



SYNOPSIS

Episode 24: Working With Your Mental Health for Less Stress & More Peace

MELANIE RENEE *from A HOARDER'S HEART*

Melanie Renee from A Hoarder's Heart shares how she has gone from being a level four hoarder to a level one hoarder and how that has impacted her daily life. She also gives some strategies that she has used to continue making progress, even with ADHD and anxiety.

MELANIE'S DAILY LIFE

Melanie describes her life as being full of craziness, kids, and cleaning. The craziness is how much she has jam packed into one day while getting kids where they need to be, recording for her YouTube channel, being a wife and mom, and working her business.

TIME BLOCKING

What helps Melanie is that she creates a time blocked list every day. She picks the most important things she wants to get done and sets up her time blocks.

She gives herself an extra hour to factor in that sometimes things run longer than expected or things don't go as planned. This buffer helps cover all the "what ifs" that can happen. If she doesn't need to use the extra hour for the top items on her list, she will use them to check off something that was less important.

Melanie uses time blocking mostly for work, but she does use it on the weekends in a much looser way.

She finds that creating her time block in the morning works best for her while her mind is still waking up and moving more slowly. Journaling and writing with pretty pens helps trick her mind into hyper-focusing and creating a map of the day.

WHEN THE DAY IS DERAILED

When the day gets completely derailed, Melanie gives herself a time out. A derailment usually means her mind is going crazy and has gotten jumbled.

If the weather is nice, she will go out for a walk to reset her brain. If it is wintertime, she will play some meditation music to calm herself.

Once she has calmed she will decide what she would like to start with first in the time she has left. Life happens and it isn't perfect. It's okay if we go over our time block or we are feeling a little crazy.

ANOTHER TOOL TO STAY ON TRACK

Melanie has found that she needs background music playing to entertain the "jumble" in her brain so that she can focus. She finds it soothing.

Some people find the opposite to be true. That's why it's important to try things to see what works for you. We're all so different.

MELANIE'S BACKGROUND

Melanie was a stage four hoarder for the majority of her life. The wake up call to change her life came from her children. They would come home from a friend's house and express how they wished their house was as nice and neat as their friend's.

She talked herself into making a change and started a YouTube channel. She originally hid her face because she wasn't ready to face the judgment that would come.

She started with the smallest drawer in her house and decluttered what she could. Everything had a deep emotional attachment and a story. She would explain her anxiety and her PTSD that was attached to the item.

Each week she was able to let a little more go with the help of the positive feedback she was getting. Decluttering began to be a positive experience. Over time she began to be able to clutter more and more so that now she is considered a level one hoarder after beginning as a level four.

THE CHANGES SHE NOTICED

Melanie has noticed she saves a lot of time by not having to look for things. She now knows exactly where to find everything.

There has also been a big change emotionally. Before, if someone came to the door, she felt terrified and would never let anyone in. She'd make an excuse that the house was a mess because they were redoing something.

Now she no longer has the weight of the shame of clutter. On a day to day basis she feels comfortable, at peace, and loves her home.

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO FEEL AT PEACE?

When asked how long it took to start feeling some of that peace, Melanie says it still pops up from time to time. It's been deeply rooted through most all of her life.

But how long it takes to really feel like you might just see that this is working will vary from person to person. Someone who is feeling really good, and has had their "aha" moment, getting things done quickly, will feel the confidence a lot sooner.

One the other end of the spectrum, if someone is scared and needs to take baby steps, they will still feel emotionally unsafe longer.

So the answer is whenever you feel emotional safety with how you've cleaned the house and decluttered. When you feel that, then you will begin to feel that safety when others come into your home.

THE FIRST STEP

The first thing you have to do is believe in yourself and love yourself. Believe that you are capable and start at a pace that feels emotionally safe. Congratulate yourself with each thing you let go and build from there.

MANAGING OUR THOUGHTS

The only thing that holds us back is our thoughts. Declutter your thoughts and the outside world will start to match it.

Tasha shared an analogy of the think, do, feel train. Start with what you know. That will drive your actions, and then your feelings will catch up. So, if we start with our feelings, fears, and

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anxieties, that is when the train gets derailed.

Reinforce positive thoughts by following up with “I can do this” and then go do something. Over time, the anxieties will get quieter because you addressed it, processed it, and released it.

LESS STRESS, MORE PEACE

The thing that brings Melanie less stress and more peace in her life right now is her quiet time in the morning. She feels this quiet time sets the tone for the day and provides a natural peace.

During this time she loves to journal in her gratitude journal or write what is on her mind. She will also read devotionals or verses from the Bible.

CALMING YOURSELF

Taking the time to notice the things around you that you are grateful for makes us slow down. Pausing to look for all the blessings we have each and every day will cause us to replace fear with love, joy, and peace.