

Ep #9: Emotional Flags



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With Your Host

C. René Washington

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Ep #9: Emotional Flags

“Is your attention on your intention? Is your attention on your intention?” C. René Washington.

Welcome to Midlife Woman Redefined, a podcast for women near retirement who are ready to step into a new chapter of freedom, travel, and fulfillment. If you're ready to focus on figuring out who you are and what you really want, this is the place for you. Here's your host, master certified life coach, travel addict, and midlife maven, René Washington.

Hello, hello, hello, midlife mavens. This is C. René Washington, your life coach and midlife maven, here for episode nine of *Midlife Woman Redefined*. We're almost at episode 10, can you believe it? And we're going to do something fun in episode 10, so be sure you come back.

Today though, we are here for episode nine. What are the flags on your play? What are the flags on your play? Before we dig into that, you know what it's time to do? It's time to celebrate. What are you celebrating today? What are you celebrating that is personal to you, something you've accomplished, something you've done in your life, your “Oh yes I did that,” what is that for you?

Every day, we should take a moment to pause and to acknowledge. As I say every week, this is something that – this is a muscle that we need to build as women, that we acknowledge ourselves. Men, most men, don't have a problem doing that. We are the ones who are so focused on how we help other people, what we do for other people and what those people are doing. And so, this is your time, your moment, to just pause and self-reflect on something that you've done that you really feel good about.

Today, I'm celebrating the reviews for this podcast. I'm really celebrating validation; validation in stepping up for myself, making a dream come true, and being validated in that work. And so I'm just going to read just a couple of the reviews that have come in. I've gotten some great ones and I'm so appreciative and grateful to all of you who have taken a moment to rate and review.

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Diane's Heart said, "All of this, the energy and inspiration of this podcast is amazing. C. René gets right to the point with practical yet enlightening steps to get you moving forward." Thank you, Diane's Heart.

And Lisa said, "I am so happy to have experienced René's wisdom and humor and I'm looking forward to more episodes. My life is enriched because of her decision to share her voice. Thank you, René." Thank you, Lisa.

And one more, from M. McNary, "René has already helped me make a major move in my life concerning a toxic job, so I know firsthand her methodology works. I'm grateful but not complacent is where I am..." one of my quotes that she likes, "I'm graceful but I'm not complacent, is where I am and I know she can help me figure out the next level up. She helps me conquer the fear and bring out my best self." Thank you, M. McNary. And thank all of you for leaving those reviews. So that's what I'm celebrating today.

Okay, let's dig into what these flags are. And this came up for me because I was at the doctor's office the other day for a follow up visit. And you know when you go to the doctor's office, at least in America, you go in, they weigh you. And she put me on the scale, and when I looked at the number, I said, "What, is that right?"

Because the last time I had to go to the doctor was last fall. And that number shocked me a little bit. And now, I'm what, five or six pounds up from that number. I'm like, something is wrong with his scale.

And so immediately, my brain when into this spiral of making that number mean something. And it is so funny, I am a BARE certified coach, that's one of my coaching certifications, and BARE is a wonderful program around body image and losing weight without dieting because the BARE philosophy, it impacts all areas of your life. You're losing mental weight, emotional weight, physical weight like clutter, environmental weight, what's in your life. It focuses on, you know, adding more pleasure in your life.

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It's just a wonderful philosophy of do not deprive, thrive, and I love it, and so I got certified in it. Because I am in that BARE philosophy mentality, I knew immediately what was going on when I looked at that number. I don't even weigh myself anymore after going through BARE. I don't track, weigh, all that kind of stuff.

You know, I have ways to know what works for my body, what doesn't. I judge how I'm doing by the clothes that I wear, and I keep on moving and I don't beat myself up in the way that I used to. That number, though, sent me right back to that old mentality of this number means you're overweight, this number means you're doing badly, and I was like, "Wow."

And I felt defeated because, you know, I work out, I'm eating better. I don't eat perfectly, but I eat well and this number is saying that none of that is true. This is what I'm telling myself. And I had to self-coach myself through that. And *Self Coaching 101* is a book that I've mentioned before. It's by Brooke Castillo.

What Brooke has done is she's taking the philosophies of several thought leaders and condensed them into an easily accessible methodology of walking yourself through crappy thinking. So you have the circumstance. The circumstance was that I was weighed on a scale and the scale gave this number. I had a thought about that number. It was not a good thought.

And so thoughts then make you feel something. That number made me feel defeated. And then, your feelings translate into actions, into behavior. And so what did I do? I was just like, okay, forget it. And I just, for two days, ate whatever I wanted to eat, which – it's fine to eat whatever you want to eat.

In BARE, what we do is 80% of the time, we're eating foods that power us up, that fuel us up. And 20% of the time, you eat foods that are strictly pleasurable. Well, I was in the 80% eating pleasurable foods that really did not have a lot of power-up capability; cake, cinnamon rolls, chocolate, just all the things, which are fine on any given day – probably not so good compressed into a two-day period.

