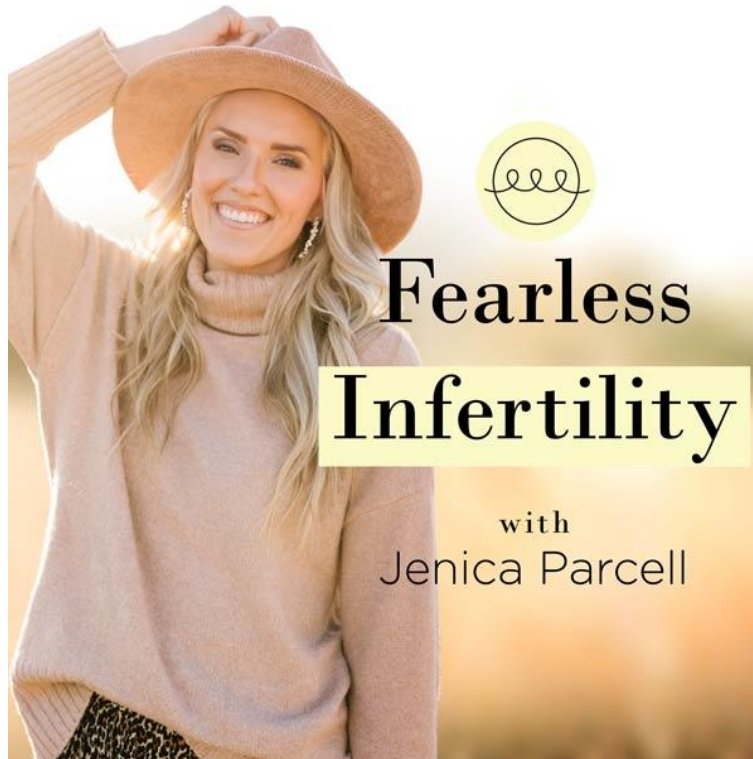


## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Jenica Parcell**

[Fearless Infertility](#) with Jenica Parcell

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

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.

Yay, you're here! Welcome back to *Fearless infertility*. I am so excited to speak with Ashleigh Di Lello today. The way that we met is crazy and I honestly feel like I met her because I needed to share her with you. And her story and her healing that can apply to any of life's challenges that we inevitably experience, including infertility and the trauma that it can create. This is a really great conversation with my friend Ashleigh and I can't wait for you to hear.

I am so glad that you are with me here today, my friends. If you are interested in joining the program with us starting November 1st this is the last week to get in before the doors close and we start November's workshop. And I'm so excited about it, it's going to be honestly life changing and cannot wait to get to know you better. So go to [fearlessinfertility.com](http://fearlessinfertility.com) and I will see you there.

This week's review on the podcast that I am choosing to spotlight to get a pair of PJs and socks that I love giving away is Fearlessfoster14. I don't think that I've read this review before. I went back on a few episodes that were recent and I didn't find it. But if I have, somebody email me and let me know and I'll choose somebody else, I'll choose two people next week, but I don't think that I have.

So she says, "Very educational and inspiring. This is hands down the best podcast on Apple Podcasts. My husband and I have struggled for five years to get pregnant and we are on our own IVF journey now. The emotions on this journey are very real and raw.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

I feel no one around me understands the whole journey we are going through but this podcast has been so inspiring. Jenica is amazing. I've listened to every episode and it makes my anxiety disappear as I hear others talk about their experience and how my feelings are normal through the process.

The community behind this podcast is so encouraging. Listen to Jenica's podcast if you are experiencing infertility, you will not be disappointed. And it is a wonderful community to be with. Jenica is very educational and inspiring."

Email me at [hello@thesliceofsun.com](mailto:hello@thesliceofsun.com) and I will get you your PJs and socks. And for anybody else who wants to win and share about this podcast with others, that's why I do these giveaways is because if we have more reviews, it helps those who have no idea who I am or no idea that this community exists, that there is a place for them and they're not alone in infertility. So go to Apple Podcasts and follow and leave a rating and I am excited to see you there.

So this week's episode is incredible. Ashleigh and I met in the most crazy way, which we talk about in the podcast. And she's so cool and so inspiring and has the most heartbreaking past. And I think a lot of people probably would have given up and said, "It's not fair. Why me?" And she has really, honestly defied so many, so many odds.

And so I am really excited to introduce her to you today because I think that we can all learn from her experience and realize that when things are really, really hard as they inevitably will be for us, for every human being on the planet and for those of us experiencing infertility, that there's always a way to continue to move forward. So let's get into today's podcast episode with Ashleigh Di Lello.

