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LDS MISSION PODCAST

Episode 33 - Observe and Love

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Hey, what's up everyone, it's Jenny, the LDS mission coach and you are listening to the LDS mission Podcast, episode number 33. Observe and love. I'm Jenny, the LDS mission coach. And whether you're preparing to serve a mission, currently serving a returned missionary or a missionary mama like me, I created this podcast just for you. Are you searching for epic confidence? Ready to love yourself and to learn the how of doing hard things? Then let's go. I will help you step powerfully into your potential and never question your purpose. Again. It's time to embrace yourself. Embrace your mission, embrace your life, and embrace what's next. Hey, everybody, it is so good to be with you on this fine Friday. Thank you so much for joining me on the podcast. We made it to February day, on the day I'm recording this podcast it is the groundhog saw his shadow today, which means that we have six more weeks of winter. Not a huge fan of winter, you guys can tell already. And if you're a coach, you're probably saying to me right now, you know what you should just change your thoughts about winter. And then that would change your feelings about winter. But I actually like keeping my thoughts. Winter, it's not my favorite. My husband and I have been planning our year different trips that we're going to take with our kids and things like that different business trips that we're going to be on. And it's just fun to kind of plan and think about what's coming up over the next year. This is the first year in a long time that we haven't had a missionary coming or going or serving. And so we're just going to really enjoy this summer together as often as we can what I'm finding and if you already have had young adult children, you know that this college schedule doesn't usually coincide with the high school schedule or the elementary school schedule. So we're just doing the best we can to try to fit it in a little trip together.

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I had an experience a couple of weeks ago that I wanted to share with you here. And it kind of got me thinking a lot about this idea that I want to share with you today, which is to observe and love. Now I know that we're really accustomed to, especially as missionaries, and especially as we're taught in the church is to observe other people kind of assess what their needs might be, and then show up with love for them. But what I want to talk about today is cultivating the skill of being able to observe ourselves and show up with love for ourselves. And I have a couple of ways that I like to do this. And so I'm going to share that with you today. But first I want to share with you this experience is that a

couple of weeks ago, I had kind of what I would call a big opportunity presented itself to me, it was an opportunity to do something that was way out of my comfort zone. And something that would kind of stretch me a little bit give me an opportunity to grow, but at the same time felt extremely intimidating and scary to me. And what ended up happening is out of nowhere, I sort of had this rush of negative thoughts. And then a couple of weeks, I'm doing a podcast on this idea. It's called when your brain freaks out. And so you can look forward to that. But this actually is what happened to me in this moment. So my brain went to the future. And what everyone might think of me if I went through that with this thing, I started, like questioning everything that I thought about myself, kind of this idea of like imposter syndrome just really came on strong. These were some of the thoughts that came on, like you're not good enough. What will everyone think about you no one will care what you have to say. Are you are smart enough to do that. You're not strong enough to do that. Anyway, I had this whole barrage of thoughts that brought on this whole, like huge amount of feelings of discouragement of overwhelm a little bit of anxiety. I even had a thought like there's for sure something wrong with me. Okay. And so all of these thoughts created A massive like flood of emotion as I teach you guys here on the podcast that our thoughts do. So, before I knew it, I found myself on the floor of my closet, crying. Now the first thing that I want you to know when I say this to you and share this experience with you, is that yes, even coaches who know how to manage their minds and manage their emotions still end up on their closet floor crying because they have human brains. Many times, we're going to be able to kind of manage our thoughts and manage our thinking and allow all of those emotions so that they don't have as much power over us. But oftentimes not. My brain thought that this opportunity was kind of scary, really intimidating. And so here, I was crying on my closet room floor. Now, what we tend to do, when we find ourselves in these situations where we have kind of a breakdown, or whatever it is, we tend to judge ourselves and just ask more questions, we have more spinning thoughts about, I shouldn't be here on the floor, what's wrong with me, I shouldn't be more confident, I should be this. And I shouldn't be that. And none of these thoughts are useful when your brain is just kind of spinning in this negativity, which it just does on default. So what I've learned to do, and what I would highly recommend you do as we develop this skill, of observing ourselves, and showing up with love. What I did in that moment, is I just was like, Okay, here we are, Jenny, we're on the closet floor. I was like, Okay, I see you, I see you thoughts, I see your brain,

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I see what you're trying to do. And I'm just gonna be here with you, taking care of you, and loving you, while you have this experience. I didn't judge it. I didn't think I shouldn't be there. I didn't think something was wrong with me. My brain was trying to tell me that but I wasn't making anything wrong with the fact that I had a little bit of a breakdown. This skill alone is so powerful, because when we can accept what is just true and what is just happening, it's the best fuel for us to move forward. For that process to be cleansing for us to feel our feelings, and to create something different in the future. Now, if I would have sat on that floor, and judge myself for crying on the closet floor and judge myself for my emotions, rather than accepting them, that spiral would have taken me down further and further and further. And I might have been there for quite some time, to be honest. In fact, in years past, that's probably what would have happened, it would have put me in kind of a tailspin for several days. But as it was, I just observed myself having the experience I was having, having the thoughts I was having, and the emotions I was having. I took really good care of myself, I sat down, I kind of called it a night early, which my husband is so awesome to help me to do so that he can help kids with homework and whatever I just came up to the room. I really took care of myself. I accepted the experience, just for what it was. Maybe watched a couple shows, were we watching Downton Abbey right now, watched a couple shows and then went to bed. And really, I'm to the point in my life now where I know that this is okay. i Don't delude myself into thinking that I'm never going to have a bad day, and that I'm never going to have a meltdown and that I'm never going to feel anxiety.

instead. What I do is when it's happening, I'm like, Okay, this is what we've got. Let's just do that. And I observed myself, and I love myself through it all. And this is something that you can do too, is so powerful a skill to have. Now I want to circle back around to some of the ways that we can do this. But first, this experience kind of got me thinking about our need to be seen. We have a need a basic human need. And it's part of that caveman brain that's inside of us that we want to be seen by other People, okay, so if we were part of a tribe back in the quote unquote, caveman days, and whoever was in charge said, Okay, we're the food source has moved, we've got to follow them. If we weren't seen, our little family or a little person wasn't seen, we would get left behind. And that was actually death. So I want you to think about this, we have this need for people to acknowledge us, and to see us. And it's just a instinctual, primitive part of our brain that wants to be seen. What I also found fascinating is that as I did a little bit of research, and when I've observed myself, oftentimes, we don't want to be seen. And I actually had this experience this week where a mom reached out to me. And she said, My daughter feels like she's not a good fit for the mission, because she doesn't feel like she can talk to people. She doesn't want to talk to people. She's, you know, afraid to talk to people. And I thought, isn't that so interesting that this missionary has a fear of being seen, because we fear what other people's judgement might be of us, we fear what they might think about us. And again, if people see us and they don't like what we they see, back in the caveman days, that also meant death. And this is a perfect opportunity for me to remind you, that your caveman brain that lower brain cannot differentiate between physical pain and emotional pain.

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Just super interesting to notice that we have this sort of desire to be seen. But we also have this like opposite sort of desire to not be seen. And I just thought this was super interesting to think about. So if you are having trouble and like questioning, maybe your own worth, or what's going on for you. Maybe just ask yourself, oh, is this about me not wanting to be seen? Or is this about me wishing I was seen more by other people, and validated by other people. But what I want to offer to you today is what I've thought about is being seen, or not being seen by people is just a thought. Let me say that one more time. So being seen, or not seen is just a thought or belief that we have. And what I want to offer to you today is it doesn't matter if people see you or understand you. It also doesn't matter if people see you and reject you. What matters is that you see you and learn how to observe yourself and accept yourself with love. If being seen by someone else, and accepted by someone else is a thought, let me give you a couple of examples that we can just think we can just choose to think they see me, they understand me. Or we could also just as easily choose to think they don't see me, they don't understand me. And it's okay, because I see me. And I understand me. Now, I want to give you a couple strategies of how to observe yourself. Because this is kind of, I don't know, meta is what people say like kind of out there, like higher level thinking about how we have the ability to observe ourselves with our higher brain. So the first way that I like to do this is I like to, in my mind, zoom out. So in that moment, when I'm crying on the closet floor, having all of my thoughts and all of my emotions, I actually in my mind's eye kind of picture myself and what's going on. And I picture myself having that experience kind of zooming out a little bit. Maybe I'm standing up above me and I notice what's happening with love and compassion. And so I'm able to separate myself from the thoughts I'm having in the feelings I'm having and then pull myself out Got a little bit and be the observer of it. Now I know that this could be effective on the mission as well, I know this could be effective in your college situations and your jobs is, let's say you're having a tough moment. Let's say you're having a panic attack before you go to your next class. I have clients that this happens to, instead of being just in your body, thinking about it, like I shouldn't have a panic attack, I can't believe I'm having a panic attack, judging the panic attack. in your mind's eye, zoom out just a little bit above where you are, and picture yourself having the thoughts and the panic attack. And just observe it and observe it with so much love. I sort of tried to go into someone else's mind. Like if someone else was standing above

me while I'm crying in the closet, what would they be thinking and feeling about me? And that's what I try to do for me in that moment. Another strategy I have for you to observe yourself is when my brain offers me tons of thoughts. I like to think of those thoughts that lower caveman brain as a small child or a toddler. If my brain is like, this feels really scary. I don't want to do this. I don't know if I can handle this. I'm not strong enough. I'm not good enough. No one will care about what I have to say. If a toddler

