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LDS MISSION PODCAST

Episode 74 - Love Your Body with Brigette Little

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Hey, What is up everyone? It's Jennie Dildine, the LDS mission coach and you are listening to the LDS mission Podcast, episode number 74. Love your body with Bridget Little.

J Jennie Dildine 00:13

I'm Jennie, 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, welcome to the podcast. I am thrilled today to share with you this episode and this conversation that I had with my friend, Bridget Little, I have been getting lots of emails from preparing missionaries and returned missionaries who are trying to figure out how to love their bodies. And it's pretty evenly split, honestly, between girls and guys. And so I think we all understand like, our bodies are, uh, you know, given to us by God created by our heavenly parents. And I think we all logically understand that we're supposed to love them. But sometimes in the society that we live in, it's a little more complicated to actually put into practice. And so that is why I love this conversation with my friend, Bridget Little. I really actually did feel so many things as we were talking that rang true and really resonated with me. So I hope that you will find the same. So without further ado, here is my conversation with my friend, Bridget Little. Hey, everybody, I am so excited to have one of my friends Bridget Little here with me today. And we're going to have a really important conversation about our bodies and how to love our bodies. I have just gotten so many messages lately and emails about what happens if I gain weight on the mission? How do I handle thinking about my body while I'm out there and trying to serve and even returned missionaries, they say I don't even like my body anymore. My body is so different now. So I'm super excited to have Brigitte on here so that we can chat about some of this stuff. And I'm going to let her tell you about her journey. And, and why she's good at talking about this. And so welcome, Bridget and I'm so happy to have you. So why don't you just tell us a little bit about yourself?

B**Brigette Little 03:00**

Yeah, my name is Bridget Little. I live in Houston, Texas right now, I grew up in Southern California, and I am actually a convert to the church. So I joined the church as a youth and has been a great blessing to my life. And so I have a great soft spot in my heart for missionaries. And we have three of our kids that have served missions. And yeah, big believer in the, in the hard work that they do.

J**Jennie Dildine 03:24**

They do do hard work and, and a lot of it is like mental right. And so I think that's where this like body image stuff comes into play and, and emotional too. And so I'm, I'm really happy you're here to talk about that with us. So what is your background in helping people with maybe overeating and body image? Tell us a little bit about that.

B**Brigette Little 03:51**

Yeah, so this is a subject that's near and dear to my heart, I spent 25 years of my life, you know, primarily dedicated to trying to lose weight, you know, starting from my early 20s until several years ago, you know, honestly, with the amount of mindspace, it took up with the amount of my thoughts and my goals. It was really one of the primary focuses of my life and something that felt very important to me. And those efforts ultimately culminated in an eating disorder that I went through for about a year. You know, I dealt with anorexia. And, you know, it's been an interesting journey since then, you know, when I first became a coach and I started working with clients, I was actually a little more in the weight loss space and trying to help people do it. And what I saw were more healthy ways. And the more that I learned about body image, the more I learned about how our bodies actually work, my thoughts really started to shift and realize that, you know, there is so much to this relationship with our bodies and where these thoughts come from and really shifted away from the way ate last piece and toward just focusing on being in tune with our bodies and to, to working on that relationship and uncovering the real thoughts and desires that are behind the way we feel about our bodies. Because I was seeing clients that some of them were, you know, very thin, some of them were larger, and they were all having the same drama, while having the same thoughts all having the same difficulties. And just realize that there was there was more at play there than just the shape of our bodies, and that you don't heal that relationship with your body by changing it. And so it's been a really beautiful journey to learn how to not only make peace with my own body, but to help guide other people through that same process. You know, I had a really beautiful personal experience while I was going through all this and was actually looking through Family Search and saw some pictures of my great grandmother. And this was a woman who lived through the Great Depression and two world wars and lived in a very different food environment than I did, right. A lot of physical labor required a lot of food rationing that happened and there was no fast food available. And we were basically identical in these. And just, you know, realize that the role that genetics play in our bodies and kind of had this moment of reckoning, where I was like, okay, I can keep fighting my body for the rest of my life, or I can use this gift I've been given to live the life I want to live, you know, and to live a really full and rich life and have an influence for good on others, and to have joy in that. And so it really shifted my perspective on how I began to view my body and its purpose.

J**Jennie Dildine 06:41**

I love that so much. And one of the things that you said is, you know, our I feel like our brains, right? In our emotions, we only have so much energy to put towards something that we want to accomplish. And it sounds like for a long time, you were putting so much energy into you know, thinking about your body and trying to change your body. And just when we tap into, like the energy of love and acceptance for our bodies, how we can channel that love and acceptance. And that energy allows us to just like, think about something else and create something new in our lives and really enjoy the lives that we're living. Yeah. So good. Okay, awesome. Um, so I think we all like, understand this from like, a logical perspective that we should love our bodies. And I had sent Bridget and email, you know, saying, Hey, you want to do this podcast, and I said, I have to be really honest with you. I don't even I don't always necessarily have the best relationship with my own body. I'm still learning how to love my body. So I wasn't even sure like, which questions to ask or how to ask them. So I'm curious what you think, Bridgette about? Why is it so hard to love our bodies? We know we were supposed to. And you know, if we talk about like, our relationship being kind of like our thoughts about something, our thoughts about our bodies that create that feeling of love? You know, we're both LCS coaches, Life Coach School coaches. Why is that so hard? Yeah.

B**Brigette Little 08:29**

The reason it's so hard is really fascinating to me. And I put a lot of study into this subject, actually, of why do we have the expectations we do about our bodies? And why are they so powerful? You know, because, you know, I've talked with so many people that intellectually they're like, Okay, I get it, but I'm not feeling it. And, you know, I think primarily, the reason is because what we think our body says about us and what it means about us, right? So we have these societal ideas that have been passed down to us through the years, you know, and I'll give you examples of a few of these, you know, we have, you know, if you go all the way back to the 1500s, to the 1600s, to where the slave trade was expanding in Europe, and you had, you know, this difference in the ways that the bodies from Africa looked from the way the European bodies looked, and at that time there developed this kind of social pressure to for white women to differentiate themselves and show that they were higher class than the slaves that they viewed as less than human or savages, right? And then this became a way to differentiate that now we listen to that story, and we think, okay, I don't believe any of that. And that's really gross anyway. Right, right. We do believe in the leftovers of that, right, which is thinness means discipline. And so if you're someone that's living in a larger body, you're thinking, hey, everyone's little Looking at me and thinking that I'm undisciplined that I'm gluttonous, that I'm out of control. And, you know, we hear people say things like that about larger bodied people in society, you know, and so, you know, we have that leftover idea, you know, we had during the 1800s, there was religious revival. And Joseph Smith talks about that, you know, and how he did that. And at that period of time, you also had an emphasis on how denying the physical appetites meant you were virtuous, right? We definitely see leftovers of that in our society, you know, is really interesting to me. Um, you know, and so there are a lot of these, I think, historical forces that are out of our awareness that we don't realize the way that they've influenced our thoughts about our bodies, but that the leftovers of that are still with us on a daily basis. And, you know, it's, it's really fascinating to think about, you know, we have a physical reminder that we wear every day that the Lord has given us that reminds us that our bodies, and our spirits need to be constantly nourished, provided that for us, and yet,

when it comes up against, you know, some of these societal ideals that we've been taught and what we think, you know, being thin means or being larger means and the way people are going to view us, there's a disconnect right there. And those things are incongruent, and we feel this pressure that, you know, if anybody's going to love me, if anybody's going to respect me, I need to show that I've got myself together. And that, in that shows, in my physical appearance,

J

Jennie Dildine 11:34

um, uh, huh. Yeah, so it's sort of like this cognitive dissonance between like, Okay, we know, we need to be nourished, we know. And yet, we kind of have like this, like, underlying current or backstory that's been there for hundreds of years, kind of telling us something else. And that there, that in order to be accepted, or a certain, you know, to be loved or accepted, that we have to look a certain way or be a certain way.