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And so I had to reel myself out of that, thinking, “What am I making that number mean?” And I was making it mean something that was not serving me. And so I pulled myself out of that, I’m back on track of balancing myself out in how I’m treating myself.

And I wanted to share that with you, one, to let you know, I’m a life coach and I’m a human being. And I am a life coach because I’m a human being who wants to live my best life and help other women live their best lives. So no, I’m not perfect. I have the tools though and resources that when I jump off the track, I know what to do to jump back on, and that’s why I’m here sharing this with you because I want you to be able to do the same for yourself.

And so I want to talk to you about several flags on the play. And I am not a sports fan, so that’s probably as close to a football analogy as I’m going to get as far as knowing what really goes on in football. But I thought I’d use that since it’s football season – American football season. I know football outside of America is soccer.

So American football, there’s some flags on the play, right? And in our lives, there are flags on our play because I think life should be as playful as possible. There are lots of serious things that go on in the world and in our personal lives. But as much as possible, we are here, I believe, to enjoy life. And that’s one of my driving motivations, to do that for myself and to help you do that.

The troubles do come, though. The shit does bubble up. And so there are ways for you to know that something’s not quite right or there’s something that you want to address in your life. And typically, we think of these things as bad things, things that we shouldn’t feel or we shouldn’t experience. And I have totally reframed my mindset around that because now I do take these as warning signs that there’s something I need to pay attention to.

So, feeling defeated in that doctor’s office let me know that I need to pay more attention to how I’m treating, not only treating my body, but thinking about my body. Because a number is so arbitrary, it’s just so arbitrary. That

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scale said I weigh 171 pounds. That sounded like a lot to me. I don't feel like what that number represents for me, but it's a number, who said?

I said to my husband, "Do you think I weigh 171 pounds." He said, "No, I don't think so." I said, "Well that scale says I do." So what am I making that mean? So what, 171? If I feel good in my body, I feel good in my body. All of my numbers said that I'm extremely healthy. Why am I letting a number make me believe something different about myself?

But this is what we do, right? And so, if you are feeling things in your life, such as anxiety, resentment, frustration, weariness, overwhelm, defeat, complacency – and here's one that I love; judgment, or even self-righteousness. So if you're looking at somebody else's life, "Oh she shouldn't be doing that. Oh, who does she think she is," that's information for you. Why do you care? Why are you sitting in judgment of someone else's life?

So, all of these feelings, these emotions that we can feel bad about having – no. Look yourself squarely in the eye. Look at yourself and acknowledge to yourself, "Yes, I'm feeling resentful. I'm feeling overwhelmed. I am so frustrated in this situation. Why do I keep doing this to myself?"

You need to answer that question. There's a reason why you're feeling those feelings. And they're not to be squashed. They're to be examined and moved through because, on the other side of frustration and weariness and overwhelmed, there is information for you that's going to move you forward.

So, those flags on the play, the flags on the play of your life, are very valuable. So the intention that I have is to treat myself with as much love and respect as possible. I have a client who said to me, "Why am I so anxious about this, about being coached?" It is because, when we address our crap, yes, that's going to put us in a state of anxiety.

Facing our fears is not easy. Facing our fears is not easy, and so just know that. Know this is not easy. But I'm already in not easy. I'm already in unhappy, so I need to make this work for me, not against me. If I keep

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myself in that valley, I will live in the valley. But if I use these feelings that I don't like to move me forward, what are the possibilities of my life? They're amazing.

And so this is what you want to ask yourself. I have a few questions for you. If you find yourself feeling any of those feelings in a certain situation, maybe you feel mistreated by someone in your life. Maybe you are doing something that you no longer want to be doing. It could be work. It could be volunteering. It could be taking care of somebody else's priorities. It can be any number of things.

But if you're feeling resentment about it, that's information for you. And to try to convince yourself, "Well, somebody has to do it, it has to be me," that's self-defeating. Maybe you are the one to do it and there's a better way for you to do it. So to just try to squash that feeling down and not feel it, first of all, that's not going to work. Feelings don't leave you alone. They just keep manifesting in different ways.

And sometimes, that way is illness. So you want to address what's bubbling up. And you can ask yourself these questions; what am I making this mean? What reframe of these thoughts would better serve me? What has this come to teach me? Who do I want to be in this situation? What do I really want?

A client was concerned about spending money and decided that they would start cutting back. And I know I waste money on buying food out of machines and I could cook for myself, and so I said, "Okay, alright, what do you really want in this situation?" So she was focused on the money aspect of it.

And I asked her, "Do you enjoy what you're getting out of those vending machines?" And she said, "No, I don't." I said, "Well let's focus on that. Let's focus on treating your body with love and respect. Let's focus on adding more love in your life by providing sustenance to your body that you truly enjoy. What would that look like for you?"

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And so then we had a conversation about how she could cook more for herself and how she could cook foods that's he really enjoys eating – because here's the thing, mavens, we don't deprive ourselves. We thrive ourselves. Okay, remember that. We don't deprive ourselves, we thrive ourselves.

