

#124 Unclutter Your Soul with Trina McNeilly

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SPEAKERS

Michelle Glogovac, Trina McNeilly

M Michelle Glogovac 00:01

You're listening to the mice simplified life podcast and this is episode number 124.

M Michelle Glogovac 00:12


Welcome to the mice simplified life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present. Don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life and start taking action today. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, and I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you while taking you on my own journey. This is my simplified life.

M Michelle Glogovac 00:46

Hi, oh, welcome back to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. When we think of clutter, we tend to think about all the stuff that's accumulated in our homes and closets and garages. But what about the clutter that is taking up space in our mind, our soul and our thoughts? The clutter that's inside of us? Today is the official book launch day for unclutter your soul. And author Trina McNeely is joining me to discuss how we can observe own and overcome the clutter that is taking up space inside of us. I love the premise of this book because whether we want to believe it or not, we've all had experiences that are clogging up our path to moving forward. Trina provides guidance from her own experience and practical steps such as meditations throughout the book to help readers uncluttered their souls.

T Trina McNeilly 01:39

Hi, Trina. Hi, Michelle, thank you for having me today.



M Michelle Glogovac 01:44

Thank you so much. I am so excited to chat with you because I love any author. Honestly, it is a labor of love to write a book. So congratulations today your book comes out.

T Trina McNeilly 01:57

Yes, I know. It is definitely a labor of love to write a book. It's a long process.

M Michelle Glogovac 02:04

It is I know I'm going through it right now. So I fully understand. Can you take a moment to introduce yourself to everyone, please?

T Trina McNeilly 02:13

Yes. So I'm Trina and I this is always the hardest question in the world for me. But I'll just start with the basics. I am a mom to four kids to our teenagers and to our like middle school age. So everything is crazy at home in my life. I've been blogging for over a decade. My blog is called Lala lovely. And my first book is called law lovely the art of finding beauty in the every day. It originated as a lifestyle blog. I love design and decor, and all things home. And then my latest book is unclutter your soul overcome what overwhelms you, which is also really written through the lens of home. And the idea that we I know we'll get into it, but just preview idea that you know, we have a living home within us.

M Michelle Glogovac 03:09

I love that and I love. Let's just talk about the book The and tell me I'm probably tripping it up on the order it comes in but only owning overcome. Say it for me it's only overcoming and observing. But I know that's not the

T Trina McNeilly 03:26

close, close, close. So yeah, the book is divided into three sections. And they all start with Oh, so it's observe, own and overcome. And so this idea of uncluttering our souls, you know, I always like to kind of define what I mean by the word soul. Because you know, it's a beautiful word, we kind of interchange it for you, like, you know, your heart or your spirit, but your soul, at least the way in my research and how I define it. And what I mean in this book is the compilation of your mind, your will and your emotions. So when I wrote my first book, I had a chapter in there called mental clutter, which was one of my favorite chapters. And same idea, we have all this stuff cluttering up our minds. And in fact, I had a publisher, make me an offer to write a book called mental clutter and I was so torn. I wanted to write it so bad, far more than I wanted to kind of, you know, write Lala lovely for whatever reason, but it kind of came down to the point that I wasn't, I didn't feel like I could give the reader what they needed. And I'd be doing them a disservice because I was still so much working on that in my own life. And so as that book came out, I was kind of in the process of learning what it means to unclutter my

soul and I found that it went far beyond just my mind and having a busy mind. And you know it was My emotions, I was a kind of emotionally out of control in my life, and my will. So that's what I mean by uncluttering, the soul. And then that process, there's so many each chapter is kind of an action step, which is great. But it's broken down into the idea of we have to observe, like, really observe what's going on, on the inside of us and pay attention. And then we have to own all of our junk, kind of like when you're, you're decluttering a home, right, you might open a door, to the basement or to your attic, and then be just like, oh, my gosh, this is too much like, I just want to shut the door. But we kind of, we have to go through all the boxes, we have to look at what's really there. And that takes time. So that we can own it, we can say, is this serving me in my life? Or do Am I have I been hoarding this emotion, or whatever it is, have I've been hoarding the soul clutter, what's my complicity in it, and then overcome, because we all actually have the power to do that, even when we feel powerless. And we can talk more about that. And I talk about it in the book. Because if you have a lot of soul clutter, I can guarantee you feel powerless and completely overwhelmed. And you just don't know where to start. Or you start and you think this is too big for me to do on my own. And that's what I hope to do is to come alongside readers and into your listeners and to, to help because it's a journey and a process and to help people know, they're not alone. And I think

