

Ep #40: Cleaning Up Your Language



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With Your Host

Lori A. Harris

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It's springtime y'all, and it's time for us to clean up our act. First, we're going to start with our language. Let's get rid of the word should. Let's stop shoulding all over our place, and let's do the things that will bring us joy. Let's take a look at the word should.

Welcome to the *Unlock Your Life* podcast, a podcast for highly successful visionary women who want more out of life. If you feel that ache of unfulfillment in your soul, you're in the right place sis. Join life mastery consultant Lori A. Harris as she teaches you how to stop living for others and finally put yourself first. Let's dive into today's show.

Hey there. Hey. You know there has been times when we sometimes say to ourselves or look at a situation or look at someone across the room, perhaps someone we don't even know. We'll think to ourselves, they should do X. They shouldn't do Y. What do we know about it? But we have an idea of what should or should not be happening.

You know, our teachers, the ones that have gone before us, the great ones, the great thinkers, the great philosophers, often encourage us, the students, to release our attachment to ideas and concepts. They'll say to us, you know, suffering is optional. What I think they mean is there comes a time in our life where we recognize that our suffering, our discontent, is self-imposed.

But if we were to look at any given situation and allow it to be neutral, color it neither good nor bad, but just let it sit there on the shelf and look at it. We can say hmm, this is something I would prefer not to be happening. This is something that I would prefer not to be the truth. If we can allow it simply to be without labeling it good or bad, I think it's just to me that we can reduce our suffering.

Ep #40: Cleaning Up Your Language

Here I mean suffering in the place of having thoughts that are displeasing, sending us into a negative thought spiral, a thought pattern that makes us unhappy, and leads us to a direction in life that we don't want to go.

I have a really good friend. Whenever I'm having a hard time, she frequently will say to me, "Soften your heart." Soften your heart is a difficult thing to do when we are stuck in the concrete of our thoughts, and that I am right, and the person that I'm in conflict with\ or thinking about is wrong.

So I'm going to invite you to think about this springtime activity of cleaning up our thoughts and our language. All this month of April we're going to talk about things we can do to generate more joy for ourselves. I want to talk to you about the word should.

Now should is something that suggests we know the answer. Should is a word that suggest we know that something is in one particular condition, and we believe that it would be better if it were in another. However, if we can release ourselves and relieve ourselves of the notion of certainty and that we know, we might be able to enjoy more peace and comfort.

I'm reminded of a situation where I was in court, and I observed a young witness really flame out and act in a way that would normally be considered inappropriate for the courtroom. She tossed things and turned tables over and threw things around. Everyone in the room was engaged in the thought pattern of that's wrong. She shouldn't do that.

But if we pick apart the situation, I'm remembering that this witness had been talking to the interrogating attorney for a number of minutes. She had indicated to the attorney, "Look hey, I'm the victim here, and what you're doing and the way that you're talking to me is hard." This young witness had tried to communicate to the attorney, "I need a minute. I need some time. Can you wait a minute? I don't understand."

Ep #40: Cleaning Up Your Language

The young witness had did everything she could in order to communicate, “This incident that you're asking me to testify about is painful to me. I'm going to need some tender care in order for me to continue.”

But her needs were not met. Neither the interrogating attorney nor the judge notice that this child was in distress. So eventually, when the kid couldn't get any attention from the adults in the room that were in charge of kind of directing the proceedings, she flamed out. She tossed and turned and threw things around the room. Then she got the break that she had been asking for.

It's easy for us to look at that situation and say oh, she shouldn't do that. However, if we can look and consider what her life might be like, what her situation might be like, what her upbringing might be like, we might be able to offer her a little bit more compassion. A little bit more understanding and grace.

So what if I told you that this young person had grown up in a household where her needs were rarely met. That unless she made a big stink, she often wasn't attended to. Her needs were often ignored. Sometimes in our households, we don't get what we need. We teach our children and the people that we love how important they are by the way that we respond to them and their needs.

Ideally, when we're infants, there are adults that are charged with the responsibility of responding to our needs. If we're blessed and lucky, we have adults who want to, look forward to it, and are happy to do it and respond to our needs in a timely fashion. But there are those people who don't get their needs met in a timely fashion. Those people sometimes learn a coping mechanism such that they flame out, make a big stink, and then they can get their needs met.

Ep #40: Cleaning Up Your Language

So while we can, from our side of the fence, look over and say oh, they shouldn't do that. Actually, based on their experience and how they've been taught and how they've been nurtured, they absolutely should. Given where they're coming from and what they know about how the world works and how needs get met, they absolutely should be doing exactly what they are doing. How do we know that that's what they should be doing? Because it's what they did.

So in the future, when you are engaged in contemplation of the behavior of another person or the policies of the government or the policy of an organization, I invite you to consider should and perhaps soften your language to consider other possibilities. Because recognizing that we are not in total control, recognizing that we don't have all the information, and recognizing that what is happening is what is needed for that given moment.

Our suffering can be reduced. Our frustration, our desire for it to be other than what it is, can be reduced when we learn to accept and act without attachment to what is.

So when we want to experience real joy and happiness, it comes to us when we let go. We let go of our attachment to knowing for certainty what must be and stay out of conflict with what is. So if we want to cultivate more joy and happiness, we must daily and regularly aspire to be in appreciation and gratitude for what is. To offer grace to those around us, whom we perceive to have made a misstep, and to release our attachment to what we think things should be.

So we want to nourish our own understanding and compassion for ourselves. As we can do that for ourselves, we can extend it to our loved ones and out into the larger community. We are going to catch ourselves from time to time engaging in what seems to be an act of suffering. But

Ep #40: Cleaning Up Your Language

when we can notice it and pause and go into acceptance, then we can stop and generate joy and ease our own suffering.

It can start with just a breath. Reminding ourselves that in this moment, everything everywhere is all right. Return to this moment. Return to the breath. Be grateful that we have air breathing through our lungs with no real effort of our own. Our bodies are breathed, and everything is already in control. So stop, pause, reflect, and let go of the idea of should and accept what is.

Well, we've reached the end of another episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. This was episode number 40. I'm so grateful that you are here. If you've enjoyed this episode, please share it with your friend. You can go and rate the show by going to Apple podcasts, follow, rate, and review. I'd love a five star review, and I'd love for you to share it with your friends. Thank you for listening. Remember, it's your life. Make it a great one.

Thanks for listening to this episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. If you want more information on how you can transform your life and do it quickly, visit loriaharris.com. See it on the next episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast.