

#37 Noticing Our Way to Mental Wellness!

[00:00:00]

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Welcome to the podcast. Today, you've probably figured out by now that my podcast offers two types of episodes to help all of us cultivate mental wellness. The first type of episode is where I talk with people and have them share how they grow mental wellness in their daily lives. Most of us do this more than we realize, so it can be helpful to have a conversation and to put into words what helps us feel better. Words give us awareness. Awareness helps us lean into doing that, which is good for us. Remember episode 22 on grief. When my 83 year old guest nonchalantly said that for her walking was a type of meditation. It helped calm her mind and allowed her to think through things with more clarity. It also gave all of us permission who don't like to sit in a chair and try to clear our minds another way to really focus and to feel more clarity of thought as we move through our day. Or maybe Episode 28 on Selling and [00:01:00] Mental Wellness, where the young realtor shared ways that she had learned to not allow others negativity to be contagious in her mind. These guests of mine aren't experts, but they are, and I think we all learn a lot from hearing what others do to keep their mind, their mental states, a bit more peaceful, happy, and productive.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: The other type of episode is what we're going to do today where a listener agrees to listen to an episode from Season One, the fundamentals of my mental wellness program, Inner Challenge, and try on the skill for a week, and then come and talk about it. The first of this type of episode number 31, played a few weeks ago, and I got really great feedback. So I'm very excited to speak with our guest today who listened to the episode entitled, What is An Inner Workout? Let me welcome my guest and I want to thank you for being on the podcast today. Let's start with you telling our listeners a little bit about yourself.

Guest: Hi, I'm a sophomore studying science professional [00:02:00] and Spanish, and I am from Indiana.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Oh, yay. Fellow Hoosier. Go Hoosiers. You were so kind in being able to listen to the episode on What is an Inner Workout? I wonder if you could just tell our listeners in your own words, what is an Inner Workout?

Guest: When I first listened to the episode, it really resonated with me because it's something I realized I did and never titled it in my head. It's more of just stopping and taking a moment to reflect on yourself or in situations that start to become overwhelming, realizing why are you feeling this way? What is your internal motive for this? Really stretching your brain to see what's happening inside of you mentally and how you can go about getting the help you need for that.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: You actually just said one of my main reasons for doing this type of episode. You were doing it, but you didn't realize you were doing it.

Guest: Yes, that's correct.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: I want to begin by asking you to share with our listeners, was there value to you to actually put words to what you were doing?

Guest: I think there was value because [00:03:00] sometimes when something was happening, and I noticed my mind wandering, doing these mental exercises, I didn't know why they were occurring. They just happened and I was like, oh no, maybe I'm overthinking it, but in reality, that needs to happen in order for myself to figure out what I'm thinking, why I'm having these emotions that I'm having. These are valid. These are naturally occurring and these are good for me.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Maybe some of our listeners have listened to that episode. Maybe many have not. Part of what I'm gonna do in our podcast today is to ask you to define different concepts that we talked about in that episode, just in your own way. Can you remember what the two different Notice exercises were?

Guest: There was an Inner exercise and an Outer exercise. The outer exercise is more when you just stop and literally feel it. I know in the podcast they talked about feeling it in your feet, feet on the ground.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yes. We call that grounding. It's a natural thing that we do. If people are watching March Madness right now, they see grounding every time someone is ready to make a free throw. Grounding is where we move our mental awareness to our feet. Let me stop for a [00:04:00] second. When I say to you move your mental awareness to your feet. How do you do that?

Guest: For me you can literally think about it, but I also, the basketball example resonates with me as well. I've played basketball for 10 years before coming to college, so I know exactly what you're talking about. When you focus, set your feet up. Once your feet are right, then everything else just comes. Muscle memory and you're able to put the shot up. Same idea when you're grounding in a difficult situation, you feel yourself on the ground and know that okay, I can do this. Calm down, calm your emotions. And then you're able to go from there.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: One of the first points I want to make in this podcast today is the power of grounding. Yeah. It's so simple. We naturally do it. And what it does is it calms our nervous system. It's an automatic way to start to bring calm. It also starts where we are managing our mind instead of our mind running off. If we use the basketball situation, if the person who has to make a really important free throw in a clutch moment of a game, they have to [00:05:00] ground themselves to be in the moment and not get lost in the fan screaming, or their fear of, I could lose the game if I don't make this. Grounding is a way to bring ourself to the moment and our body is wired when we do this to automatically begin to calm down. In both Notice on the Inside and Notice on the Outside, we begin those mindfulness practices, which they basically are, which means we're paying attention to our mind by grounding. Let's start and talk a little bit about notice on the outside. One of the things I asked you to do was, could you just practice it for a period of time? Were you able to do that?

