

# Ep #100: Reconnect with What Matters to You Most



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kristi Angevine

[Habits On Purpose](#) with Kristi Angevine

## Ep #100: Reconnect with What Matters to You Most

Welcome to, wait for it, Episode 100. I'm your host, Kristi Angevine, and I am here to help you understand why you do what you do, so you can live your life on purpose instead of tolerating habits that you don't love on autopilot. This week's topic is keeping sight of what really matters. I'll talk about the approach that helps me, and give you ideas for how it can help you too. Let's get started.

Welcome to *Habits On Purpose*, a podcast for high-achieving women who want to create lifelong habits that give more than they take. You'll get practical strategies for mindset shifts that will help you finally understand the root causes of why you think, feel, and act as you do. And now, here's your host, Physician, and Master Certified Life Coach, Kristi Angevine.

Happy New Year, everyone. Hello to all of you. Thank you so much for joining. Not only is it a new year, 2024, but the podcast has entered the triple digits. This means nearly two years of weekly episodes.

As I was preparing for Episode 100, I'm going to be honest, I watched myself have writer's block. I felt really stuck, I felt disconnected, I felt kind of blue, I felt kind of restless, and often \*gasp\* bored, which is something that I'm kind of unfamiliar with feeling. I usually default to anxiety, productivity, and busyness, so feeling restless and bored was really unusual for me.

I had parts of me show up that offered things like, "I have no idea what to say. I'm unoriginal. This should be helpful, but too bad it's going to suck." I had this critical part tell me that I should probably quit recording and quit podcasting, because if it's going to be this hard every time why would I want to continue. I had another part that just preferred to avoid starting and preferred to distract me with other things, anything besides sitting down and starting to write.

One thing that I have learned that helps me a ton in times like this, is to make space for everything that's coming up for me, and to ask for help. So, I made myself be a watcher of my own emotions in my mind. This forced me to meet myself where I was.

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And then, when my sweet seven-year-old son asked me one of his favorite questions, do you want any advice? I took him up on it. I asked him, “What do you do when you don't know what to say? How do I get started when it feels like torture?”

He told me, “First take a brain break, then do hot chocolate breath. Then, once you're in the green zone, then you can work. Just start. Just do it.” He goes on to say, “You get to appreciate what you write down. And even if you think it's dumb, other people probably won't.”

So, instead of smiling politely and thinking, “Oh, that's some really cute advice,” but not really applying it, I deeply listened and took it to heart. I find the simplest device can sometimes be so grounding and effective. So, that combination of meeting myself where I was and asking for help, helped me slog through what felt pretty miserable.

And when I did that, it hit me that the times in my life when I feel the most off kilter and unmoored are when I have lost sight of what matters most, and I've forgotten where I actually have agency. For me, this combination is its own special form of hell, made extra hellish because I don't often realize what's going on until I've been there for a while. It's an easy place to get to, especially if I'm not anticipating it.

That's precisely what I was experiencing with this podcast writer's block and my melancholy and restlessness, as of late. As I realized that, I slowly, like slow as a sloth slowly, remembered that I have a solution for this. I slowly came out of this fog and realized that over the years I've put together an approach that helps me get out of this type of a slump, and sometimes even helps me prevent it.

That's what this episode is all about. Now, when you listen to the end of this episode, you're going to hear about a very special giveaway gift that is right in line with this topic of deliberately focusing on what actually matters most. So, be sure to tune into the end.

Or if you don't have time to tune into the end, and today's just not the day, if you're not yet on my email list, number one, what are you waiting for? And

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number two, join my email list. I send out emails about once a week, plus or minus, with podcast previews and practical ideas related to habits and semantics and mindset.

The way that you get on that email list is just to go to [HabitsOnPurpose.com/email](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/email) and join the list. When you join the list, you will hear all about the details of this special giveaway gift.

So, now let's dive into the topic of today, keeping sight of what matters. This is an approach that I have organized in a way that helps my mind understand it and then implement it. I've organized it into the three most important aspects. Number one, is intuition. Number two, is being clear on what's essential and what's fluff. And number three, is noting what season of life I'm in.

