

RISE UP AND SHINE – Episode #73: How To Live With Intention



FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

Ashley

This is Episode 73. How To Live With Intention. You're listening to the rise up and shine podcast with Claudine and Ashley as an empty nester and a mom with young kids, we have both shared very similar and very real struggles. From chaos to coaches, we now help other women live an authentic and meaningful life. So tune in weekly for girl talk and tips on how you too can rise up and let your light shine bright. This is the rise up and shine podcast.

Hi, everyone, we are back for another episode today live in person with Claudine and again. I'm so thrilled. Aren't you thrilled to see me?

Claudine

I am thrilled, two episodes in a row.

Ashley

I know. It's so exciting. So today we want to focus on a topic that we all do. I'm gonna dare to say we all do this. We overthink. Do you overthink listeners out there, do you? Well, we do. And we most people do.

Claudine

We do. Definitely.

Ashley

I know I'm an over thinker. I'm a recovering over thinker. I actually saw someone wearing a sweatshirt I said, Hold on a minute, while I overthink this. I'm like.

Claudine

Oh, that's so funny. That's a good one. Well, you know, overthinking is when we think about something too long or too much. And I know you and I use the word ruminating. So we and it's not just thinking about something like I've been thinking about our new house a lot. But it's got a purpose. I'm like trying to decorate every room in my head so that when we actually move in, it'll be done in a week. But this is overthinking that's typically more negative that causes worry or depression or stress. So that's what we're talking to be. That's what we're talking about today, the overthinking that is not healthy. And as you and I both known as we teach, our thoughts are powerful, and they create our reality. So if we

overthink on some negative things, we are going to get some unhealthy thought patterns. And that's why we're talking about overthinking.

Ashley

Yeah, because basically, overthinking, rumination is just a habit. That's all it is. It's something you said we've done it over and over repetitively. And it has become a habit in our life. And so what do we need to do with a habit? You know, to stop a bad habit, we can replace it with a new habit create a new one? Yeah. And we'll get into that more a little bit later in the episode. But there's a lot of reasons why we do it. For one, it's rooted in fear, right? It's rooted in fear a lot. Yeah, but your worries will What? Or the shoulds? I know I do that all the time. Well, I should.

Claudine

I should have could have.

Ashley

I should have I could have I you know, why didn't I and we're so hard on ourselves. Past experiences can impact how much we overthink, you know, right? There's thinking about something and there's overthink about something. It becomes obsessive to a point, you know, and you ruminate and rumination. Again, it's just you're constantly, that's all you're focusing on. You can't think about anything else. But one thing to keep in mind is that we when we identify as our thoughts, then that's where we really get stuck. Because we think, well, we are our thoughts, right? what we're thinking must be true, right? So then we label ourselves we identify as those, those thoughts that we're ruminating about, which causes our life circumstances, our situation or our state of being right. And so it's really important to identify, I am not my thoughts, our thoughts are just meaning to what we are giving to a situation. Now another reason why we overthink it and I have so much experience in this is past traumas. Hmm. So yeah, so much of our life and how we act, our our behaviors, our emotions are tied to things that have happened in the past. And that can be stuck in our past even subconsciously, right, right. 95% of our brain is subconscious. So we can really be stuck in the past that could be causing a lot of overthinking. And again, for myself, where this was very prevalent in my life was I had trauma in my early childhood. And I knew this just you know, going through Kaiser and doing a trauma class and seeing a therapist. And my therapist even said, Well, I think you have ADD. I'm like Oh what? And it just like was a light bulb that turned on Really? And she also said OCD and I thought no, I'm not OCD. She's like, well, OCD can also be obsessive thoughts. And oh my gosh, again, light bulb like a million lightbulbs went on for that one because I'm like, Yes, I do that I cannot be alone, like in silence because my mind does not shut off. Like right, granted, we're constantly thinking, yeah, we have what about 70,000 thoughts a day. So our mind is constantly going but I can hyper focus on something and obsess like obsessive Lee, I've done this so many times where I've gotten panic attacks. I've almost was going paranoid in certain situations with certain people in my life that I mean, to such an extreme where I had

to in order to quiet down those thoughts in my head. I would have to have the TV on or music. So yeah, silence that because you know, when you're stuck in that you're gonna drive yourself crazy, and I did. I drove myself insane.