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## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

Jenica: All right, welcome back to *Fearless Infertility*. I have with me here today, Ashleigh Di Lello. And I have to tell everybody how you and I met because it's the craziest thing. I don't believe in coincidences. So I've never met anybody like this before.

So okay, back up a little bit. Ashleigh and I went to this event for a company called Redmond a few weeks ago. And I saw her there, it was towards the end of the night, it was getting dark. And I saw her kind of walk by and I saw her name tag, Ashleigh Di Lello. And I said, "Oh my gosh, that name looks so familiar." So I introduced myself.

And I honestly probably wouldn't have otherwise because it was getting towards the end of the night and me and my husband were getting ready to leave. But I saw it and so I said, "Oh hi, I recognize your name, and you know where I recognize it from is Venmo."

And it's so random, literally probably a year ago at least I went to this massage therapist and I would pay him through Venmo. And her husband, I recognized his last name from the payments that he had made on her behalf to the same massage therapist.

So it's not like I saw her on Instagram, it's not like I saw her on Facebook, I saw her through Venmo. Just her name, not her face. And I recognized her name and then we started talking and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, this is the perfect person to have come and talk with these women here on the *Fearless Infertility* podcast, and that's how she's here today.

Ashleigh: That's for sure the most random, I think, yet. I mean, like we spoke about then, who knew the power of Venmo. But also, I mean, kudos to her memory because I can't even fathom how many Venmo transactions you've seen since and during. And the fact that you remembered that last name is just amazing in and of itself. So definitely felt meant to be.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

Jenica: Yes, it definitely is. And that's the thing is, I think my memory is amazing, my brain is amazing, but I also think that God had your name stand out to me on purpose. And I don't believe in coincidences and so when I learned about what Ashleigh does, I said that I have to have her on the podcast, and she graciously agreed.

And so, Ashleigh, will you start with giving us a background on how you got here today in your work. And just as a preface, Ashleigh's experience, I think ties into any hard thing that we're all experiencing, and it also ties into infertility as well with her own infertility experience. But I mean, even if she said nothing about her infertility to us, I think that we can really learn from each other's heartaches, trials, struggles, because pain is pain and heartache is heartache. And despite where those feelings are coming from, we can all relate to that.

And so I would encourage anybody that's listening to, yes, this applies to infertility, and it also applies just any hard thing that you're experiencing. So Ashleigh, with that being said, will you take us through your life experience, honestly? I know, we got to do it quicker than— I'm sure we can talk about it for like hours and hours, but tell us kind of how you got here, your past experience, and how you got to your work.

Ashleigh: Yeah, absolutely. Shortened down version because it's 25 years long. But quickly, just to understand, I mean, my work I do now is with the brain and the subconscious mind. And I didn't understand, but back 25 years ago when my life was completely changed overnight, things that helped save my life was because somehow instinctively, or I think God was implanting on my heart to do things and access my brain and the mind body connection in a way that I had no conscious awareness of what it was doing at a neuroscience level.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

There wasn't access to that type of information then, unless you actually went and got an academic journal on the subject. And so it just started my life work very young without me knowing.

So quick, quick backstory is I was a dancer, I love dance. And that's important to the story because that love helped save my life. But I danced five hours a day from the age of seven. And then 13 years old, one day I went from dancing five hours a day to overnight literally fighting for my life. And that was the first day of over four years where I lived between life and death.

Which is something that I didn't realize until many years later is not something most people experience. People get really sick but living on that threshold of teetering between survival and dying is just something that I didn't even comprehend at the time how much it was impacting me, impacting my nervous system. Because I was just so wired into survival, which I think everybody understands. There's different seasons in our life where it's just about surviving. But they have long lasting impacts on us that we're not registering at the time.

So it was a long journey, I was a complete mystery. I had a rare viral infection nobody could diagnose. I went to all the top hospitals in this country. I was tested for just about anything that existed. In fact, I used to pray beforehand that something would come out positive, which is such a weird place to be, but just so that we could have some type of answer.

And I'm sure everybody feels that way, even in their infertility journey. You want to know what the issue is so you can address it. Because living in that land of unknowns is so hard.

So I remember one day in particular a doctor came in and just told me that I needed to accept I wasn't going to live past my teenage years. That I would never dance again, never get married, never have children, never live a

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

normal active life. And he told me the sooner that I accepted this, the easier it would be to come to terms with my reality.

Jenica: Wow. And how old were you when he told you this, or she?

Ashleigh: 13.

Jenica: Okay.

Ashleigh: 13, yeah.

Jenica: Wow.

Ashleigh: Yeah, I don't even know how to put into words what that moment felt like. Literally disbelief and how did this happen to my life with no warning? And what am I going to do with this?

And I remember I've never felt so defeated when I looked down and it became the most defining moment of my life because I realized I had to decide right then and there whether I accepted what was being told was the reality of my life and that it was going to be over. Or if I decided to fight and not accept those limitations. And that's what I chose, and I honor my mother—

Jenica: Yeah, I was going to ask you, okay, we need to pause there because I mean at 13 years old— 13 year olds, first of all life sucks when you're 13, let's just be honest, like I hated middle school and all that. So you're already dealing with the emotions and the insecurities of a regular 13 year old. And then you hear this.

How did you get to that point where you consciously made that decision? And which would you say it was conscious at the time?

Ashleigh: It was totally conscious. That's where I mentioned dance, because I loved life. And I know, it's not so easy for middle school, but I

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

had something that I loved so deeply that I was so driven towards, and I just had always had this love for life that obviously was planted in me from birth, because I would have to fight with all that I had for it.

So I think I was given a unique situation in having something that I was so passionate about so young, because it really drove me not just to get back to life and live, but to get back to the thing that I felt born to do. And from an early age that helped also just create a sense of determination and discipline. Which, again, was God given. I know I had something like that to help for me.

And so in that moment, and I credit my mom to actually giving me space to be the one to respond. Which is amazing because I know what she was feeling. But it really was at the end of the day going to have to be my fight. And so all I knew is that at that moment I took the biggest breath I ever have and I looked at him and I just said, "I don't accept this."

Jenica: Oh my gosh, because like you said, as a mother, I mean I think her natural instinct was probably just to protect you, and hold you, and carry you. But I think that just that moment that that was your choice is such a pivotal moment in your life.

Ashleigh: Yeah, define the rest of the 25 years that were to come from it because I had to obviously re-choose that, and re-choose that, and re-choose that over and over again. But in that moment, I defined that part of who I was with someone who just didn't give up and didn't just accept the limitations I was being told, no matter if they were from experts.

Jenica: Yeah, well, and at 13, I mean, I can't even imagine that because at 13 I just trusted doctors. I just thought that they knew it all. And so, I mean, that's truly miraculous.

Ashleigh: It was such a bleak moment. And I just felt deep in my heart, my life was supposed to be more than what it had already been. And I mean, I



## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

was facing a mountain, we had no idea it was wrong with me. I knew that I was dying better than anybody because I could feel it. But we just walked out of that hospital with a determination to figure it out.

And it was a long road. For those four years there would be nights I would be too afraid to go to sleep because I felt like if I surrendered that conscious will to live, that my body was just too tired. It was fighting so hard, and it just wouldn't make it. So I got pretty hard wired into survival because I had to be. And I lived that way through my whole adolescence.

Jenica: So were you at home all the time? I'm assuming you didn't go to school, you were just in bed.

Ashleigh: Yeah, I fought through— The first year was on and off, I fought through, I tried to still dance. I mean, we have videos of practically my partner, because I did all styles but ballroom became my main focus. And my Latin ballroom partner was practically carrying me off the dance floor. And that's when I was 14, and from that moment on I didn't dance for six years.

So after that, yeah, I got so sick that I couldn't barely make it from my bedroom to the bathroom. So that's why I was in a wheelchair to go to appointments. There were times that I could barely lift a finger or speak. And it's a really scary place to be when you don't have energy to speak.

So it was definitely a mountain. And obviously, there's a lot to that story, but we were able to find answers. And it was a long road, I essentially just did all I could to help support my immune system to fight this rare viral infection and really to program my body to heal. And that mind body connection truly helped save my life.

So I knew of its power then but didn't really understand the science behind it. And so I spoke about it, I was a speaker. I was able to go back to dance

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

after six years, which was miraculous in and of itself. And then had an amazing career.

I became a competitor and was a national champion. And then my husband and I, who became my partner, we were so blessed to be on So You Think You Can Dance together and danced against each other but shared that experience. And then we headlined a Broadway show and were guest performers on Ellen and Dancing With the Stars and just had a really amazing career for about 10 years. Which was just incredibly miraculous.

Jenica: That is, yeah. Can we pause for just a second and go back to, I mean, I'm sure it's a huge list of things we could talk about for hours. But what would you say are the main things that you did to help get your health back? And where did you find those tools?

