

For Broadcast: 9th June 2019

NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Interview

Sarah: I generally feel like I am actually a really good person. Why am I not good enough for my parents to love me?

Celia: This is Messages of Hope, and I'm Celia Fielke. Do you ever feel like you're not good enough? The messages we receive as children have a huge impact on the way we see ourselves, and that can stay with us throughout our life. It's awesome when it's a positive message, but what about when it's negative?

Sarah, your relationship with your mom was pretty unpleasant. Why was that?

Sarah: Mom loved my two brothers, so that love was showered on the two boys. There was no mother-daughter relationship as such with her, and so I was the black sheep.

Celia: So how did that make you feel growing up? Did you know that was not normal?

Sarah: Only when I started hanging around with friends and seeing the relationship between their parents. I never felt that sense of love and being good enough.

Celia: What do you mean good enough?

Sarah: There was never anything that I actually ever really did that was right, that I was loved for. Even told that I was just loved!

Celia: Was there a specific situation that you can describe where your mum could make you feel that way?

Sarah: I had two particularly close friends, but one of them was extremely close, and she used to come to my house, and mum would openly say to her that, "I don't know why you bother being friends with her, she's nothing but a little so-and-so."

Celia: Your mother said this to your friend?

Sarah: Yeah. I remember one particular time we were sitting out the back, and mum had her girlfriends over, and she just put me down the whole time. She said I was not worthy, that I was promiscuous, but I wasn't, but in her mind she thought that I was. I was always lucky that I attracted nice boyfriends, and boys that treated me nicely. Buy flowers, and jewelry, and that kind of thing, and she would openly say to them, "Why do you bother wasting your money on her?"

Celia: Yeah, so boys obviously found you attractive. Was that the issue for your mum, or was it something else?

Sarah: I wasn't allowed to think that I was pretty.

Celia: Why was that?

Sarah: Because that would have meant that you loved yourself.

Celia: And that was not-

Sarah: That wasn't okay. That wasn't okay to love yourself.

Celia: That's an incredible message that you can't love yourself! So you've been fed all these messages of not being good enough, and not lovable. Has that message stayed with you, or has there been a point in your life where you decided not to accept that anymore?

Sarah: When I was pregnant with my eldest daughter, that was when I started to realize that there was no way I was going to parent the way that I was parented, and that my children would without a doubt know that they're loved. That unconditional love that you are still always good enough, worthy, loved, beautiful. I could have very easily just continued that cycle, not being enough, and not being worthy, and-

Celia: Then making your daughter feel the same.

Sarah: Yeah. Like it stops here. There is no more. It stops at me, so that they don't do it with their family.

Celia: We often carry the negative experiences we have as children into our adult lives. For Sarah, it was all about the low self-image she formed from a loveless relationship with her mum. Sarah, that must have effected your relationships as an adult. Tell me about your first husband.

Sarah: I was with him for 11 years, and so I was obviously with him quite young. He totally surrounded me in love, or so I thought. Because I didn't get that as a child, he topped me up, and he was the one that loved me and protected me. It wasn't until later that I then understood it actually wasn't love and protection, it was actually a controlling kind of thing.

Celia: How was it controlling?

Sarah: Telling you what to think, how you should dress, how you should look, being nasty, and then flipping that and all of a sudden loving all over you, and, "You know that I don't really want to hurt you." Twisting all that back around, that, "You're the most important thing to me." That messes with your head, because you don't really know. Part of you goes, "Oh, is this okay?" I was just looking to be loved, which is why I probably gravitated so much toward my first husband, because I was really just looking to be loved, and that's why you just put up with it.

Celia: Your relationship broke down with your first husband. Tell me about your current husband, what's your relationship like with him, and is it different?

Sarah: Totally different. So my first husband was about doing everything for the man. Second husband, "Why do you even wear makeup, you're beautiful as you are." That was when I realized what true love was, was meeting him, and the way that he makes me feel every day.

Celia: That's awesome, isn't it?

Sarah: Yeah.

Celia: Yeah. So was that easy for you? Suddenly, did that heal you?

Sarah: Oh no. No, I still struggle with that, I still don't believe it. I could still race in just before he's getting home, just to go fix my makeup, and do that kind of thing. I look in the mirror, and I see ugly.

Celia: Still?

Sarah: Yep. Yeah, yeah. I still don't see myself as what he sees me as. I still struggle with that, and that's just a big work in progress all the time. Sometimes I think I've got it, and then I don't.

Celia: No matter how many positive messages we're given about being good enough, when we have that deep core belief that we're not, nothing seems to be able to heal that. Sarah has been searching her whole life to fill that need to be truly loved and

accepted. Sarah, I know you're involved in a beauty company. To me, that seems like – well doesn't that feed your poor self-image?

