



## Gratitude: The Gateway to Joy



The  
*joyful*  
Movement  
Show

Episode 50

[00:00:00] **Kim:** Hey there, friends and welcome to the joyful movement show. This is episode 50. Which I just got to say is a pretty big milestone that I am excited to be celebrating along with you today. If you're joining us for the first time, I am so glad you found us here. I'm your host, Kim Hagle personal trainer and registered holistic nutritionist, on a mission to help women break free from toxic fitness culture or diet culture, dictating how we should eat, how we should exercise and how we should look so that we can live the amazing life that's waiting for us feeling great in our bodies and confident in our own skin no matter our size.

[00:00:41] So we're getting closer and closer to that one year mark of this podcast, which I'm so excited about.

[00:00:47] As a reminder on the one-year anniversary show in two weeks from today. If you're listening to this in real time, I'll be doing an ask me anything episode where I'll be answering your questions about life, business, my own journey with food and movement and body image. Parenting relationships, anything you want? It's all on the table.

[00:01:09] So just shoot me your questions via email. [hello@radiantvitality.ca](mailto:hello@radiantvitality.ca), or DM me on social media and I'll answer them on the October 24th episode. Now I think it's perfect timing that this 50th episode is coming out right around when we celebrate Thanksgiving here in Canada. Because this podcast community, this network of women who together are changing the way that we engage with movement and our bodies and ourselves, is one of the things that I

am most grateful for this Thanksgiving. Of course, in addition to my family, friends, health, and so many other things. And it truly brings me so much joy to be able to connect with you in this way.

[00:01:59] As I was sitting and reflecting on how thankful I am for this podcast and all of you, and the interactions that we've had because of the things that you've learned here- I became aware of how those thoughts of gratitude create the feeling of joy. Have you ever noticed this in yourself? How thoughts of gratitude fill you with joy?

[00:02:20] Well, it's no coincidence. Gratitude is the gateway to feeling joy. I am a huge fan of Brene Brown, and this is something she talks about inside her book, "Daring Greatly", and also on a number of YouTube videos, which I've linked in the show notes for you to check out.

[00:02:38] So in this Thanksgiving episode, I thought it would be a great time to chat about the intersection between gratitude and joy. I'll share some of Brene's research on the topic. And that's what I really love about her is that she is a researcher. So everything she talks about is backed by science, but she's takes that data and makes it super relevant and applicable to our everyday lives.

[00:03:02] And I want to extrapolate some of her ideas and talk about how we can cultivate more joy for movement by tapping into gratitude. Now Brene Brown is a shame researcher. So she talks to people who've experienced immense trauma and great difficulty in life. As an aside, I highly recommend that you'd read her books, particularly Daring Greatly, and The Gifts of Imperfection, to learn about how vulnerability, connection and self-compassion are the antidote to shame. It's really life-changing stuff that she talks about.

[00:03:40] But what I wanted to make note of is something that Brene said in one of her videos about joy. Which is that in her 12 years of researching shame. All the people that she interviewed ever. The ones who would still describe themselves as being joyful people or being able to find joy in life. Despite all the hard stuff that they've experienced. Every single one of those people had a gratitude practice. And by that, I mean, a tangible, intentional and consistent method for practicing gratitude.

[00:04:18] Like every day, journaling things that they're grateful for or saying out loud at the dinner table with their family, something that each person is grateful for. Even on the bad days. Even on the days when it seems like everything in the whole world is wrong. In fact, maybe even, especially on those days.

[00:04:37] These people who feel joy in life dig deep, even on the hard days to think of something, to be grateful for. And I think that's such an important nugget of truth and something that I know I've been guilty, of getting backwards. And I think a lot of us get backwards. Gratitude leads to joy. Joy doesn't lead to gratitude.

[00:05:02] Do you follow me? So many of us wait for things to be good for our circumstances to be perfect, or until we work hard enough to achieve the things we think will make us happy and content before we take time to be grateful. But it's in being grateful for what is that we find our joy. I know, I often need the reminder that gratitude can exist, even when things aren't perfect, or even when things are downright crummy.

[00:05:32] And that to me is the difference between happiness and joy. Happiness is an emotion that generally comes from being satisfied with our circumstances. In other words, if things are going the way that we like or how we think things should go, then we're happy. And joy on the other hand is a deeper feeling. It's almost spiritual. It's like a knowing that we're part of something bigger; that we're on purpose. We're grounded, connected, and satisfied.

