

Lindsay: (00:02)

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. In this latest hot seat episode, I have the pleasure of Renee Pilgrim asking the questions all about grit and its connection to hope. Renee is a wellness transformation agent, passionate about the concepts of yin and yang and she and I apply hope within that framework in a super fascinating and thought provoking way.

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: (00:55)

Hello everyone. Welcome back to the Hope Motivates Action podcast. I am usually your host, Lindsay Recknell, but I have a new host here. Hi Renee.

Renee: (01:11)

Hello, how are you?

Lindsay: (01:13)

I am well thank you so much for agreeing to be the interviewer today. Our topic of hope and its relationship to grit, I think it will be a really super interesting, interesting topic.

Renee: (01:25)

Yeah, thank you. No, I really am excited about this particular topic. I'm a bit of a, I guess a connoisseur of grit. I like paying attention to it and I'd like to find out more about your take on what grit is and hope in general and where you find hope in the grit.

Lindsay: (01:44)

Oh, that's awesome. Well I'm excited for our conversation. I would like to introduce a little bit more about you to our audience so that they know who you are and what you're all about.

Lindsay: (01:55)

So Renee is a wellness transformation agent, also known as the Transformation Maven. After 20 years of learning to heal through physical and emotional challenges, Renee became an acupuncturist, TCM practitioner, and now an agent of change. Renee works with people feeling stressed, secluded and scattered from the day to day of work and life and helps them to find clarity, confidence, and courage to become a new version of themselves. She's most passionate about the dynamics of yin and yang and the opportunities we have to grow

and renew. Awesome. I really think that the whole grow and renew, seizing opportunities has a lot to do with grit.

Renee: (02:36)

Oh, for sure. Everything. Tell me what you think about that. What does that mean for you? When you, when you read that and how does it relate to grit?

Lindsay: (02:43)

So my definition of hope has to do with expectation of a future positive result by taking action on the things we can control. And I think people with a lot of grit and a lot of perseverance also believe that they need to take action on the things they can control. That without sort of effort and intention and that perseverance, we aren't going to get where we want to be. And I think helping people to become a new version of themselves, goes back to how much effort and how much action people are putting in to get to that future.

Renee: (03:20)

You know, it's so interesting when I had an opportunity to look at the topics, you know that I could choose from what I was interested in talking to you about. When I looked at hope and grit, maybe it's because I often work in the realm of yin and yang where I'm looking at things as they sit in relationship with each other. And so in some way it's a, it's a dual nature, but they're also very much a part of each other. And when I was looking at hope and grit, hope for me felt more like inaction whereas grit felt like action.

Lindsay: (03:56)

I liked how you put the two of those things as yeah, as yin and yang. The definition of hope for people is very, very different and everybody has a different reaction to that word and internalizes, internalizes hope in a very, very different way. And for me the definition is related to action because I believe that without action, hope is just a wish.

Renee: (04:21)

Mmm-hmm

Lindsay: (04:21)

We can wish for something, but if we don't action it, so if we, if we want, if we wish to win the lottery yet we don't buy a ticket, there's no chance we're ever going to win the lottery. But absolutely your definition is something I hear a lot. It's something I hear often.

Renee: (04:37)

This is what one of the things I was curious about even before I got to choose my topic. Well I guess it's a two part question. The first is my general inquiry and the other one kind of has to do with what we're talking about this moment. So I'll just give it to both of them and see where we go. But where does hope live for you and if

hope is like a wish, part of an accepted definition of hope is that it's, it's a wish or a or a longing or, or a wanting or even an intention. What empowers hope for you?

Lindsay (05:14)

Oh, I love that word empowers. So back to your first question about where does hope live for me, hope lives in all the places. So it's internal for me, but it's also external. So intuitively I recognized the day that I lost my hope on the day that I recognized that I got it back. And that was a very internal intuitive feeling of, of hope for me.

