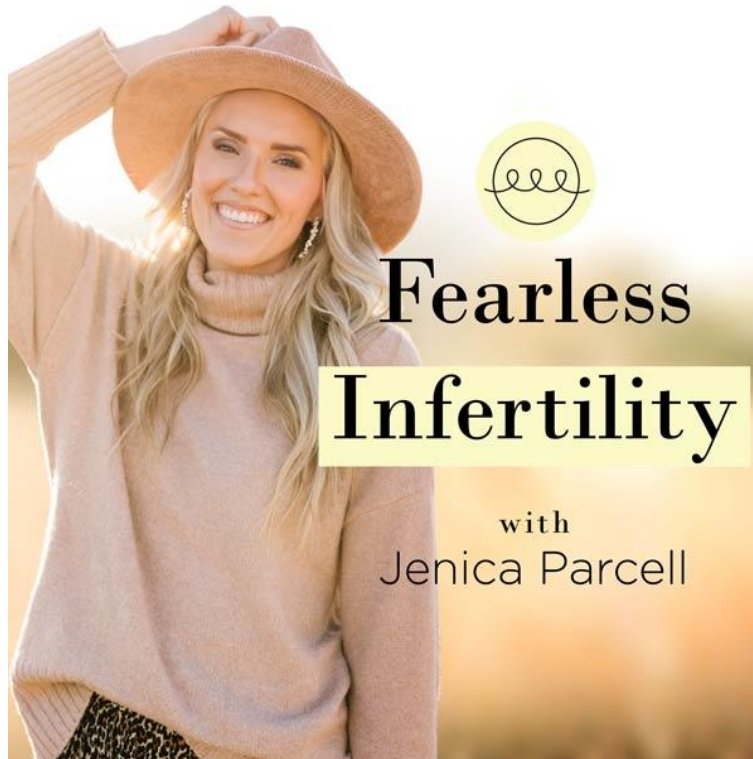


10. 5 Questions to Start Reimagining Your Future with Ashley Lemieux



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jenica Parcell

[Fearless Infertility](#) with Jenica Parcell

10. 5 Questions to Start Reimagining Your Future with Ashley Lemieux

Hi, friends. Welcome to *Fearless Infertility* a podcast for women struggling with the mental anguish that comes with infertility. My name is Jenica and after suffering in silence for too long I was able to pull myself out of the dark, take control over my mind, and create joy during my infertility experience. I'm here to help you do the same, sister. Let's dive into today's show.

What's up y'all, and welcome to *Fearless Infertility* today. As I was getting up this morning, I was doing my morning routine, saying my prayers, and just kind of thinking about today and the things that I had scheduled. I was thinking about today's podcast guest, my friend Ashley, who I've known for 16 years. I'm like, how can I know someone for 16 years? Did we meet when we were infants? No, I'm 34. I literally feel like the last 16 years have flown by.

We met when we were 18 in college. And honestly, it really doesn't stress me out a whole lot that life is flying by, it just makes me be like, "Okay girl, like stop, fear does not live here." You got to do what you want to do. Because guess what people, in one second I'm going to be 80 years old. Okay? It's insanity.

I'm so excited to get into today's episode. But before I do, I wanted to share with you a few of the podcast reviews from Apple Podcasts. I am giving away a pair of pajamas and socks to one reviewer every single week. I just love you guys so much because it really brings so much joy to me to be able to share these life changing tools with you that you can then use to change your own lives.

I truly believe that every single one of us is exactly where we should be in this very moment. And that every single one of us knows ourselves better than anybody, and using these tools we can truly, really live a beautiful, full, human experience.

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So the first review and the winner of today's pajama and sock set is K.Jeanine and the podcast title is, this podcast hits home. "As someone who has been trying to get pregnant to doing three IUIs and now starting IVF, this podcast hits home. There's so much encouraging, uplifting, and reassuring information.

I have felt so alone and this podcast has taught me how much of a community there is out there. As an IVF baby myself I never thought I'd see the day I would be walking the same path my parents did 30 plus years ago. The tips and tools provided are wonderful resources to have as I walk through this difficult journey. Thank you so much for bringing more awareness to infertility."