Let's start with the first one, intuition. For me, intuition used to be this very ephemeral thing; living in my head, ignoring my body, ignoring or dismissing emotions; and only rarely listening to my gut. I had this erratic relationship with my intuition. And sometimes, without knowing what it was, I would actually follow my intuition, follow my instincts, but I didn't realize I was doing it and I had no idea why.

Other times, I was so busy that I didn't take time to actually get quiet, listen in, and feel into what I really needed and craved. It was like my connection to this still, quiet voice was obscured. Frankly, when I thought of intuition, I thought other people had access to it and I didn't.

Now, there are a lot of definitions of intuition. Some make it seem really magical or mystical, and perhaps out of reach for the everyday person. There are some that sort of border on thinking of intuition as a superstition. The definition that I like is a combination of a variety of sources, and it sounds something like this.

Intuition refers to something one knows from instinctive feelings rather than conscious reasoning. It's something you perceive as truth, independent of any overt reasoning processes. And to paraphrase Robyn Ezer, it's the quiet inner voice that speaks without words.

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I also consider intuition to be this inner knowing that I experience when I access what Internal Family Systems terms as “Self,” with a capital S, energy. It's a state of having clarity, connection, calm and confidence.

So, what I've realized over the years is, taking time to regularly get in touch with my intuition is as important as food and water and sleep and connection. And, it's how I build inner connection and relationship with myself.

There are so many ways to access intuition, and they vary for each of us. But I like to access it through physical movement, particularly things like riding my bike, or walking in nature, or going to yoga. Doing anything that helps me connect to my body, helps me turn down the volume of my analytical, intellectual, rational thinking mind. And then be able to listen to what is often nonverbal.

Intuition, I find, is in the spaces between thoughts, and it's accessible when that jar of glitter stops shaking and all the glitter and debris settles, and it's clear. And for me, movement helps me do this.

But I also like mental movement. By mental movement, I mean writing in my journal. It helps me move ideas and thoughts out of my head onto paper. There's something about that shifting that helps me access that often quiet clarity of my intuition.

Now, the way I differentiate intuition from just oft repeated dogma, or socialized ideas that I've internalized from culture, is I tune in to how an idea feels in my body, or how it feels emotionally when I think about it.

Does it feel solid, grounded, expansive? Does it feel True, with a capital T, in a really good way? Is it a hell yes! regardless of what other people might think about it? Or does it feel tight, heavy, constricting, maybe like an obligation?

For me, intuition feels good. A person that I adore is Cy Wakeman. She says this about intuition:

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“...Intuition arises through a counterintuitive nudge. It often nudges me to do what I love, even when it feels fearful or not in line with how most people would do it. The fear arises because the ego is inflamed, working to keep you in your comfort zone or to justify your current position. Intuition usually can't be rationalized and it can't be justified. If you're really in intuition you're also able to move at odds with the world and in tune with the world *at the same time.*”

For me, intuition is sometimes really obvious and crystal clear. And at other times it is quiet, and I will never hear it when I'm buzzing around. Just like you overlook scenery and subtleties in your environment when you are driving in a rush because you're late to get somewhere, intuition can be muffled when you don't slow down, get quiet, and listen.

So, for you, what helps you listen in and access your intuition? This is your homework: Find out what helps you and go do more of it. Make it a regular daily practice. There's a fun thing that you can do easily every day, and it is simply to do this: You state a statement that you know to be true. Like, for me, I could say, “My first name is Kristi.” And you see how that statement, which you know is true, feels in your body.

You can even do what we call the “sway test.” That's where you stand up, you say the statement, and you notice: Does your body move forward? Does it move backward? What happens in your body when you say something that is true?

Then you can compare this to when you listen into your intuition. What does it feel like to you? Does it feel like truth? When it feels like truth and it feels grounded, that's your intuition. The way this connects to what matters most, is your intuition is going to guide you at that. It is going to help you have abundant clarity on what actually matters and what doesn't.