Claudine

Well, I have no trauma that I have any conscious memory of in my childhood and yes, yet this was still a problem for me as well, in Psychology Today says that any form of negative rumination or negative overthinking will stimulate a release of destructive neurotransmitters. So it's kind of this vicious cycle that we you and I talk about regularly, but our thoughts generate our emotions which, you know, activate our behavior. So if we don't get, we don't get control of our thoughts. We're in big trouble, right? And it's like you said, We worry so much about the future, or we go over situations in our past and we think of the could have would have should have right, and then we get stuck. So it's not so much thinking about a situation, but it's getting stuck in that situation. And then that can lead to sleeplessness, it can increase depression, and increase our stress levels. So that's why we want to get a handle on overthinking. And I have a really silly example of overthinking that you and I were talking about earlier, so many, many years ago, about two decades ago, 20 years ago, my husband and I were starting to worship in a new church, a sister church in a different city. And I remember, I wait. And I remember that we had gotten there early, and I went to the restroom and had inadvertently tapped my rather short dress not too short, but short, you know, for I certainly wouldn't be wearing it now in my 50s. But I had tucked it in up behind me. So here I was coming down the stairs to get to my seat. And my dress was tucked all the way up in you know, my panties. So not a good look. And certainly not the impression you want to give when you're attending a new service. So needless. Needless to say, I was overthinking this for weeks and weeks to come. Now luckily that a woman and older woman came running up to me and caught me before I went too far down the stairs and helped me straighten myself up before I made a complete fool of myself. But I'll tell you because of my insecurity. And because at that time, I cared so much about what people thought. I ruminated over this. I mean, it was so negative, it created so much fear and anxiety, like how can I ever go back there again, and how many men saw me in this way, which of course, now looking back, I was in my 30s, I had a really cute slender figure. So who cares? Trying to be the modest Christian woman, I did want to be covered up. But, you know, it was something that I ruminated over and really allowed it to create a lot of stress and discomfort, and I got very insecure about what people would think about me. And so what I ended up having to do over time, because it was really it, you know, these overthinking thoughts can really destroy your peace and your happiness, right? Because you're fixated on the negative. And so luckily, I was able to just change my focus and just started focusing on the gratitude I had for this woman that came and rescued me from you know, completely making a fool of myself had I made it all the way down the stairs, because I was at the very tippy top, this was a weird setting where the front was at the bottom of the stairs. So you'd go downstairs to get to your seats, which you know, not a great view from behind. So I just focused on that. And to this day, 20 years later, she and I are still really good friends, but I felt very protected by her and felt like, you know, she had my back literally shed my backside, literally. And so when I start focusing on that, and then of course, I wasn't going to never go to church again because of that or changed churches. Hey, honey, we can't go back. Because, you know,

Ashley

Which how many of us do that.

Claudine

Right? We do. And my husband's not like that. He's like, a no, you're gonna get over it quickly. So but you know, it is our thoughts can really create havoc, and that is why we're talking about this today. And we don't want any of us to get stuck in those negative habits and those negative emotions, right, right. And we can even do overthinking in our relationships. I was talking to someone the other day, you know, someone says something and you're like, why did they say that word? What's the meaning of that word? And you think about it over and over and over? Well, did they mean this? Did they mean that like you overthink it, and you're attributing meaning to something that probably has no meaning whatsoever. The person's like I just said, you know, dog? I don't know. I mean, cat. I said dog. I don't know what to tell you. So, anyway,

Ashley

Yeah. So I was thinking as you're talking, my husband and I, we've had these conversations like there's things that he can really focus on and overthink. And I don't write I'm just like, why even waste my time on that? But then there's also things that I do you know, that I constantly think about, he's like, Just don't let it bother you. Right. Very Personal to each of them. Right? So we're driving down the road, my husband sees a bunch of trash on the ground or, you know, on the side of the road or a couch, let's say, he'll think, gosh, it's so horrible that people just dump their trash. And I'll say, Well, how do you know, they dumped it on purpose? What if it was fell out, you never know, give him the benefit of the doubt. And, you know, he'll kind of think about that. And, and I'll just like, I just don't want to waste my time about it. But usually, it's like, with people, for the most part, if it has to do with people, I tend to kind of let it go, cuz I try to give him the benefit of the doubt. Unless it's like something really in my face, which has happened in the past. But for me, as a lot of situations, you know, is right, it can be situational, where I just focus on a lot, you know, and that, as you said, destroyed my joy and my peace and yeah, you know, any positive vibe going on? positive vibes? Yes, I even got my kids saying that now. But I was also thinking that, how many times do we just have this misconception that we can't control our thoughts? We can't control I mean, really think about we have so many 1000s and 1000s of thoughts a day? How can we possibly control them? Well, obviously, you can control all of them. Now, unfortunately, we cannot. But we can be more intentional and become aware of our thinking patterns. And I think that is a great place to start. Yes, the thinking patterns, right? Because a lot of the thoughts that cause us grief in our life are a pattern, we do it often we do it for a long time we focus on it. And it causes us to feel these emotions, we don't feel good, we feel frustrated, or we feel discouraged. Or we can feel anxiety and depression. And as we mentioned, anxiety comes from fear and worrying about the what ifs yes or no. And you're really cause ourselves so much anxiety that we can get panic attacks. Yep. And which I have had those. I mean, we could end up in the hospital from panic attacks. It's not fun. It's uncomfortable.