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Michelle Glogovac 06:41

it's such a great analogy of the clutter. Because that's all we hear about is you know, the clutter in our home and our closets, all of this. And, you know, to me when I look at clutter, like if the kitchen counter has stuff on it homework, papers and backpacks, it, there's an anxiety that builds up and I'm like, I just need the clean space. Yeah, put it away. And it's obviously something that's internal in all of us as well. And it's work. It's you know, I see a therapist, I love her to death. And you know that his work that we have to do, that's hard work that it's work that you sometimes might want to avoid, because it is so hard. And I think that there's also a lot of us don't realize that there's been traumas in our lives. Like I never would I wouldn't come to you and say, Oh, I had a traumatic childhood. That's not what I would say. But when I share my full story, like I have with my therapist, she's like, Yeah, you did. And you know, you have to recognize that and, and you should put a label on it, because it's something you've overcome. And you know, you're working towards not repeating cycles in it as well. Right? Yeah,

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Trina McNeilly 07:54

I think that's true for so many. And I talk a little bit about trauma in the book, as I have a chapter where it's called inventory, your clutter. And so I'm just naming different types of clutter. It's not an exhaustive list, but I'm naming some of my own and some big ones. And what I found was that there's two types of trauma, there's small t trauma, which would be kind of like you're talking about childhood things, different events that we go through that we we never would have really labeled trauma. And then there's big T trauma, which is more of the obvious ones, like, you know, a car accident or abuse, things like that. So, for me, that was like, a really big thing for me to discover was, Wow, I have had trauma in my life. And I didn't know it until my body kind of began to show me that because every time I talked about a situation, that was definitely a defining one in my life. My body reacted a certain way. And then it was a therapist that said, Well, that's because it's trauma, and I didn't like that label. But once I had

that label, like you're saying, then I knew I could do something with that with that pain and with that issue, but if we, if we aren't aware, if we're not observing these things, then we can't overcome them.

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Michelle Glogovac 09:22

And it becomes something that's uncomfortable, you know, why are we uncomfortable talking about this or seeking that help when ultimately it's going to better us in the end it'll make us better human beings, you know, we'll be able to love others more love ourselves more. And I think it's so important that we do you know, do this work for ourselves. We deserve it.

T

Trina McNeilly 09:45

Yes, yeah, absolutely. We absolutely do and because when we, you know, take care of ourselves, then we can help take care of others and help others but if we don't, you know, it's like that Very obvious analogy of, you know, when you're on the plane, and they say to put your oxygen mask on first. So you can help your child or others. Same thing, same thing with what's going on in the inside of us and our souls.

M

Michelle Glogovac 10:14

So how did this come about? Like, you obviously had written this chapter on mental clutter? And you know, we're on this journey yourself. How did you come up with the three O's? It reminds me of out of office, so

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Trina McNeilly 10:31

Oh, yeah. You know, really, I, it just was kind of an organic process for me, and most of my writing is because I'm, I journal. I know that's not for everybody. But I kind of have to write and process things that are going on in my life. So my books always kind of start in my journal. And I, it just kind of came, I was really stuck. I don't even want to call it stuck. I felt stuck in my life. But I noticed that I was observing so much, it's naturally my personality, I am Enneagram. Four, I'm very aware of surroundings, I pay attention and just what you do as a writer anyways, but I felt stuck in that and I was coming up against, you know, some people that were well meaning, but just not really aware, and would say things like, oh, you know, it's time to get over this, you know, or you've been dealing with this for a long time. And, you know, it was kind of hurtful. But I began to think, oh, you know, maybe I am I'm not, I'm not taking action, I wanted to, but I felt really immobile in, you know, my pain and, you know, anxiety and depression, like so many other people I'm sure can relate to. But at the same time, I was really observing and starting to kind of decode patterns in my life by paying attention. So to me, it was a really slow process of change. But this was vital information that I thought, you know, if I hadn't known this, how could I even know the step to begin to take action. So, you know, I guess I just kind of was doing it organically. And then once I understood that, that pain, attention proceeds change, I was really more empowered to begin to take action. And so I think own, you know, it just was an organic process. I'm a person of faith. So I felt really kind of led in this process, but to begin to own and so in my own inner life, I felt, you know, in my faith, I would say, like, convicted or

