

RISE UP AND SHINE – Episode #4: What Do I Do With My Emotions?



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.

Claudine

Hey Ashley, welcome back. It's great to be here with you today. Today, we're gonna be talking about emotions, we all have them, we love them, we hate them. That's part of it.

Ashley

Well, and I found, I can be controlled by my emotions. And so it's caused me a lot of grief in my life and hardships. And when I've really learned the tools that I've learned over the last year, it just gave a lot of freedom and peace in my life. So I'm so excited to share with our listeners today, those tools that both you and I have learned, right, our lives just to have more peace and joy.

Claudine

Yeah. And they're the tools that we help our clients with as well when they get stuck or feel frustrated, or don't know how to shift from one emotion to the other. So why don't we start by defining emotion, what are emotions?

Ashley

So when I looked up in Webster's dictionary, it was this really great line, it said, emotions are a conscious mental reaction. And I found that really fascinating. Because the word conscious we feel means that we can be in control, like we know exactly, this is the emotion I'm going to have when this circumstance happens, right? But it doesn't feel that way.

Claudine

No, it sure doesn't. It feels like I have no control sometimes of my emotions. I feel like they take me over until I learned how to manage them. I felt very controlled and enslaved by my emotions.

Ashley

Yeah, I did, too. I felt like I was living by my emotions. I felt like I was on an emotional roller coaster. To be perfectly honest. I just felt like there I was always up or down, up or down. And I did not think I did not believe that I had any control over my emotions. You know, I mean, we hear that a lot. Right? Especially as women tend to be the emotional ones. But that we can be ruled by our emotions. But we feel like that's just reality of it. That's true. But in fact, it's not.

Claudine

No, it's not true. And emotions, I believe, are all God given. And they serve a purpose. They help us to add joy and peace to the good times in our lives. They are messages telling us how we feel. And they help guide and direct us.

Ashley

Yeah, absolutely. So when there's a circumstance that happens, and our emotions are all flooded, right? We're just feeling overwhelmed. We're feeling angry, we're feeling frustrated, or whatever, that it's telling us something about how we're feeling about a situation. And a lot of the times it comes from somewhere, right? They don't. It's our brains programming and reacting, okay? When this happens, and I'm going to feel angry about it, or when this happens, I'm going to feel happy about it, or I'm going to feel disgusted, right all of those emotions, but they are once we realize they are a tool in telling us how we feel about whatever is going on around us. It can serve us so well in our life.

Claudine

Yeah, that's right. I love thinking of emotions as servants. I think for so many years, I was mastered by emotions, right? And learning the tips and tools to let them be my servants and help me make course corrections in my life not to give into them, but not to resist or avoid them either. So let's talk about some myths of emotions. Just talking with you and with other clients. I came up with four common myths about emotions. The first one is our circumstances dictate our emotions. And we talked about that on our previous podcast. But why don't you share a little bit more about that?

Ashley

Yeah, so I was really good at this. I would always blame my circumstances for how I felt. And it was as if I had no control of how I was feeling because I was trying to control my situation. But learning that our situations or circumstances are neutral, majority of the time they're uncontrollable. My emotions I can control I can manage I can be more on top of and choose essentially.

Claudine

That's right. And I think even listening to that it takes us from the victim mentality like I'm a victim of my circumstance. I'm a victim of my situation, to taking our power back and realizing that we're in control that we're in control of our thoughts. We're in control of our emotions, and our behaviors. So that's the first myth.

Ashley

And I don't know about you Claudine. But this is how I lived my life. I was the victim. My circumstances and I felt my emotions were a result of because what was happening, why someone else was acting up why my children were being challenging, or argumentative, or why my marriage was in shambles at times. I felt like it was my circumstances. And I was just the victim suffering all all these emotions,

Claudine

Right? And I think a lot of women struggle with this. If you find yourself saying, if only then yes, if only he would change, then I'd be happy. If only they would obey, then I find peace, right? Only blank, then blank, you fill in the blank, but that is definitely giving our power away. It's being a victim. And it's a myth that our circumstances dictate our emotions.

