



The Millennial Life

podcast

with Liz Higgins

Episode 1: Why YOUR Relationships Are So Important

Liz Higgins (00:02):

Hey, y'all! Liz Higgins here, and welcome to the Millennial Life Podcast, where my main goal is to share conversations that will inspire you and drive you toward the life and relationship you desire. I'm here to share what I've learned as a licensed therapist and relationship coach specializing in millennial relationships and wellness, as well as transformative conversations with other professionals. Thanks for listening and enjoy today's episode.

Liz Higgins (00:34):

Hello, hello everybody. Thanks for tuning in today. I'm so excited to bring you my first episode of the podcast. There is so much that I want to share with you, but I feel like the best place to begin is to just iterate to you how incredibly important your relationships are. Whether you're single, dating, engaged, or already married, the partnership that you end up in is going to bring so much joy, probably pain, probably heartache, I'm sure so much laughter and peace and harmony and all the good feels to you. And it's going to bring you so much personal growth if you let it. The need we have in our world for relationship will never go away. Never. We are meant to connect. We are meant to be in connection and we're meant to have secure, healthy, and fulfilling relationships. So a huge part of what I'm hoping to bring you is knowledge, tools, insights, and just some really engaging conversation with other professionals and thought leaders about relationships in the millennial generation.

Liz Higgins (01:52):

Now why are relationships in the millennial generation so important? Well, for the reasons I just mentioned, and also because we already know, studies show that the quality of your relationships in your life really reflect in the quality of your life and how satisfied you are all around. So they're pretty dang important. Now, I'm passionate about relationships because I've really always been, and that's kind of a cheesy way of just acknowledging, I think ever since growing up and just watching Disney and movies and chick flicks and all that fun stuff, like I have just been a relationship person. Interested in them, I like reading about them and that's true for me today. You will often find me scrolling on my phone, but upon further inspection, I'm usually reading some relationship blog or following a relationship thought leader, something like that. And of course I'm a licensed therapist.

Liz Higgins (02:55):

I'm a licensed marriage and family therapist and relationship coach. And so I love to work with people on all things related to their partnerships, their relationships to others, and family dynamics. What I also hope to bring to you today are just some thoughts about our generation as a whole and what might be some of the barriers that we face to really being in the relationships of our dreams, to being in healthy, fulfilling, and - million dollar word - lasting

relationships. I think that we're seeing a plethora of millennials experience relationship FOMO, just the fear of committing, fear of settling down, the fear of saying 'yes' to forever because that's a really freaking long time and relationships are changing faster than we can keep up. I mean, what helps a relationship last and succeed and flourish today is very different than what worked just a few decades ago.

Liz Higgins (03:58):

Certainly as we look back on generations, the whole model of what marriage is is changing and as somebody that is personally grounded in a lot of different values around marriage, one of those being like religious, I still feel very impacted by the changing narrative of relationships in our modern world. So I think it's a conversation very necessary and very worth having with each other. We need to know what it really takes to make it work, and a part of being able to be successful in other areas of our life like career or physical health, fitness, those types of things... Being a good parent, being a good friend, really tapping into your true passion and what you're on this world to do - everything boils down to relationship. And the fact is that when you're in a secure and committed partnership where you're truly practicing what works, you're truly practicing the, the art, honestly, of bringing your best self forward. Oh my gosh! The ripple effects into all the other areas of your life is just incredible.

Liz Higgins (05:15):

And I'm excited to share both some parts of my personal journey with you, as well as just have these great conversations with other people whose mission in life is to work with millennials or work in the area of relationship. So millennials - there's a reason why we're called the most anxious generation; and I'm kind of smiling slash cringing in my teeth as I say that because it both annoys me to be called the most anxious generation, but then it's also very true. And I know that just in myself. I am plagued by anxiety in lots of different areas of my life. And I think a lot of it has to do with the fast pace of our generation and our world today. And so many characteristics of who we are as individuals. Millennials can often be so driven. They're very motivated. They want to make an impact.

Liz Higgins (06:14):

I am going to speak for myself and say that I know I want to leave some kind of legacy. I want to leave a mark on this world to say that I did something that mattered and that impacted other people. I work with so many clients that say the same. They are entrepreneurs. They are business owners. They are, they have hopped around to these, like, different executive positions. They moved really high up on the totem pole at very young ages. And there's also a reason why they say that the midlife crisis has become the quarter life crisis. You know, we're just reaching these milestones at this much younger age and faster pace than we've seen any other generation. And now we are literally the greatest generation. There are more of us out in the workforce today than any other generation. So we're really in the forefront.

