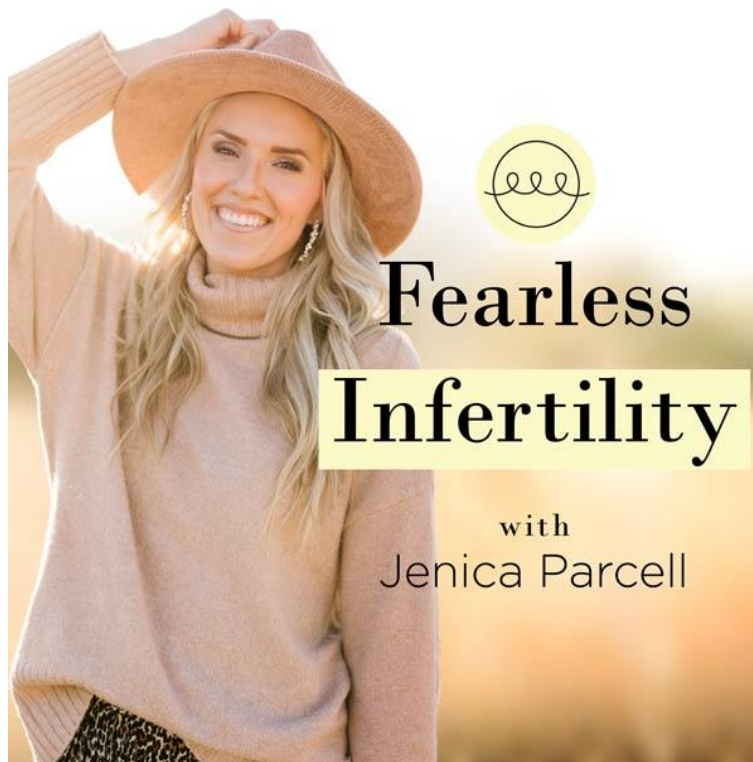


23. How Coaching Can Help with Elizabeth King



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jenica Parcell

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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.

Hello my friends, and welcome back to *Fearless Infertility*. I am so excited that I get to introduce to you today my friend Elizabeth King. Elizabeth and I met on the internet, on Instagram specifically, thank you internet. And she's amazing.

She's a certified fertility and loss doula, a parent educator, and today we talk about how coaching can impact your life for the better and what to expect from it. And then also what it can do for you in taking back the control you have always had, but forgot how to access.

We also talk about the thought that helped her when her doctors told her that her age was a factor in infertility. I know that there is something that all of us can benefit from listening today and I cannot wait to get started.

I am so excited that you're here with me today on *Fearless Infertility*. And before we get into the interview with Elizabeth King, I wanted to share a couple reviews that were left on Apple podcasts.

I really am appreciative of those of you who have left reviews and rated the podcast and subscribed to it. Because the way that other women are able to get access to these tools are through the reviews from other people. It helps my podcast to show up more easily for them when they're searching about podcasts for infertility so they can get these tools into their hands and really help their minds through infertility.

So the first review is by Kaitlyn Ellen, and she's the winner of this week's pajama and socks that from The Slice Of Sun. Her review says, "What a light in a scary place. We are just beginning this journey of infertility. Jenica

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has been a place of light. I listen to these episodes and can see myself on the other side. I know this is part of God's plan and path for my life and it helps to hear that along with the joy she radiates.”

Thank you so much Kaitlyn. If you could please email me at [hello@thesliceofsun](mailto:hello@thesliceofsun.com) with your size and address and we'll get your pajamas and socks sent out to you.

Another review that I love this week is by username Vanillafudge973. I love your username; I feel like I need to go buy some fudge now and eat it. The title is, For Everyone. She says, “Definitely especially created for mamas in their journey through infertility. I loved listening to the episodes even if I personally wasn't going through that journey but helped me explore how to be more empathetic to those moms going through this. Love Jenica.”

I love that. And I think it's so amazing that this can be a great space for those who may be not experiencing infertility and maybe like the loved ones of those who are to help them understand a little bit better even though they themselves don't have experience with it.

Another great review is from Lexi Alder. She said, “Such a great resource. This podcast is so perfect, it has helped me better understand and support my loved ones experiencing this. 11/10 would recommend.”

And again, I think that if there are those of you who are experiencing infertility and have loved ones that want to support you, but don't necessarily know how, I think sending them this podcast could be a really great way to do so to help them understand how to support you a little bit better.

So if you guys would continue to leave reviews on Apple podcasts, that would be absolutely incredible. I really want all the women that are experiencing infertility to know that they don't need to do this alone.

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And unfortunately, there are many women who are experiencing infertility who don't know of ways they can get support and don't have access to these tools yet. But you leaving these reviews will really help them to be able to discover this space for them as well.

Now, let's get into today's podcast episode with Elizabeth King.