It's my absolute pleasure, genuinely. Please email me at hello@thesliceofsun.com with your address and your size request and we will get your pajamas and socks sent to you. If anybody else wants to just buy some because they want to treat themselves, just treat yourself, then go ahead and go to thesliceofsun.com.

The pajamas are just genuine butter. I actually don't know how they don't melt on your skin upon contact. But I'm not going to question something this good. They're amazing. A portion of every single sale goes back to women experiencing infertility. And they're really something you can just wear at home to really remind you of this incredible community full of tons of women who are in this infertility community with you and you are absolutely not alone at any time.

Please continue to leave reviews, it really is important to me because it helps those who have no idea who I am. Or have no idea the resources available to them in infertility, where they can find them because it will help this podcast pull up when they're searching for podcasts on infertility. So please continue to go subscribe, rate, and review.

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Another podcast review is by KayMay2, the podcast title is essential listening for those going through it in their family and friends. "My daughter is struggling with infertility and recently had a heartbreaking setback. Finding these podcasts today have been nothing short of a miracle at this time.

Not only is the information so applicable and helpful to her to know that she is not alone and that there can be hope and joy. But it is helpful for me as her mother to really understand what she is going through that I may be able to better help her through this journey. I would urge husbands, partners, friends, and family to also listen to enhance your ability to support your loved ones. Thank you so much for sharing these journeys."

Thank you so much for leaving that incredible review. And if anybody, I just kind of thought about this when I was reading, if anybody maybe wants those in their life who have expressed interest in helping you on your infertility journey that haven't actually experienced it themselves, you may want to go ahead and send them a link to one of these podcast episodes that you feel is good representation of how you're feeling and what may help them understand a little bit what you're experiencing.

I know that there are a lot of people who want to support you that just really don't know how to and don't understand it because they themselves have not personally experienced infertility. So that could be a good suggestion if you are looking to get more support from those that love you and want to support you.

The last podcast episode review I will read for today is by elam777. The title of the review is, wow, eye opener. "I first heard about this podcast through Instagram and then listening to Jenica and Gretchen talking about IVF and all the testing. I was blown away from all the things that I've learned in such a short amount of time. I wish I would have heard these things years ago. It is so nice to hear all the open conversations through

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these ladies. Thank you for being so open. I can't wait to hear more episodes of this podcast. Thank you.”

Thank you for being here my friend. So today's episode is my friend Ashley Lemieux who is the founder and CEO of The Shine Project and the author of two books, *Born To Shine* and *I Am Here* launching tomorrow.

The Shine Project is an online community for women that helps them find support, resources, motivation, encouragement to really triumph over the challenges in their lives. And she has truly empowered thousands of women including myself to find purpose in their pain and find the courage to keep going.

She is the host of the *I Am* podcast and her passion for youth in the foster care system has put her on the board of directors for National Angels. She lives in Phoenix with her husband Mike, whom I also love, he's an awesome human being, and their crazy puppy, Honey. So let's get into today's episode with Ashley.

Jenica: I am absolutely thrilled today to introduce you all to my friend Ashley Lemieux. I was actually thinking about it this morning, Ashley, and you and I have known each other for 16 years.

Ashley: What? Has it really been that long?

Jenica: Yes, I just turned 34 in March. And Ashley and I met at Brigham Young University when we were 18 years old. And I literally am mind blown by that.

Ashley: That blows my mind. We were really fun.

Jenica: We were so fun.

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Ashley: I mean we still are fun but we were really fun in college.

Jenica: College is fun because a lot of your life challenges haven't hit you yet. And so it's just like, you know, you're just kind of making your way slowly, you know, going through trials bit by bit. And then bam, you're an adult, and it's like, "Wow!"

Ashley: Right, young and naive in college. Those were the days.

Jenica: Totally. Yeah, Ashley and I had a lot of fun. And we were always good girls, but we had like really good, clean, fun. We always loved to dance, we stayed up late.

But you know what's so interesting? I was thinking this morning when I was thinking about how long you and I have known each other is I remember specifically one time I think we were sophomores, and I was over at your apartment visiting you. And I can't remember what we had planned for the day but I remember specifically, and I don't know why this is so clear for me. And I think it's because maybe I had never had any other friends tell me this before.