Guest: I was able to practice the grounding actually it was a busy exam week for me last week, and right before the exam, nerves always happen. Nothing crazy. I'm thankful I don't have too bad of test anxiety, but right before the exams passed out, you're always a little bit nervous. I literally put my feet flat in the floor and was like you studied for this, like you're ready. That just gave me a sense of calm. When the exam was passed out, I was able to write down what I knew, fill out the information [00:06:00] confidently.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: That's great. I taught at a junior high this program, for more than 20 years. One of the things that the junior high students would say to the teachers during the I STEP period is, could we do notice? And to me junior high students who are asking to do it, see the value. It's great that you tested it out on your tests and that brought you to the moment. Also to confidence. It sounded like, yeah, I can do this. Yeah, I can do this. The other part of Notice on the Outside that we start with grounding and then we choose something intentionally to look at and to take some breaths. Were you able to do that?

Guest: I didn't do that one as intently, I would say, as the grounding, but just situations when I got overwhelmed. It wasn't hard to just oh, look at the brick on the wall, take a deep breath and go on. But I wouldn't say it had a huge impact like the grounding did for me.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Okay, for you the grounding was more, yeah. Yes. And for people who have minds that tend to run away with them. Notice on the Outside can be really [00:07:00] helpful. Let's say you did have test anxiety, very common for people. They ground their feet and then they choose to look at something. Let's say they begin to look at their pencil for their test and they're grounding their feet and they're taking a couple breaths while they're looking at the pencil. When I say it to you like that, Why do you think Notice on the Outside can help somebody calm down who has test anxiety?

Guest: When they're focusing on their pencil, they're literally just looking at the pencil. They're not thinking about, oh my gosh, I forgot to study this. Oh my gosh, I should have studied three days sooner. You can't change that now. Now you have to go into the exam. When they're focusing on their pencil, they're recentering their thoughts rather than freaking themselves out about things they can't change in the moment.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Exactly, and there's scientific research that proves this. When we have what might be uncomfortable or intrusive thoughts that aren't related to trauma, like I'm afraid I might not do as well on this test as I want. What we want to do is Notice on the Outside .We want to take control of our mind, we want to look at something [00:08:00] else, and we want to distract it from that particular thought. Now, of course we don't want to fall into three hours of distraction.

Guest: One of my classes is actually a carryover from a class from last semester. In the beginning, we take 15 seconds to say what our intent is for being in that class. I noticed last semester, I would just sit there for 15 seconds and be like, okay, I'm at class because I want to learn. I'm a class because I care about this. But this semester I really changed my approach and I started to lock in on something. Sometimes it's the girl's scrunchy in front of me. Other times it's my shoelace. Then I can really think about why I want to be in class. Why did I walk the 20 minutes to this classroom? That has really helped me just in a classroom setting. So I can imagine how when people have running minds, that really helps them to focus.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: I used to start every one of my class periods with Notice because especially I was gonna say, especially in junior high, but

actually we have minds that go everywhere except where they probably need to be unless we're intentional. I think it's really great that you're doing that in your class where you're actually doing notice in the [00:09:00] class, bringing your mind to the subject matter at hand. Do you think it's made a difference?

Guest: Yeah, I would think it makes a difference. It makes me a lot more focused in class. It's one of the classes also that I don't take notes on my computer because it's easy to get distracted on my computer, so I choose to do it pencil and paper. That's also helped me minimizing my distractions from the beginning of class and carrying it throughout, which is really helpful.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Wow. I'm gonna digress a little bit. Can you talk a little bit about the difference in taking notes, pencil and paper versus computer?

Guest: Yeah, so for one, I think I'm a pencil and paper learner. Just writing it out helps me rather than just typing it. It's so easy when you have your computer pulled up, your email's right there, and you see one comes in. What if that's for internship I just applied for, or what if that's me getting my grade back for my exam I took last week? It's so tempting to click on it. I'd say most of the time I would when I see that notification, but when those distractions are completely gone, I'm able to focus on what the professor's saying to me. Value their time, value my own time of being in class. And I really think that having it pencil and [00:10:00] paper like going back helps me too. Cuz when I'm studying, the distraction's gone again and I've already written it out once. I can annotate my notes and stuff like that, which I find very valuable.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: I want to punctuate two points. One is there is research that shows Yeah. That we activate more of the brain when we write Yes. Versus in when we type. The second thing I want to punctuate is the whole reason for these two mindfulness exercises is because we are always pulled away from the present. Yeah. And that's very different than the history of the human race. If we think back to how people lived a hundred years ago, they didn't have music or earbuds or all these devices pulling them outside. I don't think they had to do too much Notice on the Inside, Notice on the Outside, because their life was set up. Even my childhood, I'd ride my bike to my friend's house, and sometimes I'd ride three or four miles. I had a lot of time to think, I had a lot of time to [00:11:00] notice beauty around me, and it was always really centering. Think about biking. It's a very grounding experience, or if you're walking somewhere, but often we're walking, but we're not at all paying attention to what is around us. One of the things I try to encourage people to do is when they walk, is to not have devices in. I like to create skills like Notice on

the Inside, Notice on the Outside that people can do for free and integrate into their already busy lives. When I taught Inner Challenge here, that was one of the homework assignments. To walk from my class to their next class, no devices in. Feel your feet and just look around and really take in and just breathe. I think a lot of times we don't even know we're breathing. We don't obviously need to always know we're breathing, but our breath is a way that helps calm our central nervous system. That's why I try to have people understand with Notice on the Outside, we start on the outside to calm our inside, and that is through [00:12:00] grounding, putting our attention somewhere in the present and then just taking a few breaths. I encourage people to do that practice, as I said on the episode a few times a day. If you were going to integrate that a little bit more in an intentional way in your life, you're already doing it the beginning of class which is great. And that means you're probably doing it how many times a day?

Guest: Two or three, I'd say.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah. I think that's what people have to do two, just two or three times a day. Yeah. And you've really chosen to do that. Do you think it's made a difference in your ability to learn?

Guest: I would say so because my concentration in class is there and I value my time being there. Beforehand it's oh, I'm in class, I have to be here. But now it's oh, I'm in class. I want to be here. I want to learn the material.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Again, I get to be here Yeah. Is really a different spirit than I have to be here. That mental wellness is trying to figure out what we can do to raise our spirits. I think people don't often think of that. Mental wellness is connected to our spirit, and [00:13:00] sometimes when we are grateful I get to be here, our spirit feels better. Let's move to the next mindfulness exercise. Notice on the Inside. Can you tell our listeners a little bit about that?

Guest: Yeah. Noticing on the Inside, what stuck out to me is when you're having an emotion, an overwhelming emotion per se, why is it happening? Maybe it is your response. You are upset so you're crying, but maybe it's you're feeling really overwhelmed and you don't know what's motivating that, and sometimes taking a moment to think about what that might be helps you in the long term. It helps you put that emotion into words in your head, which is valuable.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Exactly. Very good description. That Notice on the Inside is doing exactly that. Do you think most people do that?

Guest: I feel like, no. I feel like most people get scared of intense emotions and choose to push them away or ignore them, which I'd say sometimes I do because I'm like, oh, I'm being dramatic, but. In reality, those emotions are valid and I should feel them and think them through.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: It's interesting that we're walking through the world [00:14:00] with this whole interior life going on, yet we're not often told, check in with it. It's important. What's some of the consequences of not checking in with what is going on inside of us of not noticing on the inside?

Guest: If you don't Notice on the Inside, things will start to build up and when things build up, It will become too much for you to handle and how your act will look different for everyone. But if you don't give time for yourself, it's gonna hurt you in the long run. You're gonna become overwhelmed and stressed and not be able to handle your emotions at all.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Because you have this whole bunch of things going on. Because inside of us is not just emotions, but it's also bodily sensations. It's also thoughts. It's also perceptions. It's also memories that can happen. That can make all of those emotions, perceptions, sensations, thoughts, have a unique level of distress or intensity or happiness. It can be, not just negative emotions. A lot of times inside we have lots of positive [00:15:00] emotions. Can you share with us experience where you did Notice on the Inside?

Guest: Yeah. So recently I've gone through a fall through with a friend and it's been months now, but sometimes I still get upset about it. My friends that I have now are aware of the situation and they just try to help me the best they can. Recently I got very overwhelmed all of a sudden trying to get back in contact with this friend and I didn't know what to do and I realized I was overly upset about something that had already passed. I took a minute to Notice on the Inside a little bit after hearing your podcast. And I realized that I wasn't freaking out because I lost a friendship. I was freaking out that what if I lost these friendships I had now? Or what if this continued to happen again, which is something I really don't want to happen. I got overwhelmed and had I calm myself down. And be like, no, it's in the past, it happened. Nothing's impacting relationships that you have now.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: That's such a good example because one interesting fact about our mind is it doesn't really know time. Our limbic system is deep in our brain. It feels, what it feels . Was it distressed? Was it worry?

