not thinking rationally, you know, that part of the brain that prefrontal cortex is not fully formed, right until mid 20s. And so as children, we start believing these things, just in our own head, oh, well, I must be this or Oh, you know, I got a bad grade, you know, right. I must not be smart, I must be stupid. I'm, you know, and having my own children really just opened my eyes to myself, it opened my eyes to see Oh, my gosh, like, I am hard on myself, because I can see my children be hard on themselves sometimes. And as much as I'm loving and encouraging them. I really start paying attention. What am I saying to myself? You know, I mean, that if they're saying this to themselves, what am I saying to myself now that I'm an adult, and I realized that I was just in such an emotional state, when I would ruminate on all this negative chatter. That prefrontal cortex was like, hibernating. It was shut down. It's like, I'm not, you know, I'm just not even functioning. And that happens, we get so stuck, which is why we feel stuck in life. We just get stuck ruminating on this negative chatter, and we just feel so unhappy in life that we're just living life with no joy, no peace. And then once we make the decision, and I just, we sometimes we have to get to a place, right? I'm tired of this. I'm tired of feeling this way. Something needs to change. And that's where I was I'm like, something needs to change. And it was what was going on in my head, that I need to change that I need to become more aware of, right? Because that's where it was starting. It was not necessarily my circumstances. It was what is going on in my head, you know, and yeah, that were just so mean to ourselves.

Claudine

Were so mean to ourselves, and it really needs to stop. And there's no reason. And so let's share a few things that could help anybody else out there that might be struggling with negative inner chatter.

Ashley

So awareness. Number one, yeah. Number one, you have to just kind of sit and listen to yourself, listen, what is going on in my head, turn off the music and the TV so you can hear your thoughts. Like, that's what I had to do. I had to turn off the music, I had to just you know, as I'm doing dishes, because we're women, our mind is constantly racing. So we're always thinking about something. So I just really had to take away the distractions. Listen to what I was telling myself listen to what is that girl in there saying,

you know, and then I would eventually go through the checklist. Okay, Is this true? You know, Is this good? Is it positive? Is that really true? Is the one I just I just camp around true, right? Because I realized that I believed so much. That was not true. And it just was controlling me. And so it's, I just keep asking, okay, is this really true? No, it's not okay. Is this really true? No, it's not. Okay. And then another practical I did? If you think of a dandy lion, right? Yeah, you blow the dandelion and make a wish. So I recognize I was starting to recognize when those negative thoughts would pop in my head. And like a dandelion, I would take three deep breaths, like I was blowing that negative thought out of my head, because as soon as we accept it, it takes root, it starts planting in our brain, and it's going to build that neural pathway, right? And I, I realized, I have a choice is optional. Do I am I going to embrace this thought? Or am I going to blow it away and replace it with truth, with positivity with gratitude? You know, like, I'm just I have to replace it.

Claudine

That's really important. We can't just expect to I'm not going to think this anymore. I think that it'll just go away. It does have to be replaced with a positive thought. And it's funny that you chose truth, I tend to focus on noble because in my brain, whatever thought I think even if it's negative, like I'm not good enough, like in my brain, I'm like, that's the truth. And I get stuck even there. Nope, this is a true thought. I'm really not good enough. And your brain, my brain will search for evidence that I thought is true, right? So for me, I have to go is it noble? Or is it pure? And that's for me, that was the word that hit me. It's not noble, it's not Noble. For me to think that I'm a failure. It's not right. For me to think that I'm unworthy. It's not those aren't noble thoughts, right? Even if my brain still wants to believe it's true, it's not Noble. And you said, You blue, three breaths. And it's funny because I use three as well. I have the thought, the negative thought, and I find three evidences to prove the opposite. That one negative thought like I am not good enough, then I do the exercise, I'm going to find three times where I was good enough. And I can find those, I can find three. And those three helped to displace the one and then the next time. I think that same negative thought I remember my three. And it could be really helpful to write really like that. Yeah, I have three, I don't know why that's my number. And remembering to second Timothy one seven, for God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind. And I need to make sure that my mind is sound. And when it's filled with dark, heavy thoughts, and negative thoughts. It's really not sound. And so in order to really live that out, I've had to practice and apply three thoughts that are evidence of the positive.