Ashleigh: Yeah, well, it was a lot more difficult back then because functional medicine, alternative medicine, those methods of treatment were really like voodoo back then. They were not mainstream at all. You didn't have functional doctors, you know.

And I come from a family of doctors in Western medicine. And I absolutely believe it has its place, and it has in my life as well. But I also believe there's so many tools outside that help the body heal, which is what the body was designed to do.

And so nutrition was obviously huge, and supplements, and literally everything I ate I had to look at from a standpoint of does this help my immune system or hurt my immune system? So nutrition became vital.

But more than that, also which again leads me to my work today, it's just understanding that I helped my body survived by willing it to live and the things that I spoke about it to it all day, every day. We know every cell in your body listens to everything that you say. And there's a chemical reaction based upon that.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And especially that becomes more vital when you're facing health challenges or things aren't working. Because then there becomes a whole fear and threat response around your body. So really starting to understand that intricate connection.

And that was really the switch, is when they told me I was going to die I realized that I had two options. I could put all my focus, energy, and efforts into not dying. Or I could put all of my focus and energy into living.

And that outcome, of course, the desired outcome was the same. But that shift in how I focused also changed in how my brain saw my body, saw the things my body was fighting, saw the experience, saw how I took action. And that shift really changed my entire experience.

And that's with everyone in life, so often we're running away from what we don't want, instead of really running towards what we do want and speaking, feeling, communicating, focusing on the things we want. Because our brain is just wired to focus on the things that it has a threat around, which is obviously the things that we don't want.

Jenica: Right. Okay, thank you. So fast forward, you and your husband have a great career, you're enjoying your life. And then what happens?

Ashleigh: Yes, I had my second life altering experience. And something to note, even in my professional career it was riddled with lots of injuries. Just my body was carrying a lot of scars. So it was always a battle, even at the height of so many blessings.

And then, of course, I was blessed most of all, to have my daughter Sophia, who was just an absolute miracle. Something that I had to really draw deep down inside to the belief that I could feel her and I think a lot of women can know that.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And I think I've heard you speak about that, because I didn't have any menstrual cycle through my entire adolescence because I was dying. And when you're dying, your body doesn't think that's important. And so they just didn't have very many hopes for my body due to what it had gone through and the lack of what had happened hormonally, which is such a crucial time for the female body.

And so she was just my little miracle and such a blessing. And then when she was two years old, I went into my second hip surgery. I'd had a first one and gone back to our professional career after eight months, so I expected this one to go the same. And it was on my other hip, it was the same surgery. So I felt like we knew what it would look like.

And it went completely different. And it launched my whole body into chronic pain and nerve pain and dysfunction. And now I had this beautiful daughter that I had prayed my whole life for and I couldn't even pick her up. I couldn't play with her. I couldn't take care of her. I mean, I had to have somebody because she was trying to potty train and I couldn't even lift her on to the toilet. I couldn't lift her into the highchair to feed her.

So that was devastating, of course, at a whole new level besides obviously, I lost my professional dance career. I was also a personal trainer, I lost my ability to do that. And it was like *deja vu*, I was being told I was a chronic pain patient now. And that my nervous system had flipped a switch and that I needed to accept this.

And I was so grateful that I had that experience when I was younger to really understand to not put these types of limitations. Because I mean it felt like I could hardly hold a book. I could hardly function.

Jenica: Well and to have your beautiful daughter, like you said, that you had tried so hard for. You were told that you might not ever be able to even have her in the first place. And then to want to get to raise her and help her

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

with the things that probably a lot of people take for granted, but that you would have treasured.

Obviously hard days too. And to see that right before your eyes and just be untouchable. I mean, that must have been just devastating and really difficult to work through again.

Ashleigh: It was absolutely devastating. Losing my professional dance career was hard because I had done it before, but it was at a whole new level, and mom guilt and sadness. And I had to tell her like, "You can't jump on Mommy," because my body would react like a truck had hit me. So I was barely sleeping.

And so she had to be so careful around me too I couldn't do normal things. And she was only two, so she didn't remember mom prior to this experience, which was just devastating of itself. I once went down a little plastic slide with her at the park thinking, "Okay, I can do this." And it took me three months to recover, I could hardly walk.

And I just felt so fragile. I mean, I went from being like my strongest physical self at the top of my career, to now feeling like I could shatter if you bumped me wrong.

And it was just so hard too, because when I was younger, I was a teenager, I had my mom. Now I was a wife, I was a mother, I was a business owner. And it was like, how do you do this now? And this mountain I was facing and the amount of pain I was in all over my body is a type of hell I wouldn't wish on anybody. It just impacts you, obviously, every single way possible beyond physical, emotional, and mental.