you may have intuition, you know, if you're not a person of faith, that now it's time to like, do have been observing, but what part maybe Have you played in this, some of this is totally out of your control. You know, my parents went through a divorce after nearly 40 years of marriage, and it kind of started this awful spiral in my life, I was living in my childhood home with my children and family. And it's just like, my world, as I knew it kind of fell apart, grandparents began dying, it was just like Pandora's box. And so most of that was like, totally out of my control. Like, I couldn't help that was happening. But it got to a point where I had to look and say, like, what can I take ownership of like, I'm dealing with chronic stress. But could I in any way be like perpetuating this? Am I trying to sleep go to sleep on time? Am I eating foods that nourish my body? Am I spiraling into a victim mindset? And for me, I had to tell myself the truth and the answer to those questions, and many more were, yes, yes. And yes. You know, there are things that we face in life that happened to us. And we find ourselves in situations where we have very little choice. And so we feel so powerless. And it came down to me kind of understanding like, well, I can choose my attitude. And I can choose to take a shower today. I mean, I got down to like, I had to get down to the nitty gritty and it still felt really, like powerless. I felt like a child at times. But when I began to make those choices, I started taking action and owning and so that I don't know, I'm all over to answering this long question, but no, I love it. Yeah. And I like alliteration, so I found the right alliteration words to go with the process I organically went through.

M

Michelle Glogovac 14:47

Well, I also love the part in the book where you and your husband go on this amazing trip to Holland. And you feel fantastic. You're like, Yes, life is great, and you come home and you feel renewed. then you only realize like, oh, nothing's changed. Just because I was gone, you know, across the across the world didn't change anything at all. And I think that that's a great recognition that, you know, we can't just run away from it, you know, whatever's bothering us, whatever is cluttering our lives, our souls, it's gonna be there until we actually deal with it.

T

Trina McNeilly 15:22

Yeah, that's so right. And I, if you read the book, you'll see the theme that I want to run away. I've been using that coping mechanisms since I was a child, but I want to, I want to escape or I want someone else to rescue me. And it really got to this point of realizing that nobody can rescue me except kind of myself. I say God, and then myself. So because I'm the only one that can make changes in my life. You know, even if you're a person of faith, God can't make that change for you, you used to have to make the choice. So, um, yeah, it was interesting, because at that point, you know, I, I kind of knew this observing process. So I really paid attention. And I thought, isn't this amazing, like, I feel so different and alive there. And then, you know, you come back and you're like, oh, it's all still waiting, because we can never, you know, run away from ourselves. The whole time I write about this in the book, you know, I wanted to move maybe that would help. And interestingly, in the story, you know, it kind of progresses, I was moving, I ended up moving out of that childhood home, which was extremely painful process for me, and a really big loss. And thinking, maybe, you know, I just need to get out of out of dodge all together all together. And eventually, you know, I did end up moving we moved recently, like, in June, out of state to Tennessee from Illinois. But it was the timing of it. And it was, you know, I reached a place them where I knew, like, I can't run away from problems and from pain, because they come with you. So I really had to deal with that. And there's still things

that I am dealing with, you know, I have a different scenery, which is actually nice, and sometimes really helpful. If you've gone through some really big things. But I still have to do the hard work to, you know, observe and overcome.

M Michelle Glogovac 17:30

And not to make light of it. But you do mention throughout the book, that you would go in the closet and play Candy Crush. Yes. And I laughed, because I went, I didn't know that was an option.

T Trina McNeilly 17:42

It's an option. Yeah. But then after you do it for so long, like in your kids know where you are, then it's not a good option because they find you.

M Michelle Glogovac 17:52

My closets for the podcast, so they're not allowed in the clothes. Yes,

T Trina McNeilly 17:57

that's good. I know. Yes. Yeah, I would. That was another coping mechanism. That was another thing I kind of had to own was like, again, it was a running, I couldn't run far, you know, but I went to the closet and would kind of fall apart in there. And then after, you know, I got a little stronger than it turned to disassociating by playing Candy Crush, but then I kind of learned and I write about it in the book that it's not like way off to, to use like a game, you know, more brain games are better. But there's actually science behind it that takes us out of this loop of you know, like when you're having a spike in cortisol or something really bad happened. Like, you know, acute stress it just boom comes on. And then you want to stay in and ruminate and then that all of those bad, you know, hormones, stay in your body. So there's a reason we want to do that. But there's just, you know, healthier and better ways to do that. So I've taken that not Candy Crush anymore. But I've reached a level I can't pass.

M Michelle Glogovac 19:03

Well, I do like now it's Wordle

T Trina McNeilly 19:06

Can you tell me what Wordle is? No, I cannot

M Michelle Glogovac 19:08

because I have not played okay. I just a bit my Twitter feed nonstop. And I'm like, wow, must

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Trina McNeilly 19:15

I keep eating now? And I'm like, I feel left out. Like I get like, I

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Michelle Glogovac 19:19

guess I'm not a cool kid. I don't know what this is. And it seems like other people are playing it together or what's going on. But I seriously was going to go Google it tonight and try to figure it out. But the closest I've seen was Saturday Night Live did a sketch last weekend where they had the guy playing Donald Trump and he came on and did the whatever his association was and that made a word and this made a word and that was it. And there you go. And I went okay, I still don't get the game.