Sarah: Oh, absolutely not. No, it doesn't at all.

Celia: Okay, so tell me about that.

Sarah: It's funny, because with the company that I'm with, the people have kind of an image and think of it as being all about beautiful people, right? But it's not, it's all about us all being worthy, and good enough, and finding our best self. A big part of it is the personal development by reading books and affirmations. Between that, we all empower each other, and love on each other.

Celia: How did you come from where you were, feeling very unworthy, how have you come to work in this company?

Sarah: I was using the products anyway, but I was asked to actually take a look at the business side of it, and because of the person that I was, there was no way I could ever do anything like that. But I also realized that personally, and I have growing children, that I actually needed to work on myself more, and needed to work on my self-belief.

Celia: Why is that? Why is that important?

Sarah: Because I didn't want to have my children having negative self-belief on themselves.

Celia: So tell me a little bit about that journey.

Sarah: The first conference that I went to, I spilt tea all over myself, I spilt my food, I completely hyperventilated, had a complete meltdown. Just being there in the conference, 3,000 to 4,000 people. I was completely out of my depth.

Celia: But you did it.

Sarah: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I've been to six now, and the girls will always say, "From where you are now, enormous difference."

Celia: What does your daughter think?

Sarah: Oh, she's so proud of me all the time. She's been to some ... where I've had to talk in front of people and things like that, and she's come to those kinds of things with me, and seeing me do that, so she's always just ... she's just super proud of what I do, that I say yes to things, and that I now step out of my comfort zone.

Celia: Why is that important to you for her to see that?

Sarah: Oh, so she can do the same thing. So she knows that there are no limits, that there's no boundaries on anything, that you can actually do anything.

Celia: Even though Sarah had built a lot of confidence through her experiences with the beauty company, she still carried the living scars of her past, and the negative self-talk continued to be a daily battle. She was invited to a Christian Women's Conference by a friend, and although she was reluctant at first, she decided to go anyway. So how did that turn out?

Sarah: Some of it was a little bit woo-woo, but it was a really amazing experience. I haven't been brought up in a Christian background. I was really out of my comfort zone, but by the Sunday, I'd actually mellowed into the whole thing, and kind of thought, "Hmm, okay. I think we can do a bit of this, and let's explore this a bit further." And I had this really powerful healing.

Celia: Oh, tell me about that.

Sarah: I went in with the healing with a different reason behind it. My husband has a health condition, so I actually wanted the healing for my husband, for his health condition.

Celia: So was this like a prayer group?

Sarah: It was in a prayer group, yes, but it ended up turning around, and picking up about my relationship with my ex-husband, and with my mum. My mum came into it. It was really quite profound, the whole experience of it. I can do positive self-talk, and affirmations, and read books, but this was beyond anything else that I had done before.

Celia: In what way?

Sarah: It was just beyond powerful. Between the three of them that were all praying, there was lots and lots of crying, lots of snot crying! It's hard to explain. Tingles. She was almost pulling out, getting rid of, cutting cords from the past, and that kind of thing.

Celia: So how has that effected you since then?

Sarah: I guess because I didn't have an understanding on what God really was all about at all, so I guess it was just the understanding that he's actually, he's there, and he just loves on all of us, and that we're all his children.

Celia: So that unconditional love?

Sarah: Yeah, yeah, that unconditional love.

Celia: Having that or starting that relationship with God, how does that make you feel?

Sarah: Well, when I'm feeling lack of love from parents, I know that he loves me.

Celia: Yeah. That's really good. Earlier you mentioned about looking in the mirror, and not liking what you see, but you've done something practical to help change the power of that every day.

Sarah: I have written across my mirror in pink lipstick that, "I am enough," and I constantly look at that, and remind myself of that, that I'm enough, and that I'm worthy, and that I am beautiful. But you know, having that, "I am enough," on my mirror, that's not only for me. My kids go in the bathroom and they see it. My husband gets ready every morning, he sees it.

Celia: And they can see your own struggles and issues, but they know that you're doing something about it. Such a powerful message you're sending them.

Sarah: Absolutely. I don't have a lot of great childhood memories, and so what's important is actually I want my kids to have some good memories, and that we are all loved, and that we're all good enough and worthy, and that we can all do what we set out to do. That there shouldn't be any limitations on what we do, we can actually be who we want to be, and do what we want to do.

Celia: You've been listening to Messages of Hope. If you've experienced a lot of putdowns and emotional abuse you may still be struggling with the guilt of not being good enough. With God we don't need to put the makeup on and build the façade that everything is great. God already totally loves us. We can just be ourselves with God. For more about how God can love you back to wholeness go to messagesofhope.org.au. Or for the free booklet UNLOCKING THE PRISON OF GUILT call us on 1800 353 350 or go to messagesofhope.org.au

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