Liz Higgins (07:08):

We're in the limelight right now. And it is our time. Now the unfortunate piece for many millennials is that as lots of us inch into our mid to upper thirties, we're seeing more and more people get divorced and separate or, you know, they are in a relationship that doesn't last. And on the one hand, while I think it's great that as a whole, we're trying to push this narrative of being supportive and conversational with others and to not judge a situation or judge another

person's choices or decisions without really knowing what's going on, I think that there are also some real known facts that we are not truly practicing the effective skills and what it takes to have given a partnership relationship a real shot before we leave. There's a quote by Esther Perel. She says "We don't, we don't leave relationships because we're unhappy. We leave because we could be happier." Ooh, that quote kind of scares me.

And I think it does because it's true. Like, you know, we, we become dissatisfied. We're not okay with good enough. And good enough can feel like we're really settling below, below the bar that we created oftentimes at a very, very young age. And a big piece of what I've found myself doing in working with millennial clients is really, really reviewing, assessing expectations, and a lot of times rewriting the narrative that we've carried through our young adulthood into these older adulthood years, because there are some narratives that just don't work and they don't fit this, this life that we're trying to go for of being in a healthy, secure relationship. We have to really adjust our thinking and look at the beliefs we're carrying into our relationship. So we're the most anxious generation.

Liz Higgins (09:12):

Let's talk about some of the reasons why that might be. Choice paradox. That's one of, I think the greatest barriers that we're faced with and some might see it as opportunity, but if you don't know what choice paradox is, I really encourage you to do some post-episode Googling and learn a little bit about the studies done around choice paradox. The plethora of options we have in terms of finding an ideal partner are a little insane and it can often lead to paralysis, like literally frozen and unable to make a choice at all. It can be always having that question in the back of your mind, that's, that's saying "But could the grass really be greener? Like, ah, you know, could there be somebody better out there?" It's a scary place to be in that kind of mindset constantly because you could be in a relationship that's really, really great. Or let's just shift it into other areas of life.

Liz Higgins (10:14):

You could be in a job that's really, really great. But I think we've become conditioned to constantly question and to not feel certain of decisions we make or people in our lives. And it's, it just takes a lot longer for us to truly trust and to let go. As I've become an adult and now a wife, and now a parent, and a business owner, I've really had to, to allow my relationship to be a mirror to my, into myself. And, oh my gosh, how it's shown me the ways that I have trouble releasing control. It's just, and it's interesting because I didn't grow up like this controlling bully person. Like not at all. I'm sure friends and people that know me would say that, 'Oh, Liz, she's one of the sweetest people. She was always kind of like timid and this and that'. And you know, I love music.

Liz Higgins (11:11):

I love singing in choir. I was in marching band, like all this stuff, and I don't think anybody would have perceived me as controlling. In fact, I more so hated to be in the limelight. But now as I've become an adult, I'm like, damn, I really have a hard time releasing control and letting things be and allowing myself to lean into uncertainty. And I think that's partially human nature. Vulnerability is not supposed to feel easy, but it also goes to this extreme for so many of us. And I know this is true because I've worked with millennial clients now for years and we all kind of carry this narrative of constantly questioning things or questioning ourselves. So when we now

have choice paradox, just tons of options, (there's so many jobs you could go get, or there's so many partners you could potentially be with) in the palm of your hand...

Liz Higgins (12:11):

It can really make for a much harder time choosing something and feeling confident about it. I think there's a lot of things that can ultimately contribute to this experience of having difficulty trusting in yourself and just looking at some of those generational influences. I think certainly technology, certainly the movement of online dating, the creation of online dating within our generation and just looking at some of the economic facets of what millennials have experienced starting back in the recession of 2008. I mean, I still remember that stuff happening, even though I was a lot younger than I am now. I still remember like the experience my family had through that and some of the hardships and challenges that we went through. And then of course taking on lots and lots and lots and lots and lots of student loan debt and feeling like this path that was paved when we were in elementary school or junior high, like this, this golden path that was going to lead us straight out to this ideal life and lifestyle that we thought we were going to have, which just didn't turn out, being that way.

Liz Higgins (13:32):

And all of these things kind of creating this perfect storm for us to really have a hard time trusting. And it's, it's going to be the thing that we always have to look at and have to work on. But I see all these things that I've just been talking about also contribute to the way that people experience relationships, like partnerships. And it's hard to let go when you've kind of had this certain way of doing your life and then decide, you know, mid twenties, late twenties, (or maybe for some people now, early thirties) that you want to get married. You want to have a family. You want to do that whole thing, but you've also built a life for yourself now. And you're not in the same place as you were when you were 21, 22, 23. You're maybe not in this space of dependence and needing somebody to help you stand on your two feet.