Ashley

Yeah, I really like that. I was thinking like, you know, the sound mine. Like we were very blessed with that. I mean, to be able to sit down and rationalize like, okay, what's going on in my head? I feel now I really value as a gift. You know, it's like, thank goodness, because of all the influences if we did not have that to decipher, okay, what is true, what's good, what's noble, what's pure was, you know, if we didn't have this guideline, and we didn't have that power to, you know, the way our brain was created, it's just fantastic. And it's to be able to weed through those things and toss them out. Like, I'm not gonna let that in. You know, I'm not gonna let that in my head. This is something I'm teaching my kids because I can see it, especially with one specifically. We had a very great conversation this morning about the

thoughts going on in his head, and it's just, you know, what, like, I can completely relate like, and I share with him, this is what I've had to do. Like, I get those thoughts in my head too, and I blow them away. Right? I even have a picture of a dandelion in my car as a reminder and I showed them I said, this is how this helps me. This is the practical like, if anything's gonna pop up, and it will, like you said it, those negative thoughts are never going to go away, because we did, you know, ingrain them in our brain, but they get less and less and less and less, you know, because as we are developing new neural pathways, it becomes a new norm. Like we talked about habits last week, it becomes a new norm. And really, it's not, oh, my circumstance needs to change, and then I'll be happier or my marriage needs to change and then I'll be positive, it's no, it's this is this is what it is accepted as it is. It is what it is. And but really, we just need to look more within we need to listen within, like what is going on, be aware, and the way that I explain it is get to know yourself, you know, like court yourself. Yeah, dating yourself, like get to know like, with curiosity, not with judgment, right? When you're courting someone, as I did my husband, you know, I was curious, I wanted to get to know him, I was excited. And just think of it as an exciting time to, you know, just get to know you and what's going on in your head and just recognize, like, you know, it's a choice. Like, I believe these things for so long. But no more, you know, I'm clear no more, you can sit down and be quiet.

Claudine

Those negative automatic thoughts, those little knacks, we've evicted them from the household of our brains of our minds. And lastly, I think it's really important when we're thinking these thoughts that there are thoughts, a lot of times they come from the opinions and thoughts of others. Yeah, and I know I do that a lot. And you had mentioned it earlier, but things from our childhood, something someone could have said in a brief moment, or they could not have been in a great loving place or dealing with their own demons and they say something rude or short. And we and then we own that we make it our own. And we we take that thought and that opinion, and we camp out on it, we ruminate on it. Like he said, I like that word, we just like it goes over and over and over in our brain. But that was someone else's thought or opinion. And it's not ours. And we need to make sure that we don't own those. Those aren't ours. That was someone else's, let them deal with it. My thoughts are my own, I can create them. I can choose them. Right. And I can release the negative ones that no longer serve me.

Ashley

Yeah, that's so true. I was also thinking when you were talking about opinions, right? I in my head, the way I functioned, even made decisions were based off of what other people might want, you know, whether they voiced it or not. I mean, that's the problem. It's like, sometimes someone did voice it, like their preferences are their opinion. And I would take that as, Oh, that's truth. Okay, well, then I must, okay, you know, and I would function that way and make decisions. And also, I learned that I could make decisions based on what I think someone else might prefer, you know, like, I would just make that judgment, like, I must do this. And you decide that or, you know, or think this because someone else might want to, you know.

Claudine

Well, they won't like me if I don't do this. Yeah, like me. And that's the negative self chatter. And then it doesn't come from a place of authenticity, and it surely doesn't bring peace and joy.

Ashley

And it might not even be true, right? I mean, if it is true, then just embrace the uncomfortability. You know, but most likely, it's not, you know, I mean, other people's opinions or their opinions. And that's where I was really held stuck is that other people's opinions I took as truth, oh, this must be the right way. And so I felt like I couldn't have my own say that my thoughts were just all this warm in my head about Oh, what other people might think or what other people think I should do. And, you know, I wasn't being authentic. I wasn't my authentic self. And I think that is so clear, just to keep in mind and those thoughts when you are becoming aware, when you're listening to that inner chatter, who is speaking to you, you know, do you hear the opinions of others? Do you hear you know, your own just limiting beliefs that you've developed over the years, regardless of what it is just be curious, be kind to yourself back, love yourself, do not be harsh, be curious, you know, no judgement, just get to know yourself. And it's just such a freeing, feeling to be aware, because then there is power, then you have the power to choose? You know, when I think this thought, this is where it gets me, you know, I feel anxious, or I feel discouraged, or I feel the victim, or I feel lonely. But if I choose this thought, then I feel more joyful, I feel more at peace and surrendered and content. So when you get to that place, just really recognize that you have the choice and there's so much power in that.

Claudine

Right. And after awareness. You practice blowing away those thoughts, and I practice finding three noble thoughts to replace them with so that's a great tool to use to get to that place.

Ashley

Yeah, definitely. So you guys, I hope you enjoy this episode. And just remember that just really sit and listen and be with yourself and just listen to yourself. Don't be a victim of the negative self talk. Cause remember, you are listening. Whatever you are saying, you are listening to and it really determines your life. You know whether you want to have a life full of joy and peace in which I think we all do. You know and there is that power so sit down with yourself, get to know yourself, become aware. And choose the thoughts that will serve you, blow away the thoughts that harm you. And just pick those three things you know that are going to help you, you know process through your chatter in your head. So thank you guys for joining us and we'll see you next time.

Friends thank you so much tuning in with us today. We hope that this episode has brought you one step closer to living the life you love. Until next time, remember, the world needs who you were made to be.