



JUNE JESSEE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

NAVIGATING NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS

• SELF-LOVE WITH MEGAN LOGAN

TRANSCRIPT

This webinar is an interview between Genny Jessee, executive director of the June Jessee Memorial Foundation (JJMF); Megan Logan, MSW, LCSW, Author of *Self-Love Workbook for Women: Release Self-Doubt, Build Self-Compassion, and Embrace Who You Are*, and a counselor for 20+ years in a variety of mental health settings; and Allison Reichart, a JJMF team member and moderator.

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Genny:

Welcome everyone to our third Navigating Neurological Conditions webinar. I'm so glad you're here. I'm your host, Genny Jessee. And I'm a mom of a medically complex child and co-founder of the June Jesse Memorial Foundation. I'm on a mission to make lives easier for children with medically complex neurological conditions and their families. Thank you for taking time out of your day to be here. Our guest today is Megan Logan, author of the book *Self-Love Workbook for Women*, here it is right here. Megan has over 20 years of counseling experience in a variety of mental health settings, including domestic violence and sexual assault centers, an eating disorder program, and a local hospice program. For the past 10 years, she has enjoyed private practice specializing in issues related to trauma, abuse, eating disorders, and grief and loss.

Also joining us today is Allison Reichart, a June Jessee Memorial Foundation team member. Allison will serve as moderator for our discussion today. Today Megan and I are going to talk about her book and how you can get the most out of it. Welcome Megan and welcome Allison.

Megan Logan:

Thank you for having me.

Allison:

Hi, everyone.

Genny:

So Megan, I did share with you that we are including this in our month of June care packages and that we will be delivering them to caregivers at St. Louis Children's Hospital and we're sending to people's homes all over the country. I'm so excited that we are able to include your book in this, especially because self-care is such a huge issue for everyone right now, not just medically complex moms and dads.

I came across your book, I think it was on Amazon or maybe even the skim, something linked to it. And I just immediately was like, "This looks so interesting." I loved the cover, I flipped through it on Amazon and I immediately purchased it. Just as soon as I picked it up, I thought this was something that the parents that we serve, the moms that we serve would really appreciate it. Especially because self care, it's such a buzzword right now or it has been. And sometimes it can be stressful, even before the pandemic, to think of ways to take care of yourself and self-love. And that's where self-love comes in because it's one of the easiest ways to provide self care to yourself, I think. So I'm excited to talk to you about it today.

Megan Logan:

Also I want just to say that I'm just completely honored that you would use my book for caregivers, that just touches my heart and is the coolest use of the book ever. So I want to thank you for doing that.

Allison:

All right. Well, let's get started. And Megan, I'll ask you the first question. What brought you to write this book? Is it based on your personal struggles and experience or things that you've seen in your work or both?

Megan Logan:

So it's probably a combination of both. I would say self-love has been a lifelong journey for me. I had an eating disorder in high school, I was sexually abused as a child. And so that opened up about 10 years of my own therapy before I went to college and decided to be a therapist myself. So I definitely have gone through my own struggles with self-love. It's a never ending journey, so just when I think I have it down and I've mastered it, something comes along and reminds me, you still need to keep working on this. So even as I was writing the book, I had gone through a divorce and had recently started dating online again, and that wasn't very fun and was very difficult at times. And so some of the exercises were in the moment being created because of what I was going through. So it was neat to do that.

But also just as a therapist working with women primarily, specifically with trauma and grief and loss and eating disorders, all of that, self-love is at the root of all of those issues and problems. So the book was very easy to write, I did it in a month. It was something that just happened spontaneously. And it just flowed from my experiences as a therapist.

Allison:

I love that you were able to pull from both your own experience and what you've seen in your practice.

Will you tell us more about the concept of self love and what it means and how it's related to the concepts of releasing self-doubt, building self-compassion. And embracing who you are?

Megan Logan:

So that's the title of the book in there. I think that self-love is an important step towards being able to know your greatest potential and all the things that you have to offer and give and share in the world. When women come into my office and know that they're struggling with that, it's really hard to think of how do you get to that? What do you do? What steps do you take to get to that place? And so one of the first steps is getting rid of those negative critical voices that had been internalized, the negative self-talk and the shame, things that we don't even realize that we're doing.

