

Hope Never Goes Away Season 2, Episode 6 – Monica Hui

Lindsay: (00:03)

Hello. My name is Lindsay Recknell and this is the Hope Motivates Action podcast. Super excited to bring you season two, conversations with inspiring people, reframing the way we've traditionally thought about hope and its connection to our lives. On today's hot seat episode Monica Hui and I will be chatting about hope and all things motherhood. Although I don't have the tough job of being a parent, we will apply the concepts of hope to all of us caregivers, everyone who struggles with hidden hope and taking care of themselves while also being present for others..

Lindsay: (00:35)

If you're interested in any of the books, resources, and tools I mentioned in this episode, all the links you need can be found in the show notes of your favorite podcast player or head to the blog and pod page of my www.expertinhope.com. You'll find them all there too. My message and my work is all about using the Science of Hope to motivate action in your life because without action, hope is just a wish.

Lindsay: (01:01)

Hello. I am your host Lindsay Recknell but today I am passing hosting duties over to my friend and soon to be yours, Monica. Hi Monica.

Monica: (01:12)

Hi.

Lindsay: (01:12)

So awesome to have you here today. Thank you so much for participation.

Monica: (01:16)

Thank you for having me. I'm excited to speak with you.

Lindsay: (01:19)

I have known Monica for, I dunno, a number of years. We got connected through our small businesses, our wedding business actually, which neither of us focus on these days. Monica's specialty is in providing efficiency tips for motherhood. Well, getting the most out of your time, the most out of your day, to be able to spend as much time with your kids and your family as possible. Which is unbelievably hard and your tips are so practical. You are providing a great service for the world. So I'm really excited to hear what you have to say today about hope and kids.

Monica: (01:55)

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Well thank you so much for your very kind introduction to your audience with me and for having me. I'm super, super excited to speak with you and to present another resource to moms. I always believe that we can learn something from everyone from others and takes them or try. Early into my motherhood I was told that takes a village to raise a child and I would like to expand that into takes a village to support a mum. And I feel like you know, you are a very valuable resource to moms as well.

Lindsay: (02:23)

Well thanks. I am not a parent, but I support many, many moms hardest job in the world and anything I could do to support, I'm absolutely all in.

Monica: (02:34)

Well we appreciate you. So I wanted to jump right in and talk a little bit about motherhood. I found through my personal experiences and in speaking with other moms during the path of motherhood, there's so so many opportunities where I'm up, don't lose hope, you know, they might lose hope about their own identity, not, you know, I'm never going to be myself again. They might lose hope about what their lives have become like, Oh, I'm just constantly taking care of others. You know? Is this all it is right now? Or losing hope about what their future looks like. It's like, well, I even survive another day like this. Like is this, it, is this it for me? So while I help moms was like tangible tips on like how to organize and simplify their motherhood, I wanted to ask you, how can moms change the perspective and hope with their motherhood?

Lindsay: (03:27)

Oh, that's good. Great question. Compassion fatigue is a real thing. Caregivers and where the energy required that it takes, to be a caregiver, to apply that to a parent, to anyone. That caregiver role that we we take is exhausting and like such relevant questions that we ask for help. It's not limited to just motherhood. You know, whether you're caring for someone with a physical illness or a mental illness, aging parents or yeah, you're caring for a spouse. Exactly. That exhaustion that comes from always giving, giving, giving and not feeling like you are receiving is a real thing. We can absolutely feel like our future, there's not likely to be better than today even if it's just because we're exhausted and we can't see through the fog of it all. I think to maintain our hope in those situations is actually focusing on taking care of ourselves. We hear about self care and that word gets bandied around a lot and it's, it's almost a dirty word, but I really think that it's important that whatever your definition of self care looks like, taking care of yourself, especially in these scenarios where you don't have anything left to give is so important. So on an airplane they say you have to put on your mask before helping other people because if the plane goes down and you're dead, you cannot help the child. That sounded super harsh, but you know what I mean? You can't help others if you can't help yourself first. And so finding ways to prioritize somehow to recharge your batteries is super key. And if a bath and candles is what that looks like for you, awesome. If listening to a podcast on the way to work that inspires you and gives you, you know, new ideas on how to manage your time, manage your day? Is the way to go do that? If arranging a caregivers circle

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where you trade, a play date with another mom so that you can have a nap for an hour. That's the way to do it. That's what you do.

Monica: (05:40)

I love how you said you know sometimes how self care is considered as a dirty word. I think another word that people kind of associate self care with is selfishness. You know you're being selfish for taking care of yourself and for not taking care of others. Think that's really something hard for moms to like change your perspective on rather than caring for others. You got to take care of yourself as well.