T

Trina McNeilly 19:47

That's funny. I'm gonna go look that skit up but yeah, so but I like board games and and then Tetris. There's actually some research behind the game Tetris, which was I was like, Well, that's great because I'm a child of the 80. So, a Nintendo. So now sometimes I kind of I call it a bridge. And if I do want to run off, I stopped myself and I'm like is this you know, for me overcoming with that situation means that I stay, I stay in have a hard conversation, or you know, don't run off. But sometimes, you know, each situation is different, maybe I do need to go cool off for a minute. And if that's the case, then sometimes I do go sit for 15 minutes, not my closet in my bedroom, I'm making, you know, change and progress is steps and we have to celebrate the progress. It's not about being perfect. Or reaching some, you know, extreme high level, but I'll go sit in my room with my iPad maybe and, you know, play Tetris or some word game for like, 15 minutes. I don't set a timer, but I watched the time. And then I make myself like, returned back to family life and not hibernate. And because for me that I would just spiral then you start ruminating, and then you, you know, go into self pity who wants to admit that, but I will enter the

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Michelle Glogovac 21:10

Doom scrolling? Oh, well, that's a thing for me too. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Well, you want to avoid it. And let me just go see what everyone else is doing. And then I'll write that's not what my life looks like, even though that's really not what their life looks like, either. Right? Then you go down this whole comparison trap, and it's worse. So play Tetris and stuff.

T

Trina McNeilly 21:28

Yeah, and what you're doing when you do um, scroll, and I get it, I do it, like, I'm in definitely a season right now where I'm having to catch myself, just doing that, because, you know, some things that I'm facing are really hard. So it's just like, oh, that's a quick way to disengage. But you're not engaging, you're not really, I'm not really engaging with people online, I'm just

looking at all their stuff and doom scrolling. So it's not, you know, the anyone call it a temptation, but the action to do that is kind of a normal process to get out of, you know, the hard thing that you're dealing with, but it's not the right thing. So, you know, if if you find yourself doing scrolling, maybe download Tetris or Solitaire, or, you know, a word game and do that instead for 15 minutes, and then put the phone down and do something else, or read a book. Read? Yes.

M Michelle Glogovac 22:20

That's what my 15 minutes is all about. I'm always reading something new. Yes. And in your book, we haven't touched on, you've mentioned that you are a woman of faith. And within the book, there are the action items at the end of meditating, reflecting acting. And you mentioned, you know, different parts of Scripture that people can refer to. Not that you have to I mean, there's reflection questions that are in here that don't have to do with God, but there are ones that do, right. So it's that perfect bridge of if you don't want to touch it, don't read that part. Like no big deal. But, you know, there's things that you can meditate on, which, to me isn't a religious action, it's getting to know yourself and getting inside yourself. And I think that's what your book is all about, you know, discovering what's in your soul, what's cluttering it what's going to free you to love yourself entirely. And, and, you know, overcome whatever it

T Trina McNeilly 23:18

is. Yeah, for sure. I love in the, in the back of each chapter is called Create space. And so there is often a verse, you know, if you are a person of faith, if not, you know, mostly they're just encouraging words. And then some introspective questions, and then an action item. A couple of them are simple prayers. A couple of them are super practical, like, go do this, this and that. But it's a lot of introspection, which this whole process of uncluttering your soul is, but yes, it's it's really for anyone, wherever you're at, in your journey. If you're a person of faith, if you're not, you know, you can read the parts that might be and look and look to your intuition. And, you know, really what we're trying to do when we when we think about meditate is you know, with soul clutter, mental clutter, whatever, you know, what we do all the time is hyper focus on everything that's wrong. And that could go wrong. We ruminate and we're trying to kind of shut that tap off. And you know, I talk about imagination in the book, and how we're so good at using our imagination for bad but what if we flipped that and used it for good? What if we imagined all of this space on the inside of us? And we begin to visualize the wide open spaces and see what could go right instead of what could go wrong?

M Michelle Glogovac 24:56

Yes, get get the Negative Nelly stuff out of the way. That's what I always tell my kids don't be a Negative Nelly. Yeah, if you think positively so, you know, teach them young.