Then after you've done that work, then you can install some self-compassion, some feelings of being kind to yourself and building yourself up. And then from there, you identify your gifts and your strengths and make sure that your actions in your life are aligned with the values that you have. Those values are going to be different from everyone, what's important to you might be different than what's important to me. As long as it's in alignment, that your life is in alignment with that, then you allow self love to flourish. And at that point, then you can extend it outwards towards the rest of the world, that comes from within and then it extends outward.

Allison:

How would someone notice that they might want to focus on self love? Or how would someone start to recognize that negative self-talk happening within themselves?

Megan Logan:

I think there's just a growing discontent inside, there's a resentment maybe that's building up, there's a negativity in the way that you look and view the world, stagnation in your life. The more obvious ones are addictions and self destructive behaviors and isolating from other people. But sometimes it's more subtle than that, it's people pleasing and bending over backwards to make sure that everyone else is happy and taken care of before you even consider what your needs are, what you're wanting. Some women that I've worked with don't even know what they want or what their needs are, it's like a completely foreign concept to them because they're so used to being the caregivers. So I think over time, that starts to build up to a place where you lose yourself.

Allison:

I think that's something so many people can relate to.

Genny:

So this was something, when you talk about the negative self-talk, for me personally, I don't feel like I noticed it as much until I became a parent, especially to my two boys. Because I realized how I was talking to myself or if I made a mistake, the self-talk in my head, I wouldn't have said that to my boys things. I was noticing how I was taking some parenting classes and it was talking about shaming and things like that and why that's not a motivator and all these other things. I was like, "Why am I doing this to myself then if I would never do this to my child?" And I remember that was a big like click for me.

And I think I said this earlier, that Katherine, the therapist at St. Louis Children's Hospital said that the higher level of self care is treating yourself with the loving kindness that you treat other people. And to me, that just clicked. Just for me noticing the negative self-talk was a huge shift in self-love for me. I just love how your book focuses so much on this. I think it just highlights noticing just the internal dialogue, just noticing it is just a huge step.

Megan Logan:

Sometimes I'll catch myself, I'll drop a pen on the floor and I'll be like, "Megan, you're a klutz or you're an idiot." I dropped a pen, why I'm so critical and negative. Or I remember when my daughter was four years old, and I forget what was happening, but something was happening that she was frustrated and she said, "This is ridiculous." And I was like, "Oh my gosh, apparently I say ridiculous a lot." Just that negative words that we say, they're external voices sometimes of other people, criticisms of society, things that we feel like we're not good enough, measures that we have somehow internalized into our own narrative. And we don't know it, we don't realize it until you stop and listen to it and realize how destructive. We think that by shaming ourselves we're somehow going to make us feel better and motivate ourselves to do better. But normally it just makes us worse.

Allison:

Once you notice that negative self-talk going on, what's the process that you work through with clients? What are the stages you work through to develop the self-love and to reduce the negativity?

Megan Logan:

So whenever we're working with any change, it's helpful to use this model of change that they use with addictions. So the first stage starts with pre-contemplation and that's when you're like, "I don't have a problem, I'm fine. You need to get off my back." So you're not really motivated or open to needing any help, denial. And then there's the contemplation, that's when you're like, "Okay, I could really work on this. I need to work on more self-love." But you're not ready to do anything about it. You're not really wanting to take action or put any work into it. Then there's the action stage, that's when you're like, "Yeah, I need to do something and I'm ready to take steps towards that." So identifying where somebody is, is really important when you're working with someone.

If they're just now flirting with the idea of taking care of themselves but they have a lot of barriers, they have a lot of reasons why they can't do it, I'm not going to go full on into action mode with them. I'm going to get them talking about what their life could be like if they loved themselves, like what things could look different, what are the barriers and how do we overcome some of those barriers? So that's from a therapy framework of how I would work with somebody. When you're working with just the internal work of self-love, the whole practice of self-love, this is going to sound really silly, but you have to have self-compassion and self-love while you're practicing the practice of self-love. But being able to be kind to yourself. If you don't do exercises, okay, you still have the book sitting on your nightstand, that's a start. If you're just too tired and exhausted and you decide you need to rest, maybe that's exactly what you needed to do. I think for moms of medically complex children, that cannot be emphasized enough.

