

Narrator 00:00

From Curtco Media.

Jill de Jong 00:04

Life Done Better. This podcast is produced for all the unicorns who strive to create a life on their own terms, don't take life too seriously, and are on a mission to make a positive impact in this world. In the show, we're getting real about daily struggles and obstacles and how to best navigate through difficult times and challenges in life. So you can make better decisions for yourself and feel healthy, confident and alive, feel less alone and more connected. We're in this together, from my heart to yours, welcome back to Life Done Better. I'm your host, Jill de Jong, and I'm excited to introduce you to my guest, Christine Hassler. Christine is a master coach and speaker with over 15 years of experience. She's the best selling author of three books. The most recent one is called *Expectation Hangover*. Christine is the host of top rated podcast, Over It and On With It, where she coaches people live on the show. Christine has a master's degree in spiritual psychology and implements elements of NLP, psychology, spirituality, science, and a lot of her own diverse live experience into her work. Christine believes once we get out of our own way, we can show up to make the meaningful impact we're here to make. Welcome, Christine,

Christine Hassler 01:24

thank you so much for having me.

Jill de Jong 01:26

I am so happy to share you with everyone that's listening because of so many things. The one thing I want to start with is the *Expectation Hangover* book that you wrote in 2014. Can you please bring us back to the specific time or event in your life that made you write this book?

Christine Hassler 01:43

Oh, gosh. So I'll define what an expectation hangover is. Because it'll make more sense into why I wrote the book. Three kinds of expectation hangovers are, life doesn't go according to your plan. You're not married by a certain age, or you don't make an amount of money by a certain age or you have a plan, and it just doesn't work out. Or life does go according to your plan, you finish that triathlon, and you don't feel all the feelings of satisfaction that you thought you would like the desired result doesn't give you the feeling you were chasing, or like the global one we're having now. Life throws you an unexpected, unwanted curveball. And you're in a place of massive uncertainty. And why I find expectation hangover so valuable is because humans really don't change unless they're disappointed or suffering in some way. It takes contrast it takes not getting what we want. It takes getting challenged in some way. It takes an expectation hangover to get us to do the inner work to get us to transform and I saw this over and over again. And Jill, no one comes to me and says, Oh Christy, my life is going great. I have everything that I want. My mental, emotional, spiritual, financial health is on point. I just thought we'd chat. I just want to get even better.

Jill de Jong 02:59

There's always something right. There's one thing if either if it's big or small, we're all constantly dealing with so many emotions, so many things we desire. So many things that may not go the way we want to,

Christine Hassler 03:10

Right, we're constantly dealing with expectation hangovers. And usually it gets us to look at the things maybe we wouldn't, didn't want to look at. So let's just use the relationship example because it's a great example that most people can relate to. My job is to look at what else is this expectation hangover triggering, like, let's look at where else in your life you felt rejected? Not enough, abandoned, not loved, not getting what you want. Where else have you had grief or sadness or anger that you haven't dealt with? And that's the cool thing about expectation hangovers is they're never just about that one thing. They really are triggering a stack of things that you felt probably your whole life that you haven't dealt with, because human beings are amazing at repressing, suppressing, avoiding, distracting and numbing emotion. But we're not really good at going in and feeling our core wounds, the deep sadness, the anger, the grief, the shame we had as children or adolescents that's still impacting our adult life and in a lot of ways is responsible for the expectation hangovers we're creating and yes I said creating because we are not victims of our lives we are co-creators have our experience. And so if we really look at it as an opportunity to okay, I'm not going to distract I'm not going to ignore I'm not going to numb I'm actually going to go into this learn from it gets the other side of it. That's where the really the opportunity for transformation happens and you don't have to have the same expectation hangover over and over again. So to circle back and answer your question, what was in my life I had a lot of expectation hangovers like had a fancy career in Hollywood that I left because it was one of those life went according to plan but it didn't make me happy. Dumped by my fiancé, estranged from my family, health diagnoses, in debt, just a bunch of different ones. But my biggie was at 31. I separated from my my husband and filed for divorce. And that was a massive expectation hangover because one I was engaged before and got dumped by my fiancé six months before the wedding. So when I met, my husband got married, I was like, oh, I finally did it, I finally made it and PS, my first book, *20 Something, 20 Everything* was all about getting, not all about, but one of the things I wrote about was getting over my broken heart and finding my husband. And then four years later, four or five years later, I'm getting a divorce. And I was working with a coach at the time. And he said to me, this divorce is a disappointment, and a let down, that's triggering a lot of other times in your life, you felt like you failed, you felt like something wasn't enough. You had your heart broken, you had grief, you had someone disappoint you. Use it, use this trigger to go and clean all of that up. And he was right. It wasn't just about the divorce. And that's the thing, like the feelings people are feeling during this pandemic right now. They're not just about the pandemic, the people that are feeling the most at peace right now, are the people who've done deep work. And this is not a better than worse thing. That doesn't mean that people have done deep, deep work are any better. They're just at a different point in their journey in their transformation.

Jill de Jong 06:11

So and what you say is the first thing to do to get out of that, like awful, terrible feeling mindset that actually paralyzes us from doing anything at all.

Christine Hassler 06:22

Actually, the first step is to stop doing what you usually do to distract and deal with your feelings. So most people when we're in that, we do things like watch more TV, drink, over eat, overwork, complain about it to friends, pep talk our way out of it, be a victim. So look at the way you normally respond to disappointment when big feelings come up. When you feel fear or fear and anxiety, how do you usually manage it, and stop doing that. Because that, that that way is not working and we're excellent at distracting and numbing ourselves. We're fantastic at it.

Jill de Jong 06:56

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. You know, like, I think everyone is somewhat guilty of that. And the way I also find it helpful, is when I told myself, look at these emotions with curiosity, instead of judging it, that's what I really admire of you, like you communicate with such clarity and compassion. And you really invite people to take on a journey within, instead of saying, do this do that you say, hey, like, let's talk about this. And and I think if we can talk to ourself to ask ourselves good questions. How is it that I'm, again, in the same situation? How is it that life is not unfolding? Like the way I want to? What can I learn from all this? And how can I move it forward in a most positive direction?

Christine Hassler 07:41

So accepting a feeling, and like you said, being curious about it. Okay, anxiety, I accept you, you're here, I'm going to stop resisting you. I'm going to stop fighting, I'm going to allow myself to ride this feeling. Yeah, just like you'd surf a wave. You ride it, and you see where it takes you. And you asked a lot of good questions in terms of what people can ask themselves. I discourage people from asking the why, you know, why is this happening? And really, instead asking, what does this remind me of? That is where you can start to do the deep work, when you start connecting this current trigger to something it reminds you of.

Jill de Jong 08:21

It could be your father, it could be a friend, it could be a fiancé, right? It could be anyone,

Christine Hassler 08:27

It could be how you felt in your home life. There's so many possibilities of what that trigger can be. What when people ask me, What's the deep work? Really, we're pretty much fully formed by seven definitely by 12. Not to say that events that happen after 12, they still impact us. But, in a lot of ways sometimes those are easier to shift than what happens before the age of 12. So deep work is really about connecting, whatever your current expectation hangover is, whatever your current challenges, whatever your current struggle is, and finding the origin. Because that question, why is this happening? Sometimes we can get into spiritual bypass, oh, so teach me this lesson or to teach me this lesson.

Jill de Jong 09:13

And oftentimes, we only can see that in retrospect, anyway.

Christine Hassler 09:17

Exactly. So going back and saying, What does this remind me of when have I felt this way before, then we're starting to go back to the origin experience. So the deep work is really about going back and healing that inner child. updating those beliefs. I mean, in so many ways, and I know you know, this Jill,

we are robots. 90 to 95% of our behavior, our actions, reactions, thoughts and feelings are unconsciously driven.

Jill de Jong 09:43

Wow, that's a reality check.

Christine Hassler 09:45

And you can tell when something's a pattern or a program, if it just feels like a default, you're dating the same person with a different face, over and over again, you keep getting fired from a job, you keep having financial things, you keep losing the weight and then putting it back on. These are all indicative of there's a core wound that has not been healed. And the nature of the soul is to evolve. And if we look at collectively what's going on right now, the pandemic, that's what's happening collectively, what I see globally is we're doing what a lot of people do individually, we're distracting. We're numbing, we're hoping it goes away. We're just waiting for someone to tell us what to do, waiting for it to be over, instead of going, alright. Game on.

Jill de Jong 10:26

Sometimes it's really good to talk to a friend who is you know, someone that you can really trust with your feelings. So just like a coach, someone that doesn't judge, and by saying it out loud, you may actually see the more connections like, oh my god, I'm copying this and that, oh, gee.

Christine Hassler 10:43

Yeah, I am becoming my mother, even though I didn't want to. And let me just circle back to something you said about calling a friend. Because I think a lot of times people, especially if they're new to personal development, you either have to find like-minded friends or train your current friends.

Jill de Jong 10:58

Yeah.

Christine Hassler 10:58

Because most friends, they want to give us advice, or they want to make us feel better. So when I first started to be vulnerable with my friends, I would say I have a request I wanted to share. And my request is that you just listen and encourage me I don't want any advice. I don't want any fix it. I just really need to emote. Can you just hold that space for me?

Jill de Jong 11:16

Beautiful.

Christine Hassler 11:17

Because a lot of times we can have a vulnerability or expectation hangover when we share with friends. And they're like, well, you should do this or don't do this, or it's going to be okay. And yeah, like but wait, I just wanted to be heard.

Jill de Jong 11:26

That's a good statement and say it again. When you start a phone call you say to your friend...

Christine Hassler 11:30

Yeah, you say to your friend, so I have a request. You're such a good friend. And I'm reaching out to you because I have some vulnerable things to share. And my request is to not give me any advice. I really just want to be heard. I know that you love me and you'll want to help. But really what will help me most is if you just listen.

Jill de Jong 11:48

Great. See, that's really helpful, because oftentimes we kind of want to say but don't quite know how so it's really important to kind of have a bit of an example, like you just gave us. Let's take a quick break. And we'll be right back.

[Ad Break] 12:06

Jill de Jong 13:03

Welcome back to Life Done Better. So let's talk about okay, we're starting to connect the dots, what are the next steps to really shift out of it and consciously create new neural pathways.

Christine Hassler 13:14

So in terms of the next step in connecting the dots, everybody's so different, it kind of just depends. And that's why another reason I wrote *Expectation Hangover*, because the format of the book is you really identify understand what an expectation hangover is, you understand how you numb how you distract how you react to uncertainty. And then we go into healing it at the emotional, mental, behavioral and spiritual level. And they're in that order for a reason. Really, the first step is to feel feelings. People want to skip immediately to how do I change, what actions do I take, but we can't bypass the feeling level. And people don't like feeling their feelings because it's uncomfortable. And it's not something that's really encouraged. So as kids, a lot of times we're either told to not feel, shake it off. Good girls don't cry. The best thing for a parent to do when their kid is having a big feeling. And PS, you are your own parent to your inner child. So when I'm saying this advice to parents for their kids, I'm also saying it to you.

Jill de Jong 14:15

Oh, yeah.

Christine Hassler 14:16

With your inner child.

Jill de Jong 14:17

I like that.

Christine Hassler 14:17

The best advice I can give is, when your kid is having a feeling or you're having a feeling you sit with it and go again to that acceptance. Go, okay, let it out. It's okay, I'm here. So that's a long answer to your question, 'what's the next step,' is to feel, feel the emotions.

Jill de Jong 14:36

Really feel it and I often say feel it to heal it. You have to go through the emotion and and be compassionate with yourself and not judge the feelings. And maybe you know, like if you if you really don't know why, like, is there any other way let's say if we had a traumatic experience in our youth and we locked it out how do you we then go back to that time, or how do we then resolve the wound?

Christine Hassler 15:05

So it's interesting, I'm teaching a virtual inner child workshop, because this is a question that I get so much people get the inner child thing intellectually. But it's always, 'how?' The more traumatic your childhood was, the less you're going to remember a lot of the times, but how we heal is not through the replaying of the event, actually, that can just re traumatize us. So let's say you're someone that struggles with sadness a lot. That right there is your access to your inner child, because that's actually not you, present day you, that is your unconscious, your inner child trying to get your attention, it's your inner child that sad, again, that feeling that we can take ourselves back to, and we go back, and we allow ourselves to feel. We imagine ourselves at a younger age. And we picture ourselves, one of the tools I use was have a picture of myself at various ages. So when I'm doing inner child work, I'll pull out a picture from the age I feel like I want to work with, and I'll just look at it and connect to that picture. Like, for example, when my sister was born, I was three and a half. And I went from having my parents full attention to being there with my sister who was a very colicky baby who required a lot of attention. So even if I don't remember that, if I just close my eyes and drop in, and think about how a three year old would feel when their world changes, I can tap into that feeling. I know you love this baby, but you're also scared, and I'm here and what else do you need? That's why we need to talk to the inner child.

Jill de Jong 16:33

Yeah, that is, you know, that's such great explanation. Because we are allowed to feel those feelings, even though you're not proud of them. In that moment, you're like, I'm allowed to have those feelings. And it doesn't mean that I don't love my sister, it doesn't mean, you know, all these other things that you know, you want to like, justify. It's okay. Just feel it. And now I also feel like the other part of now, making certain discoveries about yourself about how you get triggered, are really helpful to communicate to your partner to friends, family members, because now this is a tool that can help heal those relationships, too.

Christine Hassler 17:14

Oh, absolutely. I mean, this was something my husband and I, three months after our little love, bubble burst, all kinds of stuff came up. And what was happening is he was getting, he was taking everything personally, and I was in a lot of ways pushing him away. So I was telling him, there were rules around when he could touch me, like, don't touch me when I'm eating, don't touch me when I'm working. I don't want to cuddle in the morning, I need to get up and do my routine. So I was kind of in this, pushing him away and putting rules on him. And he was putting in this kind of needy, grabbing, making me wrong.

And then getting angry. We're just fighting like brothers and sisters, what was happening is that he grew up in a very abusive household. So part of his inner child wounding is two parts. One, wondering if he's truly lovable. Because if you're abused, you do wonder that and then two, because he felt so like a prisoner in his own home. He also has this like, Fuck everything, I just want to go do my own thing, freedom, type of type of thing. Just just run. Yeah. So he was bouncing between those two things, which was bringing up a lot of fear in me. So I, one of my inner childhood wounds is a enmeshment and feeling smothered. And also feeling like I'm responsible for someone else's feelings. So my inner child was like, oh, no, we're being smothered, shut down, walls go up, rules, guidelines, like let's just stay in our own little bubble here and go back to doing everything on our own.

Jill de Jong 18:51

Because that's how you feel safer.

Christine Hassler 18:52

And that's how I felt safer in that situation. So his inner child felt safe by either clinging or rebelling. I felt safe by having my, by kind of shutting down, having my rules and my guidelines and having him do what I want him to do.

Jill de Jong 19:07

This all could lead to a breakup, right? If you don't know how to communicate, because,

Christine Hassler 19:12

Oh, yeah,

Jill de Jong 19:12

You're at this point very different in your needs. And if you can't communicate how to continue and how to move on and how to both feel loved and appreciated, and, and save in this relationship, this could all blow up quickly.

Christine Hassler 19:26

You're right, because a lot of times we think that it's really about the present day situation. Like most people in that situation, even us at the beginning, I really thought it was about him. And he really thought it was about me, but he wasn't really angry with me and I wasn't really angry at him. We were just triggering each other. And so luckily, because we've both done a lot of work and luckily because we have our own coaches. We were able to sit down and I was able to explain to him what my inner child was feeling. And little Christine and my experience as a child, and he was able to explain his experience, and we both were able to do our individual work, because that's, I think one of the mistake couples making arguments is they have a big argument, and then they try to repair it together. And sometimes what you need to do is do your individual work. First, look at the trigger, deal with your own inner child, we look at what your partner is triggering, and then come together and have the conversation. Because then you can come to the conversation with more 'I' language and taking more responsibility, versus you did this, and you did this, and you make me feel this way, and so on and so forth.



Jill de Jong 20:33

That's really good advice. If you try to figure it out, in the moment that you're triggered, there's also too much baggage right in that moment. So like, gonna go like, alright, I'll take responsibility of my part, you take responsibility of yours. And then when you know the time is right, we come together and talk about this again.

Christine Hassler 20:51

And actually heal. And the great thing is when you actually heal it, you don't have to have the same patterns and arguments. So now two years later, in our relationship, it's kind of funny because I, since I feel so safe, and since I've done my work, I want him he can touch me when I'm eating when I'm working, like he could come down right now and give me a hug, and I would not be triggered. And so I've totally flipped. And I like really just want him around a lot. And then he's flipped in that, he's like, in his purpose. And he's I'm still a massive priority, but he's not clingy. He's not needy, if I'm like, I'm gonna go do this thing. He's like, Awesome, that's great, have fun.. It's like we resolve that pattern. And yeah, well, you know, this is 20 years of work. But eventually you get that.

Jill de Jong 21:37

Exactly, you, you've been working in, and obviously you both have been working on your own inner child and wounds. But how long have you been together now, like,

Christine Hassler 21:45

Two years.

Jill de Jong 21:46

Only two years, that's, you know, that's massive growth.

Christine Hassler 21:49

Well we both came in really wanting the conscious relationship. And we both teach this. So we feel a responsibility to really live it. And we like to use our own life as like a petri dish, like a science experiment and like to be able to coach individuals and relationships. So we use every argument we have as a as a learning experience. And I'll have a couple more tips for arguments that really work well for us. And that work well for other couples. So a couple things when, so if you're in a relationship where one person, it has more of aggressive a personality, so like, he's half Greek, half Italian, super passionate, and I'm, like, European, German mutt, Catholic repression, hold everything in size. So he's like, Mr. Explosive, my side of the family is, let's just hold it all inside. I mean, I was put on antidepressants when I was 11 years old. So it was all about like, just hold...

Jill de Jong 22:48

Mask it all, please.

Christine Hassler 22:49

Yeah, mask it all. So when he would have you know, his big fiery reactions, I just collapsed, because that felt super scary for me. I'm like, No, we just withdraw and be passive aggressive. We don't actually yeah. You know, part of his little boy thinks, well, how you have power and how you win an argument is



you just speak loudly. Like, that's just what you do. You slam doors, you speak loudly, you do this on the table, like, and that to me, my little girl was like, oh, scary. And I would just shut down. So we needed a way to work through that. You can have a gesture or a word that when you're not in an argument, you've agreed that that pauses the argument. So with couples, a lot of times what can happen is you just have the same argument over and over and you're in I think we've all been there when you're in an argument, and it's going absolutely nowhere. If you're fighting, and it's escalating, and you're about to say some nasty things to each other. Whoever thinks of it first can either say the word or make the gesture. So our gesture is we make a fist with our hand and we stick our arm in the air. And that means like desktop. Some couples like to use a word like the word can be banana, or coffee mug, or whatever. And it just means we have an agreement that we're stopping, like we're stopping. I'm going for a walk, I'm going for a drive.

Jill de Jong 24:06

That's a smart thing to do. Because obviously, you can't take words back and words do hurt. And so like to, you know, take a breather, let's not, you know, say, say anything more, and just go come back to it. Yep,

Christine Hassler 24:18

Yep, exactly.

Jill de Jong 24:20

Wonderful. I love that you shared all this. And you know, quite frankly, I think it's very brave, that you share all these things, you know, from your relationship, and the very current situation and share that with everyone else because it's so needed. Now we all struggle with conflict, we all can improve on communication skills. And one other thing I really wanted to touch on is the people pleasing. And women more than men, people please. Let's talk a little bit about people pleasing and how it can be a wonderful trait as long as it's not to the point where it is taking away from you and who you are and how you express yourself.

Christine Hassler 25:00

Right? I think there's yeah, there's a massive difference between being a kind and generous person. And a person that truly genuine cares about people, versus really having that habit of people pleasing. So people pleasing is what I call a compensatory strategy. Other compensatory strategies are over achieving, kind of being the comedian, performer, always being in control, being very judgmental and discerning of everything in your life. And a compensatory strategy is developed as sort of a way to be in the world to prevent us from ever feeling unsafe for unvalidated or unliked again. So most people pleasers, didn't, weren't born that way. That something happened in their childhood, like a very common thing is, you had some kind of conflict in your family. And your survival technique was I'm just gonna make sure everybody's happy. Because I want calm, and I don't want to get in trouble. So I'm just going to make sure everything is everybody's happy. Or you were told a lot as a child that, oh, Christine, you make me so happy. You're you light up a room, or you're this or that or, and you just get validation for making people happy. Or you have deep insecurity and are so afraid of conflict, like you grew up in a chaotic house, and you will do anything to avoid conflict. And so you'd much rather say yes, when you really mean no, then have to actually have a confrontation with someone. The

interesting thing that I say about people pleasing is that I think it's actually quite selfish. A lot of people think people pleasing, it's all about other people. But it's actually not. If I'm a people pleaser, the person I'm most concerned about is me. I don't want to deal with my discomfort if someone else gets upset.

Jill de Jong 26:45

It's an interesting perspective on that.

Christine Hassler 25:47

Yeah, yeah. It's not so much that I care that they're upset. It's that I don't like how I feel when they're upset. I don't like how I feel when there's confrontation. I don't like how I feel when I'm afraid somebody doesn't like me. So how I like to help people bust out of people pleasing. And I'm like, Look, it's not that admirable of equality. It's actually more about you than it is truly about other people. Because when we're people pleasing, we're also preventing authentic relationships. Like I'm not going to have a vulnerable authentic relationship with you, if I'm more concerned about pleasing you.

Jill de Jong 27:18

Wow, I really really enjoy all that you've shared and how we are wrapping this up with like, yes, communication lets you know, like, go to the inner child, let's work on, on on improving our communication with ourselves with our loved ones, and keep evolving in this world that you know, is forcing us to grow and to you know, this is this is a good time for massive change, and, and change does start from within. And these

Christine Hassler 27:45

And these are the things we're not taught. We're really not taught how to have healthy, adult, mature conversations, we're more more more likely to be taught how to contort ourselves into being what we think we need to be, versus really actually just being ourselves.

Jill de Jong 27:58

Christine, you are an inspiration. I totally admire all the work that you do. Please continue sharing all that you learn in your life. And again, I find it very brave and so needed. I hope all everyone that's listening will follow you on Instagram will include all the information in the show notes, but thank you. I'll give you a big virtual hug.

Christine Hassler 28:22

All right, back at you right back at you. Thank you so much for all the inspiration that you bring. And thank you for having me and the wonderful questions.

Jill de Jong 28:29

It's my pleasure. Life Done Better with Christine Hassler. Thank you