

Lauren Friedwald lymebodyandsoul

AUDIO

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SPEAKERS

Lauren Friedwald



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My name is Lauren and I'm gonna be talking about how to deal with difficult emotions while healing from Lyme disease. A friend sent me a quote by Jon Kabat-Zinn, 'you can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.' And it quickly became one of my favorites. We're all hit with waves while healing from a chronic illness. And staying present and learning to surf can be really challenging. How are we supposed to accept where we are when our life looks nothing like we thought it would be? When we're in constant physical and emotional pain and always wanting to escape our bodies, when everything seems so far out of reach and out of our control? I believe that we have two choices, we can resist and feel sorry for ourselves and dwell on everything going wrong and wish it were different. Or we could acknowledge that this is not where I want to be. Accept that these are my current circumstances and create a space for self-love and compassion as we navigate that. So we can't control the waves but we can better learn how to deal with everything thrown at us. So I do this by acknowledging all the emotions that come up the good and quote unquote bad unpleasant ones like grief, anxiety, frustration, anger; emotions are energy in motion, and they're meant to be felt and passed through us, not to be stuck and suppressed inside. I also acknowledge that everything's temporary and nothing in life is constant. So there are always ebbs and flows, triumphs and failures, good days and bad days. And that's just part of being human. I look for gratitude and small

accomplishments each day. So I keep a gratitude and self-love journal. And I remind myself that I'm always doing my best no matter what that looks like, even if I need to lie in bed all day. I also accept support from others if and when I need it emotionally, physically, financially. And I remind myself that I'm learning and gaining wisdom, even if I'm not being quote unquote productive. I also treat myself as I would treat a friend going through a difficult time and remind myself not to be so hard on myself. I also focus on the things I can control. So I can't control flare ups of symptoms, pain and energy levels, what others say to me or how they act towards me. But what I can control is my perspective on a situation, how I talk to myself, and asking myself what I need in the moment, setting boundaries and not taking things so personally.