Focusing on goals and what are the things that you have to do to be better, we don't want self-love to be a part of that whole mindset. It's interesting because it can, it can start to be like, what do I need to do to make sure I love myself and let me be good and do all these exercises? That's not how the book is designed to be used.

Genny:

I just love how you brought that back to the medically complex caregivers because yeah, you don't want it to be another stress. Because that is something people say, people would say it to me all the time, "Make sure you're taking care of yourself, make sure you're taking care of yourself." And then it felt like another to-do list thing. And that is a great reminder that sometimes the best way you can take care of yourself and love yourself is to just hear what your body is telling you. And if that's rest or not the workbook, then that's the best form of self-love that you can do.

Megan Logan:

Exactly. And just the workbook will be there. And it's not necessarily... It's set up a certain way to be able to do it, but it's fine to flip through it and be like, "Oh, this one's cute, I want to try this one." And just randomly pick a page and do that exercise. It doesn't have to be done in order necessarily if that's not really how you're feeling you want to use it. It can be, I know this is a later question that's coming up, it can also be used in order, where it's done exercise by exercise. And the way it's set up was strategic in the sense that it's about exercises to help you identify that negative voice and then exercises to get you more in your compassion and exercises to get you knowing your gifts and strengths, but it doesn't have to be done that way. I would probably, if I was doing it, it would sit on my nightstand for three or four months and then one weekend I'd be like, "I need to work on self love." And then I do the whole workbook on a Saturday night.

Allison:

So that's helpful, Megan, that you're noting that you don't have to work through it in a certain way. It doesn't have to go in chronological order, you can pick and choose where you would start working. Is there a specific exercise in the book or a couple that you would recommend as a good starting point, specifically for moms with medically complex kids? Or is there something you would tell them as they're getting started to get them started on the right path?

Megan Logan:

I would probably say start at the beginning, that's always a good place to start. The introduction, I don't do a whole lot of narrative in the book because the whole point is for you to focus on yourself not necessarily all my little thoughts. But in the beginning, I do a little bit more narrative and it's kind and it's sensitive and it's structured that way to be supportive. So I would encourage people. I think in the early on it talks about how to start your self-love journey and it gives ideas on, I don't know, getting color pencils and setting up a time and a place where you do it. Just your willingness to be vulnerable, that is uncomfortable.

So there was somebody who was doing a book club and she contacted me about speaking at it, I guess like a Zoom call, and I was like, "Okay." And then the women were so awesome that I joined the book club and now I meet with them every week. I do my own exercises, and they are hard, some of them are really hard, some of them are really uncomfortable. So I would say just to start slowly, start easy to just be gentle with yourself and realize this is not something that's meant to be done in a day, it's not meant to be done in a weekend, it's not even meant to be done in a workbook. The work would give strategies and tools to continue to use throughout your life. I would probably say I've grown a lot in a year and some of these exercises were inspired by my own struggles last year, they're not struggles anymore this year. And so the exercises would be completely different in a year's time.

Allison:

What would you advise someone when they find an exercise that is difficult for them or it brings up some difficult emotions, how would you advise them to work through that stage and process those feelings?

Megan Logan:

The one thing that I love about the book club is it's these women that are all getting together from different walks and different places and supporting each other while they're going through some of the exercises. So it's really cool to see it done in a group setting. But I think if you're getting triggered by some of the exercises, it's okay to take a break from it, it's okay just to notice, okay, that one was really uncomfortable for me, that brought up some stuff from my childhood or that brought up something that I don't want to have to think about right now. And just notice that it's a lot, you don't necessarily have to solve it or tackle it.

And then I would say to reach out, I know that's really hard. It's really hard especially when you're dealing with so much as a mom of a child that's got medical issues. But reaching out to a friend or a family member or heck it could even be a stranger that's sitting next to you in the cafeteria and just sharing a little bit can be really helpful. So you know you're not alone when you're doing these exercises. Talking to a therapist is always good too.

Allison:

That's great. I love your advice there. Just talking more about working through these things and the process of using the book, what would you give as a guideline for setting yourself up for success? How should you try to devote a certain amount of time to them for a week or set yourself, set up some goals for yourself, for yourself? How would you recommend working through that as a process?

