

Welcome to the Art of Purpose podcast, a show where we explore the joys and challenges of living a fulfilling life. I'm your host, Gayla. I'm an Alaskan, an artist, and an encourager. I'll be sharing my own personal stories and practical advice, bringing you inspiration, motivation and support as you practice the art of purpose.

Hello and welcome back to another purposeful pause episode of The Art of Purpose podcast.

My hope is that my sharing of the combination and insights from practices and coaching that I have had have given you a window into some new awarenesses about yourself that have been helpful and beneficial, and I would love to hear about them if you would like to share. So please reach out to me and let me know. So today I'd like to share with you the power of curiosity and self-awareness in our growth process.

For a long time and actually until recently, when I would have when I would have an aha and awareness and catch myself doing or thinking something that I'm playing or changing, I began to see a habit of then using that thing to get upset that I was still doing it. I would get down on myself. I'd like to point out here how self judgment and criticism on top of our already challenging situation or thought loop is so self-defeating.

It exasperates and inflames the process and does not leave any room for movement. Judging myself. For judging myself. Yikes. That's not so helpful. Instead, the practice of congratulating myself and saying, Hey, I caught myself in that old cycle and using the info as just that information and then to get curious about it. That's what creates space for growth.

And you can see how important the self-compassion piece is in this process. The Curiosity and Compassion team, as I like to visualize them. So let's really practice this mindset of curiosity. I find this practice when I do it, can really transform my thoughts and emotions and so much quicker, so much more movement and it feels so much better coming from that space of kindness and love.

Something to understand and help with the compassion piece so that we have it for ourselves is to know that science has shown us as humans, we have this negativity bias, have play. We are wired to look for the negative. It's a self-protection mechanism that helps us identify dangers in the world. However, spending too much time here sure doesn't feel great and in the long run actually keeps us playing small in order to avoid what we perceive as negative.

I find that curiosity can be a great and gentle antidote to finding ourselves when spiraling in this negative abyss. Here's an example. Someone cut you off in traffic and you think, Wow, what a jerk, huh? So it's so easy to get it to fall into the anger trap. And in another example of how we take things so personally, they did this to us as if they knew who we were.

And it's so easy to act in these situations. However, we really have no idea what is going on in this person's life and this reaction is really harming us more than anyone else. So here's another example. Instead of simply pushing away a negative thought, we approach our negative thoughts and emotions with curiosity. So this might look like your partner comes home from work and it's not in a great mood.

It's obvious because they're quiet and grumpy putting off that that grump energy. And if you're anything like me,

you might jump right to, Oh, no, they're mad about something. It's something I did. Can I fix this? I wonder what I did to cause this and getting into that thought. Now, if we just slow down and stopped and allowed Curiosity to seep in here, we might start to ask some questions.

Hmm. What if they had a bad day at work? What if actually, I didn't cause this at all? Most likely not. And maybe they just need some comfort and some alone time. These questions. Curiosity. Being curious about it can help dictate my behavior a little differently. I might ask. Hi, honey. Is there anything you need from me which is going to have a much better outcome than if I flurry around trying to fix something that simply needs some space and time to resolve?

See how this might work. Taking a breath, watching where we want to react instead of respond. This is why spending time with ourselves, creating space to practice and play with our inner workings is so beneficial to the moments when not if. This is definitely a win. Challenging situations arise. So being curious about you instead of immediately assuming the worst in a situation.

Take a moment to understand why something doesn't feel good and explore the reasons behind our negative reactions. If that's a bit of a leap, trust me, it's something I'm constantly putting awareness into practicing. Here's another helpful and powerful tool in this exploration affirmation statements to help us identify where we trust ourselves in areas where we don't give this a whirl.

How to use affirmation statements in these particular instances. I'm afraid to speak up now as to the alternate beliefs. I speak my truth. So give this a whirl. This is how you could use affirmation statements. In this particular instance, I am afraid to speak up. Now a shift to the alternate belief. I speak my truth. Take a moment to notice and feel how each of these statements sits in your body.

How does it feel? Certainly. Recognize any discrepancies between them. If, for example, I speak my truth doesn't quite feel true to you. Why? Where is it? Not true? Where? Is it true? This exercise shines a light on areas where we may need to practice and spend more time being with ourselves. Treating everything as information about ourselves allows us to let go of self-flagellation and embrace personal growth.

When we approach life with curiosity, kindness and compassion. We create space to breathe and shift perspectives. We break free from repetitive patterns that no longer serve us. It's important to acknowledge that spending too much time in judgment limits our ability to learn and grow. Instead, let's choose. Let's decide self-love and kindness. Be in that space over suffering. It really does feel good when I've decided to quit the boring suffering story and embrace possibility, kindness, love, self-compassion.

When we prioritize self-care and approach ourselves with a curious mindset, we become warriors of self-love, embracing the intention and desire to grow and learn. Head to the link at the top of this episode summary and enter your email address. From there, you'll get access to your free Summer Purpose guide and you'll start receiving regular updates about our summer long speaker series right to your Inbox.

Remember to find me on social media as that's where our Speaker series will be held, along with weekly inspiration questions and prompts to lead you through your summer of purpose. Again, head to the link in

episode description to join us now. I cannot wait to share with you and build a community of folks like you ready to have an intentional joy filled summer in life.

Thank you. Thank you for listening to the Art of Purpose podcast. I hope you found today's episode insightful and inspiring. If you enjoyed our time together, please take a moment to rate and review this show on your favorite podcast platform. Your feedback helps us reach more people and spread the message of personal growth and self-discovery. Also, be sure to subscribe so you never miss an episode.

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