And the real key was they told me my nervous system had I flipped a switch, which happens. That's what they told me once in a while in a surgery. And I thought, "Well, if my nervous system flipped a switch into pain, I'm going to figure out how to flip it back."

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And that's when I thought, "Well, I know the mind body connection is so real, it helped save my life. But now I'm going to really understand the science." So I dove deep into the pain science, neuroscience, the brain and the nervous system, how they communicate, how that impacts us.

First, obviously, driven towards healing physical pain. But realized that for myself I had been holding a lot of scars and emotional pain as well from what I had gone through when I was young that I had never processed through just because I was surviving and then I wanted to live my life.

But my brain and nervous system had essentially been wired into survival. So even though I didn't live that way consciously, those alarm bells were constantly running. And so I realized I had to heal.

I had to heal as well, not only rewire the neural pathways for pain, but emotional trauma and anxiety and fear around my body, and the PTSD that literally had set in because of what I had gone through. So that took me on a journey of figuring out how to heal and to access the incredible power that we have from the inside out.

And that's what brought me to the creation of Bio Emotional Healing and helped save my life. And now I get to see people every day truly get free, whether it's from physical pain, emotional pain, or trauma, or mental issues around anxiety and depression that just keep people stuck.

Jenica: Wow, this is amazing. And I can feel that, like you said, the PTSD and fear because, I mean, that could keep you literally paralyzed in your life. Because this had happened to you before, you'd recover, and then this happened to you again.

And so I know that if you probably aren't currently still, actively doing things to help that fear from preventing you from living your life, it could paralyze you. Because yeah, it could actually happen again. And so, I mean, how do you deal with that?

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

I mean, I'm sure the answer is long. And I'm sure if we went to your website and your program, it would help us a lot. But what would be a first step if people are feeling fearful based on past experiences they've experienced? These women with infertility have experienced really hard things, whether it's in pregnancy, or whether in trying to get pregnant, or in adoption. And if they feel stuck in fear, can you give us any advice on first steps to take there?

Ashleigh: Yeah, and what's important to note on that is it might not be conscious. Because mine wasn't all conscious, it would get triggered based upon like when I'd walk into a hospital. But I lived my life, I went after my career.

But that's the important thing to note, is that when we have these traumatizing experiences that are obviously very fearful, that impacts our nervous system. And the more traumatic, the more emotionally charged, the more it alters our nervous system and the brain essentially takes a snapshot of that experience and embosses it neurologically to not forget it.

And it does that to protect us, but it actually reinforces the fear anxiety cycle. So I really didn't even understand I had been carrying that with me because I had been living my life, but subconsciously I had. And it all came to the surface when I had the second experience.

And anyone who's struggled with their body, whether with health or infertility, there's a real sense of not trusting your body. It's supposed to be healthy, it's supposed to do this thing, and have children, and do the things that other people do so effortlessly, or don't even want to do and it happens without them wanting.

And so suddenly a big part of that fear is that lack of trust in your own body and just not feeling safe to trust your body to show up for you and to process the things that it's meant to. And so what happens then is that creates a fear threat response in the brain around your own body.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And whenever there is fear, there is stress. Which creates that sense of fight or flight and survival, which of course, makes it hard for the body to heal or makes it hard for the body to get pregnant when you're living in that stress. And then every symptom you feel, or every cycle that you have, or everything that you try, treatment that doesn't turn out, it just like reinforces that stress.

And so, first step is understanding what's happening. Even beyond, a lot of times, your conscious awareness, you can't go through things with your body and it not create some trauma around it because it's incredibly hard. So no matter how strong, or powerful, or positive you are, which is what I was, it helped me survive, it doesn't take away from the fact that it's hard, and it's devastating, and you don't trust your body. And there's so many hopes up and disappointments.

So first of all, it happens to all of us, regardless of how strong we are. And that's important too, to take any sense of shame off the table, as if it could be avoided. When you go through hard things it impacts us at a cellular level and it definitely alters our nervous system.

So understanding that is first, and then second is as hard as it is, and again, yes, this is not as deep as we need to go, but what the brain cares most about, more than anything else is protecting you and ensuring your survival. And what's really important to note is everybody automatically thinks that means physical survival. But the brain cares just as much about emotional wellbeing as it does physical wellbeing.

So those threats are perceived similarly in the brain, and we have brain scans that prove that. So if you've had a lot of emotional upheaval, which obviously comes with infertility or any other challenge, your brain now has created a threat response around that experience because it's hurt you.