Megan Logan:

So that probably depends on each person individually. If somebody told me I needed to do it, I have to prepare it for the week for the book club that I'm doing and we do a chapter a week, and it's a lot. And so I don't do all the exercises, I maybe pick out three or four because I wrote them, I have an advantage. But I think exercise a week is a great idea. It depends on how in depth you want to get with it. If you want to do an exercise and then you spend time thinking about it and contemplating it and being mindful in your mind of what you experienced with that, you can extend that. Or you could knock out a couple in a row if that's more your style. You could skip exercise, some of them might not resonate with you and some of them may be too cheesy or something that you just don't really don't get anything from. I certainly have certain exercises that are my favorites in the book that I enjoy. But I think it's different for everybody.

Genny:

Can you explain what your book club, is this the book club on the books? So do you guys get together and talk about the exercises you've done?

Megan Logan:

Yeah. So the woman that leads it is a photographer, and she's doing a whole self-empowerment, self-love type thing. She's in Virginia. And so she has gotten some women, I guess through social media, and getting women together who have the book and she facilitates it, so I'm a member. She facilitates and she gives a chapter and she just highlights certain things that spoke out to her. And everybody has done some of the exercises and she asks people to share their experiences with the exercises. So it's really neat to hear how people are using it and what they're getting out of it.

Genny:

Do you meet once a week?

Megan Logan:

Once a week. It's once a week for an hour. If you can make it great, if you can't, you're not stuck to having... I think it goes maybe for six weeks. This is the second round of it that we've done.

Genny:

Let me think about maybe doing something with some of the moms after they get the book.

Megan Logan:

Yeah, that would be cool.

Allison:

That's a really cool idea. Do you see within the group that the different ways in which people are working through the exercises themselves and so everyone has their own customized process I'm sure.

Megan Logan:

Yeah. Sometimes, I know there's one chapter, I think it's the one on healthy relationships, I just think it's a doozy. It's very intense, it's got a lot of heavy duty information in there about healthy relationships and boundary setting and advocating for yourself and those kinds of things, which could be really uncomfortable. So I know that one was hard. But some of the women have had a harder time with earlier chapters with the whole idea of the negative, critical voice and beginning to realize it. So it just everybody is at a different place. And it's neat to see everybody encouraging. I remember there was one group meeting where people were reading, I guess, a love letter that is one of the exercises that you can write to yourself. And they read it out loud and it was vulnerable and sweet and cool and really powerful when it's shared in that way.

Allison:

Is the process different? If someone weren't interested in that and really just wanted to work through it more on an individual basis, does the process work differently or are you reaching the same goals?

Megan Logan:

I think the process, it depends. If you need more structure because you're afraid that you would procrastinate and you would never get this done or it would just sit there collecting dust, even though you really want to make changes, you're in the contemplation phase of change. So at that point then adding structure and saying, "Okay, let's do an exercise or two or three a week." Setting up some goal. I think the book club does give structure and accountability. And that's one of the things with the self-love work in general, it takes intentional and consistent practice. It doesn't just happen magically unfortunately. I wish we could just snap our fingers and be like, "I love myself."

You might think that if you go on social media, people taking pictures and think that that's what self love is. But it's not, it's so much more than that. And it's even more than self-care. So I think that's the key, a lot of people will use them interchangeably. Self-care is a component to self-love, it's an important component to self love, but it doesn't just stop with taking a bubble bath or having a massage, it's so much more doing that deeper work on yourself.

Genny:

That's why I love that comment that really the easiest way to provide self care to yourself is to practice love and kindness to yourself. Everybody can do that, you don't need to go to get your nails painted to do that, you can just start talking kindly to yourself.

Megan Logan:

Do it in the shower sometimes. How many times have you taken a shower and you're like, "Did I use shampoo or conditioner?" I will have to wash my hair three times before I remember that I've done it. If I'm not mindful, I'm thinking about a whole bunch of stuff I've got to do. So one of the exercises is practicing just mindfulness, just feeling the water on you in the shower and smelling the soap and being able to just cleanse yourself in that moment of any negative emotions, have them go down the drain. That is practicing self love and self care. I can take five minutes. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money, it doesn't have to take tons of time. It's the intentional and consistent practice with it, even if it's five minutes a day.