Lindsay: (05:44)

I didn't recognize that I had lost it until I recognized that there was something, something missing and that I had found this joy, this expectation for what the future could be. And that's what I characterized as my feeling of hope. And what I did with that hope is the external part of it is the outward personification sort of, of what hope looks like. So for me, when I recognized that I got my hope back, it was that feeling of, okay, there's something to look forward to. There's a light at the end of the tunnel. There's things I can learn, people I can talk to, things I can do with this feeling, this motivation to do something new, to do something next. And for me that hope is that next thing, is that that forward, that progression to whatever goal or dream or or wish that I'm, that I'm going for. So I think for me, hope lives both internally and externally in my thinking but also in my behavior.

Renee: (06:53)

Mm-hmm. And just to be more uh, I guess specific cause what empowers it? What moves hope toward action?

Lindsay: (07:02)

Yeah, so definitely my hope is what motivates me towards action. So in the science of hope, there is hope theory, which is goals plus agency plus pathway. So the goal is that future thing, place feeling you want to attain. Agency's thinking is that motivation is what is going to move you towards that goal. And then pathway's thinking is you were going to hit barriers and obstacles. And so what pathways, what alternative solutions can you employ to get around those barriers and obstacles to get you closer to your goal. And so for me, it's that agency thinking in the middle, that motivation keeps me going, that that gets me closer to where I want to be and everything that I do, I'm wanting it to get any closer or I think it's going to get me closer. It doesn't always get me closer. Maybe it takes a left turn. Maybe it takes a backward step. But I do think it's all part of the crooked path that will eventually get me where I want to go and it's being open to and sort of curious about the opportunities as I take those actions that help me to determine what the next action should be.

Lindsay: (08:20)

There also has to be some reflection or some introspection to say, okay, here's the action I took. Was it good? Was it bad? You know, did it get me closer to where I wanted it to go? Did it take a step back? But I learned something, you know? So there needs to be definitely some consideration for the actions and then use that as sort of lessons learned to the next thing. That is where the intention, that is where the empowerment comes

from is I want to get closer to my goal, so what actions do I take to get there?

Renee: (08:50)

I really liked that breakdown. Did you get it from somewhere?

Lindsay (08:54)

It's not my definition. The science of hope is actually a real thing. When I first started down this path of learning everything I possibly could about hope I found a sub science of hope as a sub science under positive psychology and positive psychology is a branch of psychology founded almost 40 years ago, like in the late seventies, early eighties, I think, university of Pennsylvania called Martin Seligman and two researchers under Dr. Seligman, Dr. Rick Snyder and Dr. Shane Lopez. They were the two most um, sort of prevalent researchers in hope under Seligman. Dr. Snyder started the work and he's the one that came up with hope theory, the goals plus agencies plus pathways. And he had a mentee, Dr. Shane Lopez, who kind of took up Dr. Snyder's work when Dr. Snyder passed away and then actually Dr. Lopez also passed away in 2017. They were the two people that advanced the science as much as it has been.

Renee: (10:06)

Yeah, I really like that. Thank you. So slipping into, and I'm here, I'm trying to decide which one I would put in a yin category, which one I'd put any yang category and in some way I would think hope being more ethereal. I think I'll put in in this moment a category with the yang being more energetic and then grit being a more nature of matter. I would put under the yin column four right now.

Renee: (10:39)

Define the feeling of grit, especially when you're moving through whatever it is. What was that feeling of grit?

Lindsay: (10:47)

Oh, that's a great question. I think for me, grit feels like determination. It feels like pain. I'm feeling it now and having a hard time describing what it would, you know, using the words to describe what it feels like internally, but it feels quite powerful and quite, yeah, determined is the word that keeps coming to mind. It feels like standing on a mountain in a windstorm and like hair blowing back, but leaning forward, you know Sheryl Sandberg's Leaning In. That is what it feels like. It just, it's standing strong against some opposite force.

Renee: (11:30)

I get these images and I just got a ridiculous one of that thing that you're describing and then the sand blowing in your face where there's grit in your teeth. Like you know where there's sand kind of in your teeth. I guess coming back to you were like, you know, grinding your teeth or chomping, chomping down on the bit.

Lindsay: (11:48)

I don't think that's ridiculous at all.

Renee: (11:49)

Well, you didn't see what was in my head. It was a little bit funny just to say it.

Lindsay: (11:54)

But no I had that image in my head also, and I'm blinking my eyes and I'm shaking my head because I'm trying to get this grit out of my face but that's the barrier to overcome, right? Like the idea of grit is to power through something to reach some difficult goal. And if you've got these grains of sand flying in your face that you know, getting through that or getting to the other side of that sandstorm. Yeah that, that does feel like the definition of grit.

Renee: (12:23)

So if we hold onto that, if we hold onto that feeling and everything that you were describing and leaning into the wind and the sand in your face and that determination, bring hope in right now and what happens to that space,

Lindsay: (12:36)

That is what gives me the power to stand there. That is what it gives me the strength to say, screw you sand. I can see my goal on the other side of this hill. I am going to get there in spite of the pain and suffering and grittiness in my teeth. That is what hope has for me that that I know that what actions I will take, whether it's just standing here letting it hit me until it subsides that I will get to where I need to be, that the sandstorm is not going to stop me, that I'm going to persevere and be determined and take those steps forward thru as opposed to sitting back or laying down or giving up. That I will absolutely persevere thru using my grit, using my power.

Renee: (13:25)

So hope for you is very active.

Lindsay: (13:28)

It is very active. It's about choice. I would say it is about action and sometimes the choice is inaction as well. You know, somebody said to me that sometimes it's just nice to be and to feel, and I still think that that is an action is that as a choice because you are intentionally taking the time and space you need to meditate to think to destress, you know, whatever that is. That is action also. But yes, I do think that hope is a super tied to action because I don't believe that things will come to us. I do believe that we do need to take control of the things we can control. There's lots of things we aren't able to control and for a control enthusiast like myself, I want to be able to all the things, there are going to be impacts without that are outside of my control, but I can action the things that I do have control over.

Renee: (14:35)

I love the image of you standing into the wind with that breath almost like, you know, channeling hope. I guess

my personal definition until now, look at me changing, but maybe I would have seen hope as being much more passive in that in the way that I considered it. And I look to intention I guess the active part, it's a word that you've brought in, uh, in relationship with hope as well. I guess I think of them differently and I guess where I want to kind of inquire. Now, what happens when you lose that connection or have you ever lost that connection?

Lindsay: (15:20)

All the time? If I look back over my 40 years of life, there are a number of times where I can pinpoint where I did not feel hopeful. I don't believe that hope ever leaves us. I do believe that we can kind of lose it. It plays hide and seek so to speak. I also don't believe that it's very often a conscious thing where we can go from feeling very hopeful too feeling hopeless or less hopeful. Definitely I can picture times where I recognize that now looking back, where I recognize that I wasn't feeling hopeful. And those are the times where I feel like I was just going through the motions where you know, status quo was okay. I was still getting up in the mornings, still putting on pants still, you know, doing the regular things and paying the bills and going to work and doing all those things. But they were just fine.

Lindsay: (16:24)

Mel Robbins uses the F word Fine to sort of describe that status quo feeling and I don't think you know, that fine isn't necessarily bad. Sometimes it's a coping mechanism to get our energy bars back or to manage other stresses. I don't want to feel fine all the time. I want to feel full and I want to be moving towards a better future for myself and whatever that looks like. I know it is cyclical. There's the proverbial peaks and valleys of life and depending on what's going on in your life or the lives of the ones you love or you know even even the economy or the world can affect, can affect our level of hope and our feeling of that would we have control over.

Lindsay: (17:16)

I really liked that word intention a lot because I do think it is about intention and sometimes we don't consciously do things right. We don't live with intention all the time because that can be exhausting.

