

The Uncensored Caregiver Podcast

with Master Certified Coach Iryna Ishchenko

Episode 40: How I processed my shame.

Iryna Ishchenko [00:00:00]:

You probably heard from me many times. Let your emotions happen. Don't hide from them. Don't avoid them. I just had a big kept an obvious moment related to this podcast, and I want to tell you how I have Processed my emotions in that situation. So you have a real life example of how it's done. Let's talk about it. Here is what happened.

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A caregiver I've been working with, mentioned to me they believe my podcast is great, But they are not able to listen to it because of their hearing impairment. My first reaction was shame, A lot of shame. I was ashamed because I believe in inclusivity. No matter what difference people have, Our physical bodies function differently. Our brains work differently. Our life circumstances are different. And none of those differences should prevent a person from accessing any of the aspects of life, including information. And while caregivers have a lot in common, we're still a very diverse bunch.

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I firmly believe every caregiver Should have access to help and information. That was the whole point for me of starting this podcast. And I didn't think of such an obvious thing. A podcast is an audio format, which makes it inaccessible for people who don't hear unless I provide a transcript. So my shame came from not thinking about such an obvious fact. And there is another fact. I have known this caregiver for quite some time. We have worked both in person and online.

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I always make sure this particular person sees the faces during the in person events to be able to read the lips, And I make sure the captions are generated for our online meetings. Whatever interactions we have, I always think about how can I make it easier for someone who doesn't hear well? How could I not think about podcasts. I don't know. That's why I felt so much shame. What would you do in such situation? Here is what not to do. It's not the time to start beating up myself for being so insensitive, uncaring, or unattentive, And it's not the time for blaming myself for failing my own commitment to inclusivity. Pulling my hair out would definitely look dramatic, but it would not help the situation. It's also not the time to say to myself, It's not my fault someone cannot listen to my podcast because of their hearing differences, and they should either figure it out on their own or make their own accommodations, or agree that podcasts are not for everyone.

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Yes. Someone's hearing is not my responsibility, but it is my responsibility to decide what I want to do about it. So here is what I did instead. 1st, I acknowledged I was feeling shame. I named it. I focused my attention on what was happening in my body. My cheeks felt hot. My heart was beating faster than usual.

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I observed that with curiosity. This is how shame felt in my body. The thoughts that were racing in my mind were, What is shame I didn't think of transcripts for the podcast? And then I was bringing it back to my heart palpitations. These palpitations are what shame is. And then they were gone, And I was okay. The sky didn't fall. I survived. And now, I could think clearly What I could do in the given situation.

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I was thinking about that without shame. So what could I do? I can produce the transcripts. That's not a difficult thing to do with current technology. And starting from

this episode, each one will have a downloadable transcript on the website, and the links will be in the description of the episode. And eventually, I might add the transcripts to all the previous episodes, or I can put them together as a small book. I haven't decided yet. If you have thoughts and opinions about it, please let me know. Visit the uncensored caregiver.com to leave your to leave your message to me.

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I also emailed the caregiver with my apologies for not thinking of adding the transcripts earlier, And inform the caregiver what I was going to do about that. I did it for myself. I didn't do it out of shame, embarrassment, or fear of rejection. My shame was gone at that point. I could think clearly and rationally. I owned my mistake, and I wanted to inform the caregiver How I was going to move forward, that was important for me regardless of the reaction of the caregiver. At the same time, because my shame was processed and gone at that time, I didn't really need the caregiver to absolve me of my mistake. I didn't need the external approval Or the external solution to feel better myself.

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I got better because I let myself feel the shame. So I sent the email, and the caregiver's response was sweet and graceful. Please don't beat yourself over the transcripts. And this is, my friend, Where the devil is. When we say to ourselves, don't beat yourself up, We resist the shame that we feel in the given situation, or whatever Other emotions can be coming up with this don't beat yourself up. And because the phrase, Don't beat yourself up assumes there is another option that we can feel when we mess up. Like, if there is an option to feel joy, excitement, or contentment when we mess things up, And we start treating ourselves as if we don't choose this option, whether it's available or not. Like, if we don't choose not to feel shame.

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So in addition to shame for messing things up, We have shame for having shame for messing things up. And on top of that shame, we layer frustration Because we are not

supposed to beat ourselves up, but we do it anyway. And then maybe disappointment with ourselves And a sprinkle of resentment. And it becomes a snowball rolling down the hill and layering More and more of the negative emotions. The magic of not getting into the avalanche of negative emotions is in the pause between the acknowledgement of the emotion and the action we want to take Right away, out of that emotion. I call it a curiosity pause. To be curious about what's happening in the body at the time when I feel that emotion. The curiosity pause by itself can redirect your mind from self judgment and self blame To a more neutral reaction.

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Isn't it fascinating? Shame is a very common emotion for caregivers. Not because of not providing the transcripts, of course. It could be a shame for not wanting to be a caregiver. The shame of dislike, resentment, and hate for the parents that we're taking care of. Shame of, making decisions against the parents' will. Shame for losing our temper, and million other reasons. If you have shame or any other strong negative emotion frequently, here's what I invite you to do. Take a curiosity pause.

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Here are 3 steps how you can do it. Step 1, Ask yourself what you feel at this moment. Name that emotion. And even if you don't know the exact name of that emotion, just it's like feels, Whatever it is, just name it the way how it makes sense to you. Then step 2, Scan yourself from top to bottom, from head to toes, to find where that sensation is sitting in your body. How you can describe it? How would you describe it to a person who doesn't know what emotions are? In step 3, Stay with that sensation for a couple of minutes. Try it and let me know what you got. And one more thing, which is a request for you.

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Please don't make yourself invisible. Whether it's transcripts for audio material, a large print, a different form of the presentation delivery, or anything else, Please ask. The worst thing that could happen, you won't get anything. That is the worst thing. But

there is also a possibility for the good outcome, and the best outcome possible is you actually might get The accommodation that you need. Asking for help is also a form of taking care of yourself. Right? I'm sending you all my love. I'm master certified coach Iryna Ishchenko, and I'll talk to you next week.