

Episode 24 Becoming Better at Live and Love w/Riana Milne



Riana Milne 0:00

There's another fascinating study by the Kaiser Permanente Group, equating how unhealed childhood trauma brings on early disease and death. And it's fascinating with what the topic is. We're talking today with childhood trauma and the psychological impacts on relationships, love dating, and even in career and in how you feel in life.

David Sandstrom 0:31

Welcome to the Holistic Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing

your health, potential and body, mind and spirit so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, Naturopathic Doctor and Biblical Health Coach, and this is episode number 24.

David Sandstrom 0:54

Today, we have Riana Milne on the show. Riana is a Global Certified Life Dating and Relationship Coach, a Certified Mindfulness Coach. She's an educational speaker and a number one best selling author. Her mission is to help women men and couples of all ages overcome and heal from past childhood dating and relationship trauma to move on to create a life and relationship they're passionate about. Riana Welcome to Holistic Health Matters.

Riana Milne 1:20

Hi, thank you so much. How are you? Dr. Dave?

David Sandstrom 1:23

I'm doing great. Thank you for being here. Appreciate your, your giving us the time.

Riana Milne 1:27

Well, thank you for inviting me on, I really appreciate it. Well,

David Sandstrom 1:31

you know, there's a strong connection between relationships, and overall health and well being especially our physical vitality that many people have not connected the dots. When I was writing my book, The Christians Guide to Holistic Health, I came across a study that was published in the journal Harvard health. And they talked about relational connectedness and how a lack of relational connectedness can impact our health. The researchers found that it can significantly impact our all cause mortality. And they said a lack of relational connectedness is roughly equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and greater than traditional lifestyle factors like obesity, and sedentary lifestyle. So,

Riana Milne 2:12

Interesting.

David Sandstrom 2:13

That's pretty shocking. I mean, how we, we all know that obesity sedentary lifestyle, and smoking will impact our health in a negative fashion. But how many people know that a lack of relational connectedness is actually worse than all of that. It's pretty amazing.

Riana Milne 2:28

There's another fascinating study by the Kaiser Permanente Group, equating how unhealed childhood trauma brings on early disease and death. It's a fascinating with what the topic is. We're talking today with childhood trauma, and the psychological impacts on relationships, love dating, and even in career and in how you feel in life. But this was all about disease illness done with a group of obese people, you know, a lot of the findings came out, and they develop the ACE score test, adverse childhood events. And I thought that was fascinating to see, because my childhood trauma checklist was different. Some things were the same. But some things were very different. And I thought that was fascinating, because I'm like, how could they miss abandonment? And could they miss being bullied as a kid? You know? So yeah, it's interesting, though, study to see being that you're into health and feeling well, all over holistically?

David Sandstrom 3:31

Yeah. Well, you know, it's my contention that we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's designed for spirit, mind and body. And I don't have to tell you that it's not God's design that

we suffer from physical or sexual or emotional abuse as children. So for a lot of us, we've got some healing to do, we've got to correct some of those problems, because we can carry that into adulthood, those things don't just go those wounds don't just go away on their own, do they?

Riana Milne 4:01

Now, as a matter of fact, they are carried into adulthood and most people are not consciously aware that they have unhealed childhood trauma. And the research shows that this goes through at least three family generations. So if you have childhood trauma your mom and dad did, and so did theirs. So that's the first step. And the research also shows that 90% of us have at least 1 to 3 of the traumas on my top 10 list. However, the other 10% they kind of say as a side joke, or sociopathic people that say Nothing's wrong with me, it's all you. The important thing is knowledge is power. And that's where we start with people understanding as a factual point of view. Oh, yes, I did experience this. Okay, and how is this coming out now in my adult life, love relationships or in my career?

David Sandstrom 4:55

Yeah, you know, I didn't read your main books, but I did read your ebook. This one is called The Shocking Truth, Why Nine out of Ten Adults Struggle in Life and Love How to Have the Love You Deserve. And I thought that was incredible for a free download. I was amazed you don't charge for it because it is loaded with great information.