Lindsay: (06:06)

Well, and it's so interesting because we would never was that on other people. Right? We look at other moms and we encourage them to take time for themselves and we encourage them to prioritize themselves over the ones they're caring for yet we never apply that same thinking to ourselves. We internalize it to be selfish and to feel like we're not being present for other people.

Monica: (06:31)

That is so true. It's so easy to give that advice rather than to take the advice.

Lindsay: (06:36)

We shouldn't put that double standard on ourselves. No. For mothers or caregivers, generally speaking. We wouldn't speak to our friends the way we speak to ourselves, and I think it's very important to remember that. I think it's very important to be conscious of that and treat ourselves as the most important person because if we feel really good about ourselves, we can give exponentially better to those in our care.

Monica: (07:01)

Moms should start taking care of themselves, you know, self care. My next question is what are some indications of red flags that moms should pay attention to when they feel like their hope is starting to slip away? Is it when they're starting to get really cranky? What are some indications of red flag?

Lindsay: (07:15)

Yeah, so you're, you're totally right, your physical response and your mental response red flag. I think the most important thing to think about from a hope perspective is when you've lost that expectation that the future is going to be better than today, that's the biggest red flag that you've lost or misplaced your hope. I don't ever think that hope goes away. Like I don't think it leaves your body, it leaves your soul. I think it's playing a little bit of hide and seek, which is encouraging because you know that it's there deep down, somewhere buried under, you know, the loads of laundry in your living room, but it doesn't ever leave you and therefore you can get it back. And so if you can recognize those signs, of, you know, despair or hopelessness or, that nothing you do is

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ever going to make a change, is never going to make a difference, that those diapers and those dishes are forever going to be piled up.

Lindsay: (08:16)

Recognition of that and then taking some action toward rectifying it. However big or small that action is, will absolutely be dependent on how dim that light of hope is in your soul. But any action is good action and each step in a positive direction, will start that momentum going, take that pebble, and roll it downhill.

Monica: (08:40)

I love how you said you never lose hope. A lot of moms might say, you know, I've lost hope. You know, this is never going to get better. I've lost hope, but it's just hope that's just disguised.

Lindsay: (08:51)

I really believe that to be true. I think by its nature there's an expectation that it's still there, you know? And if I believe that it, it could be extinguished completely, that's not very hopeful. You know, I have to believe that it's always there. I just can't always see it.

Monica: (09:10)

You have to take the action right in order to regain that hope, to seek that hope again. I really like having like step by step, you know, like, you know, what are some of the ways that moms can get back on track and use hope for the motherhood, taking actions step by step. What are some of your suggestions?

Lindsay: (09:27)

It depends on how big an action you want to take, you're willing to take, you have the opportunity to take. So I think prioritization and connection to purpose, and the reason for living is really really key. So let's use the example of maybe you have a young child, you know, under one years old and you're a stay at home mom, still still on mat leave and you misplaced that hope under all of the responsibilities that facing you as a mom, so maybe, maybe today's goal is you'll find some time for a shower. And so all of the progress and all of the actions is in pursuit of that one goal.

Lindsay: (10:13)

So maybe it's a recognition that your child will have a longer nap if you feed them first. And so you schedule out, you know, feeding time quickly followed by nap time routine and you jump in the shower right away. Like you don't check your phone, you don't throw in a load of laundry, don't start the dishes, just get in the shower right away. You set yourself up for success to intentionally achieve that goal. And it may seem like a small goal, but think about how awesome you feel when that shower is over, you know? That accomplishment will build on the next goal you set.

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Monica: (10:52)

Yes, absolutely. Like just just focus on your main goal. I need to get to that shower, what are the steps to get there.

Lindsay: (11:01)

It's that progress that's really important. What is going to help me get closer to that goal, whatever that goal looks like, and then progress on those things. And the progression of small things is really, really key. They don't have to be big things. In fact, if you're only doing big progressive things, it can become overwhelming. And maybe you don't, you don't achieve that bigger step and then it becomes the demotivating factor, you get further from the goal. And if you can do and identify a bunch of little things that are easy to do, each one of those will build on the next one, making the next part just that much easier.

Monica: (11:41)

That's amazing. I think a lot of moms, they make really big goals, right? They have a vision of what their motherhood is like and you know, they have a grand goal of, you know, my child going to wake up and get themselves dressed and ready to go out the door, but they're only four. You know, break them down into smaller goals, I can definitely see how that would help.

Lindsay: (12:03)

If I could just add to that. So you know, smart goal setting, there's that whole methodology around smart goals. They have to be specific and measurable and yada, yada yada.

Monica: (12:14)

Yup.

Lindsay: (12:14)

At the end of that is time-bound. I struggle with the time-bound piece of goals a lot. So in our example of having a shower, you'll notice that I didn't say have a shower by noon or have a shower by 10 or whatever time it seems to be appropriate because things outside of your control are going to happen. Maybe your child wakes up sick, maybe you know, repair guys in your home and you can't get your child down for the nap that she usually takes in the middle of the morning. You know, I think it's really important to have an idea of time. Don't make it so time bound that you set yourself up to fail if things that are outside your control happen.

Lindsay: (12:54)

That whole self-forgiveness piece is super, super key and you know, rolling with the flow and taking actions over only the things you can control. Absolutely, things outside your control are going to happen.

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Monica: (13:07)

Awesome. I can totally see how that would really stress a mom out and I'm like, okay, my goal is to have a bath by 5:00 PM today no matter what. It's just not going to happen.

Lindsay: (13:22)

Yeah. You don't want to set yourself up for that feeling of failure. No, you haven't failed if you don't get a bath by five o'clock if you set that kind of time frame, but the feeling of failure seems to be so much bigger than the reality of not failing and it's super demotivating and, and you know, lowers your level of hope, not increases it.

Monica: (13:46)

And I also think it's also okay for us to understand, it's okay if it didn't happen by five but it happened by five 30 or by six or by seven 30 it's okay.

Lindsay: (13:57)

The fact that you had a bath today, check!

Monica: (14:00)

How do moms help other moms with hope? You know, obviously we're best at dishing out advice then keeping them ourselves, but you know, what are some of your suggestions on how we can help each other out?

Lindsay: (14:11)

Continue to model hopeful behavior. We only get to choose for us. We don't get to choose for other people. We can't impose our judgments. We can't impose our decision making. We can't impose what somebody else should or shouldn't be doing. We only get to choose for us and for our families. And so I think it's really important to not tell people what they should be doing. But model behavior on what we feel like we can do. And by modeling that behavior, other people will see that hopeful behavior and figure out how to behave in similar ways that work for them. So just continuing to show up, recognizing when your friend might be struggling and you know, offering to help, that moms support circle I mentioned where you know, you can take her kids one day and she takes your kids another day, you know, all of that kind of support stuff is modeling hopeful behaviour. I think that's really key. It's not the talking, it's the walking.

Monica: (15:17)

I have three main takeaways just from our conversation. I just wanted to share this with you because these were like, I find really, really key that I will be sharing with other people. You mentioned hope never goes away. No hope it's just disguised or playing hide and seek with you at the moment.

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Monica: (15:34)

Progress towards small goals. That is just mind blowing to me. We often set really grand goals, but set smaller ones take steps towards them, accomplish them and that raises hope. And I think the last thing that you mentioned continue to model hopeful behavior. That's all we can do for others. You can't tell them what to do, but we can show them what we are doing for ourselves.

Lindsay: (16:00)

I liked that you picked out those particular pieces cause they're very, very important to me. I try to live my life based on that kind of value and, and keep those things top of mind and I'm not awesome at it. I mean we're all human, right? We were not going to do these things all the time, but it's nice to hear these reminders every once in a while. And I think back to the people in my life who are modeling hopeful behavior. Hope is contagious, right? If I'm not feeling awesome today, I can look to those that are feeling awesome and modeling that hopeful behavior and sort of steal some of that hope and apply it, you know, to help motivate. Yeah, hope motivate me to do the next thing too. You know, get out of bed or to put on pants or girl, wash your face, those kinds of things. It just, yeah, the inspiration that I see in others is really super, super hopeful for me.

Monica: (16:56)

I find you incredibly inspiring and motivating. You know, you mentioned like, you know, you're not perfect at this, but just the fact that you keep trying, that's hopeful. That's inspiring and that's also motivating.

Lindsay: (17:09)

I think it's important to recognize and to call out that hope can be hard. It's not an easy thing and continuing to persevere and continuing to continue on is hard as anything, but it's not impossible and hope is kind of, you know, it's cyclical. It goes on a scale, feeling awesome today and not awesome tomorrow and that's just human, human nature and that's okay. Well that's okay. And those are the down days are the days we depend on others to provide their hope for us and on the up days are when we get to motivate, inspire others and share our hope with them, it's not always awesome. It's not always beautiful and perfect and self-forgiveness is a big deal. Self-forgiveness is a big frickin' deal.

Monica: (17:55)

Yeah, and I guess recognizing the ups and downs and being okay with the ups and downs and working with your ups and downs.

Lindsay: (18:03)

It doesn't define who you are, right? How you behave. Well, define your core values you get, you get to choose how you show up in the world. Um, you get to choose how much effort you need to put in and you can alter how you're showing up because you get to choose to be better or to take some time for yourself or just crawl

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under a pile of blankets and shut out the world for a bit. You get to choose and that's okay. Nobody should be judging you for anything, those choices you are making for yourself. You get to choose.

Monica: (18:43)

So I want to ask you, this is kind of a funny question. Okay. But if you were to provide an Instagrammable quote to moms, what would you say?

Lindsay: (18:53)

The big one that I've been really emphasizing in my life lately is that quote about choice, that you get to choose. It feels empowering, to me. It feels like I'm giving myself permission, do the right thing by myself, like the right thing by me, the right thing by my kids, the right thing by my employer. It allows me to, feel empowered, to rest when I need to rest, to push myself when I need to push myself, to persevere when it's important. You get to choose I think is something that's really resonating with me. Yeah, like that could be, it would be a good message to moms or as you get to choose, even if the choices both seem impossible. There's power in getting to choose.

Monica: (19:46)

I love that. Just the power to choose because sometimes we feel like, you know, it's not our decision. It's not our choice to do this. It just has to be done, but that's not true. We can choose how we want it done when we want it done.

Lindsay: (19:58)

Like you totally nailed it. We get to choose how it's done. Maybe it has to be done and what scenarios we'd follow to get it done and who would we use to support us in the action behind getting it done. Those are all the choices too. No, there may not be a choice, but it has to be done. But how it gets done, it's totally well we get to choose in those scenarios as well.

Monica: (20:22)

I am still like absorbing everything that you have said. You know, I asked you about the Instagrammable thing, right? So that's something that moms should always have on the forefront, something as a reminder. Do you have any other things that moms should remind themselves on a daily basis? Remind others. Any other words of advice?

Lindsay: (20:42)

Why don't I flip it over to you? You and I talk a lot about hope and we've talked a lot, your journey as a mom and we've talked a lot about your journey as a business woman. What would you say is the number one way you employ hope in your path of motherhood?

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Monica: (21:01)

As of late, I've been envisioning the end goal, so I have been envisioning my daughter getting up on her own and getting dressed and being ready on her own. And that actually gives me hope. You know, and like just seeing the future and how positive the future is actually helping me with my hopefulness.

Lindsay: (21:22)

Well, I bet it is!

Monica: (21:22)

It hasn't quite manifested yet, but it's getting there.

Lindsay: (21:28)

You put the steps into place and you're, you're actioning those little progressive steps towards that vision.

Monica: (21:35)

Yes, I am. It's not quite there yet, but I'm hopeful. I guess I am hopeful that, you know, step-by-step. This morning, she got dressed by herself. That's great. Tomorrow maybe she'll put on her socks on her own. I'm taking it step by step and I find that really helps.

Lindsay: (21:49)

And that's exactly what we've been talking about, is that small progression no matter how, how big the step, any step in a positive forward direction, is good progress, you know, net positive. That's all we can ask for. That's all we can ask for. And your future will be better tomorrow than it is today. One day she will be grown up and you will look back and notice all the things you taught her and all the frustration she gave you and all the time lines she didn't meet. And you will continue to be hopeful.

Monica: (22:20)

Yes. And I will realize that all those little steps actually helped the final outcome.

Lindsay: (22:27)

Well this has been so, so awesome Monica. I so appreciate you taking the time and for your really thoughtful, insightful questions. I know that there's lots of moms out there and lots of caregivers that listen to this podcast and I, I think you've offered some really great things for them to think about and I hope that the things they take away can be immediately implemented in folk's lives. So thank you so much for your time.

Monica: (22:50)

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Thank you so much for having me. This is a lot harder than it sounds when I'm listening to podcasts in the car. You made it so easy and it's always nice speaking with you.

Lindsay: (23:01)

That's awesome. I appreciate that. I'll talk to you very soon.

LINDSAY: (23:07)

Thanks so much for listening to another episode of the [Hope Motivates Action](#) podcast. These conversations have been so inspiring and motivating to so many people, and it's my absolute pleasure to produce them for you.

This show thrives on your feedback, so if you find value in this podcast, it goes a really long way. If you'll give me a [five star rating on Apple podcasts](#), the next step in your journey to action your hope is to check out my virtual mastermind program, the flagship series, which is called **Hope for Caregivers**. These are 12-week group accountability programs designed to support those of us who are caregiving for others, likely at the expense of ourselves and our own personal goals.

As with all the tools and resources we discussed on the show, you can find links to this program in the show notes on your favorite podcast player or on my [Expert in Hope](#). Also, when you're visiting the website, check out the [Shop page](#) where you can take Hope home. This show is all about making hope tangible and practical because without action, hope is just a wish.