Which leads me into number two, being clear on what is essential and what is complete fluff. Now, one of the people who's been instrumental in guiding me on this is the author, Greg McKeown. I reviewed his book *Essentialism* back in Episode 21. That book is so chock full of useful ideas that you should just go and read it, or listen to it. Or if you literally only have 20

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minutes, you can listen to Episode 21 to hear my take on it, and then go buy the book and read it.

So, I'm going to frame this discussion about being clear on what's essential and what's fluff with his quote. He shares,

“The Way of the Essentialist is the relentless pursuit of less but better. It doesn't mean occasionally giving a nod to this principle. It means pursuing it in a *disciplined* way. It is about pausing constantly to ask, ‘Am I investing in the right activities?’ There are far more activities and opportunities in the world than we have time and resources to invest in. And although many of them may be good, or even very good, the fact is that most are trivial and few are vital. The way of the Essentialist involves learning to tell the difference — learning to filter through all those options, and selecting only those that are truly essential. Essentialism is not about how to get more things done, it's about how to get the *right* things done.”

So, how do you get clear on what's essential and what's fluff? I agree with McKeown when he says, “To discern what's truly essential, we need space to think, time to look and listen, permission to play, wisdom to sleep, and the discipline to apply highly selective criteria to the choices we make.”

There's an entire section in the *Essentialism* book that's dedicated to these things; space to think, time to look and listen, permission to play, and wisdom to rest. When I find myself in my personal hell of feeling stuck, out of control, or disconnected from what really matters, it's almost universally when I have abandoned rest, play, time to think or time to listen, when I've gotten overly busy without taking breaks.

So, here's what I do. I take time to think on these fundamentals first. Number one, what do I value? What do I want?

Once I get clear on what I really value and what I really, really want, and I check in with my intuition to make sure that feels really solid, then I take time to evaluate. What am I doing in my regular day to day that is an obstacle to what I value and what I want? What is going on in my life that presents a challenge or an obstacle?

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And what am I believing regularly, about myself in the world, that's a barrier to doing more of what I value and more of what I want? Is my week made up of energy expended towards these values and priorities and wants? Or is it towards non-essential fluff activities? And if it is going towards non-essentials, how can I change that? How can I cut those out? How can I be creative, resourceful, scrappy, toward that which really matters?

And then, once I'm more explicitly clear about my values and what I deeply want for myself in my life, I take McKeown's sage advice and I make sure that I have the habit of reflection time, the habit of play, and the habit of adequate rest. It's in this time that I can make sure I'm on track, and not starting to veer towards the siren call of purposeless busying.

This is not a small feat for the achievement oriented, competitive, overthinking, perfectionist person that I sometimes am. It takes deliberately steering the boat in a different way than what comes naturally. Which is why I also employ the help from friends, mentors, coaches, and my therapist.

To review, to make sure that you are clear on what really matters, you need to cultivate your intuition. You need to be clear on what is actually essential and what is fluff. And number three, you need to know what season of life you're in.

This means you need to recognize that what really matters in one season might be different in another season. What really matters might show up differently for you in different seasons of your life. So, just as there is different weather in different seasons, there are different seasons in life.

When school is going on, and I pick up my second job as an Uber driver to take my kids to after-school activities, I have a certain focus that's a bit different than what my focus is in the summer, when I'm say focused on balancing work and out of town vacations. When it's November and December, and there's all sorts of holiday activities and lots of skiing to do, there's a totally different feel to that season.



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When I was dealing with sleep deprivation with having young babies, it was a different season than the season I'm in now where I have older, more self-sufficient kids. Residency and med schools, those were different seasons with totally different areas of focus.

It helps me so much to really clearly identify the season that I'm in. Why is this? It helps me be realistic about what I've got time to do, and it helps me plan accordingly.

If I'm trying to train for some long-distance mountain bike race, and simultaneously I'm going to be doing a lot of travel for speaking events, and when I get home, I have a bunch going on with my business and a lot of kid activities, I'm most likely going to butt up against some competing desires for how I use my time.

I'm most likely going to run out of time to do all the things that I would like to do, unless I skimp on something like sleep. So, the way I can be clear on what actually matters is to be straight up with myself about the season I'm in, and about what I want my season to focus on.

