

Episode 76 - MANAGING HIGH PRESSURE SITUATIONS & SETTING YOUR MIND ABOVE

I'm Diana Swillinger, and you're listening to the Renew Your Mind podcast, episode 76, where Rianon brings me more listener questions. Welcome to The Renew Your Mind podcast. I'm your host, Diana Swillinger. A lot of us have tried to do the right thing all our lives, but we still feel overwhelmed and stuck. I believe that you deserve to get unstuck and experience more joy, more peace, and more contentment. Regardless of what life sends your way, I'm here to help you renew your mind and make it all possible.

DIANA: Hey. Hey, everybody. Welcome to another episode of the renew your Mind podcast. I'm your host, Diana Swillinger, and I'm here again with Rianon Jaeger. She has been one of my clients, and she's an active member in the Renew Your Mind Facebook community. And I guess you're kind of my monthly co host now. How do you like that position?

Rianon: Yes, I love it. I'm happy to be here again. Thanks for having me.

DIANA: I'm happy to have you. This morning, I was like, oh, I get to record with Rianon today. That's awesome.

Rianon: That's exactly the way I feel too. Love being here.

DIANA: Awesome. Well, before we get started, how are you doing? How's life? You doing good? Good. Yeah.

Rianon: Doing well. You?

DIANA: I'm good. Did we ever tell the listeners, um, like, when you were first on, did we talk about your family or, um, anything about you? Did we introduce you properly ever?

Rianon: I don't think we gave too many.

DIANA: Details, but why don't we just say something? Why don't give us the quick spiel. Tell us, like, well, you're a fellow Wisconsinite now. Take it from there.

Rianon: Um, okay. I am a stay at home mom of three boys, um, ages 12,10 and 7, and, uh, wife to Joel. Very, um, handsome police officer, handsome man in uniform.

DIANA: Can't go wrong with that.

Rianon: Absolutely. So I don't know. Yeah, um, that's kind of the short version. The short intro.

DIANA: Yeah. Well, I think that helps people a little bit too, especially as you're offering input, knowing where you're coming from. I'm a little bit ahead of you, I guess, because my three boys are adults now, which is crazy. I, um, remember those days when they were little like that. So you're in a little different mind space, and I appreciate that because, honestly, I think parenting is tougher when you've got littles like that. And then when I remember when my boys were even littler, like, still had some in diapers, how crazy it was. And you're closer to that time than me, and so, anyway, I appreciate having you here with a perspective at a different point in life than me, and I think that helps bring some different dynamics to our conversations too. So, anyway, thanks for sharing about you.

Rianon: Yeah, of course.

DIANA: All right, well, it's time for you to ask me questions. So, um, I did peek at one because somebody posted it right under your post on facebook, so I saw it, but, um, anyway, I have no

idea what the other ones are, but let's go. You ask me your questions you have and let's see what happens.

Rianon: All right, sounds good. Um, so the first question I have from the Renew Your Mind community is from Angela and she wants to know what it means to set your mind on things above.

DIANA: Okay, well, that's awesome. I have some staple Bible verses that I say, and so, um, she might be specifically asking me that because I say that colossians three two says, set your mind on the things above, not on the things of this earth. And I have that posted here in my office. I see it every day, and so I think about it. And this is the question that I saw this morning. So I thought about it a little bit, because it's not that we don't think about things that are happening on Earth. We do. Like, this morning, I'm like, look at my flowers blooming outside and I'm enjoying this watermelon and, um, I'm so glad it's still summer and it's warm and here's my kids in front of me. There's things happening here on earth. And we do focus on them. But there's something about I think what that verse means to me and why it's such a staple and what I teach is because it's about a mind set.

When we set our mind on something, we are fixing on it. We are establishing a thought pattern. We are like, um, attaching it's something very intentional we're doing with our mind. So why would God want us to set our mind on the things above? And what does that mean? Like, heaven isn't like if you think about that, then, oh, uh, up above in the clouds and there's angels flying around and everything's perfect. And I don't think that helps us either, because I don't know, it's ethereal and it's hard to grasp and that sort of thing. So what does it mean to set our mind on things above? It's to understand, I think God's character. I mean, if we think God is above all, we're setting our minds on God, his character and his promises, and that does tremendous things for us. But let's just think about that and the difference of set your mind on the things above, not the things of the Earth. What are the things of the Earth? Things of the Earth are things I said before. We've got flowers and grass and wood and concrete and cars and people and jobs and frustrations and traffic and pollution and, um, vacations and yummy food and gross food and all sorts of things. And then things of this earth is also all the things we see when we're looking around culturally and on the news. And we're seeing politics and we're seeing businesses and corporations and money and opinions and systems and churches and all of it. Um, really, that, uh, what's happening here on Earth is a bunch of broken people who still sin, all of us trying to figure it out, sometimes doing great things and sometimes hurting other people. And hard things happen and we have hard emotions. And if all we do is spend our time thinking on that, it can become overwhelming. Because, yes, there are good things, but then there's also bills to pay and someone got let go of a job and someone's car died again. And, uh, there's just thing after thing after thing that can cause stress. Okay? So that's focusing on the earthly things. I mean, there's also the relationships and the love and all that kind of stuff too. So it's not like we never look at this stuff and appreciate it, but we're talking about what we're going to fix our mind on as a mindset.