So one of the most important things, but baseline that is actually more powerful than so many people understand because as complex as the



## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

brain is, it's also very simple. Your brain has a threat response now around getting pregnant, it has a threat response around treatments because all of them create that emotional upheaval and physical discomfort that come along with it.

And so something that you can do is really start to create a container of safety around it. A container of safety around your body, around your female organs, around getting pregnant, around the treatments and them being safe. It is hard, but really reaffirming to the brain and your body that this is okay, we don't have to see them as a threat. We are safe to be in this experience, safe to do this treatment.

And like I said, I know that sounds really simplistic, but it really is harnessing what the brain cares most about which is your physical or emotional safety. And regardless of whether you're doing that consciously it has caused you hurt and trauma. And so you have to re-frame the brain's meaning around the experience.

Because if we don't take conscious control of that, automatically it's going to see it through a lens of threat because it's hard, it hurts you. And it's usually something that's been going on for quite a while. And the longer it goes on, the more the brain just solidifies that fear and threat around it.

And so, you have to understand that and take that conscious control of how your brain sees the experience and therefore communicates to your body around the experience.

Jenica: I love that. And I love— I've learned a lot about the brain in the last year and a half since getting really into what I do, helping women with infertility. And it's so fascinating for me to be consciously aware of our brain's automatic response to protect us. Because it doesn't need to be something where we're annoyed, our brain is really just doing its job and doing a good job at it.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

But then when we're consciously aware of the results that are actually occurring from the brain's natural response, we can then consciously make a change and choose something different. And it's so empowering when we realize how much power we do have, versus being the victim to what's happening.

Yes, it's hard. Yes, we can feel those really hard feelings, anger, sadness, there's absolutely nothing wrong with us when we are feeling those, and I think that we should process through. But knowing that we can then be the driver in what comes next is so empowering.

And I love your work in studying what's going on in the brain because we don't learn this in school. We don't learn what's happening emotionally and really in our brain. I see that in the back of the Zoom call she has pictures of the brain in her office, it's so cool.

I mean, I'm just so fascinated by it. I feel like I'm the student of life that's just going back to school again. And I'm so excited about it because I think that everyone can benefit from this.

Ashleigh: Yeah, the brain, oh, it's my love language.

Jenica: It's incredible.

Ashleigh: It's my favorite organ.

Jenica: Yeah.

Ashleigh: It truly is so remarkable. And what I love about it is that so much of what we believe is possible for our life is based upon our background. How we were raised, our intellect, our talents, our looks, all the things that we really credit. And they all have a play to a certain degree in our life, sure, absolutely.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

But what I love about the brain is barring true mental illness or brain injury, the functionalities of the brain are the same for every single one of us. And when we can utilize it and harness its power, and this is not intellect, this is just understanding how it works and how powerful it is in each of our lives.

I've seen it time and time and time and time again, no matter how long someone's been stuck, no matter the trauma they've experienced, no matter how hurt they've been for so long. When you can utilize the brain to truly help yourself heal, there's no limits on anybody's life. And the only person who can say there are limits are God, and I leave that up to him. And until then I decide that there's no limits. And I've seen that just over and over.

And that's the important part also, with what I realized with Bio Emotional Healing is a lot we're not aware of consciously, a lot of subconscious, which is the storage and the data bank of everything we've experienced in our life. And so much even from childhood gets registered there and it starts forming belief systems that our brain and nervous system learn. And that's how they see our life, that's how they see our body.

And so that's where so much of what I realized I had to do for myself and what I do with my clients is not just, "Okay, what are we experiencing now?" But also what has happened in our past? What are the perceptions and beliefs? How did that alter our brain and nervous system? Like mine got wired into survival. A lot of other people's do too when they came from maybe an abusive home, or they had other physical or emotional trauma, or limiting beliefs and their own system got hardwired into a certain way.

And all of that impacts our bodies in different ways. And what I've learned is that we can't ever say, "Well, it wouldn't do that." The body does things on its own terms and it's unique to each of us based just upon our biology, our cells and the way they communicate.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And when you can just start healing some of those burdens that a lot of us have been carrying for a lot of our life and turn down those alarm signals on a nervous system that maybe has been running on high alert due to some experiences in your life and it doesn't know any different. When you can turn down those alarm signals then the body is able to heal.

The body is able to handle things better like pregnancy and not with so much of what I realized for me to finally get my life back and not only heal the past, but the present is I had to really realize how to get my brain nervous system out of fight or flight. And it was hardwired out of necessity, and that's such a huge part of what finally allowed my body to heal.