B

Brigette Little 12:05

And there's kind of a really fascinating progression that goes from there that I see time and time again, with people that I work with, because when we start thinking, Okay, I need to look different, if I'm going to be respected, if I'm going to be loved or anything like that, and then we engage in behaviors to bring that about. So maybe that's, you know, dieting, which I define, as you know, deliberately eating less than you need in order to make yourself smaller, right. So we engage in that, which then sets off a biological response, you know, our bodies are beautifully designed to protect us from starvation. Yeah, your hunger and satiety hormones that all adjust themselves to basically drive you to eat and your metabolism will, you know, go lower when you do that, and your body just basically pulls out all the stops to help you restore this weight you're losing, right? And that can even show up in the way that you're thinking about food. So then we think, Okay, I'm obsessed with food, I'm out of control. And you know, then emotions of shame, and all that get layered on top of this, and it becomes this really big, all consuming experience that is set off actually by the under eating. And so, you know, we tend to think, Okay, I should be able to deal with all of this emotionally, when really when your body isn't getting enough nourishment, that is typically kind of a catalyst that sets the whole process in motion.

J

Jennie Dildine 13:35

Ah, yeah, that's super interesting. You say that, because what I have said to, you know, a couple of my clients that are getting ready to leave, they're like, What if I gain weight, and I, and I'm like, your body, like, you are gonna be going through like a very big change a very big transformative, like, when we talk about that lower brain, we're like, thrust to you out of that cave, into like, a situation that has, like, potential emotional danger. So I'm like, doesn't it kind of make sense that your body would want to, like, you know, hold on to some fat for the, in case there's a famine or, you know, and being able to understand that, that it is more primal it is. I mean, really, if we wanted to say like, that was something God gave us Yeah. To, to be able to survive and to live in this, this world that we live in? Yeah, really good insight. Yeah, you know,

B**Brigette Little 14:37**

and there's a couple of really, really interesting things that kind of go along with that, you know, the two biggest determiners of whether you or not you gain weight and what size your body is our first of all, genetics. We know from twin studies that even you know, twins that have the same genetics that are adopted and raised in separate households. You know, There's something crazy like a 90% correlation with, you know what their body size ends up being the strongest influencer. And we're not as in control of that as we're often led to believe that we are, okay. And the second biggest determiner of or predictor of whether or not people gain weight is actually intentional weight loss, which is so interesting, you know, that ends up being one of the biggest predictors of weight gain. And so, you know, if we can kind of sink into this idea of, you know, there is a genetic blueprint, that your body's going to have a spot that it's comfortable at, right? And attempts to, you know, manipulate that by large margins, you know, by and large, don't work and can lead to a lot of consequences. You know, and there are little ways that, you know, it can adjust in this space. But if you look at there's some really interesting studies of Sumo wrestlers actually, okay, they, you know, force feed themselves huge amounts of food to put on weight for sumo wrestling, and they find that when they retire, they typically shrink down to the size they were before, you know, in accordance with their genetic blueprint. And similarly, people like me that have tried for years and years to lose weight will typically rebound back to that spot where their body is comfortable. And so you know, you may be in a situation, my daughter served in Brazil, and Brazilians love to feed you. And you know, they will welcome you into their homes. And yeah, that there is this emotional attachment to okay, you need to eat my food, so that I feel right, right, she felt obligated to do that, you know, and, you know, you may be in a situation like that, and there are various ways to manage that. But just know that your body by and large, when you're out of that environment, is going to go back to what it's used to, it's going to do the thing it normally does, right?

J**Jennie Dildine 17:00**

Yeah, that was one of my questions for you. Because I find like, I think one of the reasons this comes up, especially for the mission, right, is when we're just in our normal day to day lives, we kind of have some quote unquote, control over, like, what goes in our mouths, or how often we exercise or, or, you know, how often we eat out or whatever. And on the mission, it feels like potentially, that it's could be largely out of our control, right. Um, my son, also, he served seven months in Australia, before COVID, and then came home and then went back out to the New Hampshire mission. But yeah, he did put on a lot of weight, but he was in an area where they did like to feed him a bunch of food, and you just had to eat it. And I would be interested to hear like, when you say, there are some, like, ways that you can sort of handle that or address that tell me, like, what kind of comes up for what you're thinking might be some strategies for that.

B**Brigette Little 18:04**

So the number one tool that you can use is to make your body the authority of how much food is the right amount of food. And we're all born with this beautiful inborn system that, you know, we know how much to eat, we know when to eat, you know, we have ways our body signals us, you know, and if anybody has ever tried to get a toddler to either eat something they don't

want or to stop, when you know what I'm talking about, right? You know, we're born with this, and then that kind of gradually, you know, a lot of us lose connection with that over the years, you know, because maybe we're told, Oh, I should be eating this amount of calories, or maybe I should, you know, be following this plan, or maybe I should be eating this way. And we really externalize a lot of that knowledge. And we may be ignoring the internal signals to the point that we're not really hearing them anymore. And so getting back in touch with those signals is one of the very best things you can do. And, you know, it's interesting, because it can be a lot like listening to the spirit, you know, listening to the spirit has been, you know, when I receive a prompting, you know, if I'm not sure if that's coming from me, or it's coming from the Lord, but it's telling me something good, I typically do it and that confirmation comes later, right? And my sensitivity to those messages gets better and better. And I get really good at, you know, discerning that voice of the Lord and that it's similar with our bodies, you know, as we respond to those cues. And as we learn to, you know, when those subtle hunger cues are coming on to respond to those and when those subtle fullness cues are coming on to know what those mean, those become clearer and clearer and clearer. And so, you know, when we kind of develop that relationship of trust with our own bodies to where, you know, we know, okay, I know how to feed myself. I know how much is enough. Then when we're in situ Patients were, you know, I had a brother in law that was serving a mission, he got fed three Thanksgiving dinners. Right? Right, yeah. And he had this, you know, he knew, Okay, this is how I'm going to feel, you know, I'm going to be sluggish, I'm going to be uncomfortable if I stuffed myself, and so he could pace himself, you know, and my daughter in Brazil did the same thing. You know, she knew that her hosts, were going to want her to take a second helping, and that was an indicator that she enjoyed the meal and was important to them, you know, and she wanted them to feel important and valued and know that she was grateful for that meal. So she would, you know, take a very small first portion, so she could go and get more or if you know, you're making this many visits, and people are going to be offering you Fulanis, here's kind of plan for that, if that makes sense. And, yeah, this is where my body's going to feel good. And if I, you know, am going past that point of comfortable fullness, you know, I'm not going to be sluggish, I'm not going to be or I'm going to be sluggish. I'm not going to be thinking on my feet, I'm not going to feel good. You know, so I'm going to, you know, manage this in a way that's considerate of the people around me. And still, I'm showing respect for for my body and the signals that it's giving me

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Jennie Dildine 21:12

Yeah, yeah, I love that so much. It's sort of like, I like that you use the word Trust. Yeah. Because I associate trust with love. And so like, just really like, getting present with those signals, trusting your body. And then instead of people pleasing, like, Yeah, I'll just eat that. I'm just going to eat that. I'm just going to eat that because that's what these people want, but being really in tune with what you want, and loving yourself and trusting yourself enough to to either pace yourself or say, oh, no, thank you, or whatever. Okay, good. Um, okay, so But if we're going to trust ourselves and love ourselves, I think that's really where we got to start. Right? Yeah. Is just, and being able to, like, put that yourself as a priority. In those types of situations, and in stressful situations, even. So, how, where do we even begin? Like, how do we even start on this journey to love our bodies?