Riana Milne 5:12

Thank you. Yeah, it's part of the research I had, I was doing the research and started my Love Beyond Your Dreams book, Break Free of Toxic Relationships to Have the Love You Deserve. And that went to a number one Amazon bestseller in several categories. But I got up to 400 pages. And I'm like, I've got to stop, I have 400 pages. But I have so much more to say. Now, the research was just so phenomenal. And I said, Well, I'm on a mad mission now to change the way the world loves, for people to understand this to help heal this within themselves, to have a different type of empathy and communication style. So that you know, and you are also faith based in a lot of this study for their healing that I do is faith based. It's really important to understand these concepts and how to communicate around when somebody is emotionally triggered, so that you have lifelong love and happiness in your relationships and marriages. Excellent.

David Sandstrom 6:10

Yeah, it's such a great topic. I mean, we can all benefit from that information that you're sharing. And I can relate to, you know, trimming the book down my books, 325 pages, but I could have easily had double that if I wasn't careful. I had to you know, trim it down, because I know, people weren't gonna pick up a 600 page book and read it. Yeah, you gotta you got to give people what they can what they can digest.

Riana Milne 6:31

Mm hmm.

David Sandstrom 6:32

In your in your ebook, you have a checklist there on? Have I experienced childhood trauma? Because most of us say, Well, no, actually had a good childhood. No, I did. Okay. Oh, well, what was that time that my dad beat me up and kicked me to the ground? But you know, that was a long time ago.

Riana Milne 6:48

They just kind of normalize it and was no big deal. Right?

David Sandstrom 6:52

Hmm. So could you talk a little bit about some of those those areas that we could experience that we may not be aware of?

Riana Milne 7:00

Yeah, so I'll go into the top 10 as a summary, anyone that's listening that has pen and paper might be curious to write it down. Or you can just go get the E book later if you're driving. But as I go through this list, it's really important that you don't feel any blame towards your parents at this point, because most parents do the best that they know how, right and again, if you had trauma, they came from trauma. So we have to look at this with a new spiritual forgiveness and understanding. And then second, we don't want you to feel any shame around this, have you experienced any of these, because you were a child, you were just a part of your environment. As children, we don't have the ability to change things up or the emotional maturity, psychologically, to do anything except childlike survival behaviors and coping mechanisms. So and then when people do those, they become so ingrained and normalized that that's usually what comes out as an adult. So as we go into them, the first one is if there was any

addiction in your mom or dad or caretakers so the Kaiser study says drugs or alcohol. Now I am a drug and alcohol addiction specialist. So it's drugs, alcohol, sex, meaning you knew if your parent was cheating, porn, gambling, hoarding, spending, eating, gaming, TV watching workaholism, and I've had recently social media addiction to many parents being on their machines and kind of ignoring the kids, or to take care of the kids, putting them on mini computers to kind of get them quiet. And then they form a machine dependency as they get older. So those are the top addictions.

David Sandstrom 8:47

Can I interrupt you right there, Riana I just want to say one point to that. And that is what you just described there a lot of those things like porn and other addictions. They're symptoms of something underneath there. There's something going on beneath the surface, they learn best and that kind of a symptom. But we don't want to focus on dealing with the symptom, we want to get to the root of the problem, which is the trauma.

Riana Milne 9:10

And this is where a lot of the drug and alcohol facilities fail. Now, I taught at the college level, many of the courses for the LCA DC which is to be licensed as a drug and alcohol counselor. And I said, how many people are teaching the ACA, which stands for adult child of an alcoholic, or the childhood trauma work to help your clients really heal, and two people out of a class of 65? raise their hand. Wow. And I said, if you're not teaching this, this is why your clients keep relapsing, because they're not getting to the core of the issues.

David Sandstrom 9:48

So you've decided to make some improvements to your health and well being. You're listening to shows like this week and get information that can help take your health to the next level. The trouble is getting educated and implementing effective strategies is time consuming and can be expensive, not to mention overwhelming. That's why I wrote my book the Christians guide to holistic health. In my book, I've taken 20 years of research and experience as a natural and holistic health coach, and distilled it down to what you need to know, to maximize your health potential in body, mind and spirit. It's my contention that we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's designed for spirit, mind and body. My book, the Christians guide to holistic health will

put you on the fast track to the vibrant health and vitality you've been looking for. By the way, many of my recommendations won't cost you a nickel, they're free. Because a lot of my message is simply aligning our lives more fully with the Word of God, that doesn't cost you a thing. So if you'd like to avoid, overwhelm, and get some biblically based holistic health information that you can implement right away, go to my website, David Sandstrom comm, forward slash book, and you can learn more, and pick up a copy today. If that doesn't work, you can go directly to Amazon. It's available there in paperback, Kindle, and audible. Let's get back to the show.

Riana Milne 11:17

And I often get somebody you know who pays for their child, I had a 45 year old where his mother Page he goes, he's been to seven rehabs, jail three times, his son won't talk to him, you're my last hope. I said Give him to me. And he's doing brilliantly he went to chef school at 21 really did nothing to it, we were able to find him a great job in a restaurant. He went from living in a sober house to being independent from a bike to a car. I mean, his whole life changed and of course having a good relationship with his son, when he learned the proper communication tools to reconnect in a positive, loving and spiritual way. Excellent. So there's so much it's such gratifying work to see the transformation of the people I've had the honor to work with.

David Sandstrom 12:07

Excellent. That's good stuff.

Riana Milne 12:09

Mm hmm. Okay, the second one is if there was any verbal abuse, now, verbal abuse can come out as watching mom and dad yelling at each other. It could be them yelling at you. It could be verbal put down saying like, please change your outfit, you look fat in that or don't think about applying to college, I'm not going to waste my money on you. Things like that, that we call verbal put downs. It could be a lack of saying I love you, or great job kiddo. I'm proud of you. Not hearing those messages are quite abusive to the child and their soul and their sense of self esteem. So verbal is a big one. Third is emotional abuse or neglect. Fourth is physical abuse, any kind of beating and I had one person say my my family life was amazing. But when they heard physical abuse, it goes does getting beat up on the way to school every day counts. Like Yes, yes. So it doesn't

have to necessarily be in the household. You know, it's if you've experienced these things, so physical beatings, any rape or molestation that's part of that category. The next one is abandonment and identify fault or no fault abandonment. So a no fault abandonment would be as if the parent died early, certainly not their fault. But this child is left with abandonment feelings, if a parent goes off to serve at war. I know working in the schools as a sec counselor working with kids of trauma in grades kindergarten through college, if their parents were off to war, they were always in a high anxiety state waiting for that parent to come home. Another one very simply than identified to this is if your parent was gone from the house working on the road, because that's how we supported the family. And I remember as a child saying, Where's dad? When's he coming home? And my mom said, Well, I don't know where he is. I'm thinking, Well, why not? Where is he? And we found out later that my dad was CIA and FBI. Why he couldn't tell the family where he was and it's like, finally I find the answer out if you know 50 Oh, okay. Yeah.

David Sandstrom 14:21

So how does how does a seven year old girl process that right?

Riana Milne 14:25

Why you don't you know, there's there's things that you have to learn later to identify with. But that was interesting. We found out when we got letters from Ronald Reagan and William Casey, from the FBI at the time. And then the next one is a few were out the false abandonment sorry, that one is if a parent is never involved in their child's life, if they are for a little bit and the family breaks up, they don't see the child or even if they're in the home and they barely pay any attention to the child. That's a form of emotional abandonment. Or they come to visit you on custody day or visitation and you barely interact with your child. So those are all forms of fault abandonment. The next one is if you were adopted part of the foster care system or had to go live in another home, your parents couldn't take care of you. So it could be aunts, uncles, grandparents, just another home and you were displaced. Trauma number seven is one of the most popular as well as verbal. And that one is personal trauma. So this is if you felt different in any way. So maybe grew up very tall and skinny a little gawky, and you might have been called the nerd at school, or you are overweight child and teased for that, or you might have, you know, been sickly, maybe you had asthma and you weren't allowed to be on the football teams or you got teased the gym class because you weren't allowed to do the

events. These are all ways you feel different. If you might have been coming out as an LGBTQ teenager, or I had one girl beautiful African American, you would think she'd be very happy in her love relationship. But she was very jealous and controlling. So her home life was perfect as she described it. But she was the only one African American and they're all Caucasian school. So she felt very different, never good enough. She was teased, she was bullied. So that was her main one. So you know, it's very interesting to see then how it comes out later in life. Trauma number eight is sibling trauma. So that could be your sibling most often was the golden child. So either they were the star athlete maybe more pretty more handsome, the star students some way they might have excelled and you didn't feel you measured up. Or maybe the child was born with an illness and your parents needed to give them more time and attention. or third, they bullied you. So those are the three around sibling. Trauma number nine, ironically, is happening to everybody in our world today. And that's community trauma. And this used to be not very prevalent many years ago. However, look what COVID is doing to our economy, our families, our children. This is a prime example of community trauma. Also, community trauma involves school shootings, mass shootings, whole communities wiped out by Mother Nature flood fires, hurricanes, mudslides, and these are becoming more and more prevalent today. And the other one in number nine, a community trauma was after 10 for years. And I'm like, no, it's got to be in the top 10 list. So I attached it to the family. But the other one in nine is family trauma. So that could be the family moving every two to four years if they're a military family. If you grew up in poverty or dangerous neighborhood, you remember a lot of messages around lack, we don't have money. Now that's happening again, today, people are losing jobs, their homes don't have money due to COVID, losing, you know, a lot of pressure around money that these kids are hearing the messages today. It also could be if a parent was incarcerated. So there's a lot around community and family trauma. And the number 10 is mental health illness in mom or dad. Now I'm part of the baby boomer generation, our parents didn't go to counselors, so you kind of have to guess. And that the two toughest mental health issues for children to navigate is bipolar and borderline personality disorder. So borderline is described as if there's fast trigger anger, severe moods, when they're good, they're great, when they're bad, they're hard. And as a kid, you never know what you're going to get. So at least a child in a high state of anxiety. Bipolar is manic depressive, manic could be a gambling spray spending spree eating binge, something like that. depression can come out as anger, checking

out emotionally or extreme fatigue. So those are the top 10 and like I said, the research shows most people say can easily identify 1 to 3 of those. But if you get into the range of nine or 10 and severity levels of nine or 10 that's where we have sociopathic and psychopathic. Human beings.

David Sandstrom 19:32

Well, you know, there's a couple of things I'm struck with from listening to that list and one is, nobody is immune from this. Nobody grows up in escapes this there's there's something in our past that is causing trouble in our present. We all have it. We haven't grown up in a perfect world. We didn't have perfect parents, and things happen. And most of the time as you said earlier, children don't have the capacity to process this We're better equipped as adults, but we might take these wounds and the and the belief system we form around those wounds into adulthood. I, I think especially when it comes to the verbal abuse, you know it let's say a kid was really abused at school, they were maybe overweight and they called chubby or your worship their parents, especially the father says something like, You're so stupid, right? And then that kid just soaks that in it. I mean, doesn't even have to happen every day. But it happens, it can happen. And all of a sudden, that kid forms an identity of, yeah, I am stupid, I'm dumb. I'm never gonna do well in school. Now they're in college and is struggling, the dropping out. Because they've got this agreement, they've made this false. The messages the message that says, I'm not like the rest. I'm dumb. I'm stupid. And you know, that's just one example. But we carry lots of this stuff into adulthood, we all need to sort through it very much. So first, we have to recognize we have the trauma. And then once you recognize it, what can we do to heal from it?

Riana Milne 21:04

Okay, well, let's go into some of the patterns. So people can say, Oh, that's why my partner does this or does that. So for example, jealousy, where does that come from? Well, that's trauma number seven, as well as the need to control your partner because you don't feel good enough. You don't feel worthy enough, or it could be the verbal messages. A lot of women I see have people pleasing. They can't say no, they overdue for others, to the point where they're exhausted. And they do it either to feel love or to raise their self esteem. That could have been a little girl with an alcoholic mom. So if she people please the mother and got the siblings up ready to school out, you know, because mom was hungover that day, then at least she would feel loved by hearing a thanks, hon. And not get