Ashley

Yes. And I felt it was my responsibility to make other people happy, especially in my own family, I felt it was my responsibility. So if they weren't happy, in a specific circumstance, it was my fault. I needed to do something which left me in emotional wreck. So Claudine, what's the second myth?

Claudine

Well, the second myth is that negative emotions are bad. Oh, yes. And I think I spent a lot of time and I'm not alone in this and trying to stuff resist, deny those negative emotion avoid, yep, avoid, I just want to be happy. I just want to walk through the meadow, just smiling and peace and love and all that. And that's not the reality of life. But I really did believe that if I was feeling something negative, there was something wrong with me or something wrong with my circumstance.

Ashley

And as we grew up, that was a belief that we formed in our own minds, right? I mean, I've never had anyone tell me, oh, you shouldn't feel that way. But sometimes we do. For example, someone close to me addressed one of my children, and said, well, you can have this treat, if you can change your attitude and be happy. And I love this person dearly. But I spoke to my child after that, and I said, I love this

person. But I do not agree. If it's okay, that you are upset, it's okay that you are not happy right now that you're not feeling that way. Right. But a lot of us don't do that in our own lives.

Claudine

Well, and that's where, you know, you have a step up on me with this emotional health tools, teaching your children, I was the one that would send my kids to their room, and they couldn't come out till they were happy. Yeah, and I have one adult child that still spends a lot of time in their room. And I just wonder if they don't come out until they're happy.

Ashley

Well, and that could have been their place of comfort,

Claudine

Right, those times, right. One of the other myths, myths, number three, is if I allow these negative emotions, I will never move on and Amen. Yes, I think we've all struggled this one, if I really feel my anger, if I really feel my sadness, it'll never go away. And I'll never move in.

Ashley

I think another good example is grief or loss, right? Because that seems to take a lot longer to move on from and to heal from. And we try to distract ourselves. And I feel that because in reality, we try to still function. Normally, we we still have a family to take care of some of us have to go to work, you know, we can't just stop everything, right and just wallow in our loss and our grief, but we can learn to distract ourselves or avoid those emotions. But in essence, they come back stronger, and they'll keep rearing its ugly head right as we try to move on. But something will trigger it and then we'll just have this meltdown, and then Okay, this, you know, trudge on, let's keep going, let's not deal with it, don't deal with it. But I tries to keep popping up. And that's because it needs to be dealt with and it needs to be processed properly.

Claudine

Yeah, that's true. And repressing, it just makes it actually worse. It intensifies it instead of dealing with it and releasing it. It sits there within us and get stronger and more intense. And then the vicious cycle starts where we have to continue to avoid and suppress.

Ashley

And it almost takes more energy after a while to suppress it. Absolutely, then to actually process the correct way, the healthy way by and then move on. But I think many of us are just so afraid to experience those negative emotions because they're uncomfortable. We don't want to feel uncomfortable, right? And that's where we've learned over time. over our years, we have developed this belief that whether we've been told well don't feel that way or our own selves, we told our own selves don't feel that way because it's uncomfortable, and everybody would rather be sunshine and butterflies and happy all the time. But unfortunately, that's not true.

Claudine

And it makes other people uncomfortable. I think a lot of times when we feel sad or angry or frustrated. Other people become uncomfortable because they don't know How to handle it. And so then it's this, again, this cycle where, okay, I'm uncomfortable, but now I'm making my loved one uncomfortable. So I better just stuff it. So we're all just comfortable.

Ashley

Well, and I have a really good example with my two kids, they're very opposite, just like my husband and I, my daughter is a lot like me in the sense where she's positive all the time and wants to be positive all the time and wants others to be positive all the time. And my son is more of a realist, and he's very open with how he feels, which is great. But when he feels angry, or irritated, or just kind of Moody, it really bothers my daughter, because she's, you know, like me, why can't we just be happy, like, you know, there's always something to be happy about. And he just doesn't run that way. And so we've been teaching them. Fortunately, my husband and I are really on the same page with this parenting aspect as that it, he's allowed to feel how he feels she's allowed to feel how she feels. But it's important to not expect someone who may be wrestling with that right now to be happy, we'll just be happy because it's uncomfortable for me to be around. And we're teaching my daughter that if this is how he's feeling right now, maybe you can go read in your room, you know, I mean, he's working through it, it's but he's allowed to feel this way right now. And if you feel comfortable, just know that it's not your fault. It's nothing that you did, and you're not responsible for making him happy. That's just let him go through this, and it'll move on.