Liz Higgins (14:32):

Like you, you made it happen for yourself. You might even be taking care of other people in your family. But you still want that dream life. I believe you can have both, but I think that for those of us that marry later or partner up later, it can be a real challenge to let go of some of that fierce independence that I see so many millennials have in their relationships. And it can kind of present as, like, very seemingly surface level things like, you know, having trouble deciding where you're going to eat or feeling like you can't be in agreement on life decisions, like the color you're going to paint your walls or what you're going to do on the weekend with friends, or should you visit who's parents for the holidays? Like there's lots of different ways these dynamics over issues of power and control, honestly, (which is what they are) show up.

Liz Higgins (15:39):

So as a couples therapist, I've seen a lot of this stuff go down and I've seen couples push, push, push through some of these expectations, generational influences, gender scripts, and all these things to really cultivate an awesome relationship with each other. And it's an amazing experience to be able to have. I mean, I have to say, like, becoming a therapist is both one of the coolest things I think I could have chosen to do, but also, it's been this path for myself to an even deeper... To an even deeper experience of my own growth and healing. So, the only reason why I'm even doing this podcast, is to share some of what I've been so lucky to learn

from my own learning education, graduate studies and all of these things on how relationships really, really work and how they thrive. And then, also, the things that I've been so lucky to witness and share in with clients, just stories and experiences and things that I've seen go down with people that have led them to create a different path, to create a new legacy, not only for themselves as individuals, and as a couple, but for generations to come in their family.

Liz Higgins (17:04):

It's truly amazing. So, yes, I'm psyched about talking over all things 'relationship' with you. And I want you to know that if you are a millennial listening to this, there is going to be stuff for you to take away and to actually implement into your life and relationships after you hear these conversations. Millennials are so open! They're open to learning. They're more open to mental health treatment than other generations have been. They're very open to personal development and growth. And again, like I said earlier, I know millennials want to create a legacy and leave an impact. It's a part of why I'm doing what I'm doing. I'm sure it's a part of why you're doing things you're doing in your life. So the point of this is to come together and have conversation, to learn and grow from each other, and to share where we can.

Liz Higgins (18:00):

I want to hear from you if there are topics that you'd love to hear me talk about, or to find somebody out there to interview on, I am all ears. Please know that that's exactly what I want this to be. Something where you feel like you are a part of it, you can contribute. And as, as like, as much as I'm sitting here in this room by myself, talking into a microphone - I'm thinking about you, I'm thinking about you out there, what you need, what you're going through and how we can be there for each other. So don't hesitate to reach out. Listen, relationships are the path to leaving your legacy. I don't just mean by having children, not necessarily that alone, but also by transforming the legacy you've been handed from generations previous. We truly have the capacity to change history when we go inward and learn to grow and stretch ourselves in new directions and ways that we hadn't thought.

Liz Higgins (19:02):

So I hope that this podcast can be a source of inspiration for you and something that just helps you become the best version of yourself, both in and out of relationship. That's the kicker, too, is that we can begin working on creating the relationship of our dreams even before we're in it. And I tell clients that all the time, there's no time like the present for you to go inward and work on you. And you can hold that standard of finding somebody out there that is doing the same. The hope is that the more people that can do this work, the more people that can take that challenge that life has given us to become our best self. Then the more of us there will be out there. And the hope is that we can all find ways to connect, and support each other, and continue on this mission.

Liz Higgins (19:56):

So I'm going to leave it at that for today, but if you've listened this far, I just want to thank you so much for being a part of this. And for letting me share some thoughts with you today. You may notice upon searching the podcast that this is actually one out of quite a few episodes that I'm launching all at once. So I'd love to hear feedback on what you think about these interviews and conversations. And if you are looking for more ways to get in touch with me or to learn about my counseling team in Dallas, please feel free to look us up at millenniallifecounseling.com. And I'm

super excited to bring new ways of connecting to you and allowing you to follow me, follow us and get these relationship tools, tips, and skills for millennials specifically from us. So follow us and stay tuned to the podcast. And I will see you next time! [inaudible]

Liz Higgins (20:58):

Thanks again for listening to the podcast. If you like the show, leave us five stars or write a review. If you're interested in learning more, sign up for my free ebook "The One Barrier to Commitment All Millennials Face" at millennialrelationships.com.

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