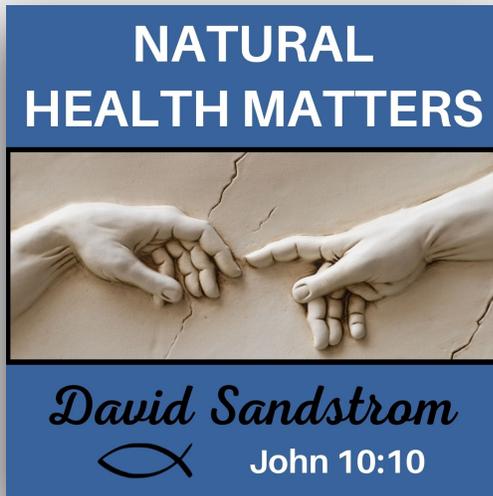


NHM - 50 Holistic Self-Care w/Alicia Michelle



David Sandstrom 0:00

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of natural health matters.

Alicia Michelle 0:04

So something that we talked about and I learned in the training for the neuro coaching was something called *stebdar*. So it starts with the subject that happens, then a thought is formed around that from the thought the emotion is created the thought and the emotion create to create a belief about it. From that belief, we make decisions about how we're going to live, and then from the

decisions create the actions that we take, and from the actions to create the results that we want. So if we want a specific result, we have to go all the way back to the subject and the thought, what is the thought?

David Sandstrom 0:37

Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential 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 50.

David Sandstrom 0:55

This episode is brought to you by my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. getting educated on natural and holistic health is time consuming and can be expensive, not to mention, overwhelming. I want to help you with that. My book will put you on a 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 anything. 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, 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.

David Sandstrom 1:48

Today we have in the show, Alicia Michelle, as a Bible teacher and Christian life coach, Alicia Michelle empowers women to cultivate a thriving connection with Christ, renew their thoughts, and live a confident balanced life. Through her signature coaching programs, podcast, Bible studies, and her training as a certified neuro coach. She helps women connect with God, discover calm, balance, and enjoy a renewed thought life. Alicia lives in Southern California with her husband of 20 years. And for kids ages 18 to nine. Her podcast is called vibrant Christian living. And you can connect with her at vibrant Christian living.com. Alicia, welcome to natural health matters.

Alicia Michelle 2:29

Thank you so much. It's great to be here and to share about these topics with you today.

David Sandstrom 2:34

Well, I'm really glad to have you on the show because I've been listening to your show for quite some time. And even though you're geared towards women, I get a lot out of it. And I know that we're very like minded, so I really enjoy your show.

Alicia Michelle 2:44

Yeah, thank you so much. I'm glad that it's helpful and encouraging whoever male or female they are geared towards women.

David Sandstrom 2:49

Yeah, there you go. It's all about advancing God's kingdom at the end of the day, but I absolutely, I really been enjoying it. So you have a pretty I mean, I want to talk about self care today. And you have a pretty inspirational story on how God's taught you some important lessons about self care. So could you tell us about that?

Alicia Michelle 3:07

Yeah, there's a it's, I'll give you the condensed version, because there's lots of things we could talk about within it. But basically, I had fallen into this pattern based on a lot of my own development growing up as someone who wanted to achieve and to get good grades and accomplish all those kinds of things I'd kind of developed this pattern of I had to push myself to the limit. And after I got married, and he had our kids, the first three are pretty close in age. And so raising three kids, we were homeschooling, my husband traveled 50% of the time, I was home a lot, and I had a lot going on. And I also had had a career before I had become a mom. And so I still wanted to keep that going. And so I was dabbling in it and a few other things. But all that's to say I created the schedule for myself, where I literally was sleeping about four hours a night, I did

that for about 10 to 15 years. That was just my life. I was just what I had to do. And I thought that was fine. That seemed to be okay. I had felt that pinch from the Holy Spirit many times like this is not a good idea. I'd had some friends who given me some counsel, like maybe you should go to bed, you know, getting more sleep, maybe take care of yourself. But it was just this, I can't I have so much to do. I don't have time for that. I'll get through I pushed through I can always make it happen. I'm that Viking warrior like I can just make this happen. And that all seemed to work well until it was July of 2017. And my kids and I were getting ready to go on a missions trip with our church in Mexico. We had done this every year. And I started having these headaches. They just would not go away and I don't typically get headaches. But again, I said be quiet Alicia take an aspirin move on. We're going like stop complaining. Just keep going. I had this very harsh voice inside of me telling me like, whatever, it doesn't matter, just keep going. And so I went on this missions trip. And just again, these headaches, I was doing all the things I could think of natural anything. I was just like taking everything I could think of to get rid of this, nothing was going, that was helping it. And finally, about two o'clock in the morning. The second night, we were there, I woke up and I was in so much pain, I went outside because we were in an RV camping kind of situation where we were doing this mission work. And I was I went out into this, this the fresh air outside, and I just heard God's voice very distinctly say, you need to go home and you need to go home right now. And like in the morning, and I was like, Well, you know, who's going to teach the Bible study? And what about this, and it was just like, you need to do this. This is not an option, Alicia. And so I was like, Okay, so the next morning, told the leader what God had said, and I said, I have to go home. I'm so sorry. And so they drove me to the border, my husband met me there drove me up to the emergency room. I mean, thankfully, it was a Saturday because I think if it was any other day of the week, I just probably would have went home and said whatever distressed, you know, Alicia to sleep or something. But I went straight to the ER. And when I got there, they gave me a scan and said, you have a vertebral artery dissection, which is a very scary, very intense thing. They said, basically, we're sending you we can't even treat you at this hospital. Because it's such a high level thing we're sending you to this specialty hospital an hour and a half away and the neurological ICU because you're at high risk for a stroke and could die. And I was like, Are you serious? Like I just had a headache, healthy, I work out I eat healthy, what is what is wrong with me. But clearly, there had been something happening inside of me that had been now I know had learned things like cortisol, things like these hormones that are just slowly eating away at, for me the lining of the inside of my arteries so that I was now at this high risk for a stroke. So spent three days there, I had many of these mini strokes, that I think they're called TSI's, TSAs, and gratefully that none of them turned into an actual stroke with lasting damage. But that happened a week after that. I had a dissection on the other side. So one on one side and then on