Claudine

Right? Well, you know, and that segues right into one of the truths, one of the first truths of our emotions, it's that they're all God, given. They're all part of the human experience. And we are built to have all emotions, a wide range of emotions were made in the image of God. And he felt things he felt sad, he felt angry, he felt happy, he felt peaceful. And so it's interesting that for me, one of the truth, learning that all emotions were God given, and they're part of the human experience helped me change my thoughts on emotions, and he really helped me gain some control and responsibility of the way I felt.

Ashley

Yeah, for me, I felt it gave me permission. It gave me permission to feel even the uncomfortable feelings. If I got frustrated. It was okay, if I got angry, it was okay. It was how I responded that I had to be careful about but it's okay to be angry. God never told us Don't be angry. Right said in your anger DO NOT SIN, right. And it's okay to be angry. So it was like, Oh, good. It's okay. I'm angry. But let me control it.

Claudine

Right. And that's huge. Even that, because I do think that gets twisted. We feel like we can't be angry. But Jesus was really clear. He didn't say, Don't ever be angry, like you said, but he said in it, don't send it's Don't yell, don't scream, don't tear your loved one apart, or road rage or any of that the anger you feel there's probably a boundary or something that's been crossed, and it might be very valid, but what you do with it, how you respond in your anger, any of your emotions, that's our responsibility.

Ashley

And what I have learned a lot recently is that if I do react in my anger, then I am the one that suffers, as well as who I was angry towards, you know, I could react or snap at my children, and then send them off to school, they can feel insecure about our last interaction. And then I feel shame all day long. I'll feel oh my gosh, I did not like how I responded, and I set my poor kids to school that way, they're gonna fail the test. Oh, no, they're gonna, you know, have a bad day because of me. But I realized that as long as I can control my reactions, it's okay to be angry. But I need to choose another way to deal with it. Like take a break, step away. Breathe.

Claudine

Right. And that's a second truth that our negative emotions can serve us if we don't allow them to manage stress. And we feel these things, whether it's anger, or sadness or frustration, anything that we would term a negative emotion, we feel those and those can serve us they can help us. Like I said earlier course direct in our lives, like, I remember for me when my kids were young, and if I was really snappy with them in the morning, it was usually because I woke up late, or I hadn't planned, I wasn't organized. It was really on me. And I had to learn, I probably need to set my clock 15 minutes earlier, so I can have my cup of coffee, I can have the lunches done. Then I'm in a place where I'm not stressed out and responding in an unloving way, which is how I wanted to respond. So it helped me make changes in my behavior, so that I could control my emotions.

Ashley

Yes, and that is exactly what I came to find out is when I was getting stressed out every morning trying to get my kids out to school, get ready, get up, get move in and out the door. I would run frustrated and rush. And then that does something to them to they're not comfortable with mom's upset at me, oh my gosh, I'm so sorry. And they feel bad. And then I come home and then I feel bad all day, right? But when I sat down finally and thought, why is this time of the day so stressful for me? Why am I reacting like this? Why am I so irritated? And I realize I'm rushing because I'm not prepared? Right? I'm not waking up early enough. I'm not having my still quiet time with my coffee and my Jesus, right. And I'm not prepared. I'm not planning ahead. I'm not setting them up for success. So my reaction towards them really should have been Hey, Mom, you know, something needs to change here. And that's where we talked about earlier, it's a message right to tell us what's going on? How am I feeling so I knew I knew as their caregiver, their parent, I need to be the one that's going to make changes to set us all up for success. Right?

Claudine

That's a great point. Another truth is that resisting emotions actually intensifies them, when we allow ourselves to be aware and become comfortable being uncomfortable that helps our emotions pass through.