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or a young child came up to me and said that I would never just smack that toddler or that young child and say, That's ridiculous. You shouldn't be thinking that what's wrong with you? I, of course would take that toddler, I'd circle it up in my arms and and say, oh my gosh, I'm so sorry. You're scared? Oh, my gosh, I'm so sorry. This feels overwhelming. What can I do? Listen, I got you is what I would tell that toddler. I would tell that toddler like, of course, it makes sense that you're a little panicky right now. It's just your brain. It's okay, listen, I got you, I'm going to take care of you. In so many of us, don't use this strategy. Whatever our thoughts are, for us, we're just like, smack that's dumb, I shouldn't be thinking that. And instead, think of your brain all of those thoughts and feelings like a toddler, and circle it up and give it so much love. The last strategy I want to offer to you today is I call the back of the classroom. And this is a way for you again, to observe yourself. And the way I describe this to my clients is if they're having this barrage of thoughts, like I'm not good enough, I can't do this. I'm not a good missionary, I should be doing more I'm not successful. What I encourage them to do is I encourage them to pretend in their mind's eye like they're standing at the back of a classroom. And then observing all of the people in that classroom, and all of their thought bubbles. And all of a sudden, you notice, oh, there's me in the classroom. I'm having the thought. I'm not good enough. And you actually see the Thought Bubble with those words in it. And then you're like, oh, yeah, there's another thought. I'm a bad missionary. Oh, look at that. Look at me thinking that thought. And maybe we noticed someone else's thought bubble. And we're like, oh, but notice how if we noticed someone else's thought bubble, and they their thought was like, I'm a terrible human, how much love and compassion we would have for that person. So what this strategy does is it puts you in as the observer again, of your thoughts. So again, this one's called back of the classroom. So just to recap, when we have these difficult moments where we're struggling, where it's challenging, where we're having a meltdown, where we're in a place that doesn't feel very good to be in rather than judging it, just except where you are observe yourself, either by zooming out, talking to the toddler in you are the young child and you or going to the back of the classroom and observing thought bubbles. One of the lines from a song amazing Grace came to my mind as I was preparing this podcast. And it was, I once was blind. But now I see. And what I want to challenge you to do is I want you to see yourself, not just necessarily from inside of yourself, but observe and see yourself, acknowledge you for the life that you're living in that it's challenging. And sometimes we end up on the closet floor. And sometimes we have panic attacks before class. And sometimes we think we taught a crappy lesson on the mission, and all of that is fine. But instead of going into judgment, and denying what happened, and being mad at ourselves for what happened, and thinking something is wrong, just observe, just see you. Be willing to see yourself. And I promise you, you will not need other people to see you. When I used to have those meltdowns on the floor, I would need my husband to come in and be like, Oh my gosh, you're so awesome. You're doing a great job, like, No, I don't need that anymore. Because I do that for me. I take care of me, I love me and I love me even more on those days that are challenging. I want to encourage you to become the compassionate watcher of your thoughts, feelings and actions. And rather than judge them as often as you can just say, Okay,

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this is what we've got today. I got you, Jenny. I'm gonna take care of you. And that skill alone will set you totally free. Okay, you guys go give it a practice. Go give that a try. Zoom out. Talk to your toddler and back of the classroom. I hope you have an amazing week. Happy February. Sending you all the love. Take care. Thanks so much for joining me on the podcast today. Listen, if you are learning a lot from this podcast and you like what you're hearing, you will absolutely love hopping on a free strategy call with me. That's where you and I meet up one on one and talk specifically about what is going on for you. I love teaching young adults the mental and emotional tools that they need to overcome worry and anxiety serve the successful missions they've always dreamed of and navigate their post mission experience with confidence. So go to JennieDildine.com, and click on the work with me link. I would love to meet you. And I would love to get you some helpful tools and strategies to help you fully embrace whatever is next for you. And in the meantime, no matter which part of the mission experience you are involved in. Just know that Jenny, the LDS mission coach is thinking about you every single day.