the other. So I had to go back to the hospital. So just to give you an idea of what the what that means that dissection because most people don't know what that is, and I certainly didn't. The vertebral arteries are the arteries that run up and down your neck and they feed along with the carotid arteries. The carotid arteries are in the front of your neck though vertebral arteries are in the back of your neck. And those four arteries are the main blood vessels to the brain. So obviously they're pretty important. Absolutely. What happened with the dissection is sometimes people know what an aneurism isn't. So an aneurism is where the blood vessel expands out and sometimes explodes. But an eye dissection is where the inside lining of the artery compresses inward and detaches from the outside lining so that it blocks and very much narrows the blood flow and causes blood clots to form on the side, which of course, a blood clot that's partially that close to the brain can mean stroke and death. Right. So all that happened. And they kept asking me, do you do extreme sports? Because I just been in Mexico, where what are you doing in Mexico? Are you doing zip line things? I'm like, I was on a missions trip. Like, this is what I wasn't doing anything. Yeah, out of the ordinary. I'm a mom, I kept telling him, I'm a mom, why is this happening to me, and it was in that quiet of that hotel or the hospital room that the Lord just said to me, Listen, I have been trying to talk to you for years about this, this is your second chance, I will heal you. But you have to agree that from here on out, things are completely different. And so that was I started he gave me a lot of great help on that because I started at Ground Zero where I just literally could not get out of I couldn't raise my head. Because of the intensity even just laying in my bed. It was so much pain that went on for about six months of just everybody coming in meals, taking care of our kids, homeschooling, my, my husband taking care of me, all these things were happening. And I just had to learn what does it mean to take care of yourself physically, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually, with my thoughts, all of these things. And so God has stripped everything away. And I started first with physical sleeping, I had to sleep it was zero option. And now even if I don't get eight hours, I get what I call these little headache alarm systems. Wow. So I will get a headache. And just kind of God's way of saying Yeah, you're not sleeping the way you need to you need to take a break. You need to take a nap. You need to do something today because this is again like we're not going back there. Right? Okay. Yes, God, we're not going back there. So kind of a dramatic story. But that was the start for me of really, God getting my attention that this is serious and that if I wanted to be to keep going literally then I needed to change my life and be different.

David Sandstrom 9:55

Wow. Well, thank God that you're here. I mean that because what you're describing is the man perfect prescription for a stroke and possibly a fatal one.

Alicia Michelle 10:03

That's what the doctor had said is, she had said, if you had stayed in Mexico one more day, I can almost guarantee you, you would have had a massive stroke and died. Wow. He's like, that's how serious this this is right now. And we're so grateful that you listened and came in. And that was the moment where I was like, that was the voice of God without a doubt. I know that was him telling back

David Sandstrom 10:24

Wow. Well, you know, we all have a weak link, this is discussion going on about, well, is ours all lifestyle more important? Or is it our genetics? Do we inherit these kinds of things, but the truth is, it's a combination of both, right? So when you're when we're abusing ourselves, and you know, your story is unique, but we all do it in some way, shape, or form we're doing, we're embracing habits that aren't good for us. Our bodies are very durable, they'll take a lot of abuse, but there comes a point where they say uncle, and something gets something breaks and gives in. And now you've got the health crisis. You know, when I found when I was, when I had my office, that that was the case, I had a hard time getting people into the office to simply maintain good health, they had to experience some type of a health crisis, and usually go to 234 doctors and not get the help they're looking for. And then they found themselves in a natural practitioners office. So it's a shame that it's that way, but that's human nature. And, and I addressed that in my book, the Christians guide to holistic health, the first section, I call it getting started. And it's all about providing people the motivation to build health now, before the crisis hits, because it's easier to handle the curveballs that life throws at us when we have some health margin when we've been working on our health leading up to that event, because life will throw us curveballs, there's gonna be things it might be an illness, it might be an accident. But there will be health challenges coming our way we live in a broken world. And you know, this is not Eden. So you have to do what we can. So Alicia, what would you say to someone who is having trouble getting over that hurdle that I just described? You know, why do people seem to have these insurmountable obstacles to making positive changes in their lifestyles?