Ashley

I like that. So I want to ask you, if you have any example that comes to mind, maybe even in marriage, or in a relationship you have that you could share with our listeners.

Claudine

Just one

Ashley

Well, we may only have time for one, right?

Claudine

Well, I think for me, I was a major stuffer and kept a lot of feelings stuffed down because I didn't feel safe. Or in some instances, I didn't feel worthy speaking my truth. So I would stuff disappointment and frustration. And I would just keep it down there, whether in my marriage or with girlfriends, and I just wouldn't talk about it. But meanwhile, it would simmer down there. And I just thought that it was perhaps maybe a righteous or spiritual thing to do. But in reality, I was really doing damage to myself

and those relationships. Because I wasn't being true to myself, it wasn't speaking my truth. And I didn't give my husband or my girlfriends the opportunity to meet my needs in a way that was more beneficial for me. So I did a lot of stuffing and avoiding difficult conversations. And it didn't honor or serve the relationships. And I think honestly, it did me some damage, it did my relationship some damage. And it helped me really dig down deeper into some subconscious beliefs that I had even about myself, feelings of lack of worth feeling of. I don't deserve any better than this. And once I was able to touch on those I was really able to heal. And then now I can express frustration, I can express disappointment. I can express sadness in a way that's healthy, not only for myself, but for those around me.

Ashley

And I think even accept them. Yeah, accepting those emotions, those quote unquote, negative emotions and allowing them to be and just talking the truth that it's not bad. They're uncomfortable, but they're not bad. They're all God, given. They're serving a purpose, I need to listen.

Claudine

Yeah, and that's the first step in healing and dealing with our emotions is becoming aware of what we're really feeling. And for me, my go to emotion when I was younger, in my 20s, and 30s was anger. And it was a really wise mentor, friend of mine that helped me realize that I was sad, my go to emotion, angry, and one day we were talking it through, and she was trying to help me get in touch with it. And she says, oh, you're hurt, you're sad. And I didn't realize I had such a hard time connecting my emotions and even labeling them or even becoming aware. So you're right. Awareness is the first step in healing and dealing with our emotions, just even knowing that we are feeling something like that. And for so many of us, that's actually difficult, because we've repressed it and stuffed it for so long.

Ashley

And sometimes there will be a trigger that an explosion happens. Yes, you know, it's you stuff it for so long. But eventually it's going to come out, you know, if there's so much pressure. And in our family, we coined this term called skane, GRI. So instead of hangry, right, you can act, you're irritable or frustrated or angry when you're hungry. We also recognize that anger can emerge. But it's really out of fear, right? Anger is the reaction. The fear is the true feeling. And that's actually the primary emotions and secondary emotions right where anger seems to be the one and The only emotion we might be feeling. But if you dig deeper than you will know there is another underlying root emotion there. And sometimes that primary emotion comes and goes so quick that the second one pops up the anger. And I you think that's what I'm, I'm angry. But yeah, you're angry, but it's more of a reaction out of your fear or your sadness.