But we were walking out of your room down the hall. I don't know why, like I said, it's so clear. But I remember you saying that one of your life goals was to write a book. And I think that it was so interesting for me because it was just not something that a whole lot of, you know, other friends had told me were on their life dreams list. And you have written a book and you launch another book tomorrow, which we'll talk about here in a little bit. And she did it guys. She did it.

Ashley: Isn't that wild? I don't even remember that conversation. But I love that you remember it.

Jenica: Yeah.

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Ashley: And it happened, and it's happening again tomorrow when the second one comes out.

Jenica: I know, it's so good, I love it.

Ashley: Thanks for believing in my dreams with me Jenica.

Jenica: Of course. Yeah, maybe it was such a prominent memory for me because I knew it was going to be something big. I don't know. And it is, and you're changing so many people's lives. And I absolutely love the way that you show up for yourself, for your family, for the people online.

So will you, for those of you who don't know you yet, first of all you guys are all in for a treat. Second of all, will you give me like a background on your story and why you started sharing online. And tell us, I know a lot has happened since you started sharing online, but tell us when you started and what has happened since to today?

Ashley: Yeah, so I'll give you the sped-up version. It's been probably 10 years now. I was newly married, in college, trying to figure out what the next steps looked like for my life. And like you said, I've always wanted to be a writer, I've always wanted to write books. And this was back in the BlogSpot days, the blogger.com days.

And so I started a blog so that I could write. And my hope though for that time was to create a space on the internet where women could come and find tools and resources to help them shine in their daily lives. So I called it The Shine Project. So that's where I started. And grew the business, things were growing, and then my husband and I became parents overnight. Legal guardians to a four and a six-year-old who we raised then for the next four years, for over half of their lives.

And we lost them very unexpectedly during a contested adoption that destroyed us. That changed the trajectory of our life forever. It changed the

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way I view life, the way I experience things, and I was buried for a really long time.

At that time and going through that process because I had started an online presence so many years before that, my audience online was really a part of our family, really supportive of us and the kids. Had gone through, you know, us becoming a family and then raising the kids. And while we were in court fighting for them for two years, I couldn't talk about them. So suddenly, people saw them disappearing.

Jenica: This was because you legally couldn't say anything, right?

Ashley: I legally couldn't, yeah. Everything we were doing was being used against us. So we couldn't legally talk about anything. So when we lost the kids and then I was able to share what had happened, I also at the time was processing my feelings more openly for the first time in a couple of years.

And as I started sharing the feelings I was having of fear, and of pain, and of grief and loss, the amount of messages that I was receiving from other women who were going through the same thing, because I always say, even though the details of our lives are so different, the feelings that we share are the same. So, so many women were finding hope in the words that I was writing because they were resonating with them so deeply. And that really propelled me forward and to keep writing and create resources for people to have to talk about the hard things that nobody talks about, that we feel so alone in.

And so that's how everything started. And then last year, yeah, about a year and a half ago now, my husband and I decided finally after three years after we lost the older two kids, that it was time to move forward in trying to grow our family again. And we got pregnant and super excited, obviously. And then I went septic and got very sick at 16 weeks pregnant. Which led to the loss of our baby boy.

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And that opened up a new experience with giving a voice to miscarriage for a lot of women who feel very alone in that. And something that I just keep learning over and over is that often our pain feels so lonely, but we're never the only ones going through it. And a lot of healing can happen when we come together to support each other in it. And so that's why I started everything that I do.

Jenica: Yeah, thank you so much. Ashley is an absolutely beautiful writer. She has a really beautiful gift for being able to express. Like she said, maybe I haven't gone through specifically what she has, but to be able to express the emotion that we can all relate to.

And I think that that is one of the biggest lies, is that we're alone. And I think, I don't know why, I'm a religious person and so I oftentimes think that maybe the adversary wants us to feel alone and wants us to feel like we can't move forward. And doesn't want us to see the people and the resources we have available to us. And so I think that's a lie that is very prevalent just as part of being human.