[00:06:03] It's intangible and it's not dependent on action. There's a saying that goes: gratitude turns what we have into enough. And I like that saying, because that to me kind of sums up joy. It's like a knowing that what we have, who we have, and who we are is enough. And we're so fortunate and blessed to be experiencing all of it.

[00:06:31] I really love that distinction. And I want to dig into it a little more, especially in terms of how it relates to movement, because often when people hear the term joyful movement, they automatically think it means feeling totally blissed out happy, and loving every second that you're exercising. And while that certainly can happen, that's not really what joyful movement means.

[00:06:57] That kind of definition to me is similar to the runner's high, that euphoric feeling that some runners get sometimes when all the stars are aligned and it's a beautiful day and they're in the flow and everything feels great and effortless, and like they could just go on all day. They're just so in love with the activity. And that's a fantastic feeling to have. But any runner will tell you they don't feel that every time they go out. I sure as heck don't. And if we think that's what joyful movement is, we're probably going to give up on the whole idea.

[00:07:33] Now you all know that I am a runner running is my most joyful activity. And I say that even currently when this fall it's been a bit of a struggle. I've been training for an event and my body has been resisting it with some tight calves and sore feet. There's lots of days where I go out to train and my legs are sore. Or where it feels like I'm always running into a headwind, no matter which way I go. My body hurts, and when I just can't wait for the whole experience to be over.

[00:08:06] In the past, those runs would make me miserable. I'd be ruminating about how hard it was, how I was struggling to get through it, how I wasn't hitting my speed targets or how I need to push through to get the distance that was on my training plan, even though it hurt. Back then I really thought that I could only enjoy running if everything was perfect, or if I thought my performance was good enough.

[00:08:34] You'll probably remember a recent interview we had with my client Jemma back in episode 45, where she shared the same sort of experience that joyful movement to her seemed impossible whenever there was struggle or imperfect conditions. And maybe you can relate to that too.

[00:08:52] I think that one of the biggest things that keeps us unhappy, is when we view what we have, what we can do, or ourselves in general, as lacking. When we believe that our circumstances are stacked against us and we aren't good enough- of course, we're going to feel unhappy. But when we do this, we're taking a very narrow view.

[00:09:16] We're looking outside of ourselves. Outside of this moment, outside of what we have to determine how we feel. And when we do this, we can't experience true joy and fulfillment. On the other hand. When we're able to pause and come back to the present moment. And see the inherent value in ourselves and focus on what is good about our life, this moment in time, what our body can do today and what we're able to experience as a result- that's where gratitude can come in.

[00:09:50] Being able to say thank you for what you have and seeing that what you have is enough changes how you experience those tough moments. I still don't get the runners high all that often. But when I'm having those difficult run days, instead of focusing on all that's wrong, I now choose to take a deep breath, look around me, and be grateful for the beautiful area that I live in, and that I get to run here. I can be grateful for the time alone to clear my head or listen to music or an inspiring podcast. I'm grateful that my legs, even though they're

sore are carrying me around and allowing me to experience this time. And I'm thankful for the wind cooling me as I run.

[00:10:38] And guess what? When I do this, I'm reminded of how fortunate I am to have this body and to be in this place and to be able to participate in this activity that feeds my body, mind, and soul. Instead of focusing on how hard it is and how much it sucks and how I'm not sticking to my training plan.

[00:10:58] Which causes me to feel dread and to push myself harder just to get it done and hopefully meet my targets. Instead I slowed down. Reconnect to my breath and my body and the sights and sounds around me. And I begin to feel a peace come over me. It's that knowing that I was talking about that what I'm doing is enough. That who I am is enough. But I don't have to hit targets for this to be a good run. In fact it doesn't have to be run at all. I can walk.

[00:11:31] No matter what I choose it's enough. I am enough. And they're in, my friends is the joy. It's not bliss. It's not euphoria. It's not everything being perfect. It's knowing that what I have, what I'm doing and who I am is enough.

[00:11:52] Now Brene Brown also talks about how joy can be the most terrifying human emotion. She spoke about this in an interview she did with Oprah on super soul Sunday, which is also in the show notes. And it really resonated with me. We as humans, have a tendency to be terrified of joy. Because anytime we feel so deeply fortunate and blessed. The automatic tendency is to jump into dread that it will be taken away. Right.

[00:12:19] The whole, what if something happens type thinking. She describes it, like looking over your sleeping child and just being overwhelmed by how much you love them and feeling that incredible joy that they're yours, but then immediately your brain goes into what if something happens to them? Like, whenever we feel that deep, true joy- dread is right on its heels. Brene says that when we lose our tolerance for vulnerability, Joy becomes foreboding. I just love that quote. In other words, in moments of joy, we try to beat vulnerability to the punch, to avoid the let down when the other shoe drops.

[00:13:00] And I think a lot of us do this also when it comes to experiencing joyful movement. Particularly because of diet culture's influence. When all we've ever been sold is go hard, burn the calories, no pain, no gain. And really that exercise needs to suck in order to be effective. And then we start to make the shift toward joyful movement, where we begin to move in ways that are respectful and nurturing for our body. And it feels good. And suddenly we're starting to feel so alive and free and connected as we move.

[00:13:32] Much like what I previously described with my running, where I now listen to my body's cues when it's tough and I slowed down so that I can still find joy in the activity. The natural instinct is to judge that as not good enough. Or we jump into fear, about what people will say about us, if we take a modification or if we don't perform, as we always used to.

[00:13:55] Or we worry that we'll gain weight, if we're not exercising at our maximum capacity. And we snap back into that, "not good enough" mindset and distrust of ourselves and our body. But Brene says what the joyful people do, which is an area of growth for me, and all of us, is that instead of shuttering with terror, instead of letting the dread take over when they experienced joy, they express gratitude.

[00:14:25] So joy then is a cycle that begins and ends with gratitude. Gratitude begets joy and gratitude sustains joy. So my friend, if you've been struggling to get your head around this whole joyful movement thing, here's a few questions I'd encourage you to sit with and ponder.

[00:14:48] Number one. Are you confusing joy with happiness? Are you thinking that everything has to be just right before you can feel joy? Are you coming at movement from a place of needing to fix or change yourself and only once you do will you be happy?

[00:15:07] Number two, when you're moving your body or exercising, what is your self-talk? Are you focused on meeting targets, burning calories, doing your best, just getting things done, plowing through.

[00:15:20] And that leads into number three, which is if so, what can you be grateful for today? What do you have? What can you do? Who's in your life that you're so fortunate and blessed to have? What can your body do that you're thankful for? How does movement help you feel connected, alive, and free?

[00:15:44] So step four, it's not really a question it's just a tip. Acknowledge that what you have, what you're doing and who you are, are enough.

[00:15:57] And then moving into number five. Notice how you feel when you think about these things, what does that sensation of joy and knowing that you're enough brought upon by thoughts of gratitude, feel like in your body? What does it feel like to exercise or move when you're focused on gratitude?

[00:16:17] And my last tip for you, number six. If you catch yourself falling into the it's not enough trap or dreading exercise, thinking it's not good enough,

then go back to step three, come back to gratitude. What can you be grateful for today?

[00:16:34] I'll always come back to gratitude. That's the tip that I really want us all to leave with today. My biggest takeaway when I was researching this podcast is , when Brene said that those people who are joyful have a regular gratitude practice; it takes dedicated practice of thinking, grateful thoughts to cultivate the feeling of joy, and to feel comfortable staying in the joy. So maybe you'll want to start a gratitude journal or have a daily gratitude check-in around your dinner table with your family.

[00:17:08] But I also think it can be a really powerful practice to bring into your movement. So I'd really like to encourage you to try that going forward, whether you're consistently moving your body or not. Practice giving gratitude to your body for all the things that it does for you, so that you can experience all that you have in life.

[00:17:32] So to my Canadian friends, happy Thanksgiving. And to all of you, I just want to say with so much sincerity that I am grateful for you. I am grateful for you.

[00:17:47] I hope that you loved this episode. If you did, please share it and tag me on social media. I'm @radiantvitalitywellness so that I can give you proper thanks. And if this podcast in general has been having a positive impact on your life, I'd love if you could take a moment to leave us a five-star rating or review on apple podcasts. That just helps the podcast move up the ranking so that more women who need this message can hear it.

[00:18:13] I so appreciate you taking the time to listen today. I'll see you back here next Monday for more non diet motivation.

[00:18:20] Be well, my friend and here's to your radiant vitality.