

THE TRULY AMAZING LIFE SHOW

with Aaron Kennard

EPISODE # 2

GANEL-LYN CONDIE'S LIFE SHOWS US HOW TO SMILE DESPITE ADVERSITY

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Aaron Kennard: Welcome to the Truly Amazing Life podcast. I'm excited to be here with you here today. And I'm really thrilled to introduce our guest for today, Ganel-Lyn Condie. And she is a consultant, writer, and public speaker. She loves to empower people to identify areas of their lives where they can become more balanced by eliminating chatter and clutter in their homes, their minds, their spirit and their schedules. Ganel-Lyn is a former magazine editor, an award winning journalist. And she is a 200-hour certified yoga instructor, and has a degree in elementary education and psychology. She just completed her first book, and she has also worked extensively in public relations and marketing. And I'm really excited to have you here Ganel-Lyn. Are you there?

Ganel-Lyn Condie: I'm excited to be talking with you today, Aaron. Thanks for having me.

Aaron: Fantastic. And for the listeners out there, Ganel-Lyn is also a friend of my sister's. And we've just been recently introduced but I'm really excited to get to know you Ganel-Lyn and to hear more about your life and what you've got going on, So, I've introduced you briefly, maybe you could just tell us real quickly about yourself. I'd like to get to know you a little personally and then kind of jump in here.

Ganel-Lyn: Great. Well, I feel grateful to talk with you Aaron. I've shared with you already that your poster has been in our home for the past year, and came into our home through your sister during a time that was truly amazing but also truly difficult. And my husband was going through a long-term job loss. So, it's feel like a [xx][1:43] moment to talk today. And just a little bit about me, I've been married 22 years and I have two great children. I have a teen boy driver and a little girl.

Aaron: Nice.

Ganel-Lyn: And she just started the 4th grade and I'll start with that. Because if I was to take one story to try to tell why I believe life is truly amazing, it would be just the fact that I'm a mother.

Aaron: That's awesome.

Ganel-Lyn: Over 20 years ago, I had some health issues and received a diagnosis that the doctors said there would never be children.

Aaron: Wow! Twenty years ago they said you'd never have children, you said?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. They said, absolutely not. I had a conditions, an autoimmune disease, lupus, and a diagnosis of a serious heart condition. And have done a total of three years of chemo and children, according to doctors, weren't going to happen.

Aaron: Wow!

Ganel-Lyn: And it took some great effort to get them here but we did have that gift in our lives. And I think that makes life truly amazing if you have the chance to be a parent.

Aaron: Absolutely.

Ganel-Lyn: So, I'm passionate about creating balance and strength so that you are empowered to go through the more difficult times. And I've had those and I see them as gifts. And the greatest teachers I've had has been through some of those more difficult ones.

Aaron: That's awesome. Thank you for that intro. That gets me excited to hearing some more of that. So, we're going to go ahead and draw some of that out and dive deeper into some of those stories you've alluded to. And thanks for sharing why you feel life is truly amazing as far as...it sounds like at the core of that for you is your family and your children, really. And I couldn't agree more, definitely. I have four children myself. And it's such a huge blessing and a gift as you've said. So, let's jump in a little here then, describe a little bit...you mentioned your children being the thing why you see life as really amazing right now but

describe a little bit more about your life currently and why it is so amazing to you right now.

Ganel-Lyn: So, I think to back track just a little bit, I grew up in a home where I had loving parents that had been divorced but both remarried. But I think growing up I've been really determine to have a really healthy, strong marriage. And within a few years of being married, there were adjustments and some challenges that comes with marriage and learning to live with someone but pretty soon after we were married and both full-time college student, I was diagnosed with lupus. And within that first year, had a heart condition associated with that.

Aaron: Wow!

Ganel-Lyn: And I was majoring in elementary education and... Aaron: You were both in school at the time?

Ganel-Lyn: We were both in school full-time with no health insurance. And so that poor college, newly married, and then this diagnosis came. And I would say, what makes my life truly amazing is my relationship with God.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I remember feeling during that time how much I had to look at that relationship and realized that I needed more strength from God and direction than I'd ever needed before just to get through the day because of pain. And then sometimes the treatments that they give you for the condition are even worse than what the condition is. [laugh]

Aaron: Wow. Yes, I've heard that.

Ganel-Lyn: Some of this side effects and trying to get through school and student teaching and not be well.

Aaron: Wow.

Ganel-Lyn: And then we eventually came to a place where my health was a little bit more stable. And I felt really strongly, we both did, that it was time to try to talk with the doctors about having a child. So, it was a seven year process really to have our son. And then during that time after he was born and was around three years old is when I actually met

your sister. And we lived in a little townhome and he was three at the time. And my heart condition returned and I did another second year of chemo therapy.

Aaron: Oh, wow.

Ganel-Lyn: And I remembered feeling like I was in need of support of others. I was this young mom and we lived in a community where we were all in a townhome situation. So, your sister and other young moms would just help. And I didn't have family that lived nearby and they were really my family to help raise my son on days where it was really difficult. And they never made me feel like I was the needy case but they were there to help and step in. And then that lasted about a year. And I was stable again for a while and that's when we tried to have another baby, and I then did another year of chemo therapy. So, there was a lot that happened during that time...