So we have that which is precarious and subject to everyone's random behaviors and, uh, perceptions and all that. And we have the ability to focus our mind on things above God's

character and God's promises. What's that? Well, God is love. So if we're setting our mind on things above on God, we're going to be setting our mind on love. He also is filled with compassion and grace and mercy and righteousness. And he gives us lots of promises that he's going to use everything that happens for his eternal glory. He's promised to take us to be in eternal glory with Him and to reconcile and to heal. Can you see how if we set our mind on that, we're going to feel hope? Now, this is where I'm like, this is awesome because let's just put this in the mind shift tool. We've talked about that before. What you think, what you feel, what you do. So if what you think is how you set your mind, I'm going to think God is going to redeem this all. If I think that because I've set my mind on it and I believe it, what will I feel? Just any emotion comes to mind for you. Rianon, what do we feel if we think God's going to redeem this all for his glory? I don't know if that's the exact thought I just said, but something like that. What do you feel?

Rianon: Yeah, um, I would feel hope. Um, and peace.

DIANA: Yes, exactly. And then what if we have the thought, oh my goodness, the car broke down again. How are we going to fit that into our budget? Then? What do you feel?

Rianon: Um, disappointment. Maybe even despair, depending on how bad the situation is.

DIANA: Right, so that's a very simplistic comparison. Mhm so when things of the Earth happen, earthly type things happen, if we spend our time setting our minds on that, we will find lots of problems and we will feel despair or worry or exhaustion or overwhelm. But if we set our minds on above God's character and his promises, we get to feel hope. And love and relief and grace. We get to feel that forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others and compassion. And I would say it's a practice. So, Angela, we get to practice where we're directing our mind. We get to practice where we're going to set it, where we're going to attach our thoughts. What are we going to anchor them on? Where are we going to establish our belief system? And if we attach it to God and his character and his promises, we get more love, more joy, more peace. And if we attach it to all the things we see around in the earth, sometimes we feel joy and happy and peace, and other times we feel despair and confusion and overwhelm. Okay? And so God's given us, in that verse and others, Philippians 4:8, Set your mind on the right whatever's, not the wrong, whatever's he tells us the right whatever is to set our mind on and all that. It says in Philippians 4:8, Whatever is lovely, whatever is, um, good, whatever's I can't think of all the words right now. That's the same kind of thing we're setting ourselves, are setting our minds on God's character and promises and all of his goodness. And that's where we get to feel joy and peace and contentment and all of that. Mhm, I live by that one. I really do. All right, what else? Anything else? Do you have any questions or comments on that? Or you can move on to the next question.

Rianon: No, I think you pretty much covered it. What I took from that was, like you said, the character of God, it's the eternal things, they don't go away. And I think the more you focus on, um, them, it builds and that it's a choice, like you said, like, God is telling us to choose, um, those things and be aware of your thoughts and what you're focusing on. So I thought you covered that really well.

DIANA: Yeah, it is the formula to having joy in all circumstances. People are like, how do you do that? How do you have joy? And like, oh, our house just burned down. How do you have joy? Well, you don't if you fixate on the house burning down. But if you are still anchored in God's eternal promises, you can, because, you know, he redeems everything. You know, this isn't the end. You know, there's more, but just for those listening, it takes practice and intention. We just keep working on it. I just spent the weekend feeling overwhelmed. Um, and some other emotions like that. I'm like that's. Okay. This is the part where I feel overwhelmed for the weekend. I'm going to get my thoughts in order. I need to feel some emotions right now. And I'll get back and that's okay too, but I never let go of i, uh, know everything's okay because I'm anchored to God's character and eternal promises no matter what.