Alicia Michelle 12:08

Well, I think is very similar to what you just said that we are creatures who need that, sometimes that smack in our face to see, this is dangerous. Sometimes we're not much better than an amoeba with, you know, the pain and pleasure that you hear about moves towards the sugar cube for pleasure and away from the pain stick. I mean, that's kind of the bottom line. But I think it really comes down to what we're telling ourselves every day, the lies that we're telling ourselves, we're telling ourselves, I have to do this, that there's no other option, that it's just this is the way it is I can't be any different. And a lot of people, they

get just in that pattern where that's what is normal and what is expected. And your body adjusts to it. I mean, that's what I found is I would go to sleep at 12:30 and wake up at 4:30. And at 12:30, I was not tired. And I had very restless sleep all night. And at 4:30, I was up and ready to go. And I think my body, I just conditioned myself, unfortunately, the wrong way that I didn't need sleep. And I'd conditioned myself to not even have a desire for sleep anymore. So I think we can condition ourselves to accept a lot of this. And I think we also just, some of us feel like we don't have models for what it looks like to rest. We think of rest as only this one tiny segment of like, well, rest is going to a spa rest is getting a massage. And it's so, so much more than that. It's these daily rhythms of taking care of ourselves. It's knowing in the moment how to identify the triggers. And to work through them. It's looking at it from a holistic point of view, mind, soul, body strength, you know, all of these parts of us. It's not just this one thing, and often what I find is the thoughts are driving a lot of that. So yes, that's the focus.

David Sandstrom 13:56

Yeah, absolutely true. So I'll bet there's somebody listening right now, that says, Well, you know, yeah, this sounds good. But I have a family. I have a husband, I have kids. I'm a member of the PTA. They all need me and I don't have time for that. But I would suggest that you don't have time not you can't afford not to. I'm an airline captain. I've been flying for a major airline for over 30 years and I've heard this this phrase done at least 1000 times it goes something like this. In case of a sudden change in Captain pressure. Mess above eat simple drop. Extend the masterful extended tubing and secure the mask around your nose and mouth and breathe normally. Don't worry if the bag doesn't fully inflate. Oxygen is flowing. Now. Now here's the important part. If you're traveling with a small child or someone that needs assistance, put on your mask first, then assist the child. That's really good advice because if the cabin loses pressure, you will be unconscious in about 20 seconds without oxygen in you are of no use to the child. If you're already unconscious from your hypoxia. So the same is true with our health, we can embrace one of the most cherished Christian principles, and that is to love one another, and to serve one another, if we don't take care of ourselves first, because we can only give part of our abundance, we can't give what we don't have. So I would suggest it, you know, taking care of yourself first is paramount, and it actually is not selfish at all, it's the most loving thing we can do. Because when we are filled up with energy and vitality, and positive mood and optimism and love, joy and peace, then it's much, much easier to be that positive person that encouraged you to our friends, the leader in our community, or a parent or a spouse, when we have our vitality when we were not dealing with our own health challenges much more difficult. You know, sometimes I'll hear say, Well, you know, Dave, I get what you're saying, but I don't know if I'm really ready or willing to take on the changes, it sounds kind of

hard. Well, I can assure you going through life with compromised health is far more difficult than implementing the kind of holistic changes that I talked about.

Alicia Michelle 16:11

Right. And that's interesting, because I wonder how much stress physical pain, emotional pain that we struggle with, because we have not addressed the underlying issues, how much of that could go away, if we'd had basic self care in place, maintenance wise, versus just always attacking? Well, I'm, I'm completely exhausted, completely burnt out or like me in the hospital, you know, doing these constant little maintenance things, I wonder how much of that could be eliminated or greatly reduced?

David Sandstrom 16:42

Well, that's a really good point. And I still care. The medical community says that upwards of 90% of all doctor visits are stress related. We may not have any control over the genetics we inherit, right, I certainly have control over our life, lifestyle decisions that affect our stress levels. So if we can reduce our stress at all levels, spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical, we will go a long way towards embracing more vibrant health. And, and that's one of the reasons why I like your podcast, vibrant, vibrant Christian living. Yeah, you know, I love it. And I want you to speak to this a little bit. But it's my contention, that we maximize our health potential when we align our lives more fully with God's design for spirit, mind and body. And I know you're like minded so could you speak a little bit to that holistic approach is being you know, the natural approach being consistent with biblical teaching.

David Sandstrom 17:39

So you've decided to make some improvements to your health and well being, you're listening to shows like this, where you can 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't 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 spirit, mind and body. It's my contention, that we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's design 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. 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, that's D, A V I, d, s, a n d, s, t, r. o. m, as in mike.com, forward slash book, and you can learn more and pick up a copy today. Now, let's get back to the show.

David Sandstrom 19:16

Could you speak a little bit to that holistic approach as being you know, the natural approach being consistent with biblical teaching?