But I think that, like you said, that pain and suffering, and all of these more undesired emotions are something that all of us as human beings can relate to.

Ashley: Yeah. And I think that one of the feelings that we all share is shame. And shame stops us more than anything else. And so if we're in a situation where we're feeling a lot of pain, a lot of times there's shame associated with that. And once we feel shame it gets really hard for the healing process to happen because we want to hide away. We're embarrassed and then that just makes us feel more lonely.

And so being able to understand that we have nothing to be ashamed of really opens the pathway for forward movement in our lives again.

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Jenica: Yeah, I love that you pointed that out. Why do you think that we feel so much shame? Because shame is definitely one of the more prevalent emotions, I would say, in infertility and with growing your family. What thoughts would you say lead to that?

Ashley: Well, speaking from my experience, if I just use the feelings that I was having surrounding my miscarriage for an example of this, I felt so ashamed that I felt that my body failed me. I felt so ashamed that what my body was created to do, to create life and protect that life. As a mother that's our instinct, right? Like, that's what we do. We protect our kids.

And the fact that I didn't do that brought so much shame to me. I felt so much shame every time I looked at my body that still looked like I was pregnant but I wasn't. I felt so much shame that this also impacted my husband and our future and my family and their grieving.

And I think a lot of times with infertility with child loss there's a lot of shame around, we're taught for so long, like forever, right? Like as a woman you're going to grow up, you're going to get married, you're going to have a baby. And then like, usually that's where our learning stops of what we think that's our whole purpose in life, right?

Jenica: Yeah.

Ashley: And so when we feel like we have failed that we start believing there's something wrong with us. And when we start believing there's something wrong about us or broken about us there's a lot of shame that comes with that.

And we, at least for me, it's like, "Well, are other people going to see me as broken? Are they going to know I'm broken? I don't want anyone else to think I'm broken too." And then shame brings wanting to hide things so that you're not exposed, or whatever those lies are that we tell ourselves. And it's really hard.

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Jenica: Yeah. That was a beautiful explanation, I think you're spot on with that. And I think it's something that all of us here can relate to.

When you were in the depths of that shame and thinking that there was something wrong with you and you were broken, can you talk a little bit about how you were able to change your mindset and change your thoughts to see the truth?

Ashley: So I talk about this in my new book, *I Am Here*, because this has been one of the things that has really aided me in being able to re-frame my thoughts. And as we talk about this right now, I don't want this to seem like some type of thing where I'm saying, "Just be positive and change your thoughts, and you're going to feel better."

Jenica: Right.

Ashley: Because that's not how it works. And when I tell you that I literally understand what it feels like to feel like you are buried in the depths of despair that you're never going to make it out of, that feeling has been a reality for me for a very long time. And so I'm telling you this from a place of, I know what it feels like to be in the darkest moment of your life. And I still have hope that you can find it in you somewhere to start re-framing your thoughts so that the light can come back inside.

So I want to say that first because I think that's important.

Jenica: Yeah, absolutely.

Ashley: But for me, re-framing my thoughts has been the most important thing that I have done. For example, let's take fear. Fear, I have had a lot of fear surrounding the loss of my children. I have had a lot of fear around it happening again. And then it did happen again when we lost our son, Jace. I have a lot of fear now about not being able to get pregnant again, because we don't know.

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I have a lot of fear. I have a lot of fear about my body betraying me. I have a lot of, you know, all those things that happened, the worst things that I was afraid of happening, once they happened, I'm afraid of them happening again.

So I've really had to go deep and ask myself what if this fear is being propelled by something else? What if there's a greater feeling than fear and that if I can get down beyond the fear that I can then change the narrative. Because something I keep learning is that fear and some of those heavy emotions, we feel it's like a protection mechanism. Our souls, our bodies, they don't want us to be hurt again. And so to try to protect us it's like, "Oh, I'm afraid, don't do that. Don't do this."

But as I started thinking about it, I realized that what was fueling that was a really deep source of love. A love for my children, that, of course, I don't want to lose them. A love for my future family that of course I want to be pregnant and be able to bring new life into this world.

And as I was able to start re-framing that and start focusing on this deeper emotion of love, then instead of feeling so stuck and terrified by fear, I've been able to grasp on and anchor to something positive that is long lasting, and that is true and right, and good so that I can find the strength to get up in the morning and keep moving forward.

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Jenica: Oh wow, I love that. And I love that you really analyzed it and were thoughtful about it. Because I think that oftentimes we think certain things for so long that it becomes a belief within us. And then when we really get curious about it and what the thoughts are causing for us and the results that they're causing in our lives, I think just being very curious about what's really happening and giving ourselves the space to be curious so that the truth can come out. I think it's really important.

And it sounds like that's what you were able to do in this situation. And it doesn't mean that it's going to be easy, and it doesn't mean that it should be easy. I think that's where a lot of our misconceptions are just in life in general, is that you're doing it wrong if it's hard. Or, you know, you've gone off the path somewhere and you need to fix it.

And I don't think that that's what you're saying at all. I think that it's hard still, and the experiences that you've been through and are currently still processing and will always have close to your heart, it will always be hard. And it's not because you did something wrong, that's just how they are. But approaching it with thoughts that allow you to continue to progress in life and continue to see it for what it is. And I think that's so beautiful.

Ashley: Yeah, I mean, it's a practice, right? It's something that we have to practice every single day so that we don't get lost in the other negative stories that really could ruin our entire lives. And something that I also keep asking myself, I love asking myself questions because I have found that when I ask myself thoughtful, intentional questions that it allows me to give true answers.

And so one of the questions that I'm asking myself right now, as we're trying to get pregnant again, when we got pregnant with Jace, the first time we got pregnant within a month. Like it was very quick. But now after we decided that we were ready to try again last fall it's taken, I don't know what month we're on, seven or eight? And now I have fertility assistance. And

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we just did our first IUI that resulted in a chemical pregnancy. And there's just all of these things happening.

And so trying to re frame my current reality, something that I keep asking myself is, what if I'm in the greatest victory of my life right now? What if right now I am right in the middle of my greatest victory? And so as I can think of it that way, no matter the outcome. I think we put a lot of pressure on having our victory be this miraculous outcome that we're hoping for. But what I've learned is that that doesn't always happen. And it can still be a victory if it doesn't.

So I keep asking myself that, because that keeps giving me the courage and the bravery to show up every day. Because I think that the bravest thing that we do, Jenica, is keep showing up in a world where our dreams get crushed but we keep trying again anyway.

Jenica: Yeah, I completely agree. And I love that you say that. And that's what I love about you. I love so many things about you but that's one of the things that I think you've truly been gifted with and practice continually, is being very open about that. Because I think that's why you are making such a big impact in the world because all of us are experiencing this, every single one of us.

Maybe it's infertility, maybe it's miscarriage, maybe it's losing someone that you love. I mean, there's like a myriad of different things that we can experience in this life. But we're all human and yeah, it's a really brave thing to get up in the day and say, "Wow, like I've experienced really, really hard trials. And I'm going to do it again."

Ashley: Yeah, it's brave. And if we think of it that way, that replaces shame so much.

Jenica: Yeah.

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Ashley: Because really, we have nothing to be ashamed of. Why? Because we are so brave for standing up and trying again even though it hasn't worked out a million times in the past. And so that's helpful for me too because there's no shame in that. There's no shame in that courage that we all take every day to keep trying again. So I love thinking about it like that as well.

Jenica: Yeah, I agree. Another thing that really helps me a lot too, is I think that all of us, just by nature are harder on ourselves than we are on other people. And so oftentimes I like to look at myself from an outsider's perspective, and say, "Would I be treating myself, or would I be treating, you know, someone else that I love dearly the way that I'm treating myself?"

When I look at the situation that I'm currently in, if someone else was experiencing it, and would I be judging it the way that I am? And I think that's a, I mean, it could be something that everyone can try, because it helps me to show a lot more love and grace to myself. Because like you said, you wouldn't look at someone and say, "Oh, she's trying again, that's so shameful." You know? It's like no, it's ridiculous.

So when you feel paralyzed by fear, which I mean, looking at your story, you guys, she has had a lot of really difficult things happen. And I mean, to see that you've been at your very, very lowest and you keep showing up again is so inspiring, because it really enables everyone watching to say, "Okay, she can do it. If she can do it, maybe I can, too."

So when you feel that paralyzed by fear feeling, do you have a first step that you have taken to move you to maybe the next step in functioning in a way that would be a way that you would want to live your life? What does that first step look like for you?

Ashley: Yeah, it took me, honestly, a long time to figure out what that first step was and what's most supportive for me. But I start my day, every day

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with asking myself five questions. And I actually uncovered what these questions are right after we lost our older two kids and I was not able to get out of bed. And I didn't feel purpose in life because I went from being an active mom every day to having it just be my husband and I again. And I was very lost with who I was and what I was supposed to be doing, and I was very afraid that life would feel that way forever.

So I started a morning meditation and through the span of six months these questions started coming. So the first question when I'm afraid of moving forward I simply ask myself, "What is my intention today?" And intention, we hear that word a lot now I feel like, and sometimes it can feel woo-woo or sometimes it can just feel like why does that matter? But what an intention is, is it's a guidepost that keeps you on a path moving towards something, It can be something small, something big, so that you can figure out what to say yes to in your life, what to say no to.

And for me moving through fear can only happen if I keep moving forward. So answering that question of, what is my intention today? It could be that I really am going to focus on connecting with my husband and so here's the things that I'm going to do that day. Or my intention could be that no matter who I'm talking to I'm just going to focus on showing up as a big ball of love, so that everyone feels loved throughout the day.

It can be whatever you want. But feeling that gives me a forward movement. And then as I go through the rest of the four questions, it helps bring me clarity so that my fear can be replaced then with freedom. Clarity in how we're living our lives, for me, it brings a lot of freedom. And when we can feel freedom from fear, not because we don't feel fear, but because we don't allow it to stop us anymore. That's when our lives start really being able to move forward.

Jenica: That is such a beautiful indicator of an example of how fear is okay, right? Like, as human beings we're going to experience fear. But I love that

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you said we'll experience it, but you can determine whether you let it stop you or propel you forward continuously. I love that.

Ashley: Yeah. And I think, like you said in the beginning, sometimes we're like, "This is so hard. Am I doing it wrong?" No, I think we're doing it right. I think that making the commitment to get up out of bed in the morning and keep pressing forward and we're afraid, we're afraid because we're trying these things that put our heart out there for the world to be broken. And I think we're doing it right. And there's a way that we can move forward through the pain and the fear of all of it.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that you brought that up because I used to think for years that if it was hard then I was doing it wrong. And I have completely changed that mindset for myself within the last couple of months. Just recently, where truly if I'm scared it's because I'm progressing and because I'm growing. And that's where I want to be, like do I want to be complacent and not making any progress and staying small? No. So fear is just something that can come along with the growth.

Ashley: Yeah. And I always try to look at it as fear is trying to protect me. It's trying to keep me safe. And so sometimes I literally, because especially after going through a miscarriage or any type of loss, there are times where fear will bring such a tight physical reaction in my body that, I don't know if you've ever had these moments where you feel it.

Jenica: Yeah, like you physically feel like tense.

Ashley: Yeah, and so there are times where it gets so bad, I literally hug myself. And I say, "Thank you for trying to keep me safe right now. But I'm okay."

Jenica: I love that.

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Ashley: And so I just keep having to have those thoughts. Because a lot of times we look at fear as a really bad thing, but it's also how we try to protect ourselves. And so letting ourselves know, "Hey, it's okay. I'm choosing to keep going." It's been something that's really brought a lot of help for me in my day-to-day life.

Jenica: I love that because you see it as truth. You're not scared of it; you appreciate it for what it's trying to do. And then you're realizing that you can still move forward. That's such a beautiful way to look at it. Thank you for sharing that.

Ashley: Yeah.

Jenica: Okay, so I loved your first question, what is my intention today? I feel like that really helps life seem a little less overwhelming. You don't have to say what is my intention for every day for the rest of my life. What is my intention today?

What is the next question that you ask yourself?

Ashley: I ask, "Who can I serve? Who can I serve today?" I have found that a lot of times our experiences can be used for the aid of other people if we allow ourselves to see the needs of other people. So when I ask myself that question, I then experience the people around me way differently than if I were just to go about my day or be on my phone in line at the grocery store, just be very consumed in what I'm going through.

But that's the second question that I ask. And then the third question I ask, because I'm assuming you were going to ask that.

Jenica: Yes.

Ashley: Is, "Why am I worthy today?" Why am I worthy? Why am I worthy for joy, for love? For all the good things coming for me? I don't know if

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you've ever experienced this, but man, as women we're so hard on ourselves. We feel guilty a lot and it's hard to invite good things into your life when you don't feel like you're deserving of them. And so asking myself every day why I am worthy for any of this helps remind me that I can accept joy and happiness into my life.

Jenica: I love that. And I love the way you phrase it too, because it assumes the truth, which is that you are worthy. So why? And it trains your brain to look for the reasons why to back that up, because you're essentially saying I am worthy and these are the reasons why. Versus, am I worthy? No, of course you're worthy. All of us are completely and 100% worthy, but it's convincing ourselves that, honestly, daily that we need to really train our brains to see the reasons why. So I love that question. Okay, question number four.

Ashley: Okay, so the next question I ask myself is, "What can I set down today?" So every single day we take really heavy things in with us. Maybe we're really nervous for an upcoming fertility appointment, maybe we're nervous about an upcoming OB appointment, or whatever the other million things are. And with those we carry a lot of emotions. And a lot of times it's those emotions that we keep carrying, that we could actually empty out and just sit down for a moment that can help us.

So I like writing it down and then I have something that I started called a God box. And in my God box I write down the thing that I can set down. And once it's in the God box it is out of my brain for that day at least, right? So that it can stop living rent free and just driving me nuts. And it's just kind of my invitation to say, "Hey, I'm actually not in control of this at all right now. I need to place it over here so that I can keep moving forward in the things I can control and so that this thing doesn't stop me from living my life today."

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Jenica: That is so cool, Ashley, I love that. And I love that, I mean, honestly, as human beings we would love to be able to control everything. I think that every single one of us can relate to that. And if it worked, great, I'd be teaching everybody how to do it. But it doesn't, I've tried for years. So I love that you ask that because truly, all of us are carrying very, very heavy burdens, that oftentimes we really just, like you said, just need to set down because we cannot control it. So worrying about them and being so burdened down by them and feeling so heavy by them is not going to help them. It's just going to make us really exhausted.

Ashley: Yeah, exactly.

Jenica: Okay, I love that. And what is the fifth question that you ask yourself every morning?

Ashley: Well, the last question I ask is, "Who is the truest version of myself today?" I used to ask how does the best version of myself show up today? And then I realized that the best version of me and the truest version of me were different because my answers when I asked myself who is the best version of myself today, it was very contingent upon what I thought other people wanted from me, or who I thought they wanted me to be.

So when I ask who is the truest, how does the truest version of me show up, it allows me to, one, go back to my intention. And it allows me to really listen to my own gut and kind of put blinders on from outside opinions or voices or things going on so that I can live true and also listen to my source of knowledge and truth, which is God. And kind of block out other things so that I can move more clearly on my path than if I'm listening to too much other noise.

Jenica: That is so amazing. I really resonate with that a lot because I have a hard time with that as well when it comes to like being your best. Because my best yesterday might be way better than my best today. And

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so it's almost the word best kind of brings about a comparison that I don't feel like is productive.

And so I really like who is the truest version of myself today, because like for example, I started my period on Tuesday. And the truest version of myself on Tuesday was someone who didn't clean her house and who really just got by. And my kids were alive, and we were all alive, and we were all fed. But the truest version of myself that day was not my truest version of myself today. And I don't think that either one of them is better. I just showed up in my true self that day.

And honestly, I was actually really proud of myself because I feel like maybe in the past, I would have beat myself up over it and been like, "Oh my gosh, there's dishes in the sink and all over the counters. And my house is horrible." But I was like truly, and it wasn't because I did my best because I probably could have rallied, you know, but I was true to myself that day. And my energy was protected and I really just honored the fact that I was absolutely exhausted, because Aunt Flo decided to show up that day. So I love that, thank you so much for that comparison. I love that question a lot better than our best self.

Ashley: Yeah.

Jenica: Okay, so I would love for you, and by the way everybody, I'm going to write all of these in our show notes. We do a transcription of every episode and I'm going to make this, you know, her questions in the show notes as well set apart so you can easily access those because I'm personally going to start doing that.

And I also love really, that you give yourself the space to do that. I think that as women and people who want to accomplish things in the world, we all have really good intentions, but I think that we probably don't give ourselves enough space to really think and nourish ourselves before we then give.

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And so I think oftentimes we're giving from an empty cup, where when you like sit down and truly give yourself that space and like fill your soul up with these beautiful questions, then you can then truly, really serve the purpose that you want to. So I will make sure to write those down so everyone has access to those amazing questions that Ashley gave us today.

So Ashley has written two beautiful books, her second book, *I Am Here*, is coming out tomorrow. Ashley, can you tell us about why you thought this book was important to write?

Ashley: Oh my gosh, I'm so excited that this book is coming out. The phrase, I am here, I feel like means a lot to me and can mean a lot to all of us because this book is the permission to allow yourself to accept your life as it is right now without trying to change the past or keep worrying about the future. But taking our power back right now and allowing ourselves to move from a journey of fear to freedom in a beautiful way that allows us to come alive.

No matter what has happened in any of our lives, it's time for us to reclaim our power. And we can do that but we have to first acknowledge where we're currently at.

And I think especially after a hard year for everyone, I mean, we're all coming out of not only a world crisis, but inside of that world crisis, we all have had personal crisis. And being able to say, "Okay, here I am. I'm not going to keep running from this pain. Here I am. And now what does life look like moving forward? What do I want to dream about? How do I want to reimagine a new future?" So that's why I wanted to write this book.

I actually had an interview earlier this week and I was asked an interesting question. They asked, "What do you want people to learn about you from reading your new book?" And that kind of caught me off guard because I said, "I don't want anyone to learn anything about me. I hope no one learns anything about me. And they learn everything about themselves that they

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learn about the power that's waiting to be uncovered. That they learn about the strength that they have within them, that they learn how to re-frame their thoughts and reclaim their power so that they can move forward. And I hope that people read this book, having learned nothing about me, and everything about who it is that they are.”

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. And I think you do such an incredible job of that. I have read your words on Instagram, I've read your blog, I've read your other book. And I think that's where you really excel because your ego is not in it. Like I think that you genuinely believe that every single one of us is whole. And we all know what's best for ourselves. And I love that you give us the tools to help us re-frame our thoughts.

And I talk about that all the time on my podcast and in my coaching that that's really where it all starts. And that when you can learn to do that. I mean, your life is like magic from there on out. And when I say magic, it doesn't mean that it's good all the time. I don't think that, I think that it means that you accept who you are, and you accept your life experiences and you accept all of it with love.

Ashley: Yes, exactly.

Jenica: Okay, Ashley, thank you so much for your time. I absolutely love you. I've personally benefited from your beautiful voice and continuing to show up in the world. So thank you for being here.

Ashley: Thanks for having me, Jenica. I love you, the feeling's mutual.

Jenica: Okay, and to sign off I want you to tell people where can they find you?

Ashley: Come find me, I love our Instagram community. Come find me on Instagram at Ashley K Lemieux, and then you can go grab *I Am Here* wherever books are sold.

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Jenica: Yay, I'm so excited. And I will link everything in the show notes you can access her as well. Thank you, Ashley, love you.

Ashley: Thank you, bye.

To celebrate the launch of the show I'm going to be giving away pajama and sock sets from The Slice of Sun that I have personally designed. They are the most buttery, soft, delightful things you'll ever put on your body. And I'm going to be giving away five bundles to five lucky listeners who subscribe, rate, and review the show on Apple Podcasts. It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you love the show. I genuinely want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome show that provides tons of value to you who are experiencing infertility.

Visit thesliceofsun.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter and I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.

Thank you for listening to *Fearless Infertility*. If you want more tools and resources to help you during your infertility experience visit thesliceofsun.com. See you next week.