Because even through physical pain I taught my brain and nervous system to no longer live in survival. And then through rewiring that, my body could finally literally have a different story than feeling like it needed to fight its whole life. And it had a lot of evidence to that to make sense.

And that's the thing with each of our brains, like you said, it really is trying to protect us. And the way it does that is unique to each of us based upon all of your life experiences and everything you've ever thought, or seen, or heard, or done, or how you were raised, all of that. And your brain takes all that information and decides how to best protect you.

Jenica: Yeah, this happened to me last year. So I had the Epstein-Barr virus. And I kind of took people a little bit on the journey if they've been following me. But if not, I can link the blog post to my website in the show notes.

But I was suddenly, well it felt sudden, but I had my twins. I went to a doctor who told me I had a "raging case of mono." I ignored it because I didn't understand it and thought to myself, "Well, I have newborn twins, I'm going to feel tired anyway. So whatever."

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

So four years goes by, I start to get to the point where at 1pm every day I just felt so drained it was hard for me to even think about functioning at all. And I would push through and I was just miserable, though. I felt like it was completely taking over my life. And I felt like I had so many goals and dreams and things I wanted to accomplish, and I felt stuck in my body, which I know you can relate to.

And so for those people listening, who are thinking to themselves, "This sounds like something that could work for other people, but it might not work for me." I would encourage you to just have the question in your mind, what if it could work for me? Or what if I did believe? What would that look like?

And that could be a really great space to sit in if this all sounds very overwhelming and very like, "I don't know if this would work. Where do I start?" Just believe that it could be true. What if it was true? What if it could be easier? And for me, that's provided me with an open mind versus defensiveness when I hear new concepts or new ideas that allows me to be open to what could be possible.

And recently I've really started to let go of the idea of how. So I have an idea of what I want my life to look like, and I just don't worry about the how. I say, "Could this be possible?" And then from that place you figure it out as you go.

And the how doesn't need to be figured out right away. And I think that's where we get stuck and quit oftentimes, because we don't know how right now. And of course we don't, we've never done it before. And so I think having grace with ourselves in trusting that there could possibly be a way, we don't need to know how, and then moving forward with the resources that we have that next step. I think it's a really non overwhelming way to approach our health and any other problems we're experiencing.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

Ashleigh: Yeah, absolutely. To your point, one reason too when we hear things, especially that's applicable possibly to us and we feel that sense of overwhelm or defensiveness. That is a self-protection mechanism from the brain. Because anything that you want is from an incredible place of vulnerability. And it also means it's from a place that has hurt deeply.

So the thing that you want is usually the thing that's also hurting you the most. And so, again, there's an emotional threat wrapped around that. And so when we start to hear something and think, "Oh my gosh, maybe this is for me. Maybe this is what I need." The brain's instinct, is to immediately be defense or think, "Not you." Because there's a certain self-protection around almost acclimating to what we have, because it helps us get through.

And we've all been on a roller coaster of hopes up and then it not working out. And just that awful defeat that comes from one other thing not working out. And so over time the brain starts to get even more defensive, because it wants to prevent that from happening.

So that's important to note too, is that's just part of your brain. And that's why I love— I always tell my clients questions are so powerful to just disrupt kind of just that negative thought loop that the brain is wired to go to from that self-protection mechanism.

And that is, like you said, but what if it could? What if it could? I mean, that is just as uncertain as what if it couldn't. Both of them are unknown in the future.

Jenica: Yeah, exactly.

Ashleigh: And so you get to decide which one you want to put your energy to.

Jenica: Yeah, which is what you did when you were 13.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

Ashleigh: Yeah.

Jenica: And that's such a beautiful thing because, like you said, the end goal is the same, but the energy that you approach it with and having that different perspective made all the difference for you and can for all of us.

Ashleigh: Yeah, and I love it. It took me a long time, like for yourself too, to let go of the how. Because all of us need to have some control in our life, it's a basic human need. And when we have things that we don't feel we have control over, we want to control all the more.

And one way in which we do that is the how, right? We want to control how it looks, when it happens. And constantly trying to control that gives us some sense of say in a life that we otherwise feel like we might not have a lot of say in at the moment.

But that control, inherent to control is mistrust. And so trying to control the how and the when actually puts more mistrust around the process, which threatens the brain even more. And we don't do it purposely but it just perpetuates that threat cycle around it.