screamed at that morning. So people pleasing became a survival tool. There's those with abandonment issues, what can happen there is some clinging this to the partner anxiety when the partner leaves, seeking attention from others. If your partner isn't perfect. There is codependency or love addiction. If there's abandonment issues. The impulsivity can happen making risky choices that not only destroy you, it could destroy your reputation, your career. Also your marriage, the respect of your children and your community. And impulsivity is one of the riskiest and hardest hit when you make impulsive choices and get caught with that. A lot of actors and even business people that do very well sometimes suffer from imposter syndrome. So a good example of this is one of our top politicians who had childhood trauma. And I remember looking at the TV and the news, people were saying, Do you think he has a mental health issue? And I said, No, he has unhealed childhood trauma. But he's always trying to please look like the hero, the good guy blames everybody else doesn't take responsibility. It's almost like childlike behavior. And he did suffer under a tyrant father who was an alcoholic, and the brother was an alcoholic and died early in life. He was not allowed to have childhood friends. He was working. If he was not in school, he had to work in the father's apartment buildings to raise money. And he said, I love biographies. So he says in the biography, one day I'll have gold toilets. And yeah, so I'm not going to say the name but I think you can probably guess who it is,

David Sandstrom 23:45
I think I can guess.

Riana Milne 23:46
But the behavior of I don't need to follow the rules. That impulsivity, you know, can get him and others in trouble, which we recently saw. So these are all prime characteristics of unhealed childhood trauma in action.

David Sandstrom 24:05
I don't think we have to look to Washington DC to find somebody like this, I'll bet we can all look to our own acquaintances or our own families, and see somebody that's manifesting something that looks like childlike behavior. And they might be 50, 60, 70 years old. Like they're acting like a two year old. But it happens, right?

Riana Milne 24:23

Yes. And then this is what gets relationships in trouble. And when I work with couples in our What did you you said, What can we do to move past it? So I work with singles and for couples, both straight and LGBTQ singles and couples as well. And from age 16, my oldest was 73 when he came to me, so all ages, men and women, all types, because childhood trauma has no prejudice. So for couples, I have to do the individual childhood trauma checklist work and the assessments to find out what they encounter. And then what is it showing up now, individually and then as a couple. So if we have one that's very responsible on the job and to the family and with finances, and one who goes through a lot of jobs and is impulsive and picks up a sports car just because he felt like it, or irresponsible and other ways, you know, habitual lying, that is also something from childhood trauma, we have to look at how they're showing up. And then I have to treat them individually and then teach them as a couple new communication rules. So if something comes up like fast to apologize, faster, recognize when they're saying blaming things, and how to do a therapeutic break. And it's better sometimes not to talk and think for a while and then come back with formalized messages instead of some people shut down, you know, if they were kids, and they tried to express their opinion to an authoritative angry father, who would be him if he spoke up, this young guy then had learned I better not speak if I'm in trouble, and then they become a shut down passive aggressive male. You know, they're not they don't have the confidence to speak their feelings, because they would have gotten beaten for it when they were young. So there's all different kinds of dynamics. And this is what we work with. So,

David Sandstrom 26:25

So Riana, this is what I hear you saying, if you let this stuff go, and you ignore it, it's probably not going to get any better. And even if you do recognize it, you're better served by going to a professional that can help walk you through this process and trying to go it alone.

Riana Milne 26:41

Yes, well, for sure. But what happens is, when a lot of couples get into trouble, they'll go to a psychotherapist that has no trauma training. And I was one of those. We didn't get trauma training. When we had a master's degree. I had a triple Master's in the clinic on applied clinical and counseling psychology. And then I happen to marry a partner that unhealed, unhealed childhood trauma. And that wasn't even spoken of that whole term was not even spoken about when I met married this man.

And he did some impulsive behavior, he got fired from the job was banished from the community. It ruined my my therapy practice, you know, the respect of our children together. It was a horrendous thing for me to have to go through someone who is also Reverend Rihanna and doing the right things in our community and had a vibrant business because of him, his impulsivity. And one of the comments, he says, I don't know why I sabotage everything I love. And I said, I don't know either, but I'm going to figure it out. And that's when my research began. Well, because I needed the answers for me. Because on the surface, our relationship was incredible. Everyone's like, Oh, my God, you guys are so happy dance. You travel all over the world. You know, he's so fun. You're fun. You know, it's like you guys are the ideal couple. And then he had this whole secret life. And that's what we call Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality. Yeah. So which is from the show or the movie, the Dr. Jekyll was well respected, well known handsome, nice home, good income. Everybody loved him. Mr. Hyde was a hidden personality type. So if you've never got knew that message from that show, you should watch it again, knowing about childhood trauma, it's fascinating to deal with this information.