Renee: (17:32)

What is the difference for you between intention and hope?

Lindsay: (17:35)

I don't think there is a difference. I think that intention is part of hope. I think hope is encompassing around intention, around grit, around and and all of those kinds of things. I think hope is bigger than intention, but I think intention is definitely a part of actioning hope so to speak. So if intention is part of that agency thinking I think intention comes in that agency thinking section where it becomes part of my motivation to action, my motivation to move towards my goal or my other future.

Renee: (18:16)

So hope is a bigger umbrella.

Lindsay: (18:18)

Hope it's a bigger umbrella. Yeah,

Renee: (18:20)

Intention sits under there.

Renee: (18:21)

Thanks for breaking that down. I'm moving ahead of myself cause I find like now I'm like, I'm like, Oh I'm sure it's about all of these things.

Lindsay: (18:28)

Ask away.

Renee: (18:29)

Thank you. I wanted to also touch back on, I like to have some, some understanding and expression of this cause I think we do all go through cycles. One thing I love about Calgary, my sister used to live there. I would always hope when I arrived in Calgary that I would get to experience a Chinook. So Calgary is one of those cities that I actually do remember having hopeful feelings around. But going back to the cycles of things. So you were saying like there were times that you lost hope. So what I, what I kind of heard in that uh oh I heard that, you know, there are times when we're just, when we're just tired or you know, we kind of need to step back. And the word that kind of came up for me was this idea of dormancy and so hope being, you know, hibernating. And I guess I had a couple of questions about that and one of them is what do you think drains us of our hope? Like what is it really that exhausts us?

Lindsay: (19:32)

Other people. External situations not achieving what we hoped we were going to achieve through particular action, disappointment. Maybe it's physical, maybe there's health concerns that are draining our energy or we're so busy doing the things that we don't stop to take care of ourselves physically and eat well and drink enough water and all those kinds of things. I think that if we don't take time to recharge, it's harder to be hopeful because all of the remaining energy bars are going towards just putting on our pants in the morning.

Lindsay: (20:14)

We can't pour from an empty cup. Right? There's a reason that on airplanes they tell us to put our own mask on before taking care of others. If the plane goes down and we are not safe, we can't help other people. We have to take care of ourselves first. And I think when those things drain us, when other people drain us, when situations drain us, life commitments drain us. We need to take care of ourselves, which is clearly easier said than done. But I do think that, that contributes exponentially feeling more hopeless because our bodies can't keep up

anyway and it just, you know, it just sort of compounds on itself.

Renee: (20:59)

What's hope's number one power food?

Lindsay: (21:01)

Ooh, that's a great one. What is Hope's number one power food. Other hopeful people. We talk a lot about how important it is to surround yourself with likeminded people, with people that are supportive or challenging but are open minded and not dismissive and not disparaging. Right. I think the community of, of people in things that we spend our time with and in and doing, I think that hope motivates hope. And the more time we spend doing hopeful things with hopeful people, we sort of feed off each other. You know, it's contagious for sure.

Renee: (21:41)

That's a really bad image. Also. I mean, eating hopeful people, it feels incorrect.

Lindsay: (21:49)

Uh, yeah.

Renee: (21:50)

But you do mean energetically, just so we're clear.

Lindsay: (21:53)

Yeah, absolutely. There's no cannibalism going on here.

Renee: (21:56)

Okay, good. Thank you. Yeah, I mean that's really beautiful, right? But like to recognize and I was doing some work the other day and oh, with this person and we were talking about the importance of community and finding your community of humans. You're running along on the same frequency or wavelength or you know, towards the same goals. And I think that, you know, in a world particularly where, you know, some days are very criti, you know, some days are very, uh, challenging and you know, walking through my life regularly. I mean, certainly I have my own grit that I deal with that I must persevere seeing the world around me. The struggle is so real for so many people in so many ways. How do you think of hope in relationship to the world around you?

Lindsay: (22:51)

The more I talk about hope and the more I am intentional about sort of recognizing it the more I see it for sure. The beauty of these podcasts that I've gotten to do is that I heard stories of super inspirational people that used their hope to motivate their action, like the number of people who are seemingly quote unquote ordinary people that have accomplished extraordinary things just by, you know, actioning on their expectation of a

future positive result. Has been awesome. And it's amazing how often I am cognizant of the word hope in language, in words, in books that I read in the news stories. How often I see and recognize that word now and how often we use it in our everyday language. And I'm encouraged by that because the connotation of hope for me is very positive one, there's a correlation to optimism. I don't think they're mutually exclusive by any means, but there's definitely a correlation to the positivity and that word for me.

Lindsay: (23:58)

There's a lot of positivity there and forward progression for sure and so when I view the world using that kind of a lens, I see hope everywhere. I've see people trying to do good things. I see people trying to do good things for themselves or for the family or for their community. Hope lives in all the places and when I'm recognizing what people are doing and then how they're doing it, how they're employing their grit and their perseverance to get it done in the face of hardship. That's hugely hopeful because they're making progress. They are, they are changing the world one baby step at a time and that's super hopeful to me.

Lindsay: (24:40)

And I have to hang onto that also because we all encounter people who are not hopeful or are not outwardly hopeful, who maybe had bad experiences that have causes them to have more negative thinking or are in downward spirals because of mental illness or situations and circumstances in their lives. Often I feel like those are the symptoms, not the cause. And if we can be compassionate and curious and hear and maybe hold space for people, we can continue to have more hopeful conversations even with those who are not always showing up as hopeful people.

Lindsay: (25:23)

Like I mentioned before, I don't think hope ever leaves us completely that, you know, hopelessness is a foregone conclusion. I think there is hope hiding in all of us and if we can continue having these kinds of conversations and continue to spread the message, continue to recognize it out in the world and be cognizant of it. I think we're all as a society going to get to a better future, you know. In fact, because of all the grit, sometimes in spite of the obstacles, but because of that perseverance that we as humanity have, if we can just connect to what's important to us, I think that's how we connect to the grit.

Renee: (26:04)

Yeah, so fun. Like I feel full like it feels like it's been such a nice, I don't know, impromptu inquiry. I mean I know we planned it. But I mean we set up the date but we didn't really set up much else. So it feels really rich speaking with you about these things. Thank you for this opportunity.

Lindsay: (26:25)

I thank you for your insightful questions and your, your complicated questions. I liked the perspective that you brought to it. You know, the topic of grit could be so, I dunno, so generic and there's been a lot of books written and ah, I mean Angela Duckworth is sort of known expert on, on grit and she has so many great ideas in her, in

her book and all the research that's out there. But I really think that your perspective was a lot of things I hadn't thought about before and I really appreciate the, the insight that your questions brought. So thank you very, very much for this conversation and for your time and your intelligence. It's been great to get to know you.

Renee: (27:06)

Yeah, I really appreciate it. And I just want to give a shout out to one of my favorite podcasts, which is probably why I chose this topic to begin with. Have you heard of a Bliss and Grit? No, I have not. It's such a beautiful podcast. It's um, Brooke Thomas and Vanessa Scotto and uh, I just enjoy listening to those women so much and they just have very real conversations about the bliss and the grit of everyday life. As mentioned, you know, grit is such a, it's so interesting cause I think grit can be something that can be so deterring for so many people. And so I really loved your perspective on how hope merges with grit and work together, like the beautiful, synergistic, complimentary, you know, motivating relationship like yin and yang is. So, uh, I really appreciate having the opportunity to kind of pull some of that out today and to be able to sit in that with you. So yeah, I look forward to more conversations and building this relationship and thanks for this. opportunity so much.

Lindsay: (28:15)

Thank you again. I'll talk to you soon.

Lindsay: (28:22)

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.