T Trina McNeilly 25:08

Yeah. And sometimes I find, you know, like, and this is in no way like, I'm not trying to insult anyone because I'm, I'm insulting myself, I'm naturally a worrier. But it's just kind of the lazy thing to do, because it's just easy. It's just that's the way your mind and in fact I think I have

thing to do, because it's just easy. It's just, that's the way your mind and in fact, I think I have some statistics in the book. But, you know, science shows that that naturally, our brains go in a negative direction. So it takes like exercise, like mental exercise, to think positively and to stop, interrupt those negative thoughts. Because they're just, they're stories that we tell ourselves. And we've been doing it for so long. It's just like, it's like if you put a movie on, and it just keeps replaying over and over and over in the background. And so we but we can, like, hit pause, and we can hit stop. And I'm going to date myself here, we can hit eject and

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Michelle Glogovac 26:06

remove that VHS tape or that with you, we still have a VCR downstairs. So yeah, and my kids who are five and six know what a VCR is?

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Trina McNeilly 26:15

Yes, I love it. I know, I still have VHS tapes, too. But you can, you can stop that you can interrupt that. But it takes it takes energy and it takes work and thoughtfulness to do that. But like anything, you know, it's a muscle that you build.

M

Michelle Glogovac 26:31

And I think that also, you know, when we talk about victim being a victim, or, you know, overcoming, it's not that we're saying, you know, get over it, is it's really learning from it. You know, there's so many things that can happen in someone's life. And I've interviewed a plethora of people who have had horrific events, you know, whether it's someone has died in front of them been shot, you know, like really traumatic things. And it's not that they simply got over it, but they learned, okay, what is it that made me who I am today, because of this event? Why am I this much stronger? Why am I now in this career path, because of what happened to me. So taking it and putting that positive spin on it, you know, we're all allowed to, for lack of better words, you know, wallow for a while, and and live in in that time, but at the same time, we should learn from it as well. I hope that makes sense. I don't want to come off as insensitive, you know, to anyone or, or regarding any event in life. But I think it's important that we do reflect on, you know, how something has made us who we are today and how we have become stronger?

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Trina McNeilly 27:50

We're not? Yeah, no, for sure. And I think, you know, with your listeners, there are there are listeners that are actual, really victims, they've been victims of abuse and horrific things, like you've said, and I'm so sorry for anyone that's listening in me that has had to endure such difficult things. It's not it's not even easy to process those things. Because when we go through trauma, a lot of times, it's just like, you actually do disassociate, and it goes way back into the boxes way into the basement. But, you know, when you when you do start to unpack those things, and, you know, hopefully with a professional that can help you. You know, then there comes a point where, at least in my life, this is my story, you you know, you have a choice set before you and I just for me, it just wasn't serving me to always look through the lens of being a

victim. And with my faith, you know, in the Bible, it says, you know that God has called us overcomers that we are victorious. So I want to look through that lens it doesn't take away what's happened or, or negate that in any way. It's just saying, I don't want this to define me.

M Michelle Glogovac 29:14
Oh, I like I like that you put that much more eloquently than I

T Trina McNeilly 29:18
know you said it. Great.

M Michelle Glogovac 29:21
Well, I love the book. Thank you for joining me where can everyone find the book today because it is out in the world for everyone to buy. Yay.

T Trina McNeilly 29:30
Awesome. So you can find it wherever books are sold. So Amazon, Barnes and Noble. If you go oh, I forget all the names but if you go to TrinaMcNeilly.com/unclutter Your soul there's links to all of the sellers online to grab it. And if you probably still if you order today, since it's released a I've got some really great freebies that you can still take advantage of and then you can find those on my website as well.

M Michelle Glogovac 30:02
Perfect. Thank you so much, Tina, and congratulations.

T Trina McNeilly 30:05
Thank you. I've so enjoyed this conversation. Thanks for having me.

M Michelle Glogovac 30:11
Friends, I think this book in our conversation is a great reminder of some of the things that might be holding us back from moving forward and discovering our purpose and going after it. I'm a big believer in therapy, and part of the work that goes into therapy is working on yourself. It's hard work for sure, but it's truly so worth it. I know that my life experiences have led me to be the person I am today. And some of those experiences I've had to learn and grow from. I've had to ensure that I don't continue patterns that were taught to me. And I have had to recognize the way I want my life to look in order to make those kinds of changes. That's truly what this show is all about. Knowing, understanding and recognizing that your past and your

present. Don't define your future. You do. You're in charge and you've got this. Take some time this week to reflect and unclutter your soul, your mind your thoughts. We only have this one life to live. So let's make it the one we want to live. Observe your life, own your experiences and overcome the obstacles