So those two things have such an importance with, again, the brain and how it sees. And that's why I just love, you know, I know it's complex, but I have a free training on the brain even on my website, because it does feel overwhelming. But my goal is to take something that otherwise is complex and make it really simple.

Jenica: How do we find that free training?

Ashleigh: Yeah, if you go to my website, [ashleighdilello.com](http://ashleighdilello.com), it says get started now. And it's just a free training, I dive deeper into how the brain works. Because if you understand how your brain works, then you're better able to actually not just be so reactive, but to see what's happening within you and why.

## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

And also take some of that kind of shame off the table of why am I acting this way? And it's like, well, this part is of the brain based upon this. And when you can see that you can start, "Okay, I don't have to just react that way. I get why my brain is doing that, but I can take conscious control."

Jenica: Yeah, your brain is working right. There's nothing wrong with you.

Ashleigh: Yes, that's right. In fact, it's serving its highest purpose of protecting you. It just gets misguided how to best do that.

Jenica: We appreciate you, brain, but now that we understand we'll work with you.

Ashleigh: Exactly. That's right.

Jenica: Okay, Ashleigh, how do people spell your name? So if people are listening— And we'll link her website in the show notes as well, just so everybody knows. But if you're listening and want to know, how do you spell that?

Ashleigh: I know it's not easy. So Ashleigh, is the British spelling, so it's A-S-H-L-E-I-G-H. And then my last name, I married an Italian, Di Lello is D as in David, I-L-E-L-L-O.

Jenica: .com.

Ashleigh: Yep, I know, I don't have an easy name to spell.

Jenica: That's okay, it's beautiful.

Ashleigh: Thank you, I'll keep it.

Jenica: Yes, I love that. And then where else can people find you? Is that the best way or is there any other place that you like to direct people to that want to get to know you more?



## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

Ashleigh: Yeah, so my website, obviously, you can read about Bio Emotional Healing, there's tons of testimonials there, you can watch the free training. I have a podcast that I've also started that's Body Freedom Radio. Or you can find me on social media, same name, Ashleigh Di Lello.

Jenica: I'm following you now, I love it. And I think that podcasts recently changed, like you said, follow. It's not subscribe, it's follow now. So everyone just press the plus sign at the top, Body Freedom Radio.

Ashleigh: Yeah, Body Freedom Radio, it's fairly new. It's all based around how to get free. And the reason its body is our body houses our spirits, it houses our hearts, our souls, and it houses our mind and our brain. And so really being able to live free and feel free of the things that otherwise feel like they keep us stuck or control us.

And obviously, from my website as well, if someone— And I love what you're doing because you have been through it, the refiners fire with infertility. And my journey has been different, obviously. What I went through the last five years halted my ability to have more kids. And so I also understand that hurt to not have those babies that you had pictured your whole life. And that is a deep sense of hurt that I wish none of us had to experience.

But I do also know they they give us such depth in our life to truly have joy and gratitude for things that otherwise we might not have at the level that we do. But if those people feel stuck, and I know people who have infertility problems struggle with many other things that might be contributing. I also have a free consult call.

If anybody wants to you can get that from my website, just go to [ashleighdilello.com](http://ashleighdilello.com) and it has a free consult just to see where you're stuck and help you kind of get clarification on that and then if it's a right fit of going through, bio-emotional healing is an eight week process. And when you can work with the brain to your point, like you said, I've seen

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## 36. Living on the Edge of Death and Healing Herself with Ashleigh Di Lello

unbelievable things happen in only eight weeks. Because I think change is so hard because we're coming up against our brain and the hardwired program.

But when we can work with it, then change and progress and healing can happen at such a more rapid pace than we grew up believing because we were all told change is hard, right? That's the other story we all adopted because it's a universally held belief system.

And so to think change doesn't have to be so hard, not that it doesn't take effort, but it doesn't have to be so hard. It doesn't have to take so long and it doesn't have to be a constant battle the rest of your life. I don't think we were created to struggle our whole lives, we have seasons.

Jenica: Absolutely, 50/50 is what I always say. It's supposed to be 50/50 and you haven't done anything wrong when you are experiencing hard times. That's what we were created to experience.

Okay, Ashleigh, thank you so much for being here with us today, for sharing your incredible knowledge. I love that there are people like you who care so much to help others understand what's happening in our brains.

I think that this is new information that a lot of us have never been exposed to. So I appreciate what you do and for being so vulnerable and sharing your experience. If anybody would like to reach out to Ashleigh, I will also link everything in the show notes as well. And we'll see you later.

Ashleigh: Perfect, thank you.

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