Aaron: Wow! So you did another year of chemotherapy before you had your daughter?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. So, I'd done a year before I had my son. A year after I had my son and before I had my daughter. And then another year when I was running the magazine. Or working on the magazine in the garage and had two small children. So, today, when you're talking to me today...I was just sharing this with someone the other day that I don't talk about those health things as much because I've never wanted them to be my identity.

Aaron: Is it pretty far in the past now? So, now where you're just happy and...

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Three or four years ago I completely changed the way that I eat. And I did a lot more work with some alternative tools and preventative tools. And I haven't been on medication or done chemo, this is the longest I've ever been gone.

Aaron: Wow.

Ganel-Lyn: So, I'm approaching my seventh year. And so, I've realized that I probably haven't embraced the miracle of that as much in my story.

Aaron: Yes. That's amazing actually, that alone.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. And it really only comes up often when I talk about my children because that's the context in which I really see that miracle is that there was this big medical thing happening .

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And yet these children still came into our family. And I was able to be a mom. So, I feel that miracle today and I probably don't vocalize it in gratitude as much when there are so many people that deal with chronic illness, especially in inflammation-oriented illnesses. So today, I feel really physically grateful and healthy. But I think everyone wakes up every day...I say that to everyone all the time, you might not have a diagnosis of lupus or another disease but I think all of us have the challenge of waking up not feeling always our physical best.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And having challenges and pushing through those even on an hour basis when you're really in the troughs of a health crisis.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: To try to find the gift in that can be challenging.

Aaron: That's some good insights for sure. So, it sounds like now...I really appreciate you going through that, to paint us the picture of what you've been through just briefly. And now it sounds like you've got these two healthy kids. You're healthy. You're writing books. You're doing things and it sounds like a lot of that pain is in the past from the standpoint of dealing with physical hardships and dealing with these emotional hardships of trying to get children here and not knowing if you could. And it sounds like now you're at a place where things seem to be running smoother. Is that a fair assessment?

Ganel-Lyn: You know what I would say about that is that in reflection before we talked today, I had to think about this because that story and that part of my life led to learning tools that helped me through other, or even probably more challenging times. And I would say it in that way because there was a year that one of my children really was struggling. And that year felt, at times...

Aaron: Harder?

Ganel-Lyn: More challenging than three years of chemo piled together and all the years of infertility.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And it was because the hurt that I felt for my child...

Aaron: Absolutely.

Ganel-Lyn: And the struggle that I saw my child going through felt so much more. As a mother you would rather feel some of that than have your child experience that.

Aaron: I can relate to that 100%. Like last fall when I was going through that severe sickness that I'd gone through and the hardest thing, I can totally agree, was when my son was suffering through depression and to see him go through that pain was harder than all the pain I experienced. As bad as it was I can totally relate to that.

Ganel-Lyn: So I home schooled my son one year and that even though I have a teaching degree and I've done three years of chemo and I ran a magazine and I did all these things. To deal with a teenager that was struggling to know where he fit in the world and what his emotions were about and how he was struggling to find his place was much more challenging. I prayed more to GOD and pleaded for more help than I think in all the other years. And then it brings emotion up for me because as with everything, that experience was a game changer for him. It was a bonding experience for us but were there really struggling moments and days and hours where I didn't think I could do it? Absolutely! And did it always feel clean and positive? It was messy most of the time. And then within a few years of that another challenging time hit our family and my husband lost his job and we had never been unemployed. And he found out he had skin cancer the week after he lost the job.

Aaron: Oh, my goodness.

Ganel-Lyn: And for a year which is when I found your poster and was given it that as a gift. Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And we made a decision as a family that we knew as a family, we could do hard things with God. And that if we focused everyday on the miracles instead of the struggles, that when we looked back and told the story again in the future to our children and grandchildren, they would hear about that time of our life as a gift. But let me tell you Aaron...

Aaron: That's amazing.

Ganel-Lyn: ...our dog was even killed during that time and I remembered telling people, I think we are a bad country song. Because we've lost two jobs, my husband got skin cancer and had his nose completely almost cut off his face, and then our dog was killed. And I remembered thinking, God. And in the meantime the market had completely fallen out in the real estate market and we were trying to sell our home for almost a year. And it was a very challenging time.

Aaron: Oh, my goodness.

Ganel-Lyn: And we're just emerging from that. We're just recovering.

Aaron: Just now?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. We just have sold everything and we're literally in the middle of our forties starting over again.

Aaron: Oh. Wow.

Ganel-Lyn: And we're now living in a tiny little rental house, building a new home, and trying to financially recover. We've sold everything we have. Our dining room table I'm working at right now is a little folding table with folding chairs. And we're happier than I could ever imagine. And we walked away from a custom built home and we're in a tiny little old 70 year old farm house. And people walk into our home and knowing what we've had, and they love the feeling here. And I would say, it's because it's stuff. It's not what matters and I think that we know as a family, we're stronger, we're happier and we were, I think a pretty decent family before, but all of us had moments where it was too hard. Selling all of your things, or paying bills for a year with no job. And then you're dog is killed and then watching your children mourn the loss. There were lots of times where to quote you back to you, it was a hard day.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: It was a hard hour, or a hard couple of days or when there's no jobs out there and you're not really sure where the next...so, when I think about what was the most empowering for us during that time it was to celebrate the miracles we were seeing and trying not to give into the fear...

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: ...of what we didn't know. And if we could stay into that place, we were given the energy, the strength the peace, the whatever, to do the very next day. But the minute I [xx][14:35] the next day think about things that may seem challenging to me right now.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: If I go to the fear of, I don't really know how it looks, and I don't know how it's going to work out, and I'm not really sure, I'm literally immediately straying from the power to move forward. And that's what I would say was the greatest gift of this last year. Is that our family looks completely different. And that if you go all the way back to health concerns, and then having chemo, and then having babies, and then going through a challenging year with my son and the things I learned then about myself, about God and forgiving, and struggling in a family and then to then be given the gift. I think if you'd ask any of the members of our family, we would say, it was a gift given to us.

Aaron: Which one? What was the gift?

Ganel-Lyn: The gift was to lose the job, walk away from our home, and sell all of our things, and start over.

Aaron: That's awesome.

Ganel-Lyn: And that didn't always feel that way. That isn't an easy thing for children to leave their home and their friends. And it's not easy to sell all of your belongings and start all over again. Or for me to have a real role reversal with my husband. He had been the spouse that watched me struggle with health issues and then to watch him recover from skin cancer surgery and struggle to find a job, we were role reversed. I was

much more in the role of supporting and not being able to fix it for him and it helped me to understand how he felt all those years watching my hair fall out and me throw up for a year.

Aaron: Oh, my goodness.

Ganel-Lyn: And be on that side of the table. And so that's a gift for our marriage to be able to role reverse. But, has it been challenging? Absolutely! And yet I would say, like with anything if we [xx] [16:32]... the ironic thing is my husband's father who's passed on now lost his job at the same age my husband lost his job. And in the process of not having a job and talking to my mother-law, because she was concerned about us as her children, I started to hear some stories of strength from the time they were unemployed that have never been shared in the family.

Aaron: Wow.

Ganel-Lyn: Really what had been passed on were stories of heartache. Like that's when dad lost his job, and that's when that happened...

Aaron: But they never ever were talking about all the strength parts of it?

Ganel-Lyn: Never. Aaron, never, never. I never had heard it. And so, every week, or a couple times of week when she would call and check in, or I would call her and check in with her, I would try to share something like, someone left a box of oranges on our doorstep, or we were able to show the house today. No offers but we showed the house today.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And then emerged some really key important miracles that had happened to them that had never been passed on. And then that solidified for me even more that what my husband and I had tried to [xx] [17:41] intention for this time in our life was the really right direction for our family to go in. But if we were careful...And we had talked about the miracles every day at dinner that it would be [xx][17:52] for no reason, that then the experience would come and go.

Aaron: It would be like all this pain for naught. Almost.

Ganel-Lyn: For nothing, for nothing. And then what if we turned around and said, guess what we say what happened today that [xx][18:06]. And sometimes you don't see that the dots connects.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And there are some dots that still hasn't been connected. There's still some things that I....

Aaron: But you're still looking for that and that makes such a difference, doesn't it?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. And there's not always reasons. And God doesn't always reveal the big lesson behind it but I think overall 90 percent of the time we try to do that. And what I see then is that my children, hopefully, [xx][18:31] and they have to go through some things, will have a story to pass on. And I think that's why in every religion I know of they have a sacred book of scripture. They read a book, a story...

Aaron: Where they're passing down this knowledge.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. That's it. They tell stories in scriptures no matter what religion you are, Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, Mormon, you're reading a story in a book about another family that did a hard thing and they turned to God and they were changed for the better.

Aaron: And then it changes you when you read that.

Ganel-Lyn: And then it changes you. Yes. And that's when we tell those stories and read them.

Aaron: OK. I want to break you off for a second here because you have covered just a ton of cool stuff. I didn't want to cut in there because there was so much good stuff you were going over. But I want to recap here what we just went through. And just kind of highlight a couple of the things that you said. Because I was really amazed as you were talking about that. I just loved hearing that faith. When you talked about your trials, and a blessing, and a trial, just one after another of things. Like you said, you've got multiple stories that you could tell and you've given us a highlight of a lot of those but I just really loved hearing that as you're going through these, you were seeing these trials as a gift as

hard as they were. It seems to me, and correct me if I'm wrong about that, you had those earlier trials in your life and you expressed that they kind of prepared you for some of these later trials. And that when you hit some of these later trials that you talked about that your perspective and your faith was, these things, this is somehow here for my good and I'm going to find the good in this and you were prepared that way. Is that true?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. I would say that as a young child, living in a home where there were some mental illness, and a divorce, and some other challenges, I probably had a natural tendency toward trying to see the lesson in it. I've always gained some strength from that process. But I would said, if I'm understanding your question correctly, that if we allow God to walk with us through whatever is being experienced it doesn't change the nature of something difficult. For example when I walk to clients, or I speak to women's group about a child dying. I had a sister that died when I was ten.

Aaron: Wow!

Ganel-Lyn: Is there any part of that you could repaint in this story that sounds fun and happy and pretty? No. It's a loss.

Aaron: Yes. It's painful.