Rianon: Mhm, absolutely. All right? So the next question that we have is from Jocelyn. And she says in relation to the last podcast that we had where we talked about a roller coaster of emotion, she says, what can you do when you're in the moment and your emotions are out of control? For example, I was in a high pressure situation with limited time to complete a task and things weren't going right. I knew at the time I was responding irrationally, but it felt like I couldn't help it. What can you do in that moment not to lose it?

DIANA: Just like I was saying, setting our mind on things above is a process. Learning to manage our thoughts and emotions in a moment is a process. So when I started this, my whole mind renewal journey in earnest with these psychology and life coaching tools. I was on a vacation with my husband and he got irritated. And then I thought he shouldn't be irritated. And so I was doing my darndest. I was like, and this isn't actually relating to high pressure thing, but we'll get to this. But this is just an example of being in the moment and how, uh, sometimes, uh, when we're first learning how to do this, it's just hard. So my husband's irritated and I'm like, he should not be irritated. We're on vacation. This is an amazing place. This is ridiculous. And then I'm like, okay, wait a second. I want to manage my thoughts. I don't want to feel irritated. So if I don't want to feel irritated, I need to think it's okay that he's irritated or this is how it should be.

Let's not think he shouldn't be irritated because he is. So he should be irritated. You know how I know he should be irritated? Because he is. Okay, all right, I'm fine. I can be fine. He can be irritated and I can be fine. But I could not let go of my thought was still in there. He should not be acting this way. I was like, trying so hard to think something better.

Finally, an hour later, I burst out to him. This changing our thought stuff does not work. It doesn't work. I'm doing a terrible job at this. I can't do this. I guess I'm just going to be mad. I think you shouldn't be acting that way. I think I shouldn't be acting this way. And this is all terrible. So I couldn't change it in the moment, not that time. But that was a huge win. Because you know what I was doing that entire time is I was being aware of what was happening. I was watching it. I'm like, this is crazy. I can see how I am latched onto this thought and I can't let it go. And I don't know how to let it go. But I see that because I'm thinking this, I will be irritated. That's it. And I really didn't want to be irritated in that moment, and I probably judged myself even more and it wasn't pretty, but, uh, that's fine.

So sometimes, Jocelyn, we're in a moment and we really know we could think and feel something different, but we can't get there. So sometimes when that's happening, you're in a high pressure situation. You're having thoughts about whatever's going on and you're having these emotions you might not be able to change at that time, but you're noticing it now. So see if you can figure out what thought you're having about it all. Like, if it's a work situation, that's high pressure, like that. I used to have those. And I might think, uh, that person should have done this a week ago, or why didn't they tell me about this yesterday? Because they didn't tell me about this yesterday. Now I'm in this situation, I'm not going to get this done. And then I would feel that irritation, um, and flustered.

So I could figure out it's coming from a thought, they should have told me about this three days ago. They knew about it. It's their fault. I'm in this terrible situation now and I might not even be able to get this done in time. At least I know that's what I'm thinking. And what do I feel? Resentment. All right, I'm blaming that person, and as long as I'm blaming that person for my current problem, I'm going to feel resentment. All right. I still want to blame them, though, because it really seems like their fault. So the more we practice being in the moment like that and seeing what's going on, we might not be able to fix it that time, but maybe next time, maybe we don't even know how to fix it that time. Let's just even start with that first time. When we start becoming aware of it, we're like, all right, I saw what happened, but I don't know what the solution was. I don't see it the next time it happens.

We see it happening again and we're like, you know what, I actually could have thought something different. I could have thought, I don't know why that person waited to tell me until now, but that's what's going on. So, okay, fine, I'll figure it out. Okay. And it feels a little less high pressure the next time. And each time we're getting more and more clarity of thought, and then the next time it happens, you're like, oh, I know exactly what this is. Somebody gave me something to do, I don't have enough time to complete it with all my other tasks. This is when I want to blame them. And then I end up feeling resentment. Well, what if I didn't blame them then? What if I wasn't going to feel resentment now? What would I want to feel? And sometimes we move to wanting to feel neutral. I don't want to think this is good or bad, I just want to be like, this is just what's happening, fine, I'm going to do my best, whatever. And we get to a place where at least we're not in resentment. And then next time we might be like, you know what, I'm going to make up a story. This is gradual, right? And that's what I do now with a lot of things. I do it all the time. Somebody cut me off in traffic yesterday and I'm like, all right, I got to make up a story. They cut me off in traffic because they're trying to get home because one of their kids is throwing up and someone just texted them and so they're in a rush, whatever. And I'm like it's fine. It's fine. Now, uh, here I am with this. I'm feeling a lot of pressure, but to get it done on time. But you know what? I may or may not get it done on time and there's really nothing I can do about it. So I just want to feel committed. I'm committed to doing my best. I'll just do my best right now so that's like, uh, then you get to that thought, I'll just do my best right now and you feel committed.