Alicia Michelle 19:23

Absolutely. Well, we hear about that, like you mentioned in Deuteronomy that has mentioned in the Old Testament about how God wants us to love the Lord your God with your heart, your mind, your soul, and your strength. And Jesus re emphasizes that again, in the gospels, using those exact words. And we see over and over we see amazing examples of how we are to be the ones in charge of, for example, our minds. Romans 12 has a great section of scripture that talks about how we are to renew our minds by focusing on God's word Philippians four speaks about the power of releasing all of our worries in prayer. to God and then choosing to focus on what is good, what is true, what is right, what is holy, what is pure, those things. And so I know I wanted to speak to you about what you're saying before about health. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Dr. Caroline leafs work around mental health. One of the things that she shares about in her books is this idea of being able to turn on and turn off our genetics, by our thoughts that our minds are literally in control of what we what we focus on makes a difference in how our body expresses it. And, you know, we have stress, we have things that that bother us that worry us, and we can feel it in our bodies, we can feel it in our chest, we can feel it in our, our muscles, specifically neck, shoulders, things like that. And so for us to say that self care and monitoring our whole body is only one aspect is not true, just flat out because we can see that in the Bible. But we can just see that in ourselves. And so what I found is this beautiful marriage that God gives us between each of these parts of self, the spirit, the intellectual, the thoughts, the emotions, and our physical bodies, and learning to tap into each one of those individual parts of self, seeing what might be blocking those things from working at full capacity, asking the Lord, because He is the creator of all those things in us asking him to give us his wisdom. What is it that I need to focus on right now? Again, one thing that people tell me is I just feel so overwhelmed. Where do I start? Do I focus on sleep? Do I focus on nutrition? Do I focus on spend time with God, blah, blah, you know, and I think there are merits for all of those things. I would first start by saying, what is it that feels like you could get the most? Well, first of all, what is what God is? What is God saying first, like, this is what I want you to focus on. But if it doesn't fit, still feel clear or feels like there's a lot of things, I would say, what is it that would give you the most baseline improvement, so to speak, if it is

David Sandstrom 21:59

The low hanging fruit, right? The most bang for your buck, right?

Alicia Michelle 22:02

What is the most most bang for your buck, just starting from right here and start there. And don't expect to do it overnight. I have a group coaching program called the reset group coaching program. It's about self care. It's an eight month program. And we take each of these parts of self and focus on them in a different month. But we start first by looking at what I call the four C's, which are these lenses over the parts of self. So they are managing capacity, looking at the clutter levels in our life, finding more calm and releasing control. So each of those, when we work through those as how does that relate to each of the parts of self, it helps us to see, okay, I'm going to start releasing some of these things, and then I can move forward. So there's lots we can talk about in terms of where to go and how to how it all integrates. But yeah, God is so wise and even give us examples of Jesus Himself, choosing to pull away from the crowds choosing to say, this is all that I can give right now. He was the Son of God, he obviously had unlimited power. So it wasn't that he was doing that because his power was limited. It was he was with his disciples. He wanted to model to them. This is what ministry looks like. It looks like spending time being alone, praying, letting God replenish you, before you go out. We can't just completely like you said, give ourselves away and expect there to be that reservoir.

David Sandstrom 23:25

I think that the story I think you referred to as in the first chapter mark, where Jesus first opened his ministry and he heals up Peters mom. And then he cast out some demons. And then the whole town shows up and he's seen he's healing people, and he's casting out demons. And then then the next morning, Jesus was off praying by himself, and the disciples, find him and say everybody's looking for you. He says, and let us go, then we go to a different place he wanted to know I think there's a lesson there for us, you know, is that we can't let other people create our schedules for us. You know, we should be proactive in controlling our stress levels, and in only doing those things that God would have us do, right, you know, that that contribute to our well being and the well being of those around us, you know, Jesus could have spread us out himself too thin, he chose not to. I want to circle back to another one, too, is First Thessalonians 5:23. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely. May your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved, complete. So I think that speaks to the three part of nature of a human being we are spirit, we have a mind or what the Bible calls a soul. And we live in a body and addressing the physical only, which is what most practitioners do. is not enough that that's like trying to win a championship and leaving two thirds of your best players on the on the bench. Yeah, you know, you've got to have all those good players on the field. If

you expect to win a championship and if we're going to build a championship vitality, we've got to recognize the way we're made the way God created us as trichotomous, three part beings address each part of our being together. Because each part of a person is interconnected and interdependent what affects one part of our being, will by necessity alter the others for good or bad. We are human beings are more than simply a collection of atoms and molecules, which is you know what the medical community would teach us. And I'm glad that you mentioned Dr. Caroline Lee, I listened to her for years, read her books, she's really awesome. She said something the other day. And it was she's got a new book out. And I was listening to her do a podcast and she said, You know, this, the psychiatrists, the MD, psychiatrists have it backwards. They believe that if you're having trouble with your thought life, that you have a chemical imbalance in your brain. So they want to correct that chemical imbalance with pharmaceuticals. She said, that's, that's putting the cart before the horse. Our brains don't create thoughts. This is Dr. Caroline leaf. Our brains don't create thoughts, they respond to them. Our thoughts are created in our minds or our soul, in the brains of simply responders to those thoughts. And it's our brains that run our bodies. So the the the spiritual connection, the mental emotional connection, and the physical connection is all together operating in unison. And when I heard him say that I said, Yeah, right. Oh, that's what I'm trying to tell people for years now as a PhD, brain researcher that agrees with that, as really that was really awesom.