And this is the fun part, I get to recognize that seasons are temporary. You might shift what you want your main focus to be in one season and downgrade a previously higher-ranking focus, but it's not permanent. Therefore, this deliberate seasonal focus can help you not feel like you're forever abandoning something that you deeply value, it's just a certain season.

In some seasons, you might retain a stable list of what matters most, but you might adjust how you achieve that. Here's an example. Say that connection and presence with your family is a core desire. And you usually do that by volunteering at your kids' school, participating in weekend activities, doing dinner together more often than not, and attending your kids' sports practices.

But say you have this massive work project that's really important to you; it's the season of this work project. And there's a few months where work needs more time than usual, but you still want connection and presence.

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But to do this temporarily, you need to make the connection presence happen in smaller bits of time. Maybe this means that, temporarily, you stop volunteering in the classroom at school. You distill your exercise to HIIT workouts. You do C- for your household chores. And instead of hang-out time being a two-hour movie, you opt for a 45-minute game night.

And to build in tiny bits of connection you want today, for 10 minutes per person, make sure that you give your full attention to each kid and your spouse. Maybe instead of walking the dog alone, you do it with a kiddo.

In this particular season, you find a way to maintain presence and connection, but it might look very different in one season than the next. So, acknowledging what season you're in is another important part about remembering what actually matters.

In order to be clear on what really matters, you have to number one, cultivate your intuition. Number two, be clear on what's essential and what's fluff. And number three, recognize the different seasons that you're in.

Now, the last piece to this is, how do you remember your agency? And how do you remember where you have control and where you don't? When I lose sight of what matters and I lose sight of my agency, I am not paying attention to things I do have control of, things I don't have control of, and noticing the difference.

So, here's some things I don't have control of. I don't have control of the weather. I don't have control over other people's opinions. I don't have control of other people's thoughts, other people's feelings, other people's behaviors, or how other people perceive things. I have zero control over those.

Where do I have control? Well, I have control about what I think, what I choose to believe, what I tell myself on the regular. I have control over what I do, what I think about what I do, what I think about other people, how I respond to other people. And I have control over what I think about my emotions.

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If my time and energy is going toward trying to control things that I cannot control, you can see how it would be really easy to perpetually feel out of control. Versus, when I'm clear on where that line is, which lane is mine, which lane is not, I can focus on the areas where I do have control and learn to let go of the rest.

So, let's take an example that comes up all the time over the holidays and over the New Year, socializing with extended family and friends. When you are 100% clear on where you have control and where you don't, there's a lower likelihood of wasting precious mental and emotional energy trying to control how others think about you, how others feel towards you, and how others act towards you. This is a massive energy saver.

Think about it, does 20% of your day go to wondering how what you said was interpreted, and flashing forward to a hypothetical conversation that you might have to have to pick up the pieces? How much energy do you spend second guessing every text or every email that you write, because you're worrying how people might judge you, how people might perceive it?

When you explicitly acknowledge you cannot control the minds and emotions of others, but you have agency over your own ideas, your own mind, you get to routinely practice only exerting effort where you can realistically expect to have an influence. And the place where you can realistically expect to have an influence is internally.

So, if you can relate to feeling stuck, feeling like you aren't living with your values and your desires front and center, this might be occurring because you have lost sight of what really matters. It might be happening because you aren't taking time to listen to your intuition. You're spending your time on non-essential fluff instead of what's actually vital and essential. And/or you might not be acknowledging what season of life you're in.

If this is you, try this. What does your gut say to you when you ask, "Am I on track?" Then ask yourself, "How clear am I with what's essential and what's fluff?"

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Feel in for the answer. Does it feel open, expansive, and grounded? Or does it feel tight or heavy or narrow?

If there's anything in the way of being super clear about what's essential and what's fluff, just ask yourself, "What's in the way? What's in the way for me right now?"

Then you get to ask, "In the current season that I'm in, where can I say no, in order to say yes to something that matters more?"

Now, if you'd like to be formal about carving time out to reflect on what really matters, and if you happen to be a woman physician, you're in luck. I am giving away a really amazing gift and it is a free registration to attend one of the Women Physician Wellness conferences in 2024. The conference is put on by the lovely Dr. Erica Howe.