Ganel-Lyn: But I could retell that same story about who she was. How she changed our family for the small time she lived in our home. And that is exactly what else I could focus on as well. And that's what I try to teach my children. It's which [xx][21:30] you want to keep. You want to keep the faith inside of your heart. Because if you do keep that faith it literally is like turning up the volume or the air-conditioning when it's really hot.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And if you want to see the fear, in your life, it is literally like kinking the hose and suffocating yourself.

Aaron: It's so refreshing for me to talk to you about this stuff. I love these kinds of conversation. That's why I'm so excited about doing this podcast because I want to have more of these conversations and so I

orchestrate that. I love to hear that. That's fantastic. And what I want to go back to...

Ganel-Lyn: But what I speak and talk about it doesn't mean that I don't trip of. I tripped up last night. I'm at the end of a long summer of being a mom. And I've been with kids a lot of hours of the day and the bickering was happening in the other room, and I completely [xx][22:27] and lost it. I was grouchy, and angry and I wanted everyone to stop and everyone was slamming doors. And then a few minutes later, I switched gears. I went in and tried to have a positive interaction with one of my kids and he said to me, I don't get you. Why are you all of a sudden...and I said well, you're right. I could stay mad. But that wasn't making me feel happy. If you want to [xx][22:47], go ahead but I'm done with it. And so I think sometimes in our lives, it really is, and I know you've talked about this in your writing and in your video post, that it's a choice. It's just a choice.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And so, sometimes when things are super heavy and difficult, the choices have to be made almost every five minutes.

Aaron: Exactly.

Ganel-Lyn: And then there are other times where normal life is quote on quote happening, and I could be just as [xx][23:15] and it's not chemo. It's not a dead dog that I have to try to figure out how to process with my children. It's not my husband beating cancer and yet it's the most simplest things like traffic, or how do I pay the bills today and I feel the fear. And then I'm feeding that side of me. And then I'm suffocating myself, or I'm creating the heat that turned literally the air-conditioning off and I'm sweating to death...

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: ...because I'm so filled with fear.

Aaron: It's amazing how we can just...it really is life starts anew every day. And just because you had this thing yesterday, your life was amazing. It's like you have to start over today and everyday requires that choice.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: And every day you're going to be faced with...and it's amazing. Really, that is something that I just love about life. It doesn't end because you figured it out yesterday. It's like you're always figuring it out. And what I want to come back to is when you said at the beginning, you lost your house, your big custom house. You're in a smaller house and your husband had lost a job. And yet you're happier than ever. Like that is such a critical point, I think for people to hear and to understand that. Just that reinforcement that none of it is about the stuff. It's not.

Ganel-Lyn: None of it.

Aaron: It's about how you feel.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: So, explain to us, why are you happier than ever now in this scenario? How is that? Why is that the case?

Ganel-Lyn: Well, I think the quick answer is I hope it's a result of the fruits of the tree of gratitude that we try to grow during a really difficult time. I hope that what we feel today is a direct gift from

how we process the other stewardship and time that you were given. And so, I hope today we're happier because we learned something. And I hope we are happier today because we are different as a family, as a couple, as individuals. And that we grew in the midst of the adversity instead of shrinking.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: The other thing I think it is, is that there is something really freeing. I've always liked having a home that felt nice, and orderly and clean. That's why I consult on home organization because I really believe in the power of your home feeling like it rises up to [xx][25:35].

Aaron: I totally agree, having order is such a key to feeling good.

Ganel-Lyn: But I have been teaching this for years. That it doesn't matter if I live in a chicken coop or a mansion. I've had people come into my home that is a tiny little apartment. And I know that my apartment

literally fits into their closet. My whole apartment because I know the homes they live in. And they don't want to leave my little apartment and it has nothing to do with any custom furniture that I may have. It has to do with the feeling in your home.

Aaron: The feeling?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. And the way you can create peace, order and beauty in every level in which you may be living your life. And so, I hope we're happier today because we love each other more. I hope we're happier today because we've learned lessons. Even the other day I was sitting down with my husband and the designer for this new home that we are trying to build. And it's scary for me sometimes, I have to admit. I'm pretty settled. It's simple. We're just renting this little house and I think that would be another life's lesson that sometimes when you emerge from a hard time in your life, and then you come out the other end and you feel some peace, you feel some of the results of the lessons you've learned, you can kind of...and maybe you feel this way Aaron, because you've gone through some big stories and then times in between.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: Where I just want to rest right now. There's a part of me that says, do we really have to build another house right now? We're doing fine. I'm so content. I don't really need anything....

Aaron: I feel that exact thing recently actually. We were having that exact conversation this morning.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. And you know what, God has really given me some really clear messages that, you know, you don't get to just sit and meditate all day in your little farmhouse. You get to do the next thing.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And so, I would say when I speak to people about doing hard things with God and trying to overcome challenges in their life and emerge from them, or create a home of beauty and peace that it's so easy sometimes to say, but it's simple now, I don't want to really make it complicated.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: But I was sitting there and my husband said, do you want this cabinet or that? I don't know what we're deciding, and we're trying to decide the cost of it and he goes, I don't want you to not choose what your dream is. And I looked at him, and to answer your question that you just asked me, I said, my dream will never be ever, ever about the cabinet. My dream is about you and my children and the things I'm learning. And am I getting up every day and living the life God want me to live? And am I taking the things you've given me and learning from them and taking the gifts from whatever they are? Because, on the surface, anyone would read our story and think, losing a job, selling a home, selling everything we had and starting over is not a gift. You don't go to God and ask for that.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: You don't say, God I would really love it if you would just let all these changes happen. Help us lose everything...