Alicia Michelle 26:22

I love that she says, and another, I think, in one of her books, that which was very profound for me as well, that we are the only creatures in creation, literally, who can stand outside of our brain and analyze our thoughts. Yes, we can think and be the big brother, so to speak, looking down and go, Hmm, is that really God's truth? Is that really a lie? Is that what does that come from? Like, we have that ability, that ability for research, because like you just said, that ability of how we discern the thought, what do we do with it leads to our results. So something that we talked about, and what I learned in the training for the neuro coaching was something called stebdar. So it starts with the subject that happens, then a thought is formed around that, from the thought the emotion is created the thought and the emotion create to create a belief about it. When a belief is repeated over and over, it becomes just more solidified in the subconscious mind. From that belief, we make decisions about how we're going to live, and then from the decisions create the actions that we take, and from the actions to create the results that we want. So if we want a specific result, we have to go all the way back to the subject and the thought, what is the thought that is causing the emotion that creates the belief? What is the thing that's causing that and I think sometimes we're trying to weed a garden in the wrong way, like we have weeds growing in a garden, and we're just trying to clip off the little top leaves

versus getting down there and getting to that root. And so often it is the mental side of it, the thoughts that are dry.

David Sandstrom 27:54

Yeah, absolutely. You know, the biblical basis for that is second Corinthians 10. Five, we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. That's something animals can't do. Animals respond to the strongest urge. But we're not animals were human beings. And we're commanded in Scripture to be the to take ownership of our thoughts, and say, Hey, is this a thought that I would like to allow in? Or is this a thought that needs to stay outside? And that's a huge point, you know, my wife, and I do marriage groups, we're doing it for seven years. And we spend a lot of time talking about this very thing, because what we believe leads to thoughts and thoughts lead to actions. And there's a really cool, I don't have time to get into the whole thing. But in my book I talk about this is the ABCDE method of identifying and correcting faulty thinking patterns. I've got a worksheet I think I'll make this available as a download in this episode in the show notes. But A stands for activating event that that's something that happens that seems to push your buttons just send you you get emotional response, and it sends you off it that that's the activating event. B is the beliefs or the thought life that follows that belief as your response to the event. Yeah. C stands for the consequences of believing and thinking that way. Right? That's usually pretty harmful. That's the harmful to go down. Right? Right. And then D stands for a disputing the self talk. And E stands for enjoying the energy shift. When you change your thoughts. And it's powerful. It's not all that complicated. I got a I got a two page PDF that people can go through. It's probably doing this for quite a while and it's huge. It's a really great exercise to go through. Right. So getting back to the physical. So how can someone our bodies are constantly talking to us, right? When they tell us when we're thirsty. They tell us when we're hungry. They tell us when we're tired. How can someone tune into that language of the body and listen to the body's cues better?

Alicia Michelle 29:54

Yeah, I think it's something that we all need to just learn as a discipline as life skills, so to speak. That when our body is speaking to us, it's for a reason it's not for it's it's trying to communicate something in the way that it knows to communicate. And I think we are quick to just shut down the pain to just take a pill to just do see, you know, something like that. But again to say not that I'm against medicine or against any of that, because obviously medicine is very helpful, but to say, huh, that's interesting. Why am I feeling like, you know, I shared before we got on that I'm having these back issues. Why is it that I had this back injury two weeks ago? What happened? And what can I change in my life that can keep this from happening again? So I think it's really not ignoring but beginning to quiet ourselves overall enough to notice what's happening in

our body and to notice, also what happens when we interact with certain stimuli, certain people, certain foods, how does certain foods affect us? How does exercising regularly affect us or not? and beginning to see, okay, if I'm serious about creating a life that's vibrant, that's full of energy that's giving as best it can to God, that I need to be serious about noticing how these things affect me noticing with grace, how to choose how to how to live, and to do my part in that. But noticing, I think is a huge step that sometimes we become so we're either trying to medicate it or just shut it off, make it stop, I don't want to feel it. I don't want to deal with it. Or we're so busy that we don't even notice it at all. So just I think noticing is a big first step in that.

David Sandstrom 31:34

Yeah, excellent. And self care just ties all into all that because Jesus said that we should be loving God, but loving our neighbor as we love ourselves and love for ourselves sometimes gets dismissed. And it's kinda you know, it's an afterthought. I don't think Jesus thought that was an afterthought at all. I think he included that for a reason he was Jesus's was the master at being concise and bottom lining us. And he was taking the whole of Scripture. At that time, it was the entire Old Testament at that moment speaking, and boiling it down to a couple of short, concise statements. And if he was being that concise in that bottom line, he would not have included that phrase, if they weren't a very important component to living the Christian life. And that is taking care of yourself so that you can be a blessing to others. Right. I think that's a pretty huge concept.

Alicia Michelle 32:27

Yeah. And I just go off on that a second. I feel like the mom that I was the wife that I was the whatever the speaker person that I was online, is a dramatically different person than who I am. Now, as I have made self care, a high priority in my life, that the ups and downs, the difficulties of parenting, marriage, all of those things, they have not changed. But what has changed is how I am able to handle and process them, I am much more resilient, I'm much more able to physically handle them and mentally work through them. So that's great. That's big. That is and but we, I mean, I hear myself in those statements, like you're saying earlier, like, well, I'm busy. I don't have time. That's, and I think that's where I was for so long. It's just, yeah, yeah, I know. I know. God wants me to take care of myself. I know that I'm supposed to do these things. But I just don't. Yeah. And so what there's that, that that that but but I just that's why I think the thoughts are so important, because it's like, what is it that's there? that's keeping you because we all work again, like that Amoeba there, we're going to make a decision. For some reason, there's some benefit to it. What is the benefit that's keeping me stuck in not taking care of myself is a really important question to ask you. What is it that I am gaining that right? You know,

what, why am I afraid of that? Yeah. am I afraid of appearing selfish before the people? am I afraid of the money factor? like whatever that might be? What are the lies that I'm telling myself that are keeping me stuck here?

David Sandstrom 34:03

Great questions. Yeah. Takes a little soul searching to go through that. And it takes courage to face that because, you know, a lot of times we've been thinking these thoughts for so so long, maybe decades. Yeah. And it's very comfortable for us. And it's uncomfortable, to challenge those beliefs and those thoughts and say, you know, is this benefiting me? Or is this hurting me? Is this furthering God's kingdom in my life? Am I experiencing more of the abundant life with this thought and belief? Or is it keeping me from experiencing more the abundant life? Those are important questions, not easy ones.

Alicia Michelle 34:38

But the question really is why what because we can say no, it's not keeping from the abundant life but what is it giving me insight on such a deep level? What is it protecting me from what is it keeping me safe from For me it was the safety of I my whole identity was about achieving and accomplishing. So in order to get out of that mode, I had to address that elephant And that wasn't just oh, I'm going to try to once a week do this nice thing for myself. That was just again, surface level kind of cutting and trimming. That was Yeah, I needed to go all the way down to that root and figure out what was it? Why am I so unable to do this on a regular basis? So I think that's so important.

David Sandstrom 35:16

know the answer to this is very personally, you don't have to answer this if you don't want to. Okay, what was the route to your drivenness?

Alicia Michelle 35:22

Yeah, no, that's a great question. I can answer that question. I think well, just to back up first by saying how our brain works to help you understand what I'm going to say. So what we were learning in brain science is that our brains around the age of 10 to 13, that timeframe, it finds the answers to three very key questions. Am I loved? Am I enough? And am I worthy? And we don't obviously sit down to say, How am I going to answer this question, but it is decided in how we receive the answer's throughout our life, by the other people in our life by how we interact with the world. And so for me, those questions were answered. And I got attention and love when I got great grades, when I was on the captain of this team president of that when I got that was how I felt the affection and the worth. And I was naturally given a spirit of just a hard worker, and achieving kind of personality. So that just compounded and grew and grew and grew for me. And so that without even realizing it, that is still an Achilles heel. For me, I have

to still kind of it comes up in different ways. But just that for me was driving everything that why, you know, what I felt like I was doing at home just just as a mom taking care of kids was never enough, I had to do this, I had to do that I had to. I mean, I even came out with like, well, I need to have more kids, because I can prove that I can have more kids. I mean, just all these crazy thoughts that sometimes happen. And I had tried and try to fix it quote as quote, unquote, by saying, Well, I do need to do this. And I do need to take care of myself. And I have a very supportive husband, who was like, go do it, do what you need to do, right? But it was me, it was me feeling so locked in. This is who I am, who am I? If I am not going 100 miles an hour trying all these crazy things, achieving getting accolades. Who am I, if I'm not that I am a daughter of God absolutely loved and getting comfortable with that if God takes everything away from me, which he did, what is it that's left? And that's where we have to get to, and he's he's so good to keep allowing us to have the things that we need, like all those other things. But at the end of the day, if everything left, where would I be? For me? That was the question I had to come to.

David Sandstrom 37:43

Wow, that's really, really good. You know, one of the things that came to mind as you were sharing that story is that the enemy can come in during these defining moments in our lives, and he can take our giftedness and turn it into brokenness. So God gifted you with a certain level of drive and motivation, and the ability to set goals. That's all those are all great things, but it becomes your brokenness, when you let that be your sense of identity. Right? Right. So when we when we can put things in perspective and every see some healing from gone on this understand where we how we got to where we are today, invite God into those broken areas to heal and restore, then we can live from our giftedness and be a blessing without manifesting these these broken parts of our hearts

Alicia Michelle 38:34

Right now. That's a great point. And that's a huge part of why it's difficult. The number one thing that I hear women ask me is okay, I've heard God loves me, like, I've heard that my whole life. Why don't I believe it? Why don't I feel loved? By God? I can read his promises over and over. And I guarantee you 99% of the time, there is something inside of them that answered that question, am I allowed? Am I worthy? Am I enough in a different way than what our identity is in Christ? And that is what's running the show? It's so subconsciously buried. And so that's what I love doing and helping women with is finding out what is that and then using these neurological principles to rewire that from the inside out and move people forward so they can be set free so they can begin to really believe this. And that's when everything changes. Yeah, our whole body, our everything, everything changes from that point.

David Sandstrom 39:24

Yeah, that's great. That's, that's a good, that's a good work. And I respect you for that since setting people free. I mean, isn't that what Jesus came for, you know, to set us free. And you're involved in that. So I know you have a Bible study method. And one of the things you teach people is to find spiritual rest and develop a more intimate connection with God, and that invites more peace and comfort into their daily lives. So could you speak to that method for a little bit?

Alicia Michelle 39:54

Sure. Yeah. So this is called the spiritual growth rhythm. And so there's three parts to it, the first part is just receiving, right. So this is receiving from God, the wisdom of Scripture. And so we have a specific method, the five hours that goes through how to break down a Bible verse and understand that, but we have to first receive God's wisdom before we do anything. And then recognizing is a second step. And this is such a critical step, if receiving is probably 70% of the time we spend. And this is like a 10-12 minute method that I teach in the Bible studies. 70% of the time is receiving but recognizing is powerful, because recognizing says, How has God shown up in the last 24 to 48 hours in my life? How have you seen the fingerprints of God? So it's a form of gratitude, but I think I found when we just say, oh, be grateful, or say something about gratitude, people just go, Okay, well, we go back to the basics. I'm grateful that I have a bed. I'm grateful that I have my kids. I mean, and that's all true. But we need evidences, our heart needs evidences that God is active working real around us. So what is how have you seen God shown up? Is it been in a sunset that you saw last night? That was just spectacular? Has it been in a really amazing conversation you had with someone at the store? Did you have something really great happened with one of your kids today, there's so many evidences where it's just like, or some sort of great deal on something you bought, you're like, that was just clearly God, like God just saved you from an accident. Recognizing that every day and focusing on that gives you the courage to say God's with me, God's with me. And then the third step is release. And so this is a form of prayer, but it's prayer with surrender. It's saying, God, I've received your wisdom, I hear these truths. We focus on one, maybe two verses at a time. I've recognized that, yes, you're real in my life, and you're at work. And yeah, you know, there's always that little bit of faith, that little bit of difficulty that remains that we're still like, but I'm still trusting you for this, I'm still struggling with this, I'm still, you know, this child is, is in rebellion, or whatever it is. And so it is choosing to say, again, I give this to you, I release this to you. So receiving, recognizing and releasing are the three steps to spiritual growth rhythm, and that's what we teach in the connector Bible community and in the Bible studies that we have on the site.

David Sandstrom 42:16

That sounds great. Now, just forgive me if I miss something, but you said it was five hours. So that was three.

Alicia Michelle 42:23

Yes. So that's not the five R's method. So let me clarify that. So the five hours Bible study method is actually inside of receiving. So originally, when this was something that the Lord gave me, I don't want to say I ever created it, because the Lord gave this. This to me. It started off as the five Rs Bible study method. And this was a way for me, I wanted to be able to teach my kids to say I have this problem, how can I understand a scripture or find a scripture and let the Lord speak to me about it? And I felt like everything was so like, graduate school level on terms of how to using these crazy words. I'm like, I have a seven year old, how do I teach them how to do this. And so five hours Bible study method is to read, rewrite, restate, relate and response such a verse, just literally read the verse and whatever translation to rewrite the verse exactly as it is in that translation, to restate it. And this is a key point because it you're you're taking each word and you're trying to find a synonym for that word, without changing the meaning of the verse, of course, but it just allows you to understand a verse in a different way and open it up a little bit. Because once we get so stuck in our little versions, we've heard of verse 1000 times, so read, rewrite, restate, and then you relate. So you're relating the verse, you're saying, how have I seen this to be true in my life, or in the life of somebody else? Or in the life of a Bible story? How have I seen evidence of this or what other Bible verses support this to feel? I can say, yeah, you know, that's right, you know, this is true, and then respond. So of course, God's word is meant to be responded to you. It's not just meant to be like, Oh, well, that's nice. See later, you know, what is it that God wants me to do with this verse today in my life, to move forward and to be changed by it? So those are the five R's within the receive section of the spiritual growth rhythm.

David Sandstrom 44:11

That's excellent. That's really good stuff. And I don't know if you realize it is this this is really on the cutting edge of learning new material. I was trained as a flight instructor many years ago and my I really consider my giftedness is to be a teacher. No, people say, oh, Isn't it cool? You find the big jets? It is cool. I you know, I'm a captain for a major airline and our fly the big jets, but I enjoyed being a flight instructor. And these little two seats cessnas more than my current job. Yeah. Because there was just something about sharing information with people when the light bulb comes on that that that really floats my boat. That's awesome. One of the things they teach you in flight instructor training, your training the trainer, is there's three levels of learning and one is rote, where you

