

FF S3 Ep. 1.mp3

Caraline [00:00:00] Hello, everybody, and welcome back to another episode of Fibro Friends, it's season three, baby!

Skye [00:00:07] Ooh!

Mesha [00:00:07] Season 3!

Caraline [00:00:10] We're back. It's me, Caraline and I also have my friends Mesha.

Mesha [00:00:15] Hello!

Caraline [00:00:16] And Skye!

Skye [00:00:17] Hello!

Caraline [00:00:18] We've been we've been interacting with each other, it's not like we tell each other off when we take a break, but I just want to ask you guys, how you're doing?

Mesha [00:00:28] Ooh.

Skye [00:00:29] Oh, you know.

Mesha [00:00:30] You know.

Caraline [00:00:31] Living the life.

Skye [00:00:32] Yeah, I guess so. How long has it been since we recorded?

Caraline [00:00:35] We take a whole month off. I give us good vacation time.

Mesha [00:00:39] It's been 89 years.

Skye [00:00:39] Wow.

Caraline [00:00:40] It's been eighty-four years.

Mesha [00:00:42] She said it.

Skye [00:00:43] Within a month we found a house, put in an offer, get the house moved in.

Caraline [00:00:51] Love it.

Mesha [00:00:53] Yay!

Skye [00:00:54] So it's been, yay, very exciting. We have a fence for the dogs now and a pool so I get to go swimming and do some aerobics and water therapy.

Caraline [00:01:01] Which is the best.

Skye [00:01:03] Right. But like it's just been a lot like physically draining. Moving is hard, but when you're moving and you're chronically ill, it's even harder.

Mesha [00:01:16] Yeah.

Caraline [00:01:17] It's like one of the top stressful life events. And then you had chronic illness on top of it. And you're like mmm no.

Skye [00:01:23] Yeah. And then you had pain and exhaustion.

Caraline [00:01:26] Yes, yes.

Skye [00:01:27] And it's just not it's not a good time. But we did it. We're still we've been here for about two weeks and we're still unpacking stuff. Hey, we're getting it done. So that's been my life.

Caraline [00:01:36] Nice! Mesha. What's been up with you?

Mesha [00:01:39] So well, the topic of moving my mom and I are going to be moving.

Caraline [00:01:44] Wow.

Mesha [00:01:45] October 1st. Yeah. And everything you said. That's what I said I'm terrified of. I know. I know. It's going to be rough like the recovery. But that's you know, that's been the the best news. Also been struggling with homework or not doing homework for school. I just have really bad homework, anxiety I've learned. So trying to get that together and I don't know just. Same old, same old, but I think things are starting to look up, so.

Caraline [00:02:20] Yay!

Skye [00:02:20] Nice.

Mesha [00:02:21] That's that, yaas. What about you, Caraline?

Caraline [00:02:21] Well, I'm not moving. Right now.

Skye [00:02:21] Stay right.

Caraline [00:02:21] I constantly I'm constantly on Zillow, where we're able to move in April. But I would like to move now because I'm just over this apartment and it's too dark and makes me sad. And I recently did, like, Fung Shui'd things because I felt like the walls were a little too chaotic and that then I now it just looks like when you take things down, like you're ready to move. And I was like, I tricked my brain. And now I'm like, OK, we're not moving for, like, another good while, although I'm smart about it. And I made sure to go back and set an alarm on my phone for more than 60 days because my apartment likes to send the notice on your 60 days so you can't send a 60 day notice without getting charged extra. Those little rascals.

Skye [00:03:13] Yikes.

Mesha [00:03:13] What?!

Caraline [00:03:13] So, yeah.

Skye [00:03:16] They always do something. They always pull something.

Caraline [00:03:18] Yes. They love to get you anywhere they can. Yeah. So not moving, just just getting closer to the date. I can go back to my original child care center that I work at. I've been at a different center for over a year now and I'll be going back in two weeks. So I'm excited.

Mesha [00:03:39] That's good.

Caraline [00:03:39] But speaking of work, which is what umm triggered this idea of this topic for this week. This week, we are going to be discussing toxic positivity, which I just think of a bubbling pot of garbage with happy faces coming out of it. That's the image that pops into my mind.

Skye [00:03:59] Rainbows and unicorns.

Mesha [00:04:01] Oh, my God. I see it!

Caraline [00:04:03] I mean, I follow so many Instagram accounts which show toxic positivity, which now I'm like more educated and unfollowed them. But now I've just found so many resources that are showing me like what I'm supposed to be looking for, because I think what's so fascinating about this topic is that just as much as you can hear toxic positivity from other people, you do it as much to yourself sometimes. And I think one hundred percent, when you have chronic pain, you're doing it to yourself because sometimes it's the only way you think you can cope. But or I think hopefully we're all coming to learn better coping strategies. Then, a smile instead of crying.

Mesha [00:04:46] Oh God yeah.

Caraline [00:04:47] But I wanted to hear if either of you had any standout moments of toxic positivity in any regards to your regular life to chronic illness life, even though they mesh together, I think sometimes you can separate them.

Mesha [00:04:59] Oh.

Skye [00:05:00] I actually have two that I can think of off the top of my head right now. This is probably about three years ago. And I went on a date with some guy and we went to go to this like pita shop or something, I don't know I'll get some pitas. I've never had a fucking pita before. I don't know, whatever. And, you know, we started talking about life and whatnot, and, you know, I mentioned to him that I had Fibro and he was like, we'll go outside. Like, you're probably just sick because, like, you're telling yourself you are like, you know, you have to you have to be positive and you have to tell yourself that you can do these things because, you know, if your mind thinks you can, then your body will be able to do it like you can do it. And I was just trying to explain to him, like, that's not that's not how this works, especially now that I'm realizing a lot of my issues are genetic. And because of concussions, that can't be reversed. And I'm just like I understand the

sentiment. Like, I appreciate that kind of, you know, oh, go outside, do this, do that. But no, like, that's not how that works. But he was he was very much like forcing the positivity on me like.

Mesha [00:06:18] Sheesh.

Skye [00:06:18] You have to wake up every single day and like, listen to this and, you know, tell yourself that you're not sick and go run a mile and do that. And I never talked to him again.

Mesha [00:06:31] Boy bye.

Skye [00:06:33] Because it was so rough. And the other time that extremely pissed me off. And I actually reported her. She's a nurse practitioner. She told me that my Fibro isn't why, I'm disabled, I'm not disabled, and I can do anything as long as I tell myself I can and I just have to look at myself as differently-abled. And that sentence was absolutely so triggering to me, and I looked at her and I laughed and I said, Did you really just say that to me? And it was on a Zoom call too.

Mesha [00:07:12] Oh!

[00:07:14] It was it was during Covid. I was like, if you really just say that. And she was like, Yeah. And I was like, All right, listen, I was like, you know, I can try and understand where you're coming from, but calling someone differently-abled and that term differently-abled was just created by able-bodied people to make themselves more comfortable around disabled people.

Caraline [00:07:34] Yeah.

Mesha [00:07:35] Yeah.

Skye [00:07:36] She was like, I don't think that's true. And I was like every single disabled person I've met absolutely hates that term because. It's diminishing and brushing aside our experiences as disabled people and as people with chronic conditions.

Caraline [00:07:52] Yes.

Skye [00:07:54] And I hung up and just sobbed.

Caraline [00:07:57] Right.

Skye [00:07:58] And I called back and I got the office manager and I was like, look. She's a doctor telling people this and that is not OK. She's trying to be positive and she's trying to be like, oh, just look at yourself differently-abled. You know, like you're able to do things in a different way. You know, you can as long as you tell yourself you can. And it's like, do you think I haven't tried that yet? You think I don't wake up in the morning and tell myself, hey, girl, you can get a shower, you can wash your hair, you can do this stuff? Oh, I don't have a seizure. You don't need to have a seizure. Don't have pain today.

Mesha [00:08:36] You don't need to have one.

Caraline [00:08:37] Don't do that, that's silly. Don't do that brain!

Skye [00:08:41] Right?! If it was that easy don't you think I already would to tried that.

Caraline [00:08:45] Right. Right.

Mesha [00:08:47] Right.

Skye [00:08:47] And it was just, you know, maybe those sentiments work for other people, but not this bitch Absolutely not.

Caraline [00:08:57] No.

Mesha [00:08:57] Never, gross.

Caraline [00:08:58] And if they truly knew, like what what Fibromyalgia was doing to our brains, which is like always in fight or flight mode, because we think things are emergencies and we're not safe. Words like that trigger it worse, because, like I said, we're probably already doing it to ourselves. And so I think a lot of time when we hear from other people, it's heightened because you hear it from your own voice and then you hear it coming out of someone else. If not, then you're like, oh, okay, that sounds bad.

Skye [00:09:29] Yeah.

Mesha [00:09:29] Adrenaline just spikes.

Skye [00:09:30] Yeah, that's something I try to explain to my family and friends. Like, I already do this to myself. I already tell myself those things like.

Caraline [00:09:41] Yeah.

Skye [00:09:42] You don't think I sit here and go through every single scenario in my head and tell myself, you can do it, it's going to be OK, you're going to be fine, you're safe. And then being told that on top of my brain, telling myself and the anxiety of it just makes it worse because I'm like, I get it like I don't like you don't understand how I'm feeling inside right now because duh of course I'm gonna tell myself that stuff.

Caraline [00:10:08] Right and I'm not going to try to fix myself to make you feel better, to make your phrases validated.

Skye [00:10:17] Period.

Mesha [00:10:18] Say that again.

Caraline [00:10:19] Meesh what about you? Anybody try to step to you and say something silly?

Mesha [00:10:26] Girl, yes. So Skye, you're probably going to bring this up at some point. But so we both myself and Skye had ended up in the E.R. at some point the last month. Separately, of course.

Caraline [00:10:41] That would have been weird if you were together.

Mesha [00:10:44] But.

Skye [00:10:45] Yeah, Mesha went and I joined her.

Mesha [00:10:46] Yeah, nah but yeah, I was I was really sick between the end of July and the beginning of August and went to the E.R. three times in like four days from a really bad kidney infection. And I never experienced anything like that before. So it was it really felt like I was I was leaving this earth like my life was over. I thought, like, this is it. I'm dying. And I know, like, sometimes I feel like that a lot. But I legitimately was in fear of my life. I had crying spurts like, oh, my God. But I yeah. So as I was recovering, some people starting the reaching out to me check to check in on me and I just kept getting the same comments like, oh you know, it's OK, I'll be fine. Like, you know, this wasn't that bad. It could have been worse. I'm like. No. Do you hear yourselves like don't you hear what I'm saying to you, like what happened, like the extent of the situation, the fact that I was in the emergency room three times.

Caraline [00:11:59] Yeah.

Mesha [00:11:59] You know, within a span of a couple of days. Doesn't that seem serious enough?

Caraline [00:12:06] Right.

Mesha [00:12:07] And it's like, oh, no, you know, it could have been worse. And it's like, why is that the default? And then and then I kept getting the oh, just do this. Just do that. You got to, you know, make yourself you have to make yourself get up.

Caraline [00:12:23] Yeah.

Mesha [00:12:23] But I'm like, I, I physically cannot do that either thing. Like I, I hadn't been able to eat for a week straight just and could barely tolerate water in my stomach. All I could tolerate was ice chips and. Like, believe me, I would have given everything to snack on something like fruit or chips or whatever, but I knew if I tried, it'll come right back up.

Caraline [00:12:54] Yeah.

Mesha [00:12:55] It'll cause more pain. More agony, delay my healing, so I just kept dealing with a lot of a lot of the. The yo, yo, yo, you're ok, you're fine. This isn't this isn't anything.

Caraline [00:13:10] Yeah.

Mesha [00:13:11] It's like why what warrants these comments. It doesn't make me feel better.

Caraline [00:13:16] And I think people don't realize is in those situations. So, like, when you think about Fibromyalgia, I think of it as like pain that has no reason other than my brain is just confused. So when you have an actual. Thing that has a reason and it's it's

ripping apart your body and like putting you in such a horrible situation, the amount of anxiety that stems from that, because I mean, I've said this a million times over this pandemic. It's like I experience like most of the symptoms of covid every day. So how how truly would I know the difference between how I live normally and the symptoms of covid? And it's similar to any other thing. It's like a lot of the symptoms that come with Fibromyalgia are symptoms of other other illnesses that are like really scary. And so it's hard for our brains to cope with, like the fact that we have this pain that really has no true cause behind it or is not is not really a signal. So something truly dangerous. So then when something is dangerous, we're like, oh, no, like this is this is bad. So that sucks I'm sorry that happened.

Mesha [00:14:32] Yeah it sucks.

Caraline [00:14:34] Just if people are in the hospital just like send a gif of of a happy bear dancing, don't say words.

Skye [00:14:40] Just send me gifs.

Caraline [00:14:44] Gifts, physical gifts and and funny gif, jifs because who knows what the right way to say that is.

Skye [00:14:52] I just I will say that I've heard I've heard often in my life. Well, someone always has it worse.

Caraline [00:14:59] Yeah.

Skye [00:15:01] And I'm like, OK, I was.

Mesha [00:15:03] OK, and?

Skye [00:15:04] I was told like an hour ago by a family member. Well, you know, people have it worse and I'm like, yeah, and?

Caraline [00:15:10] That's their life!

Skye [00:15:11] That doesn't that, right. That doesn't mean that I can't be upset about what I'm going through and that I don't have it worse than other people, you know what I'm saying, like.

Caraline [00:15:20] Yes.

Skye [00:15:20] Because it was in terms of like everything I've been through in my life. So all of it in the last decade, which has been a lot to really talk about a lot because it was a lot. I was like, OK. What constitutes worse? What else has to happen in my life?

Mesha [00:15:41] Right? That's.

Caraline [00:15:42] Yeah.

Skye [00:15:43] You know, what else has to happen to me for you to consider it worse or bad for me to have my feelings validated?

Caraline [00:15:53] Yeah, yeah.

Skye [00:15:54] Like does everyone in my life have to spontaneously combust and then the world ends and you're like, oh, yeah, that's the worst. That's pretty bad.

Caraline [00:16:01] You've hit it.

Skye [00:16:03] I don't. Yeah. Like I, I. I am. Guilty of comparing my story to others in the past.

Caraline [00:16:13] Yes.

Skye [00:16:14] Because that's what I've heard my whole life, other people have it worse than you. And it got to the point where I was like. Yeah, sure, but that doesn't mean that I'm not allowed to feel my feelings and be upset and be angry and be in denial and and go through the entire grief process because chronic illness and and having Fibro when you're diagnosed, you start going through the grief process because you're like.

Caraline [00:16:39] Yeah.

Skye [00:16:40] Am I sure I have it. Oh, shit. I have it. This sucks. Oh my God, I'm so sad. What am I going to do with my life. Cry, cry, cry. And then you're mad and everything makes you angry because. Well, I can't do crap.

Mesha [00:16:54] Exactly.

Caraline [00:16:54] Yeah.

Skye [00:16:55] And you you have to go through that cycle. To to accept it, and that's and that takes time and that takes a lot of work internally for you to accept that and move once I allowed myself to start feeling my feelings that way, I became so much happier because I wasn't letting the anger and the sadness get to me anymore. I will say my mom did my mom did say this. She said anger is a poison that you drink, hoping to make someone else sick, so stop drinking the poison.

Caraline [00:17:31] Woah.

Skye [00:17:31] And I think I think toxic positivity relates to that a lot.

Caraline [00:17:36] Absolutely. Yeah.

Skye [00:17:37] Someone's someone's forcing this these words in these motivation things down your throat. And it makes you sick because it's not helping you. And, you know, sometimes people think the sentiment behind it, they think they're helping because they've never been through that situation before. And with those people, I give them a little bit of grace because they they don't understand what it's like, but they're trying. I appreciate the people who genuinely try and they make an effort. And, you know, for a while I said to Hunter, I was like, look, sometimes I just want you to say, that sucks.

Caraline [00:18:14] I was just going to say that that's one of the best phrases you can say, commiserate with us.

Skye [00:18:21] Yes. I was like, I just want to tell you that I'm in pain and I want to cry and I just want to sit in the shower. I want to eat a Big Mac and I don't want to do shit. And I want you to say that sucks.