Allison:

Megan, you talked about, as a first step, noticing negative self-talk and those emotions and then starting to work through the process of developing self love. As you're working through developing self-love, what might you notice is changing within yourself? What goals could you expect to be meeting as you're working on self-love and becoming stronger in those areas?

Megan Logan:

So it's interesting, I think externally you may start to notice changes first. So sometimes you may disappoint people, you may have to say no, you may have to set boundaries, you may have to advocate for your child in the hospital setting and not necessarily be super nice. Whatever that is, sometimes we have to go and extend that self-love outward, it's going to change our relationships and how we show up in the world. You could even look at body language as an example. I think there's an exercise that's in the book about, we don't love ourselves, we shrink, we get smaller, we don't take up space. When we love ourselves, we stand up straight, we look people in the eye, we use confident body language to make our presence known. So we definitely see externally.

And then internally, I would say, outside of being kind to yourself, there should be something stirring inside, some passion, some connection to your gifts, we all have our own special gifts. I think connecting to my inner child has been a huge part of my healing and honoring her. If she wants to go run outside and play and have fun in the sun and find little flowers in the grass, then that's going to make me feel happy. And if I didn't love myself, I would not take time to do that stuff. So I think you start to feel differently inside when you become inspired and have a passion you want to share that with the world.

Allison:

That's great. How do you make note of your personal progress in your self love development? And do you celebrate those achievements at all as you're working along your process?

Megan Logan:

I struggle still to put myself out there or to be proud of my accomplishments. Even writing the book, and the book's done really successful, I will minimize it and be like, "Oh yeah." So I have not mastered it for sure. But I think that I noticed that I'm truly genuinely happier and have peace within my soul, within myself that I feel content, I guess. Even when crap is falling all around me and bad things are happening outside of me, there's something within me that I feel like is a light that can shine even through a hurricane.

There are exercises in the book that are designed to... The little assessments that I came up with that you can do at the beginning. And then I think they have them there at the end to see if you've changed any of your mindset or your way of thinking about things. That's there too. So I also noticed that my relationships with people are healthier, I'm setting better boundaries, I'm not overextending myself, I am giving myself permission to not be everything for everyone, that I need to be able to take care of myself. So that's for me my biggest change.

Genny:

I think that's something especially that medically complex caregivers could use a lot. Because you do have to be, you're not only your child's mother, you're your child's schedule or their therapist, their nurse, they're advocate. And sometimes it's okay to say no to therapies, to even doctor's appointments. You don't have to go in and see the eye doctor every three months. Depending on once you get to a certain point, you can say no or choose to spend time just being your child's mom and setting boundaries in that capacity too.

Megan Logan:

Even for holidays with family. Extended family might expect they want to see everybody and you may just be too tired and actually needing some time to yourself. So those boundaries can ripple over into lots of different areas.

Allison:

It sounds like it's a lifelong thing. So you don't just work through the book and then you're done and you've developed a self-love and you're good to go. It's really something you have to keep coming back to and continuously work on your life and just develop that strength over and over again and get better at it.

Megan Logan:

I thought I had it down. I've recovered from an eating disorder through... By the time I finished college, I was like, "Oh, look, I'm so proud of all the hard work I've done." Well, that was hard work and I did accomplish a lot. But there was so much more than I needed to learn, and I'm still learning even to this day.

Allison:

I know Megan, you've worked through the exercises multiple times as you pulled on your experiences and writing them, you wrote them, you've gone through and done the exercises numerous times yourself. Do you find that they bring up different emotions or you have different experiences each time that you work through the exercise?

Megan Logan:

I think that, I forget which one it was, there was one, I ended up doing the exercise and it didn't make me feel better, it made me feel worse. I was either one on either people that support you or maybe it was more of just, it was the negative thinking one. And I was like, I have a lot of work to do.

Genny:

Sometimes I've noticed that certain exercises, I haven't gotten completely through the book yet, but like there's maybe the first time I looked at one, I think it was writing a letter to like your 13 year old self or your younger self. When I first looked at it, I was like, "Oh, I can't do that." It made me sad to even think about it or something. But then now I look at it and I'm like, "Okay." I don't know, maybe sometimes you just have to, what's the word? Inch yourself towards it. And I can't think of the therapy term, but maybe it's like desensitizing yourself to it and it becomes, I don't know, maybe part of the process.