So I guess what I'm saying, Jocelyn, is this whole thing is a process. Especially when you bring up a situation like that where you generally feel frustration. In a moment like that, we're not

going to come in with a new thought and boom, everything's fixed. We've got to start with in these types of situations, let me get some awareness to what are some of the thoughts and emotions that I tend to go to? Are those serving me? What if I didn't want to think that and feel that? Then what would I want to do? And sometimes in all that too, we get clarity of, uh, requests we might want to make of other people. Like, here's that situation again. And I got to a point where I was like, okay, uh, here we are again. I'm in a high pressure situation and it feels a little stressful, but I'm okay, I'm feeling committed. I'm going to get it done. And I think I'm ready to go talk to that person and let them know every time they give me a late project that it's challenging for me. And I would like to make a request that they always give me 24 hours notice when they want me to do something for them. And then I guess to wrap this up, since you and I in the beginning, we're talking about when we have kids at home. So for those of you who are listening, um, I like to be cognizant of the moms who have young age kids.

Sometimes there's just a lot of high pressure situations where there's a lot to get done and people are pulling on your pant legs and bringing you permission slips and there's school supplies to be bought and someone needs a ride to soccer and the meal is not made yet and they feel high pressure and that's just the way it is. So my biggest or my favorite strategy, I should say, for that, is what I've talked about on a podcast episode before, is this is the part, if nothing else, maybe the situation can't change. Maybe you can't totally get to another thought. Why don't you just give yourself permission to be exactly where you're at through that moment, and that's by narrating for yourself. This is the part where I'm in a high pressure situation and I feel flustered. Um, but I've been through this part before and I survived and I'll do it again. This is that part. Tomorrow I'll be in a different part. That's a lot of strategies wrapped into one, but I honestly think that'll be helpful. The biggest thing I want to tell everybody is you always have permission to be exactly where you're at. Just like this weekend, when I was like, I am overwhelmed, I wasn't like, I need to think something different to not be overwhelmed. I'm like, no, I'm feeling overwhelmed because I think there is a lot. This is back to school season. I have a child who started a technical college, a child who's back in school. We've got moving, we've got one of the kids started a new job.

There's paperwork, they needed checks for their checking account. Um, my daughter's going back into the 7th grade. There's all the paperwork to do for that. Another son is coming back to live with us temporarily, and his car engine blew up and he's looking for help buying a car. And there's just a lot going on. And as long as I keep thinking there's a lot, I'm going to feel overwhelmed. And I'm like, you know what, I just think it's true that there's a lot, so I'm just going to feel overwhelmed. This is the part where there's a lot and the kids are going back to school and I feel overwhelmed. Okay? And then today I'm thinking, I did have a different thought. I let myself feel overwhelmed for two days and I survived and I was fine, and I had joy. And today my new thought was, I'll just keep doing one thing. I'll just keep doing one thing. When that one thing's done, I can do another one thing. And I didn't feel overwhelmed today. I don't feel totally settled in at peace, but it's better, m. I'll just keep doing the next one thing. It's fine. Speaker 2 23:38 Mhm, I think that's great. Just it is back to school time for a lot of us and moms with kids going back to school. And, um, you've talked before about resistance, uh, to emotions or judging yourself. When I read that question, I was thinking if it was me, I'd be judging myself, right? Like,

I shouldn't be feeling this way or not setting a good example or this and that, and it's like if you are judging yourself or, um, resisting that emotion, not allowing yourself to feel that it's probably going to make it worse. And so, yeah, just allowing yourself to feel whatever that is. And I mean, we're not perfect. Like being okay with being imperfect and feeling overwhelmed or, um, whatever negative emotion it is isn't wrong. Like you've said before, we get all the emotions.

DIANA: Yeah, another strategy thought that I use for that. I'm like, look at me being human. Humans get flustered when there's a lot going on or they feel like it's a high pressured situation. Mhm. My human body, brain, body, emotions are working just fine. This is what happens when it feels like there's high pressure. I feel flustered. Everything's working just fine. Look at me being a human and I'll figure it out. Being in a high pressure flustered situation hasn't been the demise of anyone's humanity yet, or their existence yet. We just move on no matter what happens. So yeah, accepting yourself, look at me being a human. And this is the part where I feel this. It's all okay. And it's hardest to just accept feeling uncomfortable. Mhm, but that's like a magic superpower, if you're like.

For me this weekend, I'm like, feeling overwhelmed doesn't feel comfortable and in fact, feeling overwhelmed sometimes also leads me to feel incapable. For me, they kind of go together. So I'm like, I'm feeling overwhelmed and incapable. This is fun. But I also gave my self permission to let lots of things like I just do what I do. I make that call on time or I don't. I pay that bill on time or I don't. I send the email on time or I don't. I finish the project on time or I don't. It's not a problem until we make it a problem. Which is crazy because we think things are supposed to get done a certain way and if they don't, it's a problem. But I'm saying that's all our stories, like, you know what, if you don't register or not register, but go on the computer for the schools and update all your children's information. By the time the school says it's supposed to be done, nothing terrible happens. You get an email, another email from the superintendent's office and they remind you and you know what happens if your kids start school and it's still not done? Then the principal's office sends you an email and reminds you and if a week goes by and it's still not done, maybe they'll call and be like, do you need help re upping your, um, registration information? Make sure it's current? None of that's actually a problem unless we think it's a problem. It's just us, uh, going through life and, uh, it's fine. It's really not a problem. It's just I didn't get to it and somebody I got several emails and calls and then it got done. It's not a problem, it's fine. Do you believe that?

Rianon: I think you're right, because it is when we think we have all these other thoughts, we attach to it when we're going through a situation like you're describing. And it is okay, I think if we think it's not okay, we're creating lots more stress and problems for ourselves. Obviously, I don't think sometimes we don't want things to be a certain way, but there are circumstances out of our control and we're doing the best we can.

DIANA: Exactly. We feel like, you know what, I don't want to be the kind of person that needs to get five emails to finish the registration. So I'm going to work on setting up a reminder for myself for next year to make sure I get it done on time. In fact, I can go in my Google Calendar and that'll remind me, and then I'll get it done. But I don't have to judge myself for it.

Rianon: Right.

DIANA: So we can still desire to do something different, not judge. So, Jocelyn, don't judge yourself in your high pressure situations. Accept yourself as human. This is the part where you're working on figuring it out and navigating what feels like high pressure and you'll get better at it. And it's Paul. Fine. Yeah.

Rianon: One more thing I wanted to add to that, too, is that I think everything that you teach, I find that since I've been working with you, I'm less emotionally reactive. Um, it's less frequent and the intensity is lower because, like you said, it's just a skill that you practice and that awareness. So, I mean, it's going to happen to all of us. We're going to have emotional reactions over things for the rest of our lives. But I think it does get better the more you practice these skills.

DIANA: Yeah, absolutely. It took me, uh, that time that I mentioned when I was on vacation with my husband, I think it was two years later, where I was able to actually manage myself in a similar situation the way that I would want to. Like when somebody else is irritated, and I thought they shouldn't be. It just depends. We all have different things matter to us more than others, are harder, and some things I would master instantly. I'm like, oh, I don't have to think that anymore. I'll just think something different cool, done. And then that one took two years, so who knows? But, uh, it's all okay, because this is just the whole thing here of us on earth is our journey of spiritual reformation, character reformation, relationships, loving God, giving, uh, our lives bringing. And all of that that I just said is what brings glory to God and us choosing Him over and choosing his love, and then go back to setting our minds on Him more and getting that and giving Him glory. I mean, that's what life's about. It's not about school and bills and projects and whatever. Those are just the vehicles that. Drive us in our growth and our refinement in our relationships and our love with God and each other. Mhm, are there more questions, or is that it for today?

Rianon: There are more questions, but I don't know that we have time for them.

DIANA: Okay. How far are we? A half an hour in already. Oh, good. We're going to save them for next time. Awesome. Well, thank you so much, as always. I'll probably just say the same thing every time we're on. Thanks, Rianon. And I love doing this with you. I really do.

Rianon: Uh, well, thank you. I think your responses are helpful. They're helpful to me. I'm sure they're helpful to the people asking the questions and other listeners out there.

DIANA: Yeah. And I think the main thing for everyone to do with my podcast in general and these questions and answers is to think about them for yourself, see what you want to apply in your life that actually helps you, and some of it's going to be really helpful. Other, but you might be like, I don't know, and that's okay, too. So we're on the journey together. We're figuring it out together. All right, well, thank you so much. And just a reminder to anyone who wants to ask a question, the way to ask a question on this podcast is to go to the Renew Your Mind Facebook community and join. And Rianon will just remind you every month, hey, you got some questions. Make sure you post them. Or if you want it to be anonymous, you can send that message to her directly within the community. So there is a link to join on the podcast website that is Rympodcast.com. So that's it. I will talk to you all next week. Until then, take care of you.

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