So we moved from her putting herself in this place of deprivation of, "I've got to cut back spending money on this and that." She's spending money on stuff she doesn't even like, doesn't even enjoy. So it's not about the money. It's about bringing more of what you do want in your life.

So you see that reframe? This is how you want to walk yourself through this. When you have that circumstance and then you have the thought about it, which generates a feeling, right there is where you can do the reframe of "What thought would better serve me?"

And so, for me, with the scale, the thought that would better serve me, instead of saying, "This scale says I weigh 171 pounds. And 171 pounds is overweight and I am a failure." The thought that better serves me is, "This scale says I weigh 171 pounds. Okay, it's a number. Yes, society places certain judgments on that number, but I don't have to put that judgment on that number for myself. I am focusing on how I feel, how I'm treating myself. That's what I'm focusing on. That is my gage for how healthy I am, how good I feel, how well I'm doing."

And that pulled me out of this binge of foods that – and I will say this though; at least now, when I go on a binge, I have up-leveled my binging because everything I ate was actually really good pleasure food. I didn't eat any really junky pleasure food. So I will give myself that credit; another reframe.

But, you know, doing all of that in that compressed period of time, no, that's not the way I want to roll. So yes, what are the flags that are coming up for you? Are you feeling any significant levels of frustration, anxiety, resentment, overwhelm? And remember, in coaching, we work with the worried well, meaning that you're pretty healthy emotionally and mentally,

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it's just that there are some few things that you would like to change in your life.

If any of these rise to a level of clinical status, that you really just can't pull yourself up out of them, then therapy may be what you need. And I actually, it's not unusual for me to coach clients who are seeing a therapist and also work with me as a coach because coaching is forward-facing and action-oriented, what can you do right now? Therapy is more backward-looking and you go really deep into things from your past to help you become healthy now. So, the different focuses can work for you at the same time.

I am continuously focused on self-actualizing, living the self-actualized life. And so I am intent on focusing on all of the messaging that serves me in that way. And because of that, I see messaging everywhere I go that supports that. You know, if you really know me, the funny thing about me is that I can be so not observant about big things that are right in front of me. So that phrase, the elephant in the room, I'm going to see the elephant in the room that that statement actually applies to, as far as some underlying current of something's going on in this room that people aren't really addressing, because that's my lane, that's what I do. So I will immediately tap into that. But if there was an actual elephant in the room, I probably would miss it.

So, what you're focused on is what will be prevalent in your life. So if you're focused on what's not going well, then that's what you're going to get more of. If you focus on it from a perspective of, "How can I make it better? How can I make it right for me?" Then that path will clear for you. So don't ignore; address. But address from the perspective of how can I move myself through this?

So, those are the flags on your life play that you want to address. And there are many ways for you to do that. I've mentioned the book *Self Coaching 101* by Brooke Castillo. I've talked to you about the benefits of life coaching. There is so much value in that. Maybe you need therapy. But

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whatever path you take, make sure it's the path that is moving you forward and not keeping you stuck.

So this is the end of episode nine. And for episode 10, this is where I'm going to do the first drawing for the \$100 Amazon gift card that's part of the promotion of this podcast to get as many of you subscribed and rating and reviewing. And remember, if you are really receiving a benefit from listening to this podcast, tell your friends, tell other women that you think would benefit. Please share this podcast with as many women as possible. And also, take a moment to rate and review.

One of them told me, she said, "Okay, I'm one of those people that you're talking about that needs to get help with that." She said, "I've tried five different ways to do that and just couldn't figure it out." So that's okay. It's okay. She said, "I know, I just need to get my daughter to help me." So yes, get someone to help you.

It's not that difficult, but if it is difficult for you, it's difficult for you, so get some help. So take a few minutes to rate and review the *Midlife Woman Redefined* podcast. And to rate and review, iPhone users go to the Apple Podcast app. And Android phone users will go to the iTunes app on your desktop computer. It's really, really important that you do this, and that's why I'm so grateful for all of you who have taken the time to do it.

And don't forget to hit the subscribe button so that you can continue to listen to these episodes. We have some wonderful things coming up for you. I'm going to start interviewing some amazing women on this podcast. So keep tuning in and remember the incentive for rating and reviewing is I'm giving away five \$100 Amazon gift cards. The first one I'm giving away in episode 10. And to get the directions for rating, reviewing, and entering the drawing, go to crenecoach.com/podcastlaunch. And the link for that is provided in the show notes.

If you have a dream, if you are in midlife transition and you just need a plan, this is where you need to keep showing up. Each week, I'm sharing tips, resources, tools, and real-life examples of making your dream life a reality.

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And I think, in episode 10, I'm going to break down the making of this dream for you, how I came to do this podcast, and what it takes to do a podcast. So you don't want to miss that. Living well is the only option for midlife mavens.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of Midlife Woman Redefined. If you're ready to learn more and reclaim your time, head over to crenecoach.com.