Megan Logan:

You build up slowly behaviorally doing the exercises. I think the book was set out in the beginning, it's all nurturing and loving and supportive. And then every once in a while there was a zinger in there. And there's a zinger. That's how I do therapy. A lot of times it's holding space. If you just support and validate, you don't make change, you just look good. But if you just are making change, that's too much sometimes, and it's too vulnerable and it's too hard. So you need to have both of them happening at the same time. So when I did an exercise that made me feel that, I would find one that then would make me feel happy. That's a strategy that I use. I'd be like, "Oh wait, this one's like, what are my gifts and talents, so let me do this one."

Genny:

I love how there's quotes sprinkled through. I love quotes, so I love how there's just... You could even just open it up and look at a quote and that can be the supportive thing or the validating thing that you do that day.

Megan Logan:

That mantra that you just are like, "Wow, this really spoke to me, I'm going to just think of that." That's the one simple thing that you can do. So it's not even having to do the exercises necessarily, it's just setting the intention.

Allison:

That's a great tip, so it doesn't need to be overwhelming, you really can just take it in very bite sized pieces, even as small as just pulling a line from the book to focus on.

Megan Logan:

I think one of the women in the group, because we have a little Facebook group, she was like, I forget what she said but she was like, "Oh, I do not want to do this." It was painful, in a good way, but it's work. And that's like you said earlier, the self-love for moms of medically complex children, we don't want to add extra work that's going to feel like a burden or be really overwhelming or challenging. The book is designed, there is compassion and kindness and encouragement throughout, through those quotes and through the way that it's communicated. And there's a lot of really positive things to build you up and help you feel that you have lots of gifts and things to offer the world.

Genny:

So another thing with the difficult, if it brings up difficult parts for you, so one thing I noticed on my care giving journey with June was that we're all... Let's say you put 10 medically complex moms together, there's so many different baselines. Somebody may be here because they have financial resources, somebody may be here because they don't have financial resources, somebody may be here because they have good coping mechanisms already built in, but somebody may have a lot of financial resources but not a lot of healthy coping mechanisms. We're all coming from different backgrounds yet we're thrown into this. All these different factors affect the care giving experience because it can affect your confidence or can affect what you can provide your children. I don't know, your triggers are different or you may be upset and you may be talking negatively to yourself and more angry or more reactive or more defensive.

=I don't know what the question is in here, but I just think that there's so many factors that can go into what kind of caregiver you are for your child. And the obvious one is financial, but some of it is also how you're taking care of yourself.

Megan Logan:

And also the complexity of medically complex. It's not just medically complex too, it's complex on every level. I think that the common theme is that you all are struggling collectively together with children with complex conditions. Add that extra stress that not anyone else can really understand unless you've probably been through it. And the

workbook obviously wasn't designed for that in mind, it's more of a general thing. But the coping mechanisms, your faith, your support system, your financial resources, all of those things play a part in how you get through something like this, and the lessons that you learn along the way, which I'm sure the moms could write a book themselves that would be [inaudible 00:43:59].

Genny:

Well, I guess yeah. And I know that this wasn't written for that, but I can see how it can at least help put maybe people who don't have... Like I said, I didn't realize that the negative self-talk that I was doing to myself that added to certain kind of just defensiveness. Somebody may not have been even criticizing how I was caring for my child but I took it as a criticism and got super defensive. Just even something that, noticing that can change how... I'm getting lost in my own thought. But I just think that this book can help level the playing field a little bit on how everybody is treating themselves, which can only help medically complex caregivers.

Megan Logan:

And it goes back to knowing yourself, knowing what your triggers are, knowing what your thoughts are, knowing what you need to work on that awareness. And the book there specific practical exercises. So it's helpful sometimes to have that as a guide because self-love is so nebulous, it's like what? How do you just do that? And what does that look like for specific populations? It's different and in different contexts.

Allison:

Genny, I think like talking about the level playing field, caring for a child with a medically complex condition requires so much emotional strength. So working on developing this self-love will help you build that emotional strength. And then that gets everyone on a better level as they're entering this care giving stage and working through all of it.