Guest: It was more [00:16:00] worried, I'd say. Yeah.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: What you're saying is this past event was making you worried about a future event that isn't even occurring. Yeah. And what you did with Notice on the Inside was you stopped the craziness, right? Because you have the distressing feelings, you took some breaths. And then it sounds like you had more mental clarity. That mental clarity comes from our prefrontal cortex. Which is the CEO of our brain right behind our forehead. And we can't get mental clarity if we don't take a few breaths and somewhat lower the intensity of the fear. Does that make sense?

Guest: Yeah, that does make sense.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: The model that I use for emotional regulation is a bell curve. Often what we do, is we feel something distressing and instead of tending it and befriending it, we actually blame or unclaim it. That's just how we're taught in this culture to do it. [00:17:00] It's what the brain will do if we don't move from our animal nature of reacting to our human potential, of reflecting and then making sense. It's a really painful thing to lose a friendship. It's a really painful thing to have a friendship with someone who won't repair it. Yeah. That's a real sense of powerlessness, and it makes complete sense to me that when you get worried about it, it's not just about that happened, it's that I don't want to go through that pain again, and then you have to do what I call Inner work. You have to take the emotion from deep inside your brain. And you have to run it, you have to sift it through the prefrontal cortex. So it's updated and it's not living in past fear, but it's updated in the present reality. When you did that update, how did your feelings and thoughts change?

Guest: When I did the update, [00:18:00] I felt like I needed, not validation per se, but needed to run it through someone. So I reached out to my sister, who's someone I love and support, and when I was able to do that, it made me feel a lot better and more confident in my ability to make that update that needed to be done.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yeah. So what's really beautiful, and you can listen to my episode number seven on emotional regulation is you, wait, let me ask you, have you heard that episode?

Guest: I have not heard it yet, no. Okay.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: What's great about this example is you are doing it even though you didn't know you were doing it. You tended and befriended

because you did Notice on the Inside, which is really the foundation for managing our emotions. You held and moved through the distressing emotion and fear of I don't want that to happen again. Then in the mental clarity you're like, I need validation. You talk to your sister, that actually, in emotional regulation is the last step. There's five things we do. [00:19:00] We reach out to talk with someone, we take a nap, we do some kind of physical exercise, we do some kind of creative expression, or we have a good cry that's finishing the emotional regulation cycle. And what's really interesting for me is that I had created that, I don't know, 10 or 15 years ago, and two sisters, whose names I can't remember, actually came out and in their neuroscience work proved that is what humans do to finish that emotion. And what you're talking about is you just automatically did it. That we are who we are and it's wonderful to be able to put words to it. Because now you said that oh, I needed validation, like it was a bad thing. No, it's a great thing. Yeah. Because after you talked to your sister, how did you feel?

Guest: Much better.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: What was it about that conversation that allowed you to feel better?

Guest: She's someone I trust a lot so that I know that if she's yeah, your feelings are valid, stuff like that. I knew what I was thinking was worthy [00:20:00] and was correct.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yes. Yes. And that's a really important part of tending and befriending emotions. We do need to see our emotions as valid. We feel what we feel. We have to be careful that we don't see them as always factual. Our emotions are our experience and they're not necessarily a fact. But for you, they were your experience of that painful situation and your sister really tended and befriended you saying, yes, that is really painful. And you can separate that relationship from your current relationships. Because the brain doesn't know. It doesn't know time. And so when you feel a pain in the past, if you don't do your Inner Workout, you're going to project it onto the present. One of the things I see a lot in marital therapy is what I call, every sin of the past keeps being brought up in the present [00:21:00] until people really learn to manage their minds. That is that they have to say, whoa, I'm not going to then bring up everything you've done wrong for the last 20 years. That's a really important skill that you fell into, but I'm glad to articulate it so you can move on and not think what happened with one person out of 9 billion has to happen with everyone else. Yeah. But that's how pain is. That's how pain is. Any other thoughts that you have on notice on the inside?