Aaron: Just help me lose everything like Job. Just beat me to bloody pieces, right? Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Yes.

Aaron: You don't ask for that.

Ganel-Lyn: Help me have no money and still learn how to pay bills with your help. Or help me learn how to grow a garden because that's the only way we're going to have food that day. I don't know of anyone who prays that. We pray for, help me to have money, help me to get a new job. Help my kids not fight today. Help me to have all this that I want. We don't pray the real prayers that really God says, I hear your prayer. I know what will make you the happiest and here it comes. Guess what it looks like? Cancer. Guess what it looks like? Chemo. Guess what it looks like? Infertility. Guess what it looks like? A job loss.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: I often tell people the quicker I learn the lesson, I'm assuming the more I get to move on to the next thing. And so, I hope we're happier because of that. I hope we're happier because we're different. But I also hope we're happier because we used the time that

we were given and we took from it what was important and it did change us for the better.

Aaron: That's awesome. So many good things you said in there. And just to kind of recap and boil that down, it's kind of like just being grateful. I just get this overriding sense of feeling throughout this call that you're just grateful for what is. Grateful for what comes and to accept it. Not like you're asking for hard things to happen but that you don't see them as bad. You see everything that's happened as God's will. And you're trying to be cheerfully accepting it. And it sounds like that's basically making all the difference of your happiness in life. Is that a fair assessment?

Ganel-Lyn: And for me that is perfect because I think for me, when I speak or teach and people say, I just don't feel like my prayers are being heard and God's not really even there. I say, when I get that way, because everyone gets that way. I have to just do gratitude first.

Aaron: Exactly.

Ganel-Lyn: And I already have a habit of everyday in my study and quiet time writing down all the things that I'm grateful for. That what've done for years and years and years.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And you can look back in my journal and see some really hard days. Because there were some basic things. Like I am so grateful to have two legs. Like you know that was a hard day

Aaron: I have the same thing.

Ganel-Lyn: ...Nothing else to be grateful for that day.

Aaron: I'm so grateful for this pen that I writing with.

Ganel-Lyn: Seriously. I'm so grateful my phone turned on so I can call my husband and hear his voice.

Aaron: You're really digging deep to try to find something to be grateful for. Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Yes.

Aaron: But the fact is, you're digging deep. That's the key. Really that is such a key.

Ganel-Lyn: That is the key. That is the key. And I've heard it said by some philosopher and metaphysical coaches and things like that, that if you're really in a state of bliss and peace, which people are really always trying to attain. And we feel like if we could eliminate whatever is hurting us, then we would have obtained that peace. But what I've learned is, you can eliminate everything that looks like a challenge, you still may not be in that place of peace. So, the invitation is, if I'm struggling to feel that peace or that joy, which is different than happy, that contentment that can come in the midst of the worst of storms. Because we know [xx][31:54] the middle of the tornado is calm. The middle of it is calm. And so, when I pray a prayer of gratitude, if I'm struggling to feel like God hears me, I have to go back to gratitude so your point is exactly what I'm saying. If I go to gratitude, I feel more love for my husband, or my kids. If I go to criticism, then nothing they do is right and they could be doing the best they could to show me how much they love me and I don't even see it or hear it because I'm not in a place of gratitude. And so, that is a choice for me. I don't always [xx][32:25] it.

Aaron: And the funny thing is too is when you choose to say, get rid of all this pain, are you really sure you want to get rid of that? If that's the things that's bringing you the blessing?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: It's almost ironic that we'd want to get rid of the very thing that is the best thing for us but we think it's not. So, the key is, going back to what you said, it's learning to be grateful. Literally, for everything, including the pain.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: And embracing it and seeing it for the beauty that it is. Because every single thing has a positive side to it. It's it just like you've been saying on this whole call, it's which do you choose to focus on? Which wolf... What did you say about the wolf?

Ganel-Lyn: Which wolf do you feed? And you know, in my book I share of lot of people's story about things that they've doing that are hard and how they deal with that. And one of the stories and contributors to that book shared that she really realized that one day when her own husband lost his job. That the prayers she'd literally prayed for something totally different two months earlier was being fulfilled and answered with this job loss.

Aaron: In a different way. Yes. Ganel-Lyn: In a totally different way. Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And so, if you really believe in your core in a God, or a higher power and for some people it isn't, they don't call it God. They don't say that. For me that's what I just choose to believe. And in my core, my God loves me and he's my father. And just like when I tell my children, no, for that third cookie right before bed, that doesn't mean I don't love them. It's just I'm saying, no, because I know that a good night's sleep is really what will bring them the most joy and happiness.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: But in their heart, [xx][34:01] but I just want the cookie and that's what we do to God all the time. We're just like, but I just want, why can't you just give me what I want?

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And he's saying, but I love you way too much and so, in my core, if I really believe that, and what I believe is he loves me enough to keep testing that principle in my own life.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And so if I really believe that, then there's nothing that he gives me that is not a gift.