In 2024 there are three different tropical locations: in February, it's in the Grand Cayman. In May, it's in Aruba. In October, for the people who prefer to stay stateside, on Amelia Island in Florida. These conferences are what I call anti-conferences. There is CME, like any good medical conference.

But at these conferences, the primary focus is on wellness and self-care. The programming of the sessions are half days, where the afternoons are free to synthesize and reflect. And every day there are mind-body workouts and there are guided meditations. There's delicious food and so many really wonderful details are attended to, like the temperature in the conference room is set so that it's not freezing cold that you need winter apparel, even though it's summer.

The topics for the programming include things like, Neuroscience Hacks for Increased Confidence, Perfectionism, Building Your Dream Practice, Building Psychological Safety As a Leader, Curating Connection for Growth and Advancement. These are literally some of the talks that are going to be in the February Grand Cayman event.

Now, this is what one of the attendees said. She said,

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“The speakers were absolutely fantastic. I felt like I was listening to a bunch of TED Talks. The location was glorious. I liked that the conference was half a day. Even though I felt very engaged with the talks, my attention span was spent at the end of the morning. The food was outstanding, hands down the best conference food I've ever had. I liked that we all sat at round tables and the seats were assigned. That, along with the breakout sessions each hour, allowed us to stay engaged throughout and make new friends.”

To learn more about this, you can go to [WomenPhysiciansWellness.com](http://WomenPhysiciansWellness.com). You can see all of the dates, all of the locations, all of the speakers, and then you're going to want to enter the drawing to get a free registration to attend the conference.

The way you do this is you go to [HabitsOnPurpose.com/WPW](http://HabitsOnPurpose.com/WPW), and when you enter, if your name is drawn you get to pick which conference that you'll attend. The registration, which is about \$1,950, is 100% waived. It is my gift to you, to give yourself the self-care and wellness focus that you need. All you've got to do is get yourself to the conference and get yourself a room at the resort hotel.

Again, to enter the drawing to go to the Women Physicians Wellness conference, with your registration completely paid for, go to [HabitsOnPurpose.com/WPW](http://HabitsOnPurpose.com/WPW). To review all the dates and all the details and to look at your schedule and decide where and which tropical location you want to go to, simply go to [WomenPhysiciansWellness.com](http://WomenPhysiciansWellness.com).

Have a beautiful rest of your week and I will talk to you next week.

If you love what you heard today, I would love it if you would let me know. It would mean the world to me if you would consider scrolling down, leaving the podcast a rating, and a very, very short review. I know your time is precious, and it is not a small thing to take a moment out of your busy day to do so. But it means so much for the discoverability of the podcast, and it means so much to have your word-of-mouth endorsement so that other people can find this work. Thank you so much for your review.

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If you're listening and you're thinking the time to start being intentional with your habits is now, and you're a woman physician, you're going to want to go to the *Habits On Purpose* waitlist. Because when you sign up to this, you're going to be the first to hear about all the enrollment information and updates for the next round of my small group coaching program, *Habits On Purpose* for Physicians.

The small group coaching program is really incredible because it gives you an intimate community of like-minded physicians who want to work on their habits. We focus on habits ranging from overthinking, overwhelm, busying, second guessing, getting triggered, work stress, relationship stress, parenting stress, charting, self-doubt in leadership roles, people pleasing, etc.

The next round will begin in February, and it comes with CME. So, if you're interested, go to [HabitsOnPurpose.com/waitlist](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/waitlist) and you'll be the first to hear about the details.

Now if you're more interested in private coaching, that's also an option. I have a few spots open right now. I coach physicians as well as non-physicians, and women as well as men. To connect to see if we're a good fit, if what you would like to achieve is a match for my coaching style, you can go to [HabitsOnPurpose.com/private](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/private). Until next week.

Thanks for listening to *Habits On Purpose*. If you want more information on Kristi Angevine or the resources from the podcast, visit [HabitsOnPurpose.com](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com). Tune in next week for another episode.