Claudine

That's right. And you've just described the second step in healing and dealing with our emotions, which is to reflect to really take some time and talk to ourselves and say, Okay, I'm feeling angry. I'm feeling scared. Where is this coming from? So Ashley, you've just touched on the second step in healing and dealing with our emotions, which is to reflect, to really take that time without judgment, but with compassion and curiosity, to reflect on why am I feeling this? Is there something that triggered it? Is there something underlying that I have not dealt with things even as simple as being dehydrated or lack of sleep, they're not all psychological reasons. Some of them are physiological. And I actually, about two weeks ago, I had a really tough day I was feeling so down and everything was going great. I really did some thought work. And I explored my day, my thinking, my thoughts, my thought everything was great. And yet I was so down, it was such a strange feeling. And then I had a large glass of water, and I kid you not? 20 minutes later, I was feeling on top of the world, I just gotten so dehydrated. So there are other reasons. There's physiological and psychological reasons. But taking time to reflect to examine where's this coming from, again, without judgment, but with curiosity and compassion for ourselves. And the third step is really to allow it. And I think of the definition that emotions comes from the Latin root word, a move air, which means to move out, and emotions are energy, and they're meant to come and go. And it reminds me of that, quote, emotions are like waves. We can't stop them from coming, but we can choose which ones to surf. Yeah. And it also reminds me of a metaphor. I've got a lot of beach metaphors today. I think it's time for a trip. But anyway, two women from soco. But I think about trying to keep a beach ball down underwater. And that's what we do with our emotions, we try to push them down. And honestly, if we just released it and let it go, it would pop up. And then it would rest still on top of the water. But we use so much energy to keep them suppressed to keep it pushed down for whatever reasons. And our emotions are meant to move their energy and they're meant to move through our bodies. And whatever we feel, it's not going to last forever. Even though it feels like that on some days, it feels like I'm never going to be happy again. I'm never going to feel peaceful again, I'm never going to feel joyful. Again. I've been there where I thought that this depression, the sadness, anger is never going to leave me. But there was a lot of resisting going on. And once I released it, and allowed them and didn't judge it, it didn't define me, they were just transitional feelings, they came and they left when I let them leave. That is where I was able to heal.

Ashley

So one of the things I've learned over this past year in my own journey is how many physical ailments, more disorders, or diseases right come about over time by suppressing our emotions, and not allowing ourselves to feel them. And when I was going through a class last year, that was one of the key takeaways for me was that this is a matter of life and death, really, and my health and if I'm not acknowledging my emotions, if I'm not aware of my emotions, if I'm not labeling my emotions, and if I'm not just sitting and being with my emotions, it will affect my health overall. And even my lifespan, when I learned about that it was really eye opening, because I may not live as long, just because I suppress my feelings. And I don't acknowledge my emotions, I don't process them in a healthy way. I stuffed them or I avoid them. I distract myself a lot. So I don't have to feel them. Right. And now that I have a family and kids and a house to take care of and it's a lot easier to distract myself because I have a lot of responsibilities on my plate. And I could just push, push, push through and we think it's the strong thing

to do. Just don't let us Don't let it get us down. Just keep going keep going. Which that's what many of us were trained to believe. But we didn't know back then what we know now we know a lot more research now and science behind stuffing our feelings that it gets literally Under our skin, and causes unhealthy cells and can cause disorders and diseases, it's right. I mean, linked to so many things like dementia or Alzheimer's, you know, and OCD, ADHD, all these things just by repressing our emotions and not dealing with them.

Claudine

Yeah, that's so true. And you said it disease. I mean, that's dis ease when we're ill at ease. And honestly, if we allow our anger or frustration or sadness to just pass through us, which is they're meant to do, just pass through it, feel it, learn from it? And then of course, correct, then we wouldn't suffer this disease. And we do a disservice to ourselves and our loved ones when we don't show up authentically, anyway. And we were never meant to do that. I believe, you know, God gave us emotions, to feel them to give us a fullness of life to experience all the benefits, joys, blessings, hardships trials of being a human. How can we experience joy and happiness and peace when we don't experience the opposite? So both of them are there for a purpose?

Ashley

And how can we really appreciate love if we never experience sadness or loss even? And how can we experience peace and joy? If we don't experience disappointment?

Claudine

That's right. It's a balancing act, in essence, and that's where the fullness of life comes in. If we were always happy, then happy would become boring. And it wouldn't be enough, and we don't want to be those. No, we're not even close to being those so we don't have to worry about that.

Ashley

Amen, sister.

Claudine

So it's really important to understand and work with our emotions, to be able to release them and process them because our emotions direct our behaviors. And when we want to go after our goals in our life, whether it's more loving relationships, or financial security or great relationship with our children, whatever it is, we need to make sure that our emotions are there to serve us and that we're not mastered by them. But we'll be talking about that more in depth next week, on our podcast, about our

behaviors, and how we can channel those behaviors to get the results that we want in our life and live life to the full.

Ashley

Friends. Thank you so much for tuning in with us today. We hope 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.