Oh and one more thing before we do, make sure you are subscribed to my newsletter. I will be giving away a free training soon to those who are. And I am launching my membership program on September 1st and would love to have you be a part of it. Or at least learn a little bit more to see if it will be a great fit for you.

It will be a really, really cool space for me to share these tools that have genuinely changed my life. And I know it can change yours. So make sure you're subscribed to the newsletter. I will put the link in the show notes. You can also access it on thesliceofsun.com. All right, let's get into today's episode with Elizabeth King.

Jenica: Welcome back to Fearless Infertility. I'm so excited to introduce to you today my friend Elizabeth King. Elizabeth and I met on Instagram, which I think is so cool. I mean, I don't think something like this would have happened years ago. I think it's so cool how we can meet new people.

And I've been so incredibly amazed by Elizabeth because I love the perspective she has on life. Her and I were both trained in the same school, the Life Coach School, to become life coaches. And in just our few interactions that we've had together I've really loved the way that you have given me such amazing space and acceptance.

And, I mean, I feel like my life's been a little crazy these last few months and she's been so gracious. For example on Monday— So at the time of this recording I'm sitting here in California at my sister's house. And we were supposed to interview for her podcast on Monday, and my day was absolutely insane.

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My flight had gotten canceled and I was frazzled. And I just love the way that you give space for being human. And for just like the craziness that's the 50/50 of life and being a human. So anyway, thank you so much for your time today and being here.

Elizabeth: Yes, I'm so excited that we finally got to connect.

Jenica: Yes, me too. Okay, so I would love for you to share with my listeners here on Fearless Infertility, will you share with us your story specifically with infertility to start?

Elizabeth: Yes, I'd be happy to. So as I go through these stories over and over, as you know, more kind of unravels and I'm like, "Oh yeah, I forgot about this and I forgot about that." And so to that point, when I was 19 my 26 year old sister was diagnosed with a very rare form of cervical cancer. It was a lung cancer cell found in her cervix. Which is super rare, she's like in the medical journals and all this craziness about that.

Jenica: Oh wow.

Elizabeth: So at that time she was told she had to do a radical hysterectomy and would never be able to have kids and whatever. And so that was the first experience that I had had with anything related to fertility and or children and not being able to have them.

And the first thing I said to her was, "I will have them for you." Like, duh, this is what you do for your sister, as you know, is showing up for yours right now to help her with her babies.

And at the time, so now this was, gosh, 25, 27 years ago now, it wasn't really a thing. And the doctor that did my egg retrieval and all of my stuff is actually the doctor my sister saw 26 years ago. And he was part of the first NIH doctors to do IVF in the 70s. So he's kind of the pioneer of all this stuff.

Jenica: Okay, what does NIH mean?

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Elizabeth: The National Institute of Health in DC.

Jenica: Okay, amazing.

Elizabeth: So they do all the like research stuff. A lot of the testing and things. Anything new comes out of, usually, there. So anyway, at that time you weren't able to be a surrogate for somebody unless you had had your own children.

And it was a very rigorous psychological testing and all of these things. Which rightfully so it should be and basically their concern is you don't want to be across the Thanksgiving table and be like, "That's my child, not your child." You know, that sort of thing.

So anyway, long story short that did not happen. She ended up not being able to have kids. My children now are kind of like her little ones, they spend a lot of time together. But that was my first awakening to ovaries. And they kept her ovaries, but didn't think that they'd be able to do anything because the chemo and radiation and whatever.

So fast forward to my early 20s and working with a lot of people that were older at the time. There was two in particular that were going through some fertility stuff. And it wasn't really openly talked about but comments were made to me like, "Oh, make sure you're not in the situation we are, you're young." Whatever.

So I ended up getting divorced at age 30. And I realized, "Okay, well then I'm going to go see if I can freeze my eggs." So I went back to the same doctor that my sister went to. And he said, "You're too young, eggs don't thaw well, so come back later if you're still single." Basically, if you had an embryo, we would do it, but it's not worth doing it for eggs. So I was like, "Okay, whatever that means."

Jenica: Yeah. And around what year was this? Like how long ago was this?

Elizabeth: Well, I'm 45 now, so 15 years ago.

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Jenica: Okay, because now I feel like they would freeze them at this stage, right?

Elizabeth: Technology has changed, yes. They still don't thaw as well as an embryo.

Jenica: Oh, interesting. I didn't know that.

Elizabeth: Because basically the chemical compound of an embryo and the protein-based versus just an egg.

Jenica: Oh wow, I did not realize that. Okay, good to know.

Elizabeth: Yeah. So, went back at 36, froze my eggs. Had 11 eggs frozen and went on my merry way. At age 39 my periods were different. I started bleeding really heavy, I was having a lot of cramping and pain that I had never had before.

I went to my regular OB and she said, we did an ultrasound, you have fibroids, but it's not a problem. Kind of no big deal.

Jenica: Did you say fibroids?

Elizabeth: So I went back to this fertility doctor again. Yes.

Jenica: Okay, and remind me what is a fibroid again?

Elizabeth: So it's basically like a small tumor, essentially, in the uterine lining. Either inside the uterus or in the lining or wherever.

Jenica: Do you know how it differs from a polyp? Because I had polyps in my uterus, is it different or pretty much the same thing?

Elizabeth: It is different. Again, it's the consistency of whatever it's made of, essentially. So the OB said it was not a problem. I went back to the RE and he said, "Actually, it is a problem. You are not going to be able to get pregnant based on the location of where they are."

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So the size was not the issue, and that's what the OB was basically saying, like, it's not a problem, whatever. And aside from even that, the fact that you have debilitating, overly bleeding periods, that is a problem for anybody who's listening.

Jenica: Right, right, that's a symptom of an issue.

Elizabeth: Right. So that's another conversation. So anyway, he suggested that I went to a gynecological oncologist. And the reason for that is usually the oncology doctors have the best equipment, right? Because the last thing you want is scar tissue to build up or any sort of damage from doing anything to your ovaries or your uterus, right? Because you want to be using them.

Jenica: Yeah, because that could just cause additional issues to prevent pregnancy.

Elizabeth: Yeah. So if you do have to have some sort of surgical intervention I just always say make sure you do your research on the doctor. And that whatever technology that they're using is the best, state of the art, up to date stuff.

Jenica: Yeah, that's a really great suggestion because I think that's something that, for me, going into my infertility experience in the beginning, I lucked out. But I think I just blindly trusted the doctors that I went to initially. And I really didn't do a whole lot of research and luckily it ended up working out.

I actually didn't end up getting pregnant with my first doctor. When we switched to another doctor that's when I ended up conceiving. Because I saw with my initial doctor that I just didn't feel great about it, long story short.

So I think that that's a great point you bring up, is that really do your research and don't just blindly trust. And maybe other people don't need to

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hear that. But for me in my mid-20s, that's something that I wish I would have been more aware of. That I should do more research in the doctor's I was seeing, and in the specific procedures, and like you said, the equipment and how high tech they are.

Elizabeth: Yeah, even the labs, ask about what labs they use. Where are they sending your embryos? Who's housing these? What are the success rates of the labs? Those really matter because there's a lot of different clinics that are popping up right now. But the labs associated with them are not necessarily, you know, they don't have a history.

So you might want to go somewhere that they can tell you what their success rates are, right?

Jenica: Oh, I love that. And I didn't even think to ask about the labs that the clinics are sending the embryos or the eggs to. So thank you for suggesting that.

Elizabeth: Yeah. So long story short, I did my myomectomy, which is the fibroid removal. And then I was 40 at that point, so the doctor said, "Now you need to try." Like now or never basically.

Jenica: Yeah. And so, by the way, at this point had you met your husband now and you were remarried?

Elizabeth: Yeah.

Jenica: Okay, cool.

Elizabeth: Yeah, literally like in between this time, so it was super-fast. That's another story too. And so as soon as I recovered from my surgery, it was like, "You need to try now." So we did and we got pregnant the first time. I was like, "Oh my gosh."

I thought all the prayers were answered and everything was done. Like we did the surgery and everything is better. And that was it.

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Jenica: So you did the surgery, and you didn't do IVF. But you just got pregnant naturally after the surgery?

Elizabeth: Right.

Jenica: Oh, that's amazing. Okay, cool.

Elizabeth: And so that RE followed me through my whole pregnancy. So we did the whole blood work every week to make sure my progesterone— Because he had just recommended the fibroid surgery, so he was already following me through this. So I was really fortunate with that.

And then for baby number two it wasn't so easy. And so then it was like, “Oh, okay, here I thought this was going to be like it was the first time and it as not.”

Jenica: Yeah, that was my answer, we're good to go now.

Elizabeth: Yeah, so that's kind of where the real stress started to set in of like, “Oh, okay, this is a thing. And this is pretty mind consuming. And what do we do from here?” And a lot of big decisions, as you know. And, again, time was not on my side so it wasn't like, “Okay, try for six months and come back and we'll see what happens.”

And mind you, I had these 11 eggs frozen, too. So that was always in the back of my mind. I'm like, “Okay, when do we do that? Are we better off doing that? Because that's 36 year old eggs versus now 42 year old eggs.” That whole conversation.

So anyway, we were getting ready to do IVF and because my particular doctor didn't believe to do IUI. He said the chances of that happening were unlikely and he didn't want to do that, so fine.

So we go to do get ready for IVF, do the calendar, I got the bull's eye written on my back for where to do the shots at home, the whole thing.

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Jenica: Oh, really? What do you mean the bull's eye? Did they circle it or something where you're supposed to do it?

Elizabeth: Totally, yes.

Jenica: They didn't do that for me.

Elizabeth: No?

Jenica: No.