Guest: I think the other thought I have about noticing on the inside is it's so easy to push our emotions away or ignore them altogether, and it's just really important that when you notice on the inside, you're validating the emotions because even if they are unreasonable, you're having them for a reason, their response to something, and it's important to let the emotions happen and then move on rather than move on and just ignore it.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yes. Emotions are never unreasonable. They're neutral. Yeah. We like happier emotions more [00:22:00] than we like distressing emotions, but emotions are just our reaction to an event. It's what we do with them that is unreasonable. What you gave was an example of doing really reasonable things. On the podcast, I talk about my reaction to a dog and my friend's reaction to a dog. We're both right. So often when I work with couples or disputes between people, I'll say, you're right. You're right. What will you do about it? Because most of the time we start with what we're feeling and it flips into what we're thinking.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: One of the things I want to ask you is part of Notice on the Inside. It's not just noticing emotions or thoughts, it's also noticing bodily sensations, images, perceptions, memories. Did you have any experience of that?

Guest: I don't think too much. I had a little bit on like the memories that I would reflect back on them and I'm like, oh, I want to do this again with her. Things like that. But not all too much.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Are you ever aware of your mind making images?

Guest: I'd say a little bit, but not too much. No.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: [00:23:00] It seems to me as a clinician, there's two kinds of people in the world, those who lean pretty strongly on images and those who not so much. I want to punctuate that because images can be really helpful for people to be aware of if that's where they get a lot of Inner information. Cuz we don't say that to people, most people get Inner information about thoughts and feelings. But bodily sensations and images are also really a rich way to mine what is going on inside of us.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: How about sensations, bodily sensations? Are you aware of many bodily sensations that you have?

Guest: What do you mean by bodily sensation?

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Go back to the experience that you had of where you felt afraid about the friendship. Yeah. What did your body feel?

Guest: I don't know if I can pinpoint an exact feeling in that moment. I think it was all like thoughts in my head that I was feeling rather than like actual my bodily sensations.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Okay. You probably have them because you can't not have them. But because we're not taught to pay attention to them, and here's a really [00:24:00] important skill, especially for people 12 to 25, and you're in that age group. Adolescence starts at 12, ends at 25, and the brain does not reach a full adult brain until 25, and that's the prefrontal cortex and lots of other things really maturing. And bodily sensations are up and going. So one of the things I would always teach the junior high students is you can trust your bodily sensations more often than your thoughts, especially when you're 14, maybe not so much at your age. Yeah. Because you're on the other side. You're on the downside of maturation. I would have them test it. The typical reflection paper I would get would be, I was playing my video game and I could feel this yucky feeling in my stomach. When I tuned into it, the thought was, you need to do your homework. You need to do your homework. It's a warning signal and so bodily sensations are [00:25:00] really our body warning us to do this or to do that. When I explain it in that way, does that make you more aware of them?

Guest: I would definitely say that makes me more aware of them. It makes me think about how, in other situations that might have occurred, but not necessarily the one we've been speaking on.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Can you talk about one that you think, Ooh, I can remember that bodily sensation?

Guest: When my basketball career ended, I remember sitting in the locker room like crying, upset, but I physically felt like pain in my stomach because I had done it for 10 years and it was over. It was just my body reacting, being like, no, you are upset. It's okay, but you're gonna move on just fine.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Yes. The mind and the body are completely connected. Yes. We might somehow separate them, but the more we can integrate them and the more that we can have full body feeling. I saw that watching the women's game yesterday. There were just a couple women who were just full body feeling it, whether it was joy or whether it was despair.

There's real value in honoring our body, our whole body, and to [00:26:00] begin to lean more into paying attention to the sensation because our sensations often, not always, but they're the first warning that we might need to tend and befriend, and we have to be able to do the skill of notice on the inside to really have emotional intelligence. If we can't do it our emotions are gonna run amuck. And that means sometimes we're gonna misstep and do things that we really aren't proud of or that aren't really a reflection of our values. Does that make sense? Yeah, that does. In wrapping up, is there anything else from the episode that you didn't think was clear?

Guest: No, I thought I was pretty straightforward and I was able to try the examples in real life, which I think is really beneficial. As you were saying before, it's. All things we do in our daily life, just altering them to these mindful practices.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Can you talk a little bit about the role that your phone computers have in helping you with this process and leading you away from this process?