David Sandstrom 28:36

Interesting. Before I ask you the last question I have for you. If someone wants to learn more about you, or get in touch with you, what's the best way?

Riana Milne 28:44

Okay, start with my website, reanamine.com. It's r i n a m i l n e .com. And that's where you can get the free ebook, and also free book download chapters of live and love beyond your dreams, the sister books, they do go together once for the mindset for success. And one is about how to have emotionally healthy evolved relationships. And then I've a podcast lessons in life in love. I want to have Dr. Dave on there. So that has 101 shows right now. So a lot of education there and so on every favorite podcast platform. And also I have three love tests on my web. So if you're single or a coupled relationship, you should go and check those out as well.

David Sandstrom 29:34

Excellent. Here's my last question. What does an emotionally healthy evolved relationship actually look like?

Riana Milne 29:42

Okay, so part of that research is part four of love beyond your dreams, but just a few things. There's a balance between you me and us. It's like pitcher i equal lateral triangle and you need to be happy in your day. hours, which means at your career, so does your partner and then you have to make us time as well. And us time is not all about the kids and running the kids to their sports in their activities. Too many people put their kids first and not their partner. So I have a little quote, it's you and me against the world. So putting your partner first keeps the marriage happy, which then keeps the children happy because the families together. So that's important. And for my singles, I say, Be who you want to attract. So you need to be emotionally healthy to attract someone else emotionally healthy, because when you are you would never settle for toxic behavior or acting out. If you want someone who's financially secure, you be financially secure. So you know, with the coaching, we do 50% life coaching and 50% love coaching. There's a lot more tips in the book. I know we don't have much time, but I want to encourage the listeners. Time is short. So take steps now to create that life you desire and to have the love that you deserve. Don't wait, you're worth it.

David Sandstrom 31:08

Excellent. Oh, that's a was a great way to end it. Thank you, Riana, it was so great speaking with you today.

Riana Milne 31:14

Thank you for having me on.

David Sandstrom 31:17

Well, I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Riana Milne. You know, when you think about all the ways that we can experience childhood trauma, it becomes obvious that no one escapes this, we all have to deal with this in some way, shape or form. When we're children, and we experienced trauma, we don't it's not likely that we have the mental emotional capacity to process these events in a healthful way. So we end up assigning meaning to them and meaning to ourselves. That is not healthy. And we bring those unhealthy beliefs and worldview thinking into our adulthood, and it very much interferes with our relationships. And when that happens, it interferes with our health and wellness. So I'm going to give you a summary of the honest top 10 ways that we can experience childhood trauma. Number one was addiction in your mom or dad. And addiction doesn't have to be just drugs and alcohol. It can be addiction to

pornography, to social media, or perhaps addiction to work or some type of a hobby or something like that verbal abuse, and that includes observing your parents verbally abusing one another, as well as verbal abuse directed towards you emotional abuse or neglect, physical abuse, abandonment, which can take on two forms, fault or no fault, and no fault abandonment will be something like living in a military family where you have to move often. That kind of thing. Personal trauma. If you consider yourself different from other kids in some way, maybe you're a little bit overweight, or you're tall and thin, or you look a little different, that can take on a form of trauma for a child, sibling trauma, you may have a sibling that is considered the golden child or the perfect one and you're you don't measure up that sibling trauma. Community trauma could include natural disasters, family trauma, that's when maybe a parent was incarcerated or put in jail or something like that. And lastly, mental health or mental illness in the parent, which can often take on the form of bipolar disorder, or manic depressive behavior. When you consider all those things, you realize that no one escapes this, we all have to process these things as adults, and form some healthier mindset surrounding these events. Don't forget to go to my website, DavidSandstrom.com in the show notes. I always put links to everything we mentioned. And I also put a full transcript of each conversation there. You can read it online or you can download it for free, put it on your device, take it with you and read it later. Once again. Thanks for listening. I appreciate you. I enjoyed serving you, and I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed