

A young child with long, light-colored hair is running across a sandy dune. The child is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and green shorts. The dune is covered in light-colored sand with some sparse green grass. In the background, there is a dense line of tall green grasses. The sky is a clear, deep blue. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a beach or coastal environment.

THE GIFT OF
CAREFREE
TIMELESSNESS

Words by Julie Blackburn





Time is a gift given and received when it's shared.

I am inspired everyday. I find beauty in the world around me. It's not in some far away place. It's right here, generally right in front of me. The challenge is being open to it. Over the years, I've made changes to help me lead a more intentional and centered life.

There is something I've learned that has truly changed how I interact with others that surpassed all other things I've learned about communication and observation: "carefree timelessness." As tough as it is to describe, it's an absolutely amazing way to experience your life.

Think of a beautifully wrapped package, topped with a sparkly bow. This gift contains moments great and small; deep conversations; and more intimate relationships. Too often those great moments are missed due to distraction: busy thoughts, over scheduled days, overall stress, attention

seeking kiddos. *What would it mean if you could enjoy any moment with an open mind and spirit?*

LEARNING TO BE CAREFREE

When I first heard of carefree timelessness, I was searching for more from my relationships. My heart and mind were open. I was willing to try new things. The year was 2008 and I was completing my internship at Joliet Area Community Hospice. My life was changing in so many ways... I was completely unaware just how much I would grow from those experiences.

I was co-facilitating an evening grief support group. There was a petite woman who had lost her spouse who regularly attended the group. I was familiar with her sense of humor



and had grown fond of her unique point of view. On this night, she shared her experiences with carefree timelessness—her approach to living presently.

Listening to her, I was in awe! This woman had it right. She was talking about what I couldn't put into words. Carefree timelessness was a puzzle piece that could easily fit into my life and would be much more comfortable than the rush I had been living. I knew this carefree timelessness concept was my next step to being the person I was striving to become.

PLANNING TO BE TIMELESS

My grandmothers were the chosen guinea pigs for my practice of carefree timelessness. I wanted to spend time with these women and get to know them as people. This

was nothing less than amazing! My Grandma Heiden shared stories about raising her large family. My Grandma Bakosh and I both love art. We would talk about and share our artworks and just chat over tea.

During that time, I had been undergoing treatment for infertility. My husband and I decided to end treatment and pursue family building through foster care and adoption. I really valued both of my grandmothers' opinions and views regarding how these children would be included in our family. It really was easy to ask questions and learn from them after developing a more intimate relationship.

continued on next page



Though their responses were quite different as they shared about their families and values, they were similar in their commitment, love, and acceptance for the children that I would eventually have in my home. Having these open conversations meant so much to me as I was exploring how I was going to build my family.

CULTIVATING OPENNESS

Carefree timelessness is unique to the relationships I have. I have found a way to listen to my body and know when a conversation is coming to a close. I allow myself to be present, listen with my entire being, and share my heart.

I've learned that I can even practice the attending skills in time-limited situations. I simply set a timer in order to not be distracted by time and I'm intentional to share my personal limitations. I am so much more engaged with others than in the past. What a beautiful way of relating!

Our kids through foster care adoption are blessed by their great grandmothers. On a recent visit, my Grandma Heiden—a shutterbug like myself—pulled out some pictures. I truly believe my daughter to have an old soul and she was so engaged in the stories and the images. She was so gentle and thrilled to hold 80-year-old pictures.

RETURNING TO INNOCENCE

As I was going through the process of integrating carefree timelessness into my life, I really thought about other times in my life when I was carefree, when time was not my worry, or I could simply live in the moment. I often thought about growing up in rural Illinois, where I had lived in a subdivision outside of town.

In the summer, we would play well into the night – Ghost in the Grave Yard and Capture the Flag were favorites. We were called in for dinner and when it was time for bed. We didn't ever wonder when we were going to stop playing. We just waited for our parents to call us in or listen for our whistle.



Life was simple. Finding innocence and spontaneity again can be tough in a world full of obligations and responsibilities. Carefree timelessness is that adult version of playing in the moment, of sincerely being present in a relationship. We can take some of these life lessons from our childhood and bring them into our adult world in a way that's useful.

LIVING CAREFREE

As a person who was always running late, I wondered how carefree timelessness was going to work. I found, at first, I would get caught up in a conversation and then be home later than expected. Over time, I got comfortable reserving more time and sharing with my husband if I simply didn't know when I would be home. He understands that I enjoy living in the moment when I visit with friends and family.

Carefree timelessness offers opportunities for relationships to flourish into something wonderful.

Tips to a Carefree Timeless Life

1. Set aside a chunk of time – hours – when planning to spend time with others. Be sure to share your thoughts of simply spending time for a while or clarify if there needs to be a determined end time.
2. Set an intention of being in-tune with the conversation and the moments.
3. Pay attention to the ebb and flow of the discussion.
4. How long is too long? Attend to your body, you will know when the time together is coming to a close.

Once you learn how to live in carefree timelessness, it's quite easy to integrate into other aspects of life... your interactions in work meetings, your love relationships, your family and friends and even strangers become more meaningful.

When you really think about it, how present are you? Think about the number of commitments of the day, the stresses of work, the shopping list. Be honest: Are you really "all in" when you are with others? *How would living with carefree timelessness change your life?*

Julie is a Licensed Clinical professional Counselor and Registered Art Therapist who specializes in fertility issues, perinatal concerns and grief. She offers support through the podcast *Embrace Your Center*; an online school that offers self-help courses and support communities; and positive intentions videos on YouTube. Married for 15 years, she has two kiddos and a lovely dog, Ralphie. Connect with her at www.ChartreuseCenter.com, or on Facebook.

Photos on pages 86/87 & 89 by Markie Lynn Jones;
Photos on pages 90-92 by Julie Blackburn.



Take a Breath.



Are you ready to feel inspired and more alive in your body and soul? Are you ready to step into your true power and free yourself from limiting beliefs? Want to feel whole and complete exactly as you are right now? I help women close the disconnects between mind, body and spirit with Coaching and the profound power of Conscious Connected Breathwork. Schedule a free connection call at lvdiamandell.com