Claudine

It's not good vibe.

Ashley

No, it's not good vibes. That's right. And also depression. Another one I have experienced on multiple occasions. It's focusing and obsessing about the negative self shaming. You know, that negative voice in our head being so cruel to ourselves? You know, I'm just saying horrible things, playing the victim. You know, I say, I mean, we can easily victimize ourselves, you know, based on somebody else's behavior or a situation and think, well, they're doing it to me on purpose, or Yeah, you know, really wishing things were different. I know, for a long time I spent I wish my marriage looked different. Marriage didn't turn out the way I want it to. But a lot of it I was creating those emotional feelings. Because I was so focused and overthinking, you know, something my husband said or didn't say. Something that he did or didn't do. Really, we just sit and focus on it. And I again, with my past trauma and experiences, it became so obsessive, that I got myself into counseling at a point because I'm like this is I don't know what's going on here. Something needs to give like some price change here. I knew there was something within me that I needed to bring to the conscious level to work through to better, you know, my life situations and myself too.

Claudine

The power of our thoughts. We can't say it over and over and over again. And that's the power of our thoughts. So Ashley, let's talk about some practicals. Because I know we both have some things that have helped us overcome overthinking. We are overthinking overcomers. So for me, one of the first ones is to live in the present because like you were sharing, when we overthink about the future that can lead to worry and anxiety and panic attacks. And when we overthink about past the past events or past things in our life, it can lead to depression, it's the could have the should have that leads to shame, to guilt into depression. So neither of those are healthy. So what's healthy is to live in the present. And I love that Jesus said in Luke 17, don't go back Remember Lot's wife. And we remember what happened to Lot's wife. She looked back and then she was frozen forever as a pillar of salt. She was the epitome of being stuck. She could move no more, right? But live in the present, just keep our eyes in the present. And that is so much easier said than done. Even for me like, and I do think about each day is a new day, right? And this is the day the Lord has made, Be glad and rejoice in it. And if I keep looking backwards at all my mistakes or all my failures or how I wish things were different. I'm stuck and it's depressing. And if I look forward, like even for me for the next couple months, we really don't have anywhere to live. We're just kind of Couch Surfing or as I've chosen to share. I'm just traveling. We're We're just travelers on this road called life. It just mentally helps me. But we're just living in the present. So we don't know. Like, we don't know when our house can be ready. Exactly. And if I live too much in the future, I'm gonna get anxious, it could create a lot of anxiety. So I'm not overthinking. I'm just living in the present

today, I'm here with you doing my laundry, Which reminds me, I need to go change my load. When we're done with this, doing my laundry.

Ashley

See you're being present. There you go.

Claudine

Recording a podcast. That's right.

Ashley

Being present can be very challenging. It is something that sounds so simple, but it's just not easy. It's so powerful to just really train your mind. To be right here right now. Because only this is real time.

Claudine

Just just today, you know. Tomorrow has enough troubles of its own.

Ashley

Tomorrow has enough troubles of its own. So just fill it up with today's troubles.

Claudine

That's right. Another one that's really helped me is just even acknowledging your emotions. And you talked about this a little bit, but just acknowledging How do I feel when I overthink these thoughts? When I start ruminating? What am I feeling and acknowledge it like for me, and I share this all the time, I it's taken me a long time to get in touch with my emotions, or even be able to name them. Now I'm getting much better at it. I could say, Oh, I'm billing like yesterday, I was actually feeling very anxious, which is not a typical struggle for me. And I couldn't even figure out what it was I think I had all these bills to pay. And we're obviously living out of a suitcase. I don't have a desk. I'm just kind of it's just challenging. And I started getting anxious. But as soon as I got back to a notebook, with pen and paper, it just helped so much. But I had to acknowledge I am feeling anxious right now. And it is okay. It is okay. Do I have any thoughts that are making it? So? No. But then I said, Do I want to continue feeling this way? No, I don't. So what do I need to do? So for me, it was just getting out pen and paper. But I had to acknowledge that I was even feeling and another one which I've kind of brought up is rewrite your story like my, you know, dress story, I had to rewrite that it wasn't the most embarrassing thing that ever

happened to me It sure it mean it was but I could rewrite the story and say this was an opportunity for a woman to show her care and concern for me. And we ended up developing a great relationships. Now I look back and then I said, Thank God, I know that she cared enough to say something she didn't know me. I mean, it literally was one of our first time there. But she cared enough. And I just focused on that. So I rewrote the story about how a great friendship evolved. And we could look back and laugh at it. Instead of it was the most humiliating thing that ever happened. And how could I ever show my face again? I just rewrote the story.