Aaron: Then you stop asking why because you believe. Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: You don't need to ask why.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Yes.

Aaron: You need to say, thank you.

Ganel-Lyn: Exactly. Exactly. Then everything that is given to me is a gift, everything. And it can look not pretty on the outside but if it really is a gift from him...and let me tell you, I'm not being Pollyanna about that because we could spend hours talking about some other stories of people that are going through and have gone through some really horrific things that go on for a long periods time.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I think there is, there's not sprint running here. This is marathon running and marathon running...I'm not a marathon runner because it just sounds horribly uncomfortable for me to think of [xx] [35:06].

Aaron: I am and I love it, but it's funny how everybody has got such a different opinion on that.

Ganel-Lyn: I run in very small spurts and for me those are marathons. And when I get to my second mile, I go, oh, this is what marathon runners must be talking about. Because you just keep going and then you hit a place where it really is a relief. And so, I know that there's challenges out there that people are dealing with that are really not simple, [xx][35:33] contained in short periods of time. They're long-term struggles that require some real dig deep and I teach this and talk about this a lot about a tree that has a good root system or a small root system. And the sometimes outward appearance pretty trees don't have good root systems and the first storm that comes along, those trees are ripped out of the ground. And then those ugly, crooked, kind of like gnarly looking trees are seriously the best root system. The storm comes and they're the last trees is standing.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: So, I always say, if you are in a season in your life right now where there's is not a storm, then nourish those roots.

Aaron: Right.

Ganel-Lyn: This is the time that you do it. Sometimes we don't even think about a root until the storms comes and then all of a sudden we're

like, do I have faith? Do I have gratitude? Do I have what it takes to be in a place of...

Aaron: That analogy is great because it coincides with that you're saying. From the outside perspective, it looked like you had nothing and yet you're the happiest because your roots are strong whereas you see lots of people in debt but they have these amazing house and boats and this and that.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: And they may appear like they're smiling and then at home they're not happy and there's no peace. And there's no true joy and that's not a truly amazing life.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: That's just emptiness. That's a really good one about that tree.

Ganel-Lyn: But isn't it challenging though?

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: I think the consistency of during the non-storm times when your life looks like there's relative peace. There's no storm on the horizon that anyone's warning us about or we don't even see anything's coming. Everyone seems pretty good, that's when we get sometimes lazy. We stop nourishing our roots, our faith.

Aaron: And that's why it's so critical to have reminders and things. That's exactly why I made that poster. Because I was in this time of feeling amazing and I thought, I have to keep this and I know there is going to be times when I need to kind of keep this. So, that was actually the reason why I made that. And I don't want to cut you off because this is amazing but I know you've probably got to go and pick up your daughter soon and we needed to wrap up the call. So, we could keep talking for a long time, I think.

Ganel-Lyn: I'm in the car so I have another ten minutes probably of relative quiet and I'd be happy to give you wrap up time or whatever you need.

Aaron: Perfect. It's been really cool to hear. That's good to know how much time we have here. I kind of want to just maybe bring it all together

here and wrap up and have you boil it down to maybe some advice. But let me just ask you this, of those three questions here to kind of finish up, and then I'm just going to wrap up and have tell people how they can get in touch with you and finish off with maybe one final thought. But let me ask you a couple questions right before we finish. They're just kind of quicker.

Ganel-Lyn: Great.

Aaron: Of the poster where I've listed the 12 pillars, what I call the 12 pillars of a truly amazing life. That's just what it's become known to me as. Those are my pillars and what I share with other people. On that poster, what of those stand out to you the most right now? And why? Just kind of a quick discussion on that.

Ganel-Lyn: I would say that it's the power of joy. And I apologize because I just walked away from the poster.

Aaron: No problem.

Ganel-Lyn: And I'm standing in front of it and I wanted to quote it exactly, so maybe you can help me with which pillar is that.

Aaron: So, celebrating life. Helping others experience joy. Your joy is directly proportionate to the joy you give others. Is that what you're referring to? Or are you referring to finding joy in every moment?

Ganel-Lyn: Finding, finding...

Aaron: And...

Ganel-Lyn: Go ahead.

Aaron: Yes. So, just enjoying every moment. That would be one of those pillars? Is that the one you're referring to?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Yes. And that trying to find...I think there is something powerful when you're going through a difficult time. The first pillar you talked about in helping others to find that joy, is that during the time of say, the job loss time, and even when I was going through the chemotherapy. When you reach out of yourself to try to serve anyone

else around you and for some it is literally just changing that next diaper for your new baby, that's service.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And it brings you out of yourself. And I think that is one of the great pillars. And so, when we would share our miracles that [xx][39:09] share with others, to help empower others, I gained strength from that.

Aaron: You mean while you were going through it kind of thing?

Ganel-Lyn: Even when I was going through it. And I remembered felling that...

Aaron: Especially that.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. That I felt that direct result of a relationship between when I would share a miracle we had seen. And it wasn't that it was just about us but when we talk about in our family as good fruit, bad fruit. When someone ask you how you're doing, it's really easy especially when they know that you've lost your job or you're on chemotherapy, you just talk about the struggle.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I tend to be a pretty open book honest person. And so, I really believe that you shouldn't just tell people, oh, I'm doing great, I'm fine when you're really, really struggling. But there is a way to share that joy with others by either A, serving them, or sharing what you're learning through your own experience.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: That's why I wrote the book that I did write. It's because during that year that I home schooled my son, I felt so isolated and alone. And there's nothing more draining than feeling like you're the only one on the planet that's ever experienced something.

Aaron: Yes:

Ganel-Lyn: And I remembered feeling that as soon as that year was over, I should be meeting all these other mothers that had had a 13 year

old struggling emotionally that year and had home schooled them and I thought, why weren't we all talking to each other?

Aaron: Yes. Exactly.

Ganel-Lyn: Like, why weren't we supporting each other? So that's really the beginnings of why I started writing the book that I did.

Aaron: And you were just about to publish that. You haven't published it, is that right?

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. I haven't published it yet but it is a compilation of stories of doing hard things with God and how in different areas of our lives when we read other people's stories and when, Aaron, you've shared your story, we gain strength from each other.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And we do a service to each other when we do that. So one of the pillars I think is so brilliant is that you bring that joy to others when you share your own joy.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And sometimes your own joy isn't, let me share with you how great my life is. Sometimes your joy you're sharing is, let me share with you how I've overcome something today, or the lesson I learned today, or the struggle I'm having today. And how I saw God's hands in it. And then that next moment, that person leaves that conversation empowered.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: I listened to your video and I sat and realized, OK, how many times today could I take what I already do know? But you reminded me of that. So, I think that's really powerful.

Aaron: It's so powerful to remind each other. I say those things and I teach these things and quite frankly the main reason why I do it is because I need to be reminded every single day.

Ganel-Lyn: Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think it's so easy when you're going through a difficult time to become isolated. I guess that's my point. Is that when we serve others and share joys with others, as one of the pillars, we gain strength from not becoming so micro-focused...

Aaron: That's awesome.

Ganel-Lyn: ... on whatever we may be living. And I lose perspective. I need a few really good quality people in my life to check me so that I don't get too crazy, and too self-absorbed, and too into my one stuff.

Aaron: Yes. We all need that. Ganel-Lyn: We all need that.

Aaron: We need each other. We don't just do these things alone. A truly amazing life doesn't exist of one person's living by themselves. It's not that easy.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes. And don't you think the gifts of social media and technology today really do allow us to share that joy or share negativity. And I am all for one for telling the truth about your life. But I think there's always a way to perpetuate gratitude and joy in the posts we give on Facebook and the conversations we have.

Aaron: [static] [xx] That's awesome. I have two more questions. [xx] what's the number one most important thing you'd tell someone[xx] [43:56]

Ganel-Lyn: Aaron, I'm having a hard time hearing you. It's all jumbled. Like roboty.

Aaron: Oh, no. How's it now? Is it still messed up?

Ganel-Lyn: I can gather what words you're saying. You sound still a little bit like you're on Star Wars Darth Vader voice.

Ganel-Lyn: ...fairly but stop me if I'm not saying what you want me to say.

Aaron: OK. Sorry I'm not sounding great here, but what's the number one most important thing you'd tell someone to help them to start living a truly amazing life today? And then what's one book you'd most likely

recommend to somebody right now, as far as related to living a full and amazing life?

Ganel-Lyn: So, that's interesting because I think the answer to both of those questions is the same answer.

Aaron: Great.

Ganel-Lyn: So, one of the books...I was trying really to be thoughtful about...I knew that you may ask about the book. I've read a lot of great books. I read books of scripture every day and that gives me great strength. One of the books that was probably the most life-changing information for me to have is Becoming Spiritually Minded by James Cox. And I don't know if you know or familiar...

Aaron: I haven't heard about that one.

Ganel-Lyn: OK. So, he talks a lot about this principle of stewardship. And that really everything is a gift from God. So, that includes your death, that includes your illness, that includes your perceived struggles, and that if you really see it all in that way, your children are a gift, your marriage is a gift, your health is a gift, your body is a gift. And when they're all gifts and there's stewardship assigned, and that may seem like a foreign term because people haven't heard of that. But I like to equate it to an assignment or a...

Aaron: Duty, or...

Ganel-Lyn: Well, like when you're in school and you get an assignment to write a paper.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: You don't own that paper. You were given the assignment to write that paper...

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: ...by your teacher and so you go home and you write the paper and the paper isn't you're whole self, it's just an assignment.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: It's just a responsibility or...

Aaron: So, you take away the identity of you being a mother but it's just an assignment you have temporarily or what not?

Ganel-Lyn: Exactly. Or like when we check out a book out of the library, you're borrowing it. Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: Maybe that's a better analogy. Is that God gives us a lot of opportunities to check out books out of the library. Some of them look like a raise at work, or some people win the lottery. And those are easy ones for everyone to go, oh, my gosh, how lucky that person is to have that great blessing or gift. But then others books it's like, why did you just check that book out? And you're child has a drug addiction and treatment for it. Or you've gone through a divorce, or you're dealing with chemotherapy and your hair is all falling out. No one walks up to you and says, that's a great book you just checked out of the library.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: Literally, that's what Jim teaches, is that becoming spiritually-minded really boils down to...and that was my first introduction that everything happening into my life was a stewardship. It was a gift for a time. And if you think about stewardship, or checking a book out of the library, those are temporary.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: I think sometimes our challenge in a challenge is reminding us that it is always temporary.

Aaron: Exactly.

Ganel-Lyn: And it maybe long-term temporary. I knew people that have had a disability. My father-in-law died of MS.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: I saw two months before he passed away that he probably had gotten the gift [xx][47:30] of that disease. And I'm sure there were

many of them. But the reason I know he was close to graduating was I [xx][47:40].

Aaron: Because he changed.

Ganel-Lyn: He changed. I saw him at Halloween. He looked at us differently as we showed up to visit him in our costume.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: He found joy in that moment that I hadn't seen. And he had spent...his last whole life was in bed and hospice care.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn : And he had had a complete role reversal 15 years earlier when he started to become sick and because of that it was very challenging in his life to walk away from a career and be dependent on his wife. And all of these things that perceived to be losses of freedom. And yet the moment I could see in his eyes that peace and joy, in just laying there and seeing us in a costume.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: In our funny looking Halloween costumes, I thought, he's ready to graduate because he got it.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: He got it.

Aaron: And then he died a couple months later?

Ganel-Lyn: He died on Thanksgiving so that was Halloween, Thanksgiving day he died.

Aaron: This was just last year Thanksgiving?

Ganel-Lyn: No. That was nine years ago.

Aaron: OK.

Ganel-Lyn: Nine years ago. And so, I would say that his stewardship assignment was heavier than most.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: He wasn't asked to check out the book of MS. And I don't think that anyone goes into the library to ask for that book. But we all have stuff. We all have stuff and we all have stuff that looks on the outside like a great blessing that can turn into being a challenge too. So, it goes both ways. I think sometimes we talk about, can you see the gift in that challenge? Well, oftentimes we think someone winning the lottery and we hear about this later and their life changes for the worse.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: Because of it. And so, it's easy to look at the Oprahs of the world and think that they have it all figured out because there's so much abundance in their life and there is. But even she would tell you that it's how you choose to frame it and see it.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I don't know when my last day on earth is going to be. And my last thought on that is, my biggest fear is to leave this planet and this classroom, so to speak, and miss a class or a lesson that was a gift for me. That I left sitting right there and didn't unwrap it because I labeled it as a challenge.

Aaron: Yes. Or as a curse or whatever.

Ganel-Lyn: Or a curse, or a bad day. Yes. And I love what you teach, that if you call it a bad day, that's the tragedy.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And that's the tragedy because what do you do at the moment? You shut the whole thing down.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I love that we have a God that really is, in my belief system, our father first, that he gets that we're children really in so many ways.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And that we're going to get it eventually. And so I also tell my kids, you can run it the first time with the brick or the second time with a brick wall. I want to learn it with a brick.

Aaron: [laugh]

Ganel-Lyn: A brick hurts a lot worse than a huge brick wall falling on top of...

Aaron: As you know. Ask you how you know? I tend to learn things the hard way too in life... Ganel-Lyn: Yes. Yes.

Aaron: ...sometimes but I make sure there's a reason for that as well. But that's really good. I appreciate that insight and that's all. I look forward to reading that book. That's exactly, everything you're saying, as you know, one of my favorite sayings, is everything is conspiring for your benefit. And I truly believe that.

Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: And it's been a real pleasure talking to you Ganel-Lyn. I could keep talking to you for a long time and I look forward to a continued relationship. It's just really great to get to know you and I really appreciate you sharing. I know the listeners, whoever is listening to this, is going to be blessed and gain lots of value from this. And, so thank you so much.

Ganel-Lyn: Oh, thank you Aaron.

Aaron: I just wanted to say...real quick, just tell people how they can find you. I know you are a consultant, a homemaker, speaker and you've got a beautiful website that you can tell people real quick as we wrap up and then...

Ganel-Lyn: Sure. Thanks for the opportunity to share. It's ganellynn.com. My name is G-A-N-E-L-L- Y-N.com. And if people go there they can see either places I may be speaking. I often do tele- seminars on different

topics in areas of life. The most recent one was organization for your home and how to really like clean your house with God, so to speak. And have balance in that because as moms and dads, we have a lot of stay-at-home dads that use that information to help them. Hopefully, they'll be able to buy a book soon that I've written.

Aaron: Yes. That's exciting.

Ganel-Lyn: It talks more about other people that have had challenges and how they're grown stronger and happier because of those challenges. Yes. Visiting my website and they can always find me on Facebook and interact. I always love to hear from clients and other people because I learn from other people's stories. That's why I like to collect stories. I always say, people always have a story.

Aaron: Yes.

Ganel-Lyn: And I can always learn something from it.

Aaron: Well, we've learned a lot from you today. Again, I really appreciate having you. Ganel-Lyn: Yes.

Aaron: I'll let you get off. I know you have to pick up your daughter here soon. So, let's sum it up for now. But it's really a pleasure meeting you and thank you. Thank you so much again. And everybody's who's listening, just go to Ganellyn.com or find her on Facebook if you want to reach out to her and say thank you for joining us. And with that we'll sign off. And again, thanks again Ganel- Lyn.

Ganel-Lyn: Thanks Aaron. Aaron: OK. Talk to you soon.

Ganel-Lyn: Bye-bye.



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