Elizabeth: When I was doing it myself years before I didn't have that the first time. And I was more stressed the second time to do it this time around than I was the first time. She's like, "I can do a circle." And I'm like, "Okay, do it." So literally Sharpie on my bum.

Jenica: Oh, how funny. That's awesome.

Elizabeth: Yeah.

Jenica: That's actually smart because, I mean, some of the things that they asked me to do at home, they were like, "Here's the medication." They send you links to watch the videos on how to actually inject yourself. And I'm like, "They're trusting me to do this? I'm not a nurse. I'm not a doctor. What's happening here?"

Elizabeth: Totally. I say this every day, I am not qualified to be doing this in any way.

Jenica: It's a little overwhelming. Okay, yeah, I love that. So, for those of you listening, you can ask for things like this. I mean, that's a genius idea, just circle where you're supposed to do it. Perfect.

Elizabeth: Yeah, tell me what I need to do, please. So we did that, go home. And so our doctor always calls like around 10:30, 11:00 with the

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blood work for that day. And he calls and he's like, "Well, guess what? You're not going to pick up your medication because you're pregnant."

I literally like fell off my chair. I could not believe it. Yeah, so that was amazing. Unfortunately, I lost that baby. But at the same time, it was like, "Okay, maybe I'm able to do this. So it kind of kept me going in the sense that right after I got that news that I was pregnant, it was like, "Okay, I can do this. My body is capable of doing this."

However, the loss was something that I had never – I didn't know anybody who had gone through it, no one had ever talked to me about it. It literally like took the rug out from under me in every which way.

So I started writing a book at that time, *The Mamas After Miscarriage*. Because I remember thinking you will always be a mama to that soul no matter what, right? No matter if it was a chemical or whatever.

And I realized also that that's why people don't talk about it, the feelings that I had. It was guilt, shame, I'm broken, what did I do wrong? And that's what they keep telling you, you did nothing wrong. But I remember thinking, "Well, I must have done something wrong. Because why is my body doing this? And if this was what God wanted for me, why did he take it away from me?"

Jenica: Yeah, very confusing.

Elizabeth: Yeah, it was a very, very difficult time. However, I had had 10 plus years, 13 years of coaching. So I knew kind of the psychological aspects of kind of how to shift, or reframe, or however you want to say it, the narrative, right?

But I do believe too, you need to grieve it. So no matter how much you know, it is what it is. It still hurts, it's still painful, it's still a loss, it's a death, and whatever. So you have to allow yourself the time for that before you can go on to any sort of tool to kind of move forward and move on.

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Jenica: Yeah, and that's one of the things I do love about what we learned in coaching. Because I think before I did my certification and learned what I know now, to be just total truth, is I thought that negative feelings were a problem that needed to be fixed.

Whereas now I'm fully aware that the human experience is 50/50. And you should grieve. And you should process those negative emotions and not try to shove them behind a closed door because they're always going to be there. But to allow them and to realize that you are doing a good job being a human being and living the full human experience.

And I think there's such a freedom that comes in that and accepting the circumstance for what it is and allowing yourself to be a human through the process. And I think that that maybe isn't something that society teaches us necessarily. I think we want to be positive and we want to be happy. Where in reality, that's maybe not the best thing for us in the moment.

I think that acknowledging that we you really sad, that was a really hard thing. And there's nothing wrong with feeling sad about going through that. I think that's an amazing point that you made.

Elizabeth: Yeah, especially infertility specifically, right? I mean, with miscarriage loss too, I mean, you're kind of expected – It's only now becoming a thing that companies are giving you bereavement time off and things like that. But even when I went through it, it was like, you don't tell anybody and you're expected to be at work the next day or call in sick or whatever it is that you're doing. Even though you're bleeding profusely for days, and you are sad. You're mourning. You are in mourning, there's no question about that.

Jenica: Yeah, and I think that that's such a good point too, is I'm like why have we not talked about this that much until now? I definitely feel like infertility, and miscarriages, and topics similar to that are becoming more common to speak about, thank goodness.

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But the fact that it's so common and that women, I think in society have just been expected to deal with it in silence and continue to carry on like nothing happened. It's just shocking to me honestly.

Elizabeth: Well people would say to me, "Oh, well, it's normal. It happens." So after I started saying this, "Oh, it's so normal." Well, that doesn't mean it's not hard and sad. And that I just had a death, right? The story that I wrote is no longer. I'm grieving that.

So even though it's normal doesn't mean that I'm not allowed to express how I'm feeling about it. And I think that that goes for anybody, whether that's embryos that are lost, or failed retrievals, failed transfers, whatever. It's the same type of experience with the grief. You are allowed to feel that grief and take the time that you need to.

Because if we have a death in our life with an aunt or an uncle or a cousin or whoever, we usually know why that's happened, right? We can say oh, they were old, or they had this or that or whatever. In these cases we often don't have the answers. So it's like, you have this story that you're writing in your head of like, "Oh my gosh, what car seat am I going to buy?" Or whatever, and then all of a sudden, it's gone for no reason.

I mean, even if you do the tissue testing, you still don't know. Okay, well, why is there a chromosomal defect? And or why did nothing come up? And even when you do your reoccurring loss panel and nothing comes up it sometimes becomes even more frustrating because you feel like you just don't get any answers.

Jenica: Yeah, so it's normal but it adds a lot of extra layers of confusion when you don't know why. And I also love your point too, that just because it's normal doesn't mean it shouldn't be sad.

For example, I wouldn't walk up to someone whose grandparents just passed away of old age and say, "Oh it's normal. It's fine." I wouldn't expect

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them to not be sad about their grandparents passing away even though it is so normal.

And so I think that that's a really great way to look at miscarriage as well. Yes, it's normal. And it's really, really hard and really sad. And it's okay to feel that way.

Elizabeth: Yeah. And no matter what stage you're at, right? Because I hear people say, "Oh, well it was ectopic." Or it was chemical or whatever.

Jenica: Or it was really early.

Elizabeth: Mm-hmm. And of course everyone is different on where they feel that kind of an attachment. And so only you can determine what is okay for you to feel. Don't let anyone else outside say anything about that.

To me, it's like as soon as you get that positive test that's your story, right? Your mind starts going and you get excited and whatever. So there's no competition of what your story is, as far as how far along you are or whatever. It's in your own heart and how you are feeling and thinking about that.

Jenica: Yeah, absolutely. There's no right or wrong way. And only you can determine what is the best way for you to process that. I love that.

Elizabeth: Yeah. So then we went on to, after that loss, trying again for three months. We kind of gave ourselves that window, and we ended up getting pregnant with number two during that time. So that was great. We went through the same doctor who carried us through the whole way, again, because I had losses at that point.

After that one I had another loss. And then the last one, we went through IUI because after trying and timing and everything as well, with a different doctor I had had some complications with my last miscarriage where I had some tissue leftover from the DNC that caused some issues. And so it was just a little bit messy and we figured that was kind of the best route to go to

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start at. And that was our number three. So that was like a very condensed version of the long trip forward and then here we go.

Jenica: Yeah, we could talk for days about that, I'm sure. So you switched doctors, and then this doctor thought an IUI would work. And so it ended up working, that's amazing.

Elizabeth: Yeah. So at that point I knew that I could get pregnant because I had the multiple losses and the babies. I will tell you in between then I had seen two other doctors that were like, "You need to do egg donation. And I won't see you because of your age."

So I often tell people keep knocking on the doors until you find somebody who's willing to be on your team and support you. Because they are out there. You just need to advocate for yourself, know the right questions to ask, basically know what your own body is capable of in order to come to the table to have an educated conversation with them about what you feel your needs are as well.

Jenica: Yeah, yeah. I love that. That's a really great suggestion. And I think it goes back to what we said earlier, there's no right or wrong way. And I truly believe, and I know you believe this as well as a coach, that every individual knows what's best for themselves. No one else can decide that for them.

And I'm a religious person and I think God truly directs you to what your path is. And so if you truly believe that an answer a doctor is giving you doesn't feel like truth to you, then I think that's a great indicator to continue searching and find someone that helps you, like you said, give you some more, I guess, reassurance in the path you're going down feels like the right thing for you.

Elizabeth: Yeah, and everybody knows what that is, right? When you see a doctor and you get a good vibe from them, and you leave, and you're like, "I feel super pumped about this." Or like, "I just saw four slides about my

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age and the decline of eggs over 35 that I didn't need to know. And now I feel really crappy about this.” Right?

Jenica: Yeah, yeah.

Elizabeth: Because you are going to spend a lot of time in that office with that doctor and his team. So you really do want to find somebody that you feel super good about and you feel positive being there. Because as you know, as a fellow coach, those hormones, those cortisol levels, those stress hormones are a big player in this whole game. And most of the medical doctors don't really acknowledge that too much.

But I have clients that would have full on anxiety attacks outside of their doctor's office because they weren't aligned with them. And then their next doctor, they were so positive and felt so good about. And they had just a better overall experience just by the vibe of that doctor. So it really does make a difference.

So I always tell people too, if you're feeling like on the fence, go get a second opinion. Meet somebody else. You are interviewing them, too.

Jenica: Yeah, exactly. And that's such a good point too, that I think that our mental state, and I think that's probably why— Well, one of the many reasons why I'm so passionate about coaching is because I truly believe that our mental state affects every aspect of our lives. And when we realize how to control that, and how to choose which thoughts allow us how we want to feel, then it really does affect us physically too.

I think that, like you said, the cortisol levels and the anxiety can truly have an impact on physically what your body is capable of doing. And there's tons of research. I mean, I'm not a scientist and I'm not a doctor. But I know that there's a lot of smart people who've done a lot of research on the fact that that's true. And so when we have control over what thoughts we choose in our minds, it can make like all the difference in the world.

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Elizabeth: Absolutely.

Jenica: Okay. Well, thank you for sharing your story with us and giving us the background. So will you share with us some thoughts you chose when you were experiencing and growing your family that got you through it? Or helped put you in a mindset to continue to move forward?

Elizabeth: Yeah, so again, back to my age, we all know, in fact the doctor had told me your 30 year old eggs are your 30 year old eggs, your 36 are 36, et cetera, et cetera. So I had been hearing that forever. I really just had a knowing in my heart and in my mind that I was not going to let my age be a factor in this.

And I chose that thought, right? Society tells us very different all the time. We've all heard it from lots of different angles. And I'm certainly not saying that— Of course, younger eggs are better, I'm not going to dispute that at all. But that was a major helpful thought for me, was keeping that negative stigma around the age out of my thought process.

So any time somebody would bring that in, I switched it around. I really made a conscious effort to say that that wasn't the case. So much so, and this is interesting, I had complicated pregnancies with all of mine. So I had to see a specialty doctor every week with everybody to the last one.

So, through my last pregnancy, every week you go into the doctor and you write here's my age, are you on any new medications? Has anything changed since last week? And no, no, no.

So one of the times my husband comes with me, and he's kind of over my shoulder, and he's like, "You're not 42." I'm like, "What do you mean?" He's like, "You're not 42." I'm like, "Are you kidding me right now?" Not only was I not 42, I was 43 almost 44. So literally, I had no idea that I had really thought to the point of literally not even thinking my own age.

Jenica: Wow, that's so interesting. I love that.

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Elizabeth: Yes, and I do feel like it makes a difference. Because if you take on, it's like any thought, right? Whether it's like, "I'm not good enough at this." Or "I'm too fat" or "I'm too this" or whatever, that's a limiting belief. And that thought changes how you show up in the world.

My thought about my age changed how my body showed up for me in getting pregnant and having healthy children. So, I always say it's one thing to get pregnant, but we want that to be a healthy baby.

So that I think was the main thing that really kind of got me through. But as well as just, once you have that experience of a loss and going through it, there's a whole other set of kind of anxiety that comes with the fertility situation and getting pregnant and staying pregnant. And it's this, "Are we going to see a heartbeat every week?" It's like this constant stress.

And so that was really where I feel like I was tested with my coaching skills for myself. And honestly, my faith too. Speaking of God and all of that is really trusting and surrendering to the fact that this is out of my control. And as much as I have the ability to change my thoughts that can affect my feelings and my actions, et cetera, it really is out of my control.

And so how do you surrender to that and feel some sense of peace? And a lot of times for me, and what I do with my clients, is giving them tools in order to do that. So is it writing? Is it meditation? Is it cooking? What does it mean for you to get to that headspace to try to surrender to whatever it is that you feel? To the universe or whatever it may be, because we are in a situation that literally is out of our control?

I mean, you know, after you have a transfer, or whatever it is, it doesn't matter whether you're laying down for four days or not. It's nothing that you can do about it, truly. So yeah, that's what I would say as far as the thoughts.

Jenica: I love that. Thank you for sharing that. That's very helpful. And it's so interesting, as you were talking it made me think about this study I

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heard. And, again, I'm not a scientist or a doctor, so I have no idea where I heard it, I can't even cite it. But I remember reading this somewhere, that there was a study done about our brains and about the impact that thoughts have on our physical bodies.

And there were two groups of people. There was a one who was given a placebo and rubbed it on their skin and said that this is poison ivy. And it wasn't poison ivy, but they told them that it was. And so every single person broke out with a rash on the spot that they had rubbed it on their skin. Even though it was not poison ivy, it wasn't anything that should have caused an allergic reaction or any type of reaction at all. But because they believed it, it did.

And then to the opposite end there was another group of people that they rubbed actual poison ivy on their arms. And they told them that it wasn't poison ivy. And none of them— Or I guess, maybe they didn't even say poison ivy. But they said like this is just like a cream, it just helps moisturize your skin, or whatever they told them. But they had no idea it was poison ivy. And because whatever they told them, they believed, none of them broke out with the hives or whatever happens with poison ivy.

So it's so amazing to me what our brains are capable of. And I think that sometimes we forget how absolutely incredible our minds are and really the impact of believing certain things can have on our lives. So I love that you shared that story and that thought that really helped you in terms of your age. Because, like you said, your circumstance was your circumstance, you were at the age that you were. I mean, no matter how much people told you younger eggs are better, you couldn't have gotten younger.

And so I love that you were like, "This isn't a factor for me, it is what it is." But you chose to believe thoughts that helped you propel forward. And I think that's such a great testament to, I mean, really choosing the thoughts in your circumstances that you know will benefit you.

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Elizabeth: Yeah, I mean, of course, to that point I did everything that I could to maintain my body to be healthy and feel like I was doing whatever I could for my eggs. I was taking supplements, I was eating well, I was working out, you know, doing all the things to maintain health internally. But at the same time, I mean, you can only affect so much with those things.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. Okay, would you please share with us maybe some of the gifts you experience now in your life because of the trials that you experienced in growing your family?

Elizabeth: Oh my gosh, so many. One, meeting you and talking to you. Going through this experience and being able to meet so many amazing people that have gone through it.

When I was going through it there wasn't this community, really. Resolve was kind of the main group, and even that I remember thinking it wasn't publicly stated in my clinic. But if you had asked, they'd be like, "Here's some pamphlet information on this." It wasn't like, "Here's a whole community, here's a support group or whatever."

And so I think that just having the experience that I went through and being in that, I always kind of mentally go back to the chair where they take the blood at the at the clinic. Because I had so many different emotions in that chair throughout those three years of ups and downs, and HCG tests levels after the miscarriage losses, and what's my progesterone going to be? And it was crying to the poor girl taking my blood.

There was a lot of different emotions that were happening during those years. And as much as my experience wasn't the same as the next person. And that's another thing I tell people, it's not a competition of whose fertility struggle was harder or whatever.

But that did really help me to get in the mind space of knowing what these women go through and feeling the empathy to be able to really transform my life coaching practice to support women that were going through this.

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Because when I was sitting there, I remember feeling like there's such a void here, why isn't somebody helping people specifically deal with this? This is such a heavy, heavy experience, like nothing else. This is not buying a house; this is not going through a divorce. This is something that I had never experienced before on such a deep level.

And, again, as great as the clinics that I went to were, they were not qualified to deal with me crying in the seat there.

Jenica: Right, yeah, they deal with the medical aspect.

Elizabeth: Yeah, they don't know what to say to you. And so that's where I feel like us as coaches come into play. As they walk out of the clinic, that's where we come in to help with the mental side of that.

And so I feel like all of that led me to being able to connect with so many other women and just make it my mission to serve and support other women to build their families and know that it is possible. It may not look the way you think you wanted it to look. But if you have that knowing that you're going to be a parent, then we can help figure out how you're going to get there.

You know, it may be through a very unconventional way. But you will get there. It's just a matter of going through the steps to make it happen.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. That segues perfectly into the next question I wanted to ask you, which is, why do you think coaching is valuable? And can you explain to me a little bit about the value you've seen coaching have in your own life? And then in the lives of maybe some of your clients?

Elizabeth: Yes. So, to me, coaching is so invaluable because I was somebody who kind of grew up on going to therapy. And really where the therapy kind of for me was a turning point was when I got divorced at 30.

We had gone to therapy for like three years, I think. And my husband at the time had said, "I feel like this is divorce counseling, rather than helping us.

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They're not giving us any tools to make it better. They're basically just listening to us."

And that really kind of hit me because I always thought this is what you do. You go talk about your stuff for an hour, and then you leave. And I do remember feeling like, "Okay, our time is up." And I was just getting to the point of where I was feeling like I was getting my point across. And then it was like, "I'll see you next week." And I felt like that wasn't helpful to me.

And so with coaching I feel like you get tangible tools and experiences to help you do it. I'm a very type A person. So tell me all the ingredients to make the salad and I'm going to make the salad. But don't just say like, "Go do it." I need instruction.

Jenica: Don't just talk about it.

Elizabeth: Yes. Yeah, and I would say you don't want to have a coach necessarily forever. Whereas people can talk about the same issues in therapy for 25 years, going around and around. Like let's figure out what is happening and fix it as much as we can.

And it's, I always say comparable to like a personal trainer, right? You go to a trainer to gain five pounds, lose five pounds, whatever it is. They tell you the steps to do that. This is what to eat, this is the workout to do, whatever. And that's kind of what we do with the coaching as well.

And so on the fertility side of it and how that plays into that and the success that I've seen there is just coming to the table different than you did before when you are doing some sort of treatment makes all the difference.

I say to people, you don't want to go to your next retrieval the way that you were last time because that didn't work well, right? So what do we need to look at in your life that we need to shift or reframe? Or what are the thoughts that you're having around this even? And let's work on those and give you some tools in order to shift that mindset.

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So it's a whole different reorg, basically, of your thought patterns and your feelings and how that plays out. And then in turn, you have a different outcome. And you go into a different area. Everybody's like, "I don't know what, I'm just calm this time. I just feel better. I'm not so attached to the outcome."

And ironically, having less attachment, whether they believe that fully or not, they have a better outcome because they're not hanging on so tight to like, I can't eat gluten, I can't have sugar, whatever. And if that's the things that are causing you stress, we're going to let go of that. Because I promise you whether you have that piece of cake or not, is not what's going to make you pregnant or not.

So I mean, I get it. I would have stood on my head and turned around five times if somebody told me that. So if somebody is telling you not to eat cake and sugar, then I understand. But sometimes it has the opposite effect. And so knowing the history of that person and how those things, may trigger them, gives me an idea of how we coach through that and how we get a successful outcome for them.

So I really feel like it's invaluable because it's a period and experience in your life that you have never had before. And people don't really talk about it unless you have somebody who's gone through it with you. But even if you are with somebody who's gone through it, it's really difficult not to compare your situation to them.

And the comparison game in this fertility situation is not healthy. Because I don't know what your history is, what your thyroid levels are. Any sort of thing that you may have, that I don't have, our protocols can be different. And whatever it may be, it's better to stay in your lane.

I always say write your own story. It doesn't matter, for better or worse, what somebody else did, this is your story. And this is what you are doing. And so we focus on that and their success. And it's been incredible. And

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literally my biggest joy is to get these positive outcomes from seeing my clients go through this.

Jenica: I love that I completely agree with you. It's some of the greatest work, I think of my entire life. Because to be able to see what these tools have done in my own life, and tackling any obstacle with so much more self-confidence is just life changing and so, I mean, literally priceless for myself.

And I think coaching is so invaluable. And having a coach is so important because it's really hard for us to evaluate our own brains from inside of our own brains. And so we have thoughts that we have thought so many times that they just become beliefs and truths to us that we can't see are maybe causing results that we don't want in our lives.

And so it's incredible to have a coach step outside, you know outside of your brain, and look at it from a nonjudgmental and very curious perspective and see what's actually happening. And then based on their viewing of the brain, I guess, they can then tell us what they're seeing is happening.

And I've had some of the most eye opening experiences of my life being like, "Oh my gosh, I knew I was having this problem, but I could not figure out for myself what was causing it." And seeing a coach be able to coach me through and solve these problems that I thought were just so dramatic and I wouldn't be able to get through, really simplify it I think is such an incredible way that people can use coaches.

And I also love that you said that we can have like support systems. But I think that that is different than a coach. I think a coach can help us with our thought patterns and give us really, like you said, tangible tools to help through any trial or any problem, including infertility.

And then it's also nice to have our support system that is completely different. And maybe others who have gone through it as well or were there

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before us to help us not feel alone. But then to actually process through the problem and help you understand what's actually happening in your own brain, I think coaches are just— I just think everyone needs a coach because I've seen the huge impact it's had on my own life and in so many others lives as well.

Elizabeth: Yeah, and once that clicks for you and you see kind of how that model works and how you can use it in any aspect of your life, you realize like, “I have so much control in a situation that I thought I had no control of.”

Jenica: Yeah, yeah.

Elizabeth: And infertility especially, it's huge, right? Because it just rewrites the narrative of your story. Because you're literally like rewiring everything from what you initially thought it would be to what it truly is.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that. And I love that you can then see possibilities that were never there before. Well, that were there all along, you just didn't see. It's like this whole new freedom, it's like you almost can't even describe until you've witnessed it yourself or experienced it yourself. It's so, so amazing.

Elizabeth: Yeah, I agree. All right, so the last question I wanted to ask you is what are some of the things that you do in your daily routine that you feel like help you get in a productive mindset to help you continue to have that control and be aware of what's going on in your mind to just progress through any obstacles that come your way?

Elizabeth: So productive mindset versus my mind, I think are different for me. So productive is I live by my calendar. If something's not on my calendar it doesn't happen and write everything down.

As far as shifting my mind every day, and just kind of keeping myself back to really what's important to me and where I want to stay, kind of in that movie with Will Smith where he's like teaching the guy to dance. He's like, “This is where you live.”

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Jenica: I love that.

Elizabeth: In my head that's the visual I have of like, "This is where you live." So what do you need to stay in that zone of this is where you're at? And for me it's gratitude. It's really just taking 60 seconds at a minimum, and the most I do is two minutes, and I literally set a timer. And I write out gratitude. Sometimes I write out future gratitude of what I am grateful for in order to help manifest that to happen.

Jenica: Yeah, I love that.

Elizabeth: But really, it truly is gratitude. Because I feel like if you are in a state of gratitude, it's really difficult to see anything else. And so that's what keeps me there.

Jenica: I love that, that's such a good answer. And I completely agree with you because I think that whenever we choose a thought that's grateful, we'll always find evidence for what we're believing. And so when you're grateful your brain is going to look for things to be grateful about. And so I love that. Thank you for sharing that.

Okay, Elizabeth, so tell us a little bit more about where people can find you and about your business. And if they want to follow up and just connect with you.

Elizabeth: Yeah, so on Instagram, Elizabethking_coaching. On the website, elizabethking.com. And on the podcast, Pretty Little Tribe.

Jenica: Okay, amazing. And we'll link all of Elizabeth's information in the show notes as well to make it easy for you guys. Thank you so much, Elizabeth, for being on the show today and taking your valuable time to share your amazing experience with us.

Elizabeth: Thank you, Jenica.

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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.

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