can memorize let's say you're memorizing a Bible verse. You can quote back. Okay, that's good. It's the first level you haven't learned yet. And then the next level is understanding. So you understand what the words mean. And you can maybe even quote it back in, as you were saying in some different words in your own language, that's good. And then the final, the highest level of learning is correlation. And you say, Okay, I got another other passage to teach us. That's a similar thing over there. And another passage over there. And this is how they all blend together is how they all fit together. And the same is true when you're learning to fly. You got to you got to bring those pieces of the puzzle together. Then once you see that happen with a student, you got a smile on your face, because, you know, learning has taken place and it's gonna stick. It's not just rote anymore, because rote you know, kids do this in school, they memorize. They cram for a test that's rote, right? Oh, they might get good grades. But it's not actual learning. I think the classic is, you know, high school language courses, you know, they give you know, eight or 10-12 words and you got to take a test on next day, you just memorize them the night before, after the test is ram up, and it's all gone. So your method, although I haven't been through it yet, I intend to. But your method sounds like it's a it's it's really solidly standing on a firm foundation of really good teaching methods.

Alicia Michelle 46:16

Hmm, that's interesting. Thank you for sharing that. I didn't realize it, but it makes exactly it makes perfect sense to what you're saying that we have to go through all of those steps to make it actually move forward. So yeah,

David Sandstrom 46:27

Yeah. The wrap things up, Leisha, I'd like you to share with the audience. Some of the low hanging fruit what what can people do men and women do to experience more peace throughout their days? Jesus said He came to give us peace, not as the world gives do I give you but but I give you real peace. So how can we start enjoying some of that more in our lives? You know, without getting too deep? You know, some of the low hanging fruit?

Alicia Michelle 46:50

Sure, yeah. It's a great question. I think that there's a couple of things first, it's important, of course, to take that dedicated time to be in God's word, God's word is what cleans us, it's this truth that is going to change us that that is the only thing that that corrects us, keeps us in line, it is life itself. And so if you can find a way to take even 10 minutes a day, 10-15 minutes, that is what the spiritual growth for them teaches. And it makes it simple to make put into your life, I do have a free resource on the site to go to vibrant Christian living calm. You can get a free Bible study there, I think it's free three day study, I can give you the exact link in the show notes. But that's something that you can try just

to say, you know, we spend a lot of time doing lots of things in our days that maybe aren't nearly as effective and life giving as spending time in God's word. So even just devoting that for me, I have to do that first thing. I have something in my mind that I have, I say to myself almost every day, but first Jesus right before I turn on my social media, before I get on my email, before I do anything, outside of saying hello to my children, you know, things like that, I have to go spend time with God because it won't happen. So making that a priority, I think is huge. And then just making space to listen to God, we're so quick to just get in the car, turn on the radio, get home, talk to people look at the phone, you know, what if you just had space, to be still and to be quiet and to let God share with you? What's going on in your heart things he may want to encourage you in? I think the peace of God comes when we can let him tell us what do we need, right? And then just letting him rest letting us rest in that. So taking time to be still and to kind of shut out the noise even if it's just driving around in your car without anything on and letting that soak in to you. So those are two things that I would recommend. The other thing is, I think sleep is critical. I think sleep changes a lot of things. Yes. So finding ways even just to add in, you know, what is keeping me up at night? How can I sleep half an hour longer? You know, what can I do to go to bed half an hour earlier or sleep in half an hour longer? What is it? That's how can I slowly change that over time? And then one more thing I know that's probably a lot of love all low hanging fruit, but as you're having these times with the Lord or having the quietness, to say, what are the thoughts that fill my day? What are the things that are cluttering my mind cluttering my heart? It's been said that 80% of our thoughts are negative. So if what how are these thoughts lining up with God's Word? And are they true about me and and how can I just begin to notice what those are? Because when we notice we can begin to say Hmm, yeah, that's something I need to work on or something God can speak to me about. Excellent. So I don't know if that's a lot of fruit but picking one of those at least to start with one

David Sandstrom 49:58

Baby steps right baby steps and then you continue to grow. That's really really good stuff. Thank you so much for sharing. So if someone wants to get ahold you really should be a part of your your coaching program and how can they learn more about you?

Alicia Michelle 50:09

Yeah, so you can find out all of the information about me and the programs we offer the coaching programs, the Bible studies, all of that stuff at vibrant Christian living.com. Of course, there's the podcast Viber Christian living podcast, which runs on all major podcast players and Instagram is where I tend to hang out more. So that's at vibrant Christian living. But yeah, I would love to speak to you. If you want to continue these conversations about what that could

look like. How do you really find progress in your thoughts? How do you get rest? How do you study the Bible? That's a free resources, lots of great things there that I would love to help you move forward in.

David Sandstrom 50:43

Excellent. That sounds great. Felicia, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom with the audience. I appreciate you being here.

Alicia Michelle 50:49

Thank you so much for having me, it's been a pleasure.

David Sandstrom 50:52

Likewise, more, go to DavidSandstrom.com. in the show notes for each episode, you'll find links to all the resources that were mentioned, as well as a full transcript with timestamps that you can download for free. In addition, I always include a content upgrade with each show, which is a free download that is designed to help you go deeper with that subject. Once again, thank you for listening, and I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed