



KEEPING BUSY. BUT HOW ARE WE ACTUALLY FEELING?

Vashti and I talk about the patterns we can fall into, the feelings underneath them and finding a little room to choose what comes next. Sometimes it starts with noticing, rather than trying to change the whole of life at once.

Vashti Whitfield and I chat about noticing patterns and giving ourselves a choice.

BUSY ISN'T A FEELING.

01 BUSY AND FINE AREN'T ALWAYS THE SAME THING.

Vashti reflects on a time when purposeful work also helped her avoid grief. Being active and being honest about a difficult feeling can be different things.

02 WHAT'S HAPPENING UNDERNEATH THE FAMILIAR ROLES?

Vashti talks about looking at the feelings and motivations underneath a successful-looking life, especially when it stops feeling aligned.

03 DID ALWAYS BEING BUSY FEEL NORMAL GROWING UP?

We talk about constantly working and doing becoming familiar ways to feel useful. Noticing a pattern gives us something to be curious about.

04 WE CAN NAME THE FEELING TOO.

Vashti distinguishes recognising and working through a feeling from suppressing it. Her emphasis is on awareness and having room to choose a response.

05 A SMALL SHIFT IS STILL A DIFFERENT CHOICE.

At the end of our chat, I come back to seeing a repeated pattern and choosing what happens next. Change doesn't have to mean blowing up your whole life.



SHOULD IS OUT. COULD IS IN.

More useful bits from the conversation, each with one way to use it.

Pick the one that fits your week.

06 SWAP SHOULD FOR COULD

Vashti turns should into could to reveal the choice underneath. I could have gone to the gym, but I chose my kids. **Try it:** Rewrite one should as could, then name what you chose instead and why.

07 LIST FEELINGS, NOT JUST ADVENTURES

Vashti asks for two lists: adventures you want, and feelings you want more of. **Try it:** Make both lists and look at what the feelings list tells you.

08 WHO WROTE YOUR WISH LIST?

Roles like sensible mum or provider can take over decisions. Noticing the role helps you hear your own answer. **Try it:** Read your wish list and ask which part of you wrote it.

09 GIVE A HABIT A REASON

When Dom says she should meditate, Vashti asks what being present would serve. Intention beats another promise. **Try it:** Write why one habit matters and what it would make possible.

10 REHEARSE THE NO, PLAN THE AFTER

Vashti practises what to say, then plans support afterwards so she doesn't cave under pressure. **Try it:** Practise a kind no out loud and line up someone to call afterwards.



NOTICE IT. THEN CHOOSE.

A small shift still counts.

1 NOTICE ONE FAMILIAR MOMENT.

Something ordinary where you react automatically. What happened? What did you feel? What did you do? Start by writing it down.

2 WHAT MIGHT THE REACTION BE PROTECTING YOU FROM?

Disappointment? Judgement? A difficult conversation? Keep it as a question, rather than a conclusion about your past. Seek support if difficult material comes up.

3 TRY A DIFFERENT RESPONSE.

Pause, ask for time, choose a manageable alternative. What happened? If difficult feelings come up, you can get support to work through them.

ONE THING BEFORE 50. OR STARTING NOW.

Notice one pattern that isn't helping you any more. What could you try instead, and who could support you? You don't have to work it all out alone.

OVER TO YOU

The pattern I'd like to notice is...

A response I'd like to practise is...