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Brigette Little 22:26

Yeah, you don't, I think, you know, if we want to go back to the very beginning, I love thinking

about the purpose of our bodies and the gifts that they are, I think it was Boyd K Packer that talked about his patriarchal blessing, where he was told that his body was the instrument of his mind and the foundation of his character. So if you think about, you know, your body, being an instrument of your mind, all the ideas that you have all the things that you want to do, all of that gets sent to your body. And that's the way you do it. I like to think about K, you know, we did our prayer life, we didn't have these bodies, and why were we so excited. And I think, sometimes we take for granted all of the things that it enables us to do right? Now, I think about the ability to have the people I love or comfort a child that needs comfort, or even, you know, that feeling of having put in some service and you're tired, and you're exhausted and your muscles hurt, but you have deep down satisfaction, even the experience of our emotions, you know, we know that when we feel emotions, you know, our heart may be beating, or we may just, you know, we feel physical sensations in our body. And think about the richness that it would take out of our emotional experiences, if we didn't have a body. Even our experiences of feeling the spirit, it's often described as a burning in the bosom, right. So you know, our bodies just enhance everything that we're able to do. It gives us opportunities to act that we didn't have before. It gives us opportunities to feel things that we didn't have before. And, you know, adds so much richness and so much dimension, and it's such a huge gift and nowhere in that gift, does it say but if you have a body that this size, none of that counts, or none of that works, right? Yeah. But we get into these patterns of negativity with our bodies, and maybe we're not looking at liking the way it looks. And so, you know, we kind of develop this antagonistic relationship or we're, we're trying to control it, we're trying to manipulate it we're trying to make it do what we want instead of working with, you know, the signals that it gives us and everything and it kind of creates this adversarial relationship and I could get in the way of that, that love and appreciation.

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Jennie Dildine 24:54

i One of my favorite primary songs, this is what I it aligns completely with what you're saying. There's a line in it, and I won't remember like what page or anything. It's my Heavenly Father loves me and I, I'm pretty sure it's the second verse that says, He gave me my life, my mind and my heart. Yeah. And when I think about that, like, it literally blows my mind that that's all we need to create whatever we want. Like even thinking about, like you and I created this call where we can talk about this and, and then what we're creating will create something else for someone else, and they'll go and do something else. But that's literally all we need is our minds and our hearts and our bodies. Yeah, and then we can create, just like, and I like to think about it, like, just like our heavenly parents create, think about something, they fill it with love, and then they go make it happen.

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Brigette Little 25:53

Yeah, you know, if I can go back for just a second to the story of, of my great grandmother, and I mentioned a few of the difficult things she went through. And my grandfather lost his dad when he was 11 years old. So she was also widow in the midst of all this, you know, but my grandpa always talked about how absolutely happy and ideal his childhood was, and how much he loved being in his home with his family, you know, and so, you know, I think about my great grandmother, you know, in this larger body that looks exactly like mine. And that's not what her children were thinking about their thinking about how amazing she was to be around how they felt when she was around them, you know, the influence that she had on their hearts and their

minds. And, you know, I think that's so significant. You know, I think sometimes we get so caught up in, you know, my body is, uh, you know, if I want to do any of the things I want to do, if I want to accomplish any of the things I want to accomplish in my life, I have to first get this in this certain form, right? And then I can do all the things I want to do, instead of saying, Okay, this is the body I have. And I can just actually go directly to living the life I want to live and having the kind of influence that I want to have with the body that I've been given. So,

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Jennie Dildine 27:15

so powerful. I love that so much. So when I think about what I've kind of noticed, actually, is that, and you can tell me, I might be totally wrong, but what I've kind of observed is that when a lot of people get stressed, they lose a ton of weight. Yeah, I feel like for me, when I get stressed, I have a tendency to grow towards food as a way to sort of like numb emotion or numb stress. And the way that I was taught and the way you were taught is like that we call that maybe like a buffer to sort of like put a little like padding around the emotion. So that we it doesn't feel as intense to us. But is that still how you think about it? Do you still think about overeating as a buffer? And what tips do you have, because I know like, I know, because I talk to these missionaries, they're stressed, they're worried they feel pressure, they feel overwhelmed, to be a certain way and to to meet their goals. And then when they get home, it's sort of the same feeling but a different flavor. Like I gotta show up, I gotta be this certain way, I gotta live up to my potential. So tell me what you think about overeating. And I just want to hear all of your wisdom. Yeah, I

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Brigette Little 28:38

actually teach this a little bit differently. And they're similar limits that are the same and some are different, but I don't think you can completely separate it from the biology. And, you know, we talked a little bit about how restricting food can actually lead to a kind of a compensation response, right? Yeah, I think it's really important that we define what overeating really is, you know, because we tend to think, okay, if I'm not as thin as I think I should be, then I'm overeating. And we define it that way, when that may not be true, you know, your body may be genetically designed to be a different weight. And it's not evidence that you're overeating at all, you know, just yeah, there are thin people that overeat. And you know, if that result doesn't show up in their body, either. And so, you know, I think it's important to define over eating as when we're overriding those signals that our body's giving us, right. Okay, and when we're eating past comfortable fullness, and we're seeing consequences of that. And so, you know, a lot of times what we and I mentioned a little bit about how when we have one of those compensatory eating episodes where maybe we haven't been eating enough and then our body floods all these hormones and we eat a lot, you know, in compensation to try to make that up then We have shame that layers, we have regret that layers on top of that, and it becomes a very emotional situation that then makes us want to eat more to soothe it. Right, right. And so I think it's really important to kind of get the biology worked out first and make sure we're adequately nourished before we start working on emotional eating, right. And then what I think is really valuable is, you know, I never tell anybody I work with, they're not allowed to eat in response to emotion. Because the truth is that it does work, it can't do it. And so I usually, you know, tell people, okay, take that tool, and stick it in your toolbox, but let's make sure it's not the only tool that's there, right? What are other ways that you can respond to emotion. And sometimes that's just taking a minute to process the emotion and letting that move through

you and having that experience, you know, sometimes what might help you is actually taking a nap, you might be exhausted. Or you may need to spend some time talking with a friend or companion or, or somebody and have that that social connection. And so I think if we can put emotional eating in the toolbox and let it be there, but not, you know, put all these prohibitions on it. And then, you know, when we're in this situation where we're feeling all this emotion, we can ask ourselves the question, what's going to help me most right now? What would be best for me at this moment, and we can choose that solution and choose that tool that addresses those emotions that we're feeling? You know, I had a client once that was working toward a deadline, she had a really stressful demanding job. And she's like, I can't go for a walk. I can't sit and process emotion right now. I don't have time. But I can have a snack and it gets me through the workday and helps abate that stress. And that's totally valid. That is a you know, that is an okay tool to use. But it kind of loses that just kind of all consuming power over us. When we're not placing so much, you know, burden on it, I guess. Yeah.

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Jennie Dildine 32:12

Well, what I like about what you're saying is that, so instead of what I kind of think, is some of the shame, right is gonna come from thoughts like, oh, all of a sudden, we've eaten an entire bag of cookies, it was sort of unconscious. And, and I think a thought might be like, I'm out of control, or I, you know, I, maybe I don't love my body, if I loved my body, then I wouldn't have done that. Right, and all of that. But when we become like, bring some awareness to it, and we become super intentional, then that is a form of showing love, like, okay, so this is super stressful, which of these coping tools, or strategies do I want to use? And sometimes it's crumble cookies, just gonna be sometimes and that's totally fine. But I think even just that intentionality is going to change the energy behind it. Right? And then we won't have to layer on that shame. Is that kind of what you're saying?

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Brigette Little 33:17

Yeah. And there's, there's a really fascinating study that I want to mention, and it was actually a study on sugar addiction, and they used rats, you know, with rats aren't humans, but you know, there's some things we can learn there. But they had, you know, containers of sugar water and regular water in these rats cages. And the the people that were crafting, this study had some of the rats that they restricted from food behind forehand and some that they didn't, that had had their food restricted ahead of time showed addictive behavior toward the sugar water, right. And the ones that hadn't had that experience in the past and hadn't had their food restricted, the sugar water was just, it was no big deal. It was like regular water, right? So they partake of it a little bit, and then they wouldn't need have some of the regular and they didn't display any of that addictive behavior. So you know, a lot of times when I have a client that they're like, I can't trust myself with food, I can't, you know, I'm out of control. If I let myself eat any of this, or if I keep this in the house, I'm just gonna plow through all of it. And that is evidence of physical or mental restriction when it comes to food

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Jennie Dildine 34:31
deprivation

B

Brigette Little 34:32

or, you know, when there are emotional tools in the toolbox and when the body is adequately nourished without that restriction. There really is no such thing as out of control eating those things, those things level out and food becomes food.