Mesha [00:18:32] Right.

Skye [00:18:33] And just those two words can validate you. And you're like, yeah, that's you know, you're not like, well, you know, you can do it and things are going to get better.

Caraline [00:18:42] Yeah.

Skye [00:18:44] And drink celery juice and do yoga and everything's going to be totally fine. And you're going to cure yourself. No, I want you to say this shit sucks.

Caraline [00:18:52] Yeah.

Skye [00:18:53] Because it really does sometimes and.

Mesha [00:18:55] It does.

Skye [00:18:56] And I think I also go through a wheel of positivity. I'm like, I'm on I'm on a good edge. I can do it. And little moments will happen in my life. And I'm like, OK, girl, I got this. This is good. And then I go cry in the shower.

Caraline [00:19:09] But that's good though because then that's genuine. That's a genuine emotion and you should be able to feel those highs as much as you should be able to feel those lows. So like that's so good. The most recent time this happened to me was in like the past week because I've been put in pretty much every classroom at work recently. And it's a lot, especially when I don't know that that's what's going to happen that day. I'm pretty much aware that I might get moved into rooms, but not knowing what my schedule is like exactly really throws my brain for a loop. So I got moved to a different classroom and I was upset because I like I said, I'm about to go back to my other center. So these are my last couple of weeks with my kids and my preschool class and so I'm really just trying to cherish every moment. And so I was teaching a lesson about rocks this week, which I love talking about rocks. Rocks are cool. And so I was getting my materials ready and they're like, OK, we need to in this room. And I was like mad. And I was like, OK, so I like put my things back and I went into the classroom I need to go into and I walked up to the teacher, the co-teacher that was in there. And I said, please excuse if I have an attitude. I'm just like, not really happy right now that I'm down here, like, happy, not happy to be here, but like I'm here. So I have hands and feet and I can do things. And so we have connecting classrooms so that a teacher on the other side was like, no, no, no, you're coming at it all wrong. Like, you just have to know you're going to have a good day. And like, you just have to think that this is going to turn out the best way possible. And I go, no, I don't. I was like toxic positivity. I was like like spray holy water on it. Like, no, bad demon. And I was like you're just like taking away everything I just did. I came in and I was honest about how I felt. And I was like, not that I had to apologize for how I felt. I just want to give a heads up. I think that's kind of people to do. And for her to come in and immediately like Mack Truck into my little smart car, I was like, no, I'm allowed to be frustrated about this like if it

was if it was you like and you had to be in a classroom, what you don't necessarily like and I'm not going to name names, but there's a classroom I don't like. It's just not my age group. It's not I have an age group that I like.

Mesha [00:21:35] And that's understandable.

Caraline [00:21:37] There's ones that I really don't care for. And so I was like, no, no, no. And so I just like they pretend that there was like a not a hole in between our classrooms and there was a wall up. And I was like, I'm only interacting with this person now. I will only talk to small people.

Mesha [00:21:53] Yeah.

Caraline [00:21:54] So I was like, no, shut it down. Shut it down. Not happening. And it's like I almost got taken aback, because usually when I hear the toxic positivity it's in conjunction with chronic pain and Fibromyalgia and so like this, to hear in a general sense, I was like, oh, I still don't like it.

Mesha [00:22:12] Yeah.

Skye [00:22:15] Yeah.

Caraline [00:22:17] Oh my gosh.

Skye [00:22:17] I just. And like it's it's a greatly appreciated when someone's like, hey, look, I'm sorry, I'm having a bad day, so, you know, I'm acting this time away. It's not personal. I'm sorry. I'm just I'm just in a mood and I'm working through my stuff today. I respect that more than someone being an a-hole and then they're like hey sorry I'm having a bad day.

Caraline [00:22:40] Right.

Skye [00:22:40] Give me a heads up and that's fine. Like, I totally get it, I, I understand because I get that way too. And for her to just be like boom. Oh my God. Rainbows. Butterflies.

Caraline [00:22:52] Yes. And I would do the same thing if I was having a flare. So that's terrifying to me that that's what would come out of a person's mouth. If I was like instead if I was to come in and be like, sorry, I'm in a lot of pain today, like I'm having a bad flare. It's going to be a great day. The sun is shining, the tank is clean, a drain your tank going back into the ocean to get eaten by a shark.

Mesha [00:23:14] Drain your tank. Oh my God.

Caraline [00:23:16] Well, since we've been talking about these very cliché phrases that people like to use, I thought we could play a game together. So I am the game show host. I am Drew Carey or Wayne Brady does anybody else from who Whose Line is it Anyway host a game?

Skye [00:23:37] Alex Trebek.

Caraline [00:23:37] Alex Trebek, rest in peace, we love you.

Mesha [00:23:37] RIP.

Caraline [00:23:38] But I thought we would play a game where you have to rate phrases of toxic positivity on a scale from zero to five flares. So I will give you the phrase and you can each give me your score on a scale of zero to five flares.

Skye [00:23:53] Perfect.

Mesha [00:23:53] Ready.

Caraline [00:23:54] So here's the first scenario. Imagine you're walking through T.J. Maxx and you see a Rae Dunn mug and it says "positive vibes only". What are you doing to that mug and where are you putting this on the scale?

Mesha [00:24:08] Oh my God. I'm dying right now.

Skye [00:24:16] Honestly, like, just because it's Rae Dunn and like Rae Dunn is kind of a meme, now. I put it out like a two, because if people, you know, if people want that mug and they look at it, it makes them feel good. That's fine like that. That's it's not and it's not like personal. Like someone isn't saying it to me.

Caraline [00:24:38] Yeah.

Skye [00:24:39] It's just Rae Dunn.

Mesha [00:24:39] Yeah.

Caraline [00:24:39] It's not the mug's fault.

Skye [00:24:41] No.

Mesha [00:24:42] Yeah.

Skye [00:24:42] And they put the most pointless phrases on everything like their spoon, mug.

Caraline [00:24:51] Right?

Skye [00:24:51] Container. Like poop bags.

Caraline [00:24:53] Are you telling the mug are you telling the mug to have positive vibes or because I'm sure the mug doesn't want to hear that either.

Mesha [00:25:02] Or the contents of the mug.

Caraline [00:25:03] Right.

Skye [00:25:05] Mesha, what do you rate this?

Mesha [00:25:06] I put it at a. Yeah, like one and a half, because it's like, OK, I see it, whatever, bye.

Caraline [00:25:13] Right.

Mesha [00:25:15] I'm not spending my money on that. You know.

Caraline [00:25:18] Yeah.

Skye [00:25:20] I could make my own Rae Dunn mug if I want. Exactly.

Mesha [00:25:23] Right?!

Caraline [00:25:24] We have Cricuts and we have all the power.

Skye [00:25:27] Facts.

Caraline [00:25:30] OK, so phrase number two is one I've already heard both of you say it's not good, but let's put it in a scenario. So Aunt Debbie is at the Christmas party and you're explaining your most recent flare. And she could say to you, well, you know, so many people have it worse. What are you going to say Aunt Debra?

Mesha [00:25:51] I'm probably shaking in my boots. Five.

Caraline [00:25:52] Where are you putting her?

Skye [00:25:56] I'm putting in Debra's head in the toilet bowl. That's where I'm putting Aunt Debra.

Caraline [00:26:01] Ooh, Aunt Debra gets a swirly for saying that.

Skye [00:26:04] Okay now like question. Do we like Aunt Debra or no?

Caraline [00:26:10] See, that is hard because depending on who it's coming from, it does put it at a different level. I'm going to say and Deborah has sent you like cards with one dollar bills in them since you were little but that's it.

Skye [00:26:23] Okay, I'm going to say a four. Screw you, Aunt Debra. Get out of my business, even though I was telling you my business, mind you're own.

Mesha [00:26:36] Right.

Caraline [00:26:37] OK. All right. So scenario number three oh wait, Mesha, you didn't rate it.

Mesha [00:26:43] Oh yeah no, immediately I was like five.

Caraline [00:26:45] Okay, perfect.

Mesha [00:26:46] Like I don't have time for this.

Caraline [00:26:47] All right. Scenario number three, you're at the gym and you are lifting some really sexy one pounders. Someone comes up to you and says, if I can do it, so can you. As they're holding like twenty-five-pound weights.

Mesha [00:27:07] I gotta center myself.

Skye [00:27:10] It's a tough one.

Mesha [00:27:10] Nah, nah bro, no, no. Five, five flares.

Caraline [00:27:14] That's what I felt.

Mesha [00:27:15] Let's go, five. This is not hard.

Skye [00:27:16] I don't know how I feel about that one. Oh, because, you know, they're probably just like, oh, yeah, like let's motivate this kid. But at the same time, mind your business.

Caraline [00:27:32] Yeah.

Mesha [00:27:33] Right.

Skye [00:27:33] That's why I think that is the biggest reason why don't go to the gym, because one of my biggest problems is when they look at me or stare at me like why? Look at something else.

Caraline [00:27:47] You're like, I'm here. I made it and let me do what I want. I'm at the gym, I'm putting in the effort.

Skye [00:27:54] Yeah, like people say stuff like that. Like I'm here with my headphones. I don't want to talk to you. I'm minding my business. Yeah. I would probably trigger me and I probably. Yeah. That I'm going to say a five that would probably piss me off.

Caraline [00:28:08] Take that little one-pounder and chuck it at your head.

Skye [00:28:14] Yeah.

Mesha [00:28:14] Yeah.

Caraline [00:28:14] OK, so scenario number four, let's see your old colleague. Susie, sorry Mom, your name is Susan, I'm not referring to you. She is listening to you talk about your history with a chronic illness to another coworker and she comes up to you and she said, well, darling, everything happens for a reason.

Skye [00:28:41] Five!

Mesha [00:28:43] With the accent with the twang, too oh.

Skye [00:28:46] Five, maybe a six.

Mesha [00:28:50] Ooh.

Skye [00:28:51] I can tell myself that, but you can't tell me that.

Caraline [00:28:54] Yes, I was going to say I said this multiple times, I think because you're in like once you're in that spot. And I think really I've only ever said it reflecting on the past, like, it's hard to say it in the moment. But like, when I look back on my life, I'm like, oh, that had to happen for this to happen or this wouldn't have happened. So I think it's more of a reflective statement for the person themselves. But to hear it from someone else, you're like, yeah, but for what reason? Because I'm a bad person, I deserve this. I could just go into a whole big spiral about this.

Skye [00:29:24] Especially when it's something about like your health. But then what's the reason?

Caraline [00:29:27] Yeah.

Mesha [00:29:27] Exactly. Like was I meant to suffer?

Skye [00:29:32] Like am I supposed to die? Do you want me to die? Like, is that the reason behind this? And I just have to like, be cool with that.

Caraline [00:29:40] Mm hmm.

Skye [00:29:41] No. Bye, Susie.

Mesha [00:29:42] Yeah. Bye. Yeah, five flares.

Skye [00:29:44] Bye!

Mesha [00:29:47] Bye!

Caraline [00:29:47] OK, scenario number five, this man on the street who's selling his stickers because Etsy sucks. So he has to go out on the street. Yo, Etsy charges me like five dollars every week just for having an account.

Mesha [00:30:03] Oh my god.

Skye [00:30:04] That hit me so hard.

Caraline [00:30:06] He sees you walking down the street and you're repping a Fibromyalgia shirt, maybe from the Fibromyalgia Care Society you know, and he hands you a sticker and it says think happy thoughts.

Skye [00:30:22] That don't bother me, I don't think.

Mesha [00:30:23] Ehh two. Nah. Have to know. Yeah, I'm like, ehh. If you just hands a sticker, it's like. And I keep it moving.

Caraline [00:30:31] Yeah.

Skye [00:30:31] Yeah.

Mesha [00:30:32] That's fine.

Caraline [00:30:32] Okay, Steven's a cool dude.

Skye [00:30:32] And he probably didn't read your shirt anyway.

Caraline [00:30:36] Right.

Mesha [00:30:37] Right.

Skye [00:30:38] Probably didn't read the shirt and probably doesn't know what Fibro is.

Caraline [00:30:41] He's like what's Feebro?

Skye [00:30:43] Yeah, I think, like I mean, you can't you cannot think negative thoughts all the time. You're going to be a miserable piece of crap so like.

Caraline [00:30:54] And studies have shown you the way you talk to yourself makes a difference.

Skye [00:30:57] Right.

Mesha [00:30:57] Oh yes.

Skye [00:30:58] You know, you can't just sit there and be like I'm a piece of crap. My life is worthless. Like, you cannot do that all the time. But I think thinking happy thoughts, like I'm doing my best, you know, like I'm ok, today.

Caraline [00:31:09] Yeah.

Mesha [00:31:09] Yeah.

Caraline [00:31:10] Oh, I got up out of bed and I did this good job.

Mesha [00:31:14] Yeah.

Caraline [00:31:14] Yeah.

Skye [00:31:14] I think that's important so. You know, that old man can keep standing on the corner.

Caraline [00:31:21] Yeah. Taking a break from the catastrophizing we usually do inside our heads. It's like a nice a nice little break.

Skye [00:31:27] I'll allow it.

Caraline [00:31:28] All right. So last scenario number six, let's say someone names someone named Hannah Montana is listening to your podcast and she is hearing you talk about your story with Fibromyalgia. And she decides to comment on our Apple podcast, which did you know you can leave comments there and you can rate, review and

subscribe also to our podcast just a little heads up. But this little Hannah Montana decides to comment being negative won't help you.

Skye [00:32:03] Booo. Blocked.

Mesha [00:32:05] Hannah, you know what you could do. I'm not going to say what you could do, but you can also not listen to the podcast.

Caraline [00:32:15] Amen.

Skye [00:32:15] Those are the like even people who comments on anything. I just don't watch it then. Or don't listen like don't.

Caraline [00:32:23] Right. Yeah.

Mesha [00:32:25] Yeah.

Skye [00:32:26] I don't know!

Mesha [00:32:26] It's not worth it.

Skye [00:32:26] Mind your business.

Mesha [00:32:27] It's really not worth the energy.

Skye [00:32:30] I'll tell you, some of y'all's mammas are not teaching you how to mind your business and.

Mesha [00:32:34] Yo!

Skye [00:32:35] Come on man. Come on.

Caraline [00:32:38] Didn't we learn that if you don't have anything nice to say then don't say anything at all. I'm pretty sure it's not if you don't have anything nice to say, type it behind the keyboard.

Mesha [00:32:47] Right.

Caraline [00:32:47] That's not an inspirational poster.

Skye [00:32:47] Say it to my face!

Caraline [00:32:48] Yeah.

Skye [00:32:52] Say it to my face Hannah Montana.

Caraline [00:32:53] Come at us. Or Miley Stewart. What's your screen name. Who are you?! Oy. Well thank you for playing the the toxic positivity rating scale game.

Mesha [00:33:08] I loved this game.

[00:33:14] *Mesha and Caraline singing a made-up theme song*.

Caraline [00:33:15] I don't have any prizes but you're both a prize so.

Mesha [00:33:21] Oh!

Skye [00:33:22] Oooh! Wow, thank you!

Mesha [00:33:27] You are too, Caraline.

Caraline [00:33:27] Thank you!

Mesha [00:33:28] You're welcome.

Caraline [00:33:28] So basically just as like because we've discussed how sometimes we talk about topics and don't necessarily have like the best like tips to help people cope with these things. I did come up with like a few little things just to look out for either in your own thoughts or things you're hearing from other people. So something that you should look for within yourself is that are you hiding or masking emotions.

Skye [00:33:54] Yes!

Caraline [00:33:54] And not letting yourself feel them? Because one really important thing I've learned recently, my Fibromyalgia journey is that digging a hole and putting those emotions in there is making it worse it is not going to help you heal at all.

Skye [00:34:10] The ladders not getting taller to let you out.

Caraline [00:34:10] So fell all the feels. Mm hmm. Yeah. And then another thing is like having the mentality of like just getting through it, which I think one hundred percent every chronic illness person can say that, that's maybe where they live in that mode is just getting through it. I think, like Skye said, the thoughts that you have and how you talk to yourself and and you can still say, like, yeah, this sucks, but you can have those moments of, like, I'm really proud of myself for doing this today or something like that that I think is better than like, oh, I'm just like going through the motions of my life. You should be going through the emotions. Yeah, Ted Talk what's up?

Skye [00:34:55] And recently I've been telling myself more how proud I am of myself and that has made a big difference because.

Mesha [00:35:01] I love that.

Caraline [00:35:02] Yes.

Skye [00:35:03] No one will ever be more proud of you than you are of yourself.

Caraline [00:35:06] Yes!

Skye [00:35:06] Because you get to be able to experience everything. So, like, tell yourself that if you had a good day, be like hell yeah myself. I did great today.

Caraline [00:35:15] Yeah.

Skye [00:35:16] And that makes you feel good. You know that. I don't think that's toxic at all to to recognize. Your accomplishments for yourself.

Caraline [00:35:29] And doing that is like giving you the dopamine and the serotonin that you're lacking on a typical basis. And so like those little sparks of, like, kindness to yourself. I actually like helping you heal. So that's super important. I would say to look out for other people using toxic positivity and obviously all the phrases we've previously mentioned. But basically, just all in all, when they're minimizing your emotions or your experiences or invalidating it, just cut them off. You have you have the ability to move in whatever possibility that means. If you can walk, if you're in a wheelchair, if you're using a walker, get out of there. Exits can happen.

Mesha [00:36:12] Yes.

Caraline [00:36:13] Doesn't matter who it is, if it's your mother, if it's your neighbor, whoever it is, we've talked about this many times, toxic relationships are not necessary in your life. You can cut people off blood or not. They don't need to be in your life.

Skye [00:36:29] Facts.

Mesha [00:36:29] Exactly.

Caraline [00:36:31] So so hopefully you guys can get a better understanding if you have already experienced this, which we're here for you. We know you have we're not silly. We've been through this. But yeah, so if you guys remember, we can still receive voice mails through the Anchor app and we would love to hear your experiences with toxic positivity. If you've heard any of the phrases we've talked about, if you have heard something different and even higher on the flare scale, tell us in our voicemail we want to hear your voice, because honestly, over the break, we haven't heard from anybody where you all at? We love hearing from you. Actually, that's not true. We have a friend, a Fibro Friend named Jacqueline, who has been a very constant emailer and has messaged me on Instagram. And I have loved hearing from her and all her updates about her journey because I like the whole point of Fibro Friends is to share experiences. But I think it's just to feel more connected with people who are like ourselves. And that's what I feel with the people who have reached out, is that I am now a part of their journey. And I truly hope that we're a positive part of their journey. And I love getting to hear from everybody. So through email, which is fibrofriendspod@fibro.org, or like I said, you can send us a voicemail if you are listening on Anchor or Spotify and we'd love to hear from you, but we got lots to work from on this point. But we're going to do our Visible Victories and our Tender Points, so.

Mesha [00:38:15] Hell yeah, that's right.

Skye [00:38:15] Word.

Caraline [00:38:16] Does anyone want to raise a hand and go first?

Mesha [00:38:19] I'll go.

Caraline [00:38:19] Go Mesha!

Mesha [00:38:20] Hesitation only because I like blanked again. I always blank.

Caraline [00:38:25] It's hard. I know I spring this on you every time.

Mesha [00:38:29] It's ok. Visible Victory I would say you know about you know, the news about the move it's good. I'm going to be starting another AmeriCorps term.

Caraline [00:38:44] Ooh.

Mesha [00:38:45] Boo. But it's a good organization and I'll actually be doing things that I've been wanting to do for a long time, just like, you know, work with support groups. So. That'll be starting in September. I'll have like a week between my jobs to kind of. Decompress and also catch up on homework and try to pack as much as I can you know for the move. Tender Point, yeah, I kind of did a lot this past week and. It kind of sent me into a little flare and it wasn't that great, I had to recover like yesterday, took a loan at. And I feel better compared to, like, how I was feeling the last week. Just. And my mother, I always say that she's my my number one, she's my rock. She understands me, understands my condition. She knows when I tell her, like I have planned to do this. And the third she said, are you sure like, that might be a little too much like, oh, no, I could do it. I couldn't do it. So, you know, so.

Caraline [00:39:59] Yeah, that's good. Gotta have that rock.

Mesha [00:40:03] Yeah.

Caraline [00:40:04] I would say Visible Victory for this week is something I mentioned on my Instagram stories, but I'm filling out some paperwork for my job and I was clicking through and I got to that page that we always see, which asks if you have a disability. And normally I scroll immediately to the bottom click, no, move on, because Fibromyalgia, to my knowledge, in any past, paperwork I've done for other jobs has never been even listed as an option. And I don't even think chronic illness itself has been listed. But this time I scroll down and what do I see? It says Fibromyalgia. Not only does it say Fibromyalgia, but it mentioned autoimmune issues. It also said chronic illness on there. And so I just had to shout out the company. I work for Bright Horizons, because they're very big on diversity and inclusion. And I, I almost was getting teary about it because I'm like every time I see like, Fibromyalgia even like going looking for doctors. If they mention Fibromyalgia on their website, I was like, you get points because some people don't even want to put on there because they're like, I don't want to treat, that's too hard, blah, blah, blah. But I was very excited to see that that was on there. I was like ten points for Gryffindor. I will stay with your company. A Tender Point would be probably just like I talked about being moved around a lot, especially with only having two weeks left at the current center that I'm at before I moved back to my original center. It just kind of stinks that I'm in other classrooms. It's not horrible because I pretty much know all the kids in the center, so I'm comfortable being with whoever. But it's like I want to teach about rocks and I want to be in my preschool room with my preschoolers. So that's pretty much what's going on. Skye, what about you?

Skye [00:41:57] I will say a Tender Point. Currently, I'm just in a mood today. There's a lot that's been happening. And you know it just makes me feel some type of way. You know,

another Tender Point recently I so I had I previously mentioned I have mental issues that several doctors have not been able to diagnose. So in May, I was finally given an IUD, which has stopped some of the problems. And now I'm having extreme, excruciating pain like I want to die pain. It has been terrible. So I'm trying my doctors in Jersey and I'm in Florida. So I've been trying my hardest to try and find a doctor down here that might be able to help. But again, it's been difficult. And my victory, which is some good news. Two weeks ago, I heard back from Vanderbilt Autonomic Clinic and they wanted me to fill out a questionnaire and they actually finally accepted me into their program after a year.

Caraline [00:43:08] Yay! Oh my gosh I'm so excited.

Skye [00:43:12] Thank you.

Caraline [00:43:12] I have talked endlessly about how I so, so hope and wish for this this illness, this syndrome to be taken in the direction of Dysautonomia because I hope not only they can help you with your POTS, but they can start to see that everything is connected. Like everything you guys always talk about is like it's all the autonomic nervous system. Why is no one why is no one looking at our brains? Or even if they do, they're like it looks like a brain and they're like, yeah, it's not it's busted.

Skye [00:43:48] Yeah.

Mesha [00:43:48] It's busted, yeah.

Caraline [00:43:49] Yay Skye I'm so happy for you.

Skye [00:43:51] Thank you. They messaged me and said that my first appointment is March twenty first twenty twenty two so I have to wait seven more months.

Caraline [00:43:59] Oh man, the anticipation. Come on.

Skye [00:44:05] By the time I get there to see the doctor for the very first time it would have been nineteen months since I've been referred to them, which is something that I'm going to make a video and talk about soon. Because if you have chronic illness, that is about how long you have to wait to get care. Almost two years, five months short of two years.

Caraline [00:44:25] And I try to think of it like they're so good that you can't get in quickly. That's where I try to frame my thoughts. I'm like, oh, well, they're just like so amazing. They're booked up till forever because you have to kind of like, assume that. So I'm going to have that in my thoughts that you like. The program is going to be bomb dot com and you're going to get all the help you need.

Skye [00:44:46] Yeah. And I get to I get to go to Nashville, which is one of my favorite cities.

Caraline [00:44:49] Yeehaw!

Skye [00:44:51] Briefly lived near Nashville. So when because the doctor she was like, well, I could send you here, but it's in Nashville. And I was like, actually I'm extremely familiar with that. And that is not a problem. But for some people, they're coming from all

over the world, are all over the country and they've never been in Nashville and they don't know what they're doing. So I am lucky in that fact. I'm very grateful. I'm very excited. But at the same time, I've waited so long for this and it's a good and bad thing waiting, you know, like, yeah, finally it's done. It's here. But at the same time. Nineteen months. That's just, just a lot of time.

Caraline [00:45:30] Yeah. So is this like a clinic where you're going to have to stay for a while or?

Skye [00:45:36] I genuinely do not know the day the first appointment, I will have an EEG, which is a brain test, to put little probes on your brain. I will have another tilt table test, which will be my third tilt table test. They strap you down and go up and down. And one of the tests, they injected adrenaline into me. So that was not fun. And then the third tests are do I think it is like an autonomic nervous system test, which I'm not too familiar with. I don't know if they test your nerves or your body functioning. So we shall we shall see. I'm going to Nashville y'all. Closest I'll ever be to being accepted into Vanderveldt, so that's fine with me.

Caraline [00:46:25] Oh, I love it. Frame it, put it on the wall. Print out the e-mail.

Skye [00:46:31] Yes.

Mesha [00:46:31] Right.

Caraline [00:46:32] Yay, that's exciting.

Mesha [00:46:33] Awesome.

Caraline [00:46:34] And it's good to know that there's various options coming out there that hopefully they're being looked into.

Skye [00:46:42] It might be the only one and you might have to wait two years, but it exists.

Caraline [00:46:47] Yes.

Skye [00:46:47] So.

Caraline [00:46:48] Yay, we love it. Well, we are so happy to be back for another season of this podcast. I have enjoyed the break, but I have missed talking with you because I love both of you with you, the people listening because we love you as well. But just just having people know what you're talking about and relating. But just like I said, one of the reasons we do this podcast, so as I mentioned, we're on Spotify, Apple podcast and many other podcast listening platforms. But specifically we've seen the Apple podcast is probably the top platform that you guys are listening on, though, as I mentioned, you can rate our podcast however you want to rate it. I believe it's had five stars. You can put a review if you want to let us know your feelings on this podcast. I mean, constructive criticism only, please. And you can also subscribe so that we when new episodes come out, you can set notifications on your phone and it'll tell you when a new episode comes out so you can listen to us babble for forty eight minutes and forty seven seconds. We don't babble. We say important things.

Mesha [00:47:55] Babble and giggle.

Caraline [00:47:56] Stop it.

Skye [00:47:58] We do, I think we say important things. But I might be biased.

Mesha [00:47:59] Yes.

Caraline [00:48:00] Oh for sure. Well, thank you so much for joining us for this episode and we hope to see you back next time. We love you. Bye!

Mesha [00:48:08] Peace!