Genny:

Yes. So when June was alive, I went to therapy all the time, I still go to therapy all the time. But when June was alive, I went to therapy a lot. But I also did yoga a lot and I remember, and I also still do yoga, but I remember, this was a foreign concept to me because I remember being in chair pose and the yoga instructor at the time holding it really long and saying something along the lines of, "You're practicing being in discomfort so in life you can be in discomfort." But he said like, "You can get out and go back in and take them..." That was also something that I learned, like you said, building that emotional strength, building that muscle of being okay not being okay, coming out of it, getting back in. I don't know, it's just...

And I remember when June would be crying for hours being uncomfortable in listening to that and just remembering, okay, I can come in and out of this. It's just like yoga, I can go take a shower or I can leave for a little bit. And this book reminds me of that too, it's just stuff that you can practice to help you in the moment.

Megan Logan:

That's mindfulness. A huge part of yoga is learning to be in the present moment even when your moment sucks.

Genny:

Yes.

Megan Logan:

Noticing it, observing it without judging it as good or bad, you're just there, this is just what's happening. When we can look at things from a mindful perspective, it's just a moment. When we're worried about the future, we're having anxiety. When we're thinking about the past, we're having depression. When we're in the moment, it's just that moment in time and it will pass, there will be a new moment that happens shortly after. It can pretty much get through anything when you're in the moment. So I think that that's a skill that has to be developed, and it takes intentional practice doing that. In the beginning you may be like, "I don't have time to do that." Well, when you're in the shower and when you're going to the bathroom, when you're eating something, be aware of what it tastes like, notice what it feels like, the texture, the smell, even if it's just for one second, you're practicing mindfulness. Then you can apply it to the harder times when it's more emotional. But in the beginning, you can do it on very tangible, concrete things.

Allison:

Megan, just like with mindfulness, do you apply in your daily life some of the exercises that are included in the workbook?

Megan Logan:

Yeah. I think mindfulness for me has been a game changer throughout my life. Learning that as a therapist and how to teach that to people, I think I've just absorbed it somehow without practicing it intentionally and now I just do it. If I'm driving and I get frustrated with somebody, I'm not always great at it, sometimes I may get frustrated and yell or say something. But what I try to do is step back and just be like, "Okay, that car had a reason to get in front of me. It's just an observation I'm going to make right now." I treat everything as facts. Then it's not meant to say that we don't judge things that are not fair or we don't judge things that are harmful, we notice them. And you can't change something unless you're mindful of it first. So mindfulness sounds very passive, it's just like, "Okay, yeah, whatever." You still have to be mindful before you can actually make change and change something that needs to be changed. Or sometimes you have to accept that you can't change things and that this is what it is, and that's very hard.

Allison:

Megan, this has all been so helpful. As a closing question, is there anything else that you'd want to tell parents of medically complex children as they're receiving your book and beginning to think about developing self-love and embarking on that journey?

Megan Logan:

I would probably say for medically complex families that the work that gets done in terms of caring for your child is way beyond, it can even be fathomable, just the amount of stress and the amount of overwhelming day to day sacrifices that get made. And so in order to do that, you have to be able to have a well to tap into. And so self-love, we're basically digging a well and filling it with something that you can use to then be able to do what you need to do as a mom.

Genny:

I love that. I love that it's digging well. You have to start with self-love for sure. So thank you, Megan, for taking time out of your busy schedule and on your day off to be a part of our Navigating Neurological Conditions webinar. We really appreciate your insight on caregiver's mental health and why this is so important. We love your book and we are so excited to get it into the hands of the moms we serve. And thanks everyone for tuning in. For questions, please visit junejessee.org and reach out to us on our social channels. I know, Megan, you're on Instagram too, so if you want to share a way to reach out to you too.

Megan Logan:

I actually just started an Instagram, but it's not something I've ever needed to do. But it's been really cool connecting, that's how I got in touch with you. It's [@MoganLoganLCSW](https://www.instagram.com/MoganLoganLCSW)

Genny:

Okay, awesome. And also stay tuned, we may be talking at June Jesse Memorial Foundation how we can maybe do one of these book clubs. Maybe not once a week, but maybe once a month or something. I think that sounds so cool and fun and supportive and just another way moms can connect, so anyway. So that sounds fun.

Allison:

Thanks so much, Megan.

Megan Logan:

Thank you, guys.

Interested in continuing the conversation? Visit junejessee.org to find events, resources and support for the needs of children with undiagnosed, neurological conditions and their families.