J

Jennie Dildine 34:50

Mm hmm. Okay,

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Brigette Little 34:52

you could take or leave, right, right. Okay, good. Bridget,

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Jennie Dildine 34:57

I love everything that we've talked to about and kind of these concepts and stuff, but I can kind of hear the listeners being like, okay, so what do I do? Right? Like, we've kind of talked about how we can think about our bodies and how we can feel about our bodies. But if you were to offer some, like, real, like, action oriented like to do is where do we start to create this relationship to get back into like, you know, queuing into our bodies, and to take the shame out of, you know, using sometimes food as a tool as a coping mechanism without at layering all this judgment and shame on top of it?

B

Brigette Little 35:44

Yeah, I think there are a couple of things that, you know, can be useful in the moment. And I think first, with that physical component, you become the authority of when and how much you need to eat, you know, nobody else is going to be able to determine that better than you can. And so, you know, that may involve, you know, just really getting familiar with how your body signals to you that it's hungry. So paying attention to those kinds of things, you know, do you get a headache? Does your stomach rumble? Do you start thinking about food a lot? Do you start to feel a little bit weak, all of those things can be manifestations of physical hunger. And so if you can start recognizing and responding to those, that is a great first step, you know, because like I mentioned, you'll get better and better at tuning in to those. And, you know, sometimes pausing in the middle of a meal, and just evaluating how you're feeling at the moment, you know, you have no obligation to stop if you want to continue, but just checking in to say, okay, how am I feeling right now? Am I starting to feel satisfied, and my, you know, starting to feel a little too much, you know, but I think, you know, intentionally taking those pauses and intentionally paying attention to that physical experience and knowing that your body is the authority for what you need. That's the first step, you know, and then I think being aware of our thoughts about our body. So you know, we've all had those experiences, where we kind of find ourselves in a body image crisis, you know, and we're, we're feeling really bad about ourselves. And a lot of times, if we can just ask ourselves the question, what is it that I really want right now? Am I wanting acceptance? am I wanting love? Am I you know, what is it that I'm thinking my body has to deliver for me at this moment? And I think recognizing, okay,

that's the thing I really want more than I want to look a certain way I'm thinking that looks looking a certain way gives me this right, you that, yeah, we can cue into what that thing is. And we can kind of put our focus directly there, right. You know, another thing I like to do for kind of those in the moment things so you know, maybe I'm at the grocery store, and I haven't done my hair, and I'm not dressed. feeling down about myself and my appearance, you know, we've all had those moments. But sometimes I just think, Hey, what is my purpose and not my cosmic eternal purpose? What is my purpose right now? You know, I'm here in this store to gather food for my family. I'm not here to decorate the store and be an ornament, you know, how is my body doing it the task that I'm that I do. And so, you know, usually I'm grabbing things off the shelf just fine. Not a problem. And you know, my purpose was never to ornament, the space that I was, sometimes that's just a quick tool that we can use to pull ourselves back to center and say, What am I here to do right now? And especially with a missionary, you know, I am here to share the light of Christ in the story of the gospel with these people that I'm serving. Yeah. How is my body enabling me to do that right now?

J Jennie Dildine 38:55

Right, and what's interesting about the three things that you just shared, is they all require presence. Yeah. And all require us to go inside for our own, like to check in with ourselves. Right? And, and that can be tough. I think on a mission, especially we get this mindset, where it's like, it's all about them. It's all about these people, and how can I help those people? And how can I help those people? But if we can, you know, take that time to check in with us, like, where am I at, during this meal, or, or check in with those hunger signals? And, and also, I love this idea, like I'm in the grocery store, like, what's, what's my purpose here? Like, why am I here? How is my body helping me and serving me in this moment? I just I really liked that because it's not about the past, like the weight that we were before we left or the weight that we're gonna be when we get home or the weight we're gonna be 10 years from now. It's like Like, experiencing our bodies, I'm just thinking about this out loud right now. But experiencing our bodies and loving our bodies happens in the present moment. Right.

