

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jenica Parcell

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.

Good, you have once again shown up here for yourself. You just need to give yourself a pat on the back. If you can't reach back there—Tyler's like, "Give yourself a pat on the back." I'm like, "That hurts my shoulder." So if you can't do that, just give one hand the other hand a fist bump. Okay, that's going to be our new thing around here.

I'm so excited to have you here for today's podcast episode on how exactly, to use gratitude to see your life in a way that will allow you to create your dream life. We will get into it, let's go.

Hey, friends. I'm laughing because I'm in my office right now, Tyler is downstairs and his favorite part about this podcast, I don't think he actually listens to all the episodes, let's be honest. He says his favorite part is when I say "Hey, friends."

So I'm walking up the stairs and I'm like, "Hey, I'll be back in a little bit, we can watch our show. I'm going to go record my podcast episode then I'll be back." And he's like, "Okay." And then right as I walk upstairs into my office, I can hear him say, "Hey, friends." So I feel like I'll never be able to say it with a straight face again. I mean I always say it with a smile, but now I'm going to laugh a little bit because he tried to say like me and let's just be honest, I say it better.

Oh my goodness. Okay, well, I just wanted to say hello, I'm so glad that you're here, as always. We are in the process, and by we I mean I'm dragging my whole family into it. We're organizing every nook and cranny of our entire lives.

So I ordered probably the entire inventory of the Container Store. And it shows up and the people that deliver the mail, I love you. You should know that and I can't repay you. And as Alicia Keys says, I love you for that, in her song. What's that song called again? Good job. Oh my gosh, you guys, that song is so good.

Anyways, the mail people, like the UPS drivers, the USPS mail drivers, all the people, FedEx, they probably think I'm a crazy person because I opened my door on Sunday and there was like 15 boxes. Okay, that's—I was going to say I'm being serious, it was probably more like nine boxes. But the boxes are huge because they have these giant baskets from The Container Store. And that's what we're living in right now. It's the storm before the calm.

And I mean, I just have very ambitious endeavors to get incredibly organized because the parts of my home that I have organized, like my drawers in my bathroom, are a dream. And the reason why I love it so much is because it saves so much time. Because you know exactly where your things are, you don't need to overbuy because you know what you have and what you don't have.

And when you're getting ready in the morning or getting ready for bed at night, you know where your things are at. And then you just put them back and they stay there. Unless your children, if you have kids, if they take them from that spot.

So anyway, I'm trying to do the same thing to, I'm not kidding, every closet in our house. And I just really have a lot of containment items. And our house is a bomb right now. So I'm in my office, which is relatively clean because the office door is closed and my office closet is closed. But everywhere else, it's just a situation. So don't come visit my house, it's not going to be a pleasant experience.

Before we get into today's podcast episode on gratitude, I wanted to read a review. And if you are new here, the reason why I love when you rate and review on Apple Podcasts is because there are many women experiencing infertility that are alone and lonely and have no idea that this community exists.

That's probably the number one thing that I get as feedback from women experiencing infertility, is they feel alone. And I think a big reason why is because a lot of us don't expect to experience infertility, this is not one of those things that you plan on in life typically. And so when you find yourself there, you just haven't set yourself up with support and resources because you didn't know that you needed to.

And so this is an incredible space, as you know, to connect with other women and to get the tools and support that you need to get through infertility. And my Fearless Infertility program really takes it to the 10X level, but it all starts here at the podcast.

And some of these women don't know that we exist and so leaving ratings and reviews helps the podcast to become more visible. And so I appreciate those of you who have left ratings and reviews. I love to reward you as well because I feel like life should be fun. And so I choose a reviewer every single week to give a pair of pj's and socks to, valued at \$81, and you're just not going to want to miss out on these, okay?

They are designed by yours truly, and they took a year to design because I wanted them perfect. So the winner of this week is Elle.Jay, well that's her username. And then her title for her review is, "so incredibly helpful." She said, "I've been so afraid to even think the word infertility, let alone say it or even hear it sometimes. Longest four letter word of my life, I am so grateful for a safe and not scary place to learn and share. Looking forward to embracing this."

And then on 10/25 she said, "Update since my first review, been so incredibly inspired by all I have been learning as a happy new member of the Fearless Infertility community." Email me at hello@thesliceofsun.com with your address and your size, and I'll get that sent out to you. Thank you so much for that incredible feedback. That makes me so happy to know that you've really found your place.

And for those of you who are interested in the Fearless Infertility program, the doors are closed right now. We just started our workshop for December on becoming your own best friend to truly live the life that you dream of living. And it really starts there in treating yourself in the way that you deserve to be treated.

So it's been really, really fun to share this message with the women in my community and then to actually apply it in our lives and have accountability toward each other. And instead of just learning about it, actually taking action in our lives.

So if you're interested in learning about the program when the doors reopen, make sure you're signed up for the newsletter. You can go directly to it at fearlessinfertility.com/fearlessemail and sign up there. And I'll let you know about all of the incredible details when the doors are re-opened.

So today's podcast episode we will be talking about gratitude. And you're like, "Jenica, it was just Thanksgiving, we already talked about that." No girl, you didn't talk about it like this. And I love this topic because I think that all of us know that gratitude can really be beneficial to our lives.

But oftentimes we don't know how to take that knowledge and that belief from our minds to actually applying it to our lives and take action so that it truly benefits us. And so that's what we'll talk about today, is how to actually do that for yourself.

So I want to start here with a little story. When I was a preteen, I would say I was 12-ish. And it's so fascinating too, what specific memories stand out

for you. Don't you think? There are certain things that happened and people will bring it up decades later and you're like, "Yeah, I don't even recall anything about that incident. That seems very hazy, blurry to me. I don't remember that. Are you sure that happened?"

Then there are other things that happen that honestly feel seemingly insignificant at the time. And this is the most random story, but I was sitting in the pews at church as a preteen, I remember exactly where I was at. And it was so clear to me and looking back on it I think it's because it was kind of the start to a really long learning experience that I had ahead of me.

So I was sitting there, and I'm a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. And on the first Sunday of every month it's called a fast and testimony meeting. And we fast and we donate what we would have eaten, like the money we would have spent on those meals to those who are less fortunate.

And then we also have a testimony meeting for the first hour of church where anyone can get up and they can talk about their testimony of Jesus Christ. And somebody went up, I believe it was a woman, back when I was 12. And she said, "I'm really, really grateful for my trials."

And I remember being like, "Hold up, this woman has made a very large mistake, because now God knows that she's grateful and he's just going to pile on those trials. He's just going to be like, "Here you go, girl. You like these? Here you go." I literally thought that that's how God worked and I could like hide my thoughts from God.

I clearly vastly misunderstood what she was trying to say. But for the longest time I just literally thought I could hide that from God. And I'm like, you know what, if I don't say that I'm grateful for trials, maybe he just won't give them to me. He'll be like, "Oh, she doesn't like those. I'm not going to give those to her, I'm going to give those trials to the other lady who likes them."

And honestly, it's genuinely comical looking back on it because clearly, that's not how God works. That's not how life works and I had a long ways to go. And I have learned so much about the nature of God, and the nature of trials in the last several years, specifically through infertility.

And so what I want to do is fast forward a little bit and teach you something that your brain will probably want to reject. And I've mentioned this in the past, but if you're new here, this is something that I will continue to talk about because I think it's so important to the foundation of our existence in really living up to our full potential and really living into the life of our dreams that we would ideally like to have.

And so I just want you to sit for a minute and realize your brain will probably want to reject it, as mine did the first time I heard it. And just sit back and say, well, maybe what she's saying could be true. And I think that coming from that place of curiosity will help you learn what you need to take from this episode today.

So for years, I thought the ultimate goal was to be happy all of the time. And when I wasn't happy, I made it mean something in my life had gone terribly wrong. It needed to be corrected. I'd made a huge mistake because I was supposed to be happy all the time. And when I wasn't, it was a problem.

And so when I first heard of the 50/50 experience of life concept, my brain immediately rejected it and I wanted it to be wrong. And I'm like, "No, no, no, I want to be happy all of the time." Thinking that life should be a 50/50 experience is actually really depressing. It goes against everything that I believe, I want to be positive all the time. I want to feel happy all the time. I want other people to feel happy all the time.

And it's so fascinating as I've really given this concept a run for its money in the last year, how I've seen that my old way of thinking was actually making me way more sad way more of the time. So the concept works, as kind of

by definition, that half of the time we will feel some version of happiness. Now there's lots of different terms we can use, but some version of happiness.

That could be love, confidence, peace, contentment, inspiration, joy, and so on. And so to simplify, I'll call it happiness. But remember that it comes in many variations and intensities.

The other half of the time we will feel some version of bad. So we'll feel frustrated, lonely, we'll feel self-pity, we'll be confused, and so on. So some version of bad.

And we should, and we're supposed to. And like I said, I know what your brain is doing right now, you're like, "No, that's ridiculous. I'm going to try to be happy and positive all the time." But I will tell you why this is not a good idea, because for me it was really holding me back.

And so I started to get curious and I asked myself, what if this is true? And I started seeing evidence of this everywhere. So first of all, I'm a religious person, and I started seeing it everywhere in nature. So there's light and dark, there's hot and cold. So why would we, as the ultimate creations of our Creator be any different?

All of this around us, this world, this universe, this existence was built for our purposes and patterned after us. And so why would we, as human beings, be any different? So I believed that and I'm like, "Okay, it's everywhere."

And then I started seeing it in myself, and how I was really holding myself back by thinking that life needed to be perfect all the time. And so what happens when we have this ideal in our mind that our life is not currently at, is we have this feeling because we're a normal human being having normal human emotions.

But then we resist it, saying, "Oh no, I shouldn't have that feeling." And we make up all these thoughts that are literally made up, that we make that situation mean. Well, this in my life went wrong, because I made a bad decision and now, I'm feeling guilty about it. And so you have the original bad feeling. And then you have the layering thought that I shouldn't be feeling this way. And then you feel guilty.

So not only are you feeling sad, or whatever original bad feeling you have, you're also feeling guilty, or shame, or some other layer on top of it. So what actually ends up happening is instead of having a 50/50 experience of processing through that bad emotion like a normal human being does, and should, and what you were created to do, you layer on the shame and the guilt for saying to yourself that you shouldn't feel that way.

So you still have it though, it hasn't passed through. You haven't felt that emotion, so it's still there. And then you have that layering thought. And so you feel horrible, it's actually more of a 60/40 experience because you feel awful.

And so what ends up happening is you compound the negativity. And so what I have started to do, and I've tested it out, I'm like, "Say this is true, I'm just going to test it out and see if it is because a lot of people that I really respect and love and who are living the lives of their wildest dreams, believe that this is true." So I'm like, "I'm just going to test it out and see how it goes."

So on my hard moments that we all have because we're humans, because there is opposition in all things, in those hard moments, I let myself feel them. And I tell myself thoughts like, you are a human being who is living the full human experience. And I let myself feel it. And let myself be sad. And I let myself cry. And then I move through it without the shame, without the guilt.

And it is the most beautiful thing because you feel so much more free and light. And the fascinating thing is, is that you process through that negative emotion so much more quickly because you're not stuffing it and hiding it where it can't be seen but still exists. You're looking at it, you're feeling it as a human being that feels the dynamic emotions of opposites. And then you move past it and through it.

And this has been so incredibly helpful for me because it has allowed me to really honor myself as a human being versus fighting against my nature. And I truly am happier more of the time than I was when I was constantly trying to be happy all the time and thinking that that was normal.

And I think that this concept is challenging. I've wondered why, oftentimes, we're not just given a human handbook, right? Like we come to Earth, we have beautiful scriptures to help guide us. I think we have personal revelation that God speaks to us in our minds when we seek after his help.

But there's still a lot of questions for me. We don't know the exact right things for a lot of situations, we don't know the exact right step because he also believes in agency. That we are capable of creating what we want our lives to be. And I think that it's challenging so that our spirit can be reminded of its regal nature. That we are strong, we are capable in our nature. And I think if we relied on external sources all of the time, we wouldn't have to look internally and realize who we are.

And learning this has helped me become closer to God. It's helped me to learn about his nature more. It's helped me to learn about my true nature more as a daughter of God. And I think it's such a beautiful concept if we really allow it to work in our lives in the way that it's intended to.

A lot of you guys saw on Instagram that I went to Hawaii a few weeks ago. I'd mentioned that on the podcast a couple episodes ago as well. And we went on a helicopter ride and it was literally one of the most astounding, jaw dropping experiences of my life. And I almost didn't do it, I was terrified.

When we signed up for everything Tyler's like, "Okay, we have the opportunity to sign up for a helicopter ride. Are you in?" And I'm like, "Are you crazy? No, I'm not in. Who do you think I am? I'm not a daredevil." I've heard of so many small planes going down, it freaks me out.

And Tyler used reverse psychology on me and lo and behold, there I found myself on the front seat of a helicopter. And I'm not kidding, you guys, it was one of the most magical, beautiful experiences of my life because this helicopter took us on the big island to the side of the island that you can't get to unless you were in a helicopter. The steep incline of the mountains, and the pools, and the waterfalls, I literally started crying.

I started crying. I've never cried because of looking at something from the sheer beauty of it in my entire life. And I was just so grateful that I was alive. And I've thought about it, and even in the moment I thought why am I crying? Why is it so special for me? It was just stunning.

And it's because I have felt the opposite of that moment. I've been in hell before. I've been in those moments where I'm like, "You know what, I'm good. I've lived a good life, I'm ready to move on." You know what I mean?

And we've all been there, I think, in infertility and in other really challenging moments of our lives where we're like, "Did I actually sign up for this? Because if I would have known that I would have to experience this torture, this deep heartache, I don't think I would have done it. I'm just saying."

And so in that moment I was just absolutely blown away by the sheer beauty and the gratitude for being alive and being a human being in that moment. And I would not have had that experience had I not had the exact opposite.

So when it comes to seeing gratitude in our lives, even in the trials and circumstances that aren't comfortable, I think what it really comes down to are what thoughts we allow in our brains. And our brains are the smartest supercomputers in the entire world. They're smarter than the smartest

supercomputers in the entire world, and they do a really good job of automating things for us.

So when there are unhelpful thoughts that we have thought for so long, our brain is like, "You know what, I notice that you are going to these thoughts a lot. I'm just going to go ahead and help automate it for you to help make your life a little bit easier."

Our brain is on our side and just trying to help automate things for us like it does with a lot of things. Breathing, our heart beats, our blood circulation, I mean, our brains are incredible, amazing things. And we also have control of harnessing them as well, but they're just doing their jobs.

So when it comes to looking for gratitude and kind of training your mind, all of us have shopped for a new car before right? So if you're shopping for a new car, suddenly on the road, all of the cars are your new car. You see them everywhere. You're like, "Wait, I didn't even realize all the other people had this same car."

And there's no more of those cars than had been the day before you started shopping for that car. But suddenly, you're noticing it because your brain is focused on it. And it applies the same for gratitude, when we constantly seek for things that we're grateful for, eventually our brain will automate that and really help us to be able to more easily see the things that we're grateful for.

So what tools though can we use to do this? How do we actually apply this in our lives? One thing is to not get mad at yourself when something unhelpful pops up in your mind. So, for me, the energy of getting mad at myself and saying I shouldn't have thought that, that just honestly leads to this big spiral of shame. And you can't do anything positive from an energy of shame, it's a very low frequency energy.

And so I've even noticed this in motherhood now, where I'm feeling mom guilt for not doing what I think I should be doing. I'm then not as good of a

mom in the moment, in the present moment because I'm coming at it from that energy. When I'm like, "You know what, I am an amazing mother." Then I show up as an amazing mother.

And so one thing that I want you to really try is to be very curious about what's happening in our brain, in your brain. So if something comes up, and you realize that it's not helpful, you realize that you're searching for things that are wrong.

Like, for example, with my house. I have done this often, I'm really, really trying not to as often. I mean, I know you think that I'm not doing the best at it because right now my house is an actual bomb.

But for the most part, I'm really trying to see what is good in my home because there are piles of stuff everywhere and it's difficult for me, my brain has gotten so used to searching for what's out of place and what's wrong. And there's a pile here, and this was cleaned before and it's not clean now and I'm frustrated, and driving myself crazy over it.

I have started to really focus on training my brain to see what is right and to look for the gratitude in the things that are happening in my home. And do I want my children's bathroom to be empty? It was empty for years, there was nothing in there. In fact I used it as my—Jenica's drug lab is what I called it. I even put up a sign in there because all my IVF shots were taking up so much space. I was like, "You know what? This bathroom is empty, we're just going to use it for that."

And so my kids bathroom is messy a lot, it is what it is. We have clothes that we take off. I mean, there's certain systems and processes that we do, oftentimes to keep it clean. But other times we just get tired and we don't and there's towels on the floor and it's messy. But I now train my brain to think like, "Okay, well, what's the alternative?" It used to be really clean, but I also didn't have too precious angels in my home.

And you can use this to apply to anything. I'm grateful for a spouse that I live with. Yeah, he leaves socks on the floor sometimes but I'd rather have those than not a spouse. I'd rather have that than live alone here. And so it's interesting when you start to see, make things mean different things that lead to gratitude, it will honestly change your life.

So be really curious about those things that are happening in your brain rather than judgmental of yourself. And I think you'll be able to flip your brain into gratitude a lot more quickly from that energy.

And it's been fascinating too, as I've been thinking about this podcast this week where just even thinking about gratitude and how I can teach you better about it, I've seen things everywhere because that's been my focus.

So it's actually interesting, my son's soccer coach messaged us on Thanksgiving. Which the reason why I say it's interesting is because we don't really know him that well yet, like we've had three practices. But I thought it was cute he texted everybody this text and I loved it, about gratitude.

And he says, "God says to give thanks in everything. That doesn't mean you need to give thanks for everything. You don't need to give thanks for that bad day, or for that bad relationship, or being passed over at work, financial hardship. Whatever it is, you are not to give thanks for the difficulties, but rather in the difficulties.

That is a very important distinction and one I think we often miss. Giving thanks in everything shows a heart of faith that God is bigger than the difficulties and that he can use them if you approach him with the right heart and spirit for your good and his glory." That's a quote by Tony Evans, he said.

I love that because oftentimes I think that I misunderstood that lady who was talking in sacrament meeting saying that she was grateful for her trials. Well, of course, she wasn't grateful for her trials. Who actually wants to go

through really hard things? I don't. A lot of the things I've gone through, I'm so grateful for what I've learned in them though.

And that's the thing that she was trying to say that I misunderstood as this preteen who was trying to manipulate God apparently, and trying to hide from him my true intentions that I didn't like trials. Was that our trials are not comfortable to experience, but what we gain from them is invaluable and cannot be gained in any other way.

I also have a cute little book on my desk that I try to open every day in the morning when I'm doing my daily scripture study and prayer. And it's called Daily Joy by Russell M. Nelson. And it's a good quote, it's called The Crucible of Adversity.

So he's talking about the pioneers who settled Salt Lake City and he said, "The pioneers understood hardship, they understood trial. One thing all these people had in common in their search for freedom to worship was the knowledge that God often tutors his people through travail.

A schooling in hardship, persecution, and sacrifice were to refine a weakness from their souls, leaving them only the pure metal of loftiest character and sterling faith fully tested. They knew that God does not work out His purposes through pampered victims of affluence or riotous living."

I'm going to repeat that sentence because that was very eye opening and beautiful to me. He says, "They knew that God does not work out His purpose is through pampered victims of affluence or riotous living." Isn't that interesting? They talk about pampered victims of affluence.

"History had taught them that in His work He used great crises, employing affliction and probation to forge spiritual spines of steel. Indeed, they knew that God shapes His servants in the crucible of adversity, never fashioning them in a hot house of ease and luxury."

And I think that is a big misconception and a big lie that our adversary tries to get us to believe, is that the easy way is the best way. And does it feel better most of the time while we're in the easiness? Yes. But would it even mean anything had we not known the opposite? No.

And so I think that is really a beautiful perspective to have that even though it doesn't feel good to be in those trials, there is something that you are gaining. There is character that you're refining, there are traits you will have because of that experience that you would not have been able to get in any other way.

I am so fascinated by the sentence that they talk about being a victim of affluence. And it's so fascinating too, I think, because if we kind of look at pop culture and famous people that have it all, right? I say that in air quotes because I know that their lives are really hard in so many different ways. But I think that a lot of times we have this illusion that fame and fortune, or whatever it is that you're seeking after, is the answer.

And it's so interesting because a lot of these people are some of the most unhappy people in the world. And because our external circumstances don't give us feelings, our thoughts give us feelings. And when we can choose to see gratitude in our trials and in everyday mundane moments, that will truly shape how our life feels, what actions we're taking, and will give us results that are so much more beautiful and better and more aligned with our dream life, than could happen in any other way.

I ride my Peloton a lot, and I love Robin, she's so awesome. And she always has these awesome quotes. And she said the other day in our ride, "A diamond is just a rock that handled stress and pain and pressure exceptionally well. Who are we?" Love that. Love you, Robin, shout out to you, sister.

And I am so grateful for my trials. My 12 year old self would be trying to take that back and say, "Wait, I don't know if I want to admit that to God."

But I'm grateful for, not specifically my trials, but I'm grateful in my trials and what I've seen that have come from them. And I really think that trusting our Creator enough to also trust to the struggle that he has placed in our path is the answer.

And knowing that he knows, he sees the big picture, he knows who I can become through this trial that I can't in any other way. So I'm going to trust him enough to know that this is my path.

So over the weekend, we saw a movie called Disney Encanto, and I don't even know if I'm saying that right. I probably need a Spanish accent to say it correctly, so I apologize. But it has the cutest songs in it, I thought it was a great message and we've been listening to the songs ever since. And one of the songs has a line that talks about stars not shining, but burning.

And that line really stood out to me and I've kind of been pondering it since then. And I really think that the reason why it's so admirable that stars burn but don't shine necessarily, is that shining would indicate a reflection of someone else's light. But I think when we go through trials and we're grateful for them and we grow from them, that it burns, right? It hurts.

We think of a burn and getting burned by fire or getting burned by a pan, and it hurts. And that's how it feels sometimes when we're going through these really hard challenges that are refining our souls, it burns. But then that light comes from within us, it makes us brighter. And I think it helps us to become who we were always created to be.

And I am indeed grateful for my trials. I'm grateful for the tools that I have learned that I can then pass along to you through my life coach certification, and that I continue to seek and learn these tools to really apply them in my life to then be able to pass what I've learned on to you.

And I will never ask you to do something that I do not do myself. And I think that gratitude is one of those principals that really deserves our attention because of the unbelievable impact that it can truly have in our lives.

So I hope you were able to take these certain action items, be very, very curious about what's happening in your brain and how you're seeing things. And be very gentle with yourself and your brain. And realize that your brain will follow your lead and you can choose which thoughts you let pass by, and you can keep the thoughts that are really serving you. And be gentle with yourself and curious and see how your world completely changes when you approach it with an energy of gratitude.

I love you guys, I will see you back here next week. Talk with you soon.

I know how tough it is to struggle through infertility. If you're ready to get ahead of the pain and frustration, the best way is to create an ironclad mindset. That's where it all starts. I have the best free download for you, you're going to love it. It's my free morning mindset magic checklist. You'll get the seven tips I use to create my mindset each morning so I can create a life I love despite my challenges.

You will lower your anxiety and increase your peace. I spent a couple years of trial and error and finally came upon this list of actions I take or never take every morning, even when I don't want to because they work every single time. Download for free at fearlessinfertility.com/mindsetmagic.

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