Ashley

With my trauma. That's where the obsession would come 20 years, 25 years down the road, I would still feel anxious going to church every time like it's going to happen and obsessed. Check my clothes every time. I'm not going to go to the bathroom while I'm in public. That's where we could take it to the extreme.

Claudine

When you can be sure that I was far more cautious when that day for it every time I left the lady's room. That is for sure. I did learn to go Oh, let me take a quick look around. Make sure. But rewrite the story instead of looking at the negative in the past or worrying about the future? What if some What if it's great, what if it's better than you ever imagined? I've had to really retrain my brain. Because my go to is the negative? I'm a half glass empty kind of gal. A lot of us do that. Yeah. So I've had to rehydrate, retrain my brain like what if it's better than I ever imagined? What if things turn out even better than I could have hoped for? And that's not my natural default system. But in retraining my brain, it's becoming more natural. It's becoming more habitual to think the positive than the negative, but it's taken time and it takes work.

Ashley

Well, and our brain wants to keep us safe, it wants to make sure that never happens to you again, so it's gonna do everything in his power to No, no, no, we're not gonna do that. Nope, nope.

Claudine

Don't wear dresses, don't go to church.

Ashley

Exactly. And that's where I would have gone. I would have been like, Okay, I'm not gonna do this. I'm not gonna do that. But it's true. I mean, our brain is wired to protect us. That's right. survival is for keeping us safe, comfortable. It doesn't want us to experience those things again, like that's dangerous.

Claudine

Very dangerous. Yeah.

Ashley

So so as you said, just trying to reframe it and focus on what is something good that came out of it rather than the negative because regardless of what you think about you reinforce those fashions on you know, just staying fixated on whatever you're thinking about. So if you're going to think about negative situations or the negative or the quote unquote bad experience, then you're going to constantly relive that Yeah, body your body is constantly going to be you know, flooded with those hormones or you know, those emotions are going to rush through your body. Yeah. As if you're reliving the experience because your brain doesn't know the difference. It doesn't right know the past, you know, future to present. It doesn't know that and so but as long as you fixate, you're going to reinforce so why not try to think the best right thing? Yeah, best. And we've heard that and we've even had it told us well, what's the worst that can happen? But for me, I didn't like that. I know, I've shared this previously, I didn't like being asked, well, what's the worst that can happen? Good intention. Right. And yeah, at times we talk ourselves through that.

Claudine

Now that could trigger more overthinking.

Ashley

It triggered me because even something like and I shared this before, like with my past and my codependency people pleasing nature, that someone even just telling me No, is very triggering. I mean, the rejection? Yeah, I feel is just so harsh on my body, and my emotional well being. But I've had to learn, okay. I the idea of it, what's the worst that can happen? Okay, how can I take that and reframe it? I'll say, Well, what is the best that can happen? And so just rephrasing that, that sentence really helps because it did not trigger my body from my past, projection issues. And it helps me to think basically, to the same goal of what I wanted to create or experience. And I just, I just had to flip it a little bit. And sometimes that's all it takes, you know, it could be a word, it could be something that can trigger you. And let's just switch that you know, switch it.

Claudine

That's great. Yeah. And I think it's so true what you said, I mean, we have to focus on the positive we really do. And there is good that can come out of any situation, even if, if we've been mistreated in our past or abused. If anything, we've learned how not to treat people. And that's why I say when things I look back on my past and things I've been very hurtful, I think, well, at least I had that experience to teach me how not to treat people because clearly that person didn't. And so I've tried to look really hard for the good boundaries and boundaries, right? It's boundaries. Yes, it's taught me boundaries. So there is good that can come out of every situation, but we really do have to train our brains to look for it. And then to keep repeating it. Like if we keep focusing on the positive, like you say, we keep repeating that, then that's how our bodies are going to feel we're going to feel better emotionally. And then our neural pathways are going to strengthen and develop there and it'll just become easier and easier.

Ashley

And that's creating a new habit. That's replacing that overthinking habit to this, maybe even overthink about the positive. And that's going to reward great benefits, right? You're going to feel much better. You know, you're not going to feel perfect, obviously. Or, you know, there's, you'll still go through ups and downs.

Claudine

Usually not the problem overthinking the positive, right. We don't struggle with that. Let's do an episode on overthinking the positive.

Ashley

It's like well, just stop thinking that stop thinking that. I was told that many times when I have the obsessive thought, my brain is not gonna be like, Okay, stop thinking?

Claudine

Yeah, it doesn't work, you can't stop thinking.

Ashley

It doesn't. And what happened was, my coping was music or TV on because I can listen to something else. But all it was doing was ignoring the brain. I wasn't processing anything. I wasn't working through

anything. I wasn't allowing myself to feel I was numbing out right. And that's not healthy that kept me stuck in that situation. So creating a new habit, let's replace it with things that are going to serve you thoughts that are going to help you help better your life help you to feel better, you know, the situation what is the best that can happen? Or give people the benefit of the doubt or boundaries or Okay, I mean, you name it. And I want to add one thing also to that way is X-ing out perfection. That is one thing that can cause us to overthink is that we feel like we have to do it perfectly. We're being perfect. And just accepting that nobody is perfect. And even if something fails, or it doesn't go the way that I want that we can always try something different. It's just a part of life. And that's okay. Yeah, you know, but having to strive for perfection is something that can keep us stuck in this negative overthinking pattern. And we will stay stuck at our life because we're not going to want to, you know, challenge ourselves or step out to do something new or that can quote unquote, feel scary, right? Our brain doesn't want to do those things. Perfection is not, you know, let's just take that out of the equation.

Claudine

Yes, so many good things. So that is overthinking. So don't overthink this podcast too much. Right? Don't overthink it, listen to it, acknowledge it, process it and then move on.

Ashley

And subscribe and share with friends.

Claudine

Great. Yeah, please subscribe, please leave a review. That'd be helpful for us. And we'll leave you with Proverbs 23:7 as a man or woman thinketh so she is so remember your thoughts are creating your reality and they're generating your emotions. So if you were feeling stuck, or unhappy or worried or depressed, start with your thoughts. Until next time.

Ashley

So the next one is keep routine. Now this is one of the first things that go out the window right you know, I know for myself over the last year is especially with the kids school seems to every day is different. And from week to week, it's are they in school longer what's going on and, and my brain is having a really hard time trying to keep track of everything. As much as I can, at least my morning routine I know that I can control to be consistent. And so keeping routine is one of the best things you can do for yourself, your mind, your mental health. And that was even I remember watching that on the news. They were asking, in the beginning of this pandemic, well, what can people do, you know, to help with this? And that was one of the first things they said as much as you can control keep to a routine and there's so much power in that for yourself. And then the last one is just moving body, you know, moving your body, making sure you're making wise choices. And I don't always like to say healthy

choices, because sometimes I'm like, Oh, that's no fun. That's kind of boring. But wise choices. make wise choices. What am I going to eat? What am I going snack on? Maybe I shouldn't snack right now. Maybe I'm really not hungry. Maybe I need a glass of water. Maybe you just go on a walk, you know, something like that. But moving your body is something that is just it gives you that peace you something you can do outside. It helps you even just to be in nature and be with God for a little bit. I like to listen to my worship music while I'm walking around or praying or listening to podcasts. But if you can be in a consistent habit of moving and I know one thing that was challenging for me is I was exercising like five days a week. Yeah. And then I feel like I can't really keep up with that. That was almost unrealistic. So then I went to nothing. But and then I have to ask myself, Well, why can I just go on a walk? It doesn't have to be I need to do this exercise or nothing at all. Well, I can go on a 10-15 minute walk. You know, I could Yeah, that I can squeeze into my day. Maybe not an hour workout. But I can squeeze in in 10 to 15 minute walk. So just keeping in those patterns will be super, super helpful with dealing with big change, big life change.

Claudine

Yeah. And I love this quote, it says Change is hard at first messy in the middle and gorgeous at the end. And that's what I'm hoping for. I'm in the, I think I'm in the messy middle right now. We're in the changing of homes and right cities and children moving out of state. So I'm kind of in the messy middle, but I'm counting on the gorgeous end. So until next time listeners thanks for stopping by and we'll catch you the next time. Take care.

Ashley

Alright everyone, thank you for joining in on our conversation here on the Rise Up and Shine podcast. If you haven't already, please take a second to hit that subscribe so you'll never miss an episode and while you're at it, share this episode with a friend who you know it can bless today. If you wanna visit us as well on our websites, you can catch Claudine over at claudinesweeney.com and Ashley at mindoverchaos.com our links are at the description. We also have some free resources there for you as well. So remember ladies, no matter what you are facing in life, it is never too late to rise up and shine and live your best life.