B Brigette Little 40:11

And I love you know, coming back to that, quote from elder Packer if we can think of our bodies as the instrument have our minds, right, and our spirits, and it is the thing that enables us to do and fulfill all of those desires of our heart, right. And, you know, sometimes if we can focus on that element of our body, we can get a little bit out of the you know, I have to meet these certain beauty standards. i It's important for me to you know, like I said, decorate the space you know, it gives us a recenter on okay, why do I have this body in the first place? And what does it help me do?

J Jennie Dildine 40:51

So good? Well, Bridget, anything else that we didn't cover that you feel like we want our missionaries and our return missionaries to know anything come up?

B Brigette Little 41:04

I love there is a quote from Sister Hinckley. And let me see if I can grab this real quick. I love this. I think she encapsulates this idea so well, she says, I don't want to drive up to the pearly gates in a shiny sports car wearing beautifully tailored clothes, my hair expertly quaffed with long, perfectly manicured fingernails, I want to drive up in a station wagon that has mud on the wheels from taking kids to scout camp, I want to be there with grass stains on my shoes for mowing sister Shanks lawn, I want to be there with a smidge of peanut butter on my shirt for making sandwiches for a sick neighbor's children. I want to be there with a little dirt under my fingernails from helping to weed someone's garden, I want to be there with children's sticky kisses on my cheeks, and the tears of a friend on my shoulder. I want the Lord to know I was really here and that I really lived. And I tear up every time I hear this quote because I think, you know we our bodies enable us to do so much they enable us to serve and to experience like so ritually and evidence of that living is going to show right. There are going to be changes that occur to our body over time. And you know, the consequences of all those experiences we have are going to show but do we see that as evidence of having lived? And you know, I love that idea that you know, our bodies really do tell the story of our lives and we're not you know, the Lord never said I want you to bring this body back looking exactly like it did like your Stinky Pete mint in the box from Toy Story. That's not what he told us. You know, we're you know, we can be more like the Velveteen Rabbit that are the wear and tear and all that the things that happen can be evidence of a life well lived and can be evidenced that we've used this body for all of the things that that we intended to use it for.

J

Jennie Dildine 42:59

That's beautiful. I love that so much. That gives me chills too. That was That was awesome. Well, Bridget, thank you so much for being here today and for sharing all of your wisdom. How can people find you like, how can they work with you?

B

Brigette Little 43:17

I have a website at Bridgette little coaching.com and I am also on Facebook and Instagram at the same same place. Bridgette little coaching. I you know, see clients by the session. So if somebody wanted to work with me for one session or continually, you know, they don't have to buy a package or do anything like that we just meet a resume. And you know, talk through any individual issues they may be having and and how to apply some of these principles.

J

Jennie Dildine 43:46

So good. Everyone, go get a session with Bridgette. That's awesome. I love it. Okay, well thank you so much for hanging out with me today and for all of your wisdom. And thank you for helping us kind of sort through some of this stuff that often can feel a little bit complicated. Appreciate all of your wisdom and love, my pleasure. Serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints can present a unique set of challenges, and many of those challenges you might not even see coming. So you're gonna want a unique set of solutions. It's easier than you think to overcome worry and anxiety serve the successful mission you've always dreamed of and navigate your post mission experience with confidence. That is why I created some amazing free goodies that I'm sharing in my show notes. Maybe you'll want to grab the free training for preparing missionaries, my video course for RMS or maybe you and I

should hop on a free strategy call. If you're ready to take your preparedness to serve or your preparedness to come home to the next level. Then go grab one of those freebies. And in the meantime, no matter which part of the mission experience you We're involved in just now that Jennie the LDS mission coach is thinking about you every single day