Guest: Yeah. So I think my phone and in this situation helped me cuz it gave me an ability to reach out to my sister who's [00:27:00] in Pennsylvania. Otherwise it can be a huge distraction and cause you to hyper- focus on things that aren't relevant. The social media image can cause people to freak out about their own personal image when in reality if they never saw, it'd be fine. I also think I've started this thing where I don't even take my phone into bed anymore, so that before bed I'm focusing on myself going to sleep and I've noticed better quality of sleep, I've noticed like falling asleep faster, which is really valuable because I don't have the giant distraction in my phone right before I go to bed.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Wow. You're a wise, young woman Because science doesn't want us having our phones in the bedroom. Yeah. They do not want us having our phones in the bedroom because they're perfectly synced up and they interrupt our sleep and it's one of the most common things I say to anybody I work with. I'm sure it gets very old. Sleep is the foundation of mental wellness. So in ending, I usually ask this at the beginning, but I forgot. How do you define mental wellness?

Guest: I define mental wellness as you take, having the ability to focus on where you are mentally. It's [00:28:00] not always gonna be top tier best mental health that you have, but whatever it is, sitting with his emotions and acknowledging them and working with that and working to amplify it and make it better. Even if it is top tier, you can always improve working on tough

emotions or if you are going through a tough mental place, like working on enhancing that and being at your optimal mental wellness when you can.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: And how do you know when you feel mentally good?

Guest: I think it correlates to how you act and stuff like that when you're mentally unstable or unwell. I know I definitely act differently and it's like noticeable to my friends. I tend to be an energetic and happy person, so when I'm off a day people are able to recognize it, so then I know that I need to focus on myself for a minute.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Oh, great. Thank you so much for being on the podcast today. This was delightful.

Guest: Thank you so much for having me.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: I sure did a lot of noticing and here are my Inner Challenge insights.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number one:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: I loved how quickly my guests connected notice to her experience as a high school athlete. Sports is one of the best ways to train our [00:29:00] minds. What I find interesting, having worked a lot with athletes, both high school and college is their a tendency to leave their best mindset on the field? What happens when the athlete applies, the focus, determination, and curiosity of their athletic mindset to other parts of their life? Such as the classroom or tasks of daily living like wash, eating well or tidying up their living space. You know what they have taught me? Off the field, they let their minds be lazy, but once they realize this and begin to notice, they challenge themselves to bring their energy and effort off the field and things begin to change. Why be lazy in life and energetic on the field? Hey, it is the same mind, but not the same mindset. It's all about intention.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number two:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Grounding helps us train the brain and mend the mind. [00:30:00] It's free. It feels so good. As one of my clients said to me, It's almost like grounding buttons my mouth and puts weights on my fist. Now, that's an endorsement.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number three:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Are you a teacher? A coach? A parent ready to eat dinner with your family? Start with Notice. Help everyone step into the present. By grounding and taking a few breaths.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number four:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Today's guest shared her wisdom about writing her notes instead of typing them out. Here's the science. A study published in January of 2022 by researchers at Princeton and UCLA found that there are definite links between handwriting notes and committing them to memory. The act of writing requires a brain to be an active participant in the note taking process. Typing, does not. So this is great news for pencil manufacturers everywhere. [00:31:00] I hope their next research project is if checking email during class interrupts one's learning.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number five:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: We are often walking and not paying attention to what is around us. Like this morning, I took an hour walk on the campus of Notre Dame. Shout out to the world's best ground crew. Those tulips! As I was walking, I played the Inner Challenge game, Notice on the Outside. This is an old game of mine that I've played for about 10 years. I say hi to everyone who walks by me and notice who says hi back. Today's numbers were, I said, hi to 14 people. And three said, hi back. By the way, the 11, who did not say hi back to me, we're all intensely practicing Notice on the Outside. Or more accurately, they were looking at their phones.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number six:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Notice is a hat trick. It brings your mind to the present. It calms your nervous [00:32:00] system. And it helps you choose what fuel you want for your spirit. Today's guest shared, she refueled her mindset from, oh, I'm in class. I have to be here. Too, I'm in class, I want to be here. I want to learn the material. Yep. She went solar on us. Fueling her mindset with warmth, positivity, and zero carbon footprint.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Insight number seven:

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Let's be honest. We are trained to not Notice on the Inside. Think of a typical response, if you'd say to someone, "I'm having a

bad day." Most people respond well, at least you're alive or tomorrow will be better. Hey, all we want is for people to say, I'm sorry, how can I help you? Or thanks for telling me, do you need a hug? You know, we can make it through anything, but we can't make it through anything alone. If you want a real life example of this, listen to episode 33 Mental Wellness & [00:33:00] Cancer.

MJ Murray Vachon LCSW: Thanks for listening. As you go through your week notice and should you see me on a walk look up and say, hello. This is your Inner Challenge.