

New Speaker:

Michael Arnold:

All right, All right, All right. Welcome to episode two of Monday State of Mind. My name is Michael Arnold. I am the Director of Alumni and Recovery Support Services for the Harmony Foundation. Let's take a minute to settle in with me, whether you're driving, having that first cup of coffee, finished your workout, or just getting your day started. Let's settle in and be present with me on this episode. I want to talk to you about something that I like to call a hidden mechanism. You see, there is a hidden mechanism within all of us that creates unhappiness, difficulty changing habits. It creates relationship problems, frustration, anger, and even disappointment. You see barely. Anyone is aware of this hidden mechanism, even though it's happening all of the time. Yep. All of us. Do you want to know what that hidden mechanism is? Yeah. That hidden mechanism is the stories we tell ourselves.

Michael Arnold:

I want you to take a hot minute and just get honest with yourself right here right now. Do you ever really pay attention to the stories that you tell yourself? Do you really understand the impact that the stories we tell ourselves have on our daily lives and ultimately on how we choose to make our decisions? Do you really ever ask yourself why you choose to focus on something? Okay. Can you just have you spiraling and thinking the worst? I know, you know what I'm talking about. I want to tell you, okay, this hidden mechanism, the stories that we tell ourselves, we do this all day long. We tell ourselves a story about what's happening in our lives about other people, about ourselves. When I call them stories, that doesn't mean that they are false or that they aren't based on the truth. It just means that we have constructed a narrative based on our experiences, a perspective on the world, around us.

Michael Arnold:

It's our interpretation of the facts as we see them. Hence, that's why it's our story. It's not false, but it's not necessarily the entire truth either. It's just one perspective. It's our perspective. These can help us succeed in life or keep us living in a lot of fear. Feeling like we have absolutely no control stories happen in our brain. Literally all day long. We tell ourselves a lot of things. You guys, I mean, we tell ourselves so many things such as, Oh my God, this day is going to suck or I can't get sober. We'll say I will never be good enough. Or my boss gave me such a weird look, you guys, I know he doesn't like me or even my friend didn't respond to my texts last night. He must be mad at me. These stories that we tell ourselves can make us spin.

Michael Arnold:

These stories can take over our mind and we lose all focus on everything else in the moment. Sometimes the stories we tell ourselves, hold us back from our true potential. This is something that, that I realized. So check it out. You guys I've been able to do a lot of reflecting and recovery about the stories I would tell myself and how those stories they didn't serve me. And that, yes, it did start to make so much sense on why I was where I was at in my life. And it was because of the stories I told myself, things like I couldn't stay sober and that getting silver was too hard. So what happened? I stayed in fear and I kept drinking. I would tell myself that Monday's were awful. Then seriously, the day was just going to suck. And so what happened the day ended up sucking and I would be exhausted, overwhelmed, and frustrated.

Michael Arnold:

I would tell myself stories all the time about my friends and that I thought that they were mad at me because they wouldn't immediately respond to my texts or they wouldn't immediately return my phone calls. These stories would set me up for failure. I was doing to myself before I even gave anyone else a chance to do that. That had me in so much fear. And I would just sit marinate and think the worst, these stories were keeping me in a place deep down that I didn't want to be, but I honestly didn't know how to change until people helped me realize what was going on. And it was much more simple than I thought it would be, because let me tell you, I didn't know that I could change my narrative. I didn't know that I had a choice. So what I want you all to understand is that yes.

Michael Arnold:

Oh my gosh. Yes. We ultimately have a choice in what we allow into our headspace. Yeah, it's true. And I know some of you might be thinking no way, Michael, I can't control this. It's too big. Or you'll say no, I don't know how, there's no way. So instead of trying to fix the stories, you stay stuck because staying where you are, it's comfortable and it's safe for you, even though, you know, it's not good for you. I don't want to see that happen for you. You know what? It's time for you to take your power back. I told you that this podcast is all about growth and getting uncomfortable and getting transparent and getting vulnerable, right? So if you didn't listen to the first episode, that's my recap. That's what this is about. It's about getting uncomfortable. It's about choosing to change. So let's take a little deep dive.

Michael Arnold:

How did I choose to change these stories? Like I just said, you guys, I got uncomfortable by taking the time to honestly ask myself if the stories I was telling myself were real or made up. And then I made the choice to change the narrative. I made the choice to not doom myself, but opened myself up to seeing it different perspective. It would actually be helpful and not harmful. I chose to start to say to myself, I can stay sober. I can do this. I chose to tell him myself, this Monday is going to be awesome because I get to make it awesome. Even though you guys, this was incredibly uncomfortable at first, it was totally better than swimming in negativity. I kept at this daily monitoring. My stories was exhausting at first, but I realized I wasn't really nice to myself or how I looked at people in circumstances.

Michael Arnold:

And that ultimately I realized I, I was my biggest barrier to happiness and success. I was the one that needed to change my state of mind. I'm happy to say now, but this is something that I love being aware of because I love feeling good. I mean, you guys come on. Who doesn't love feeling good. I love taking moments throughout the day to monitor my thoughts. Because when I finally realized through recovery that I have a choice on what I choose to think about. I just, I get so excited. You guys it's like, it's that natural high, that natural feel good? Like, yes. Okay. I don't have to feel this way. I can choose differently. So how do you change your state of mind? How do we change the stories we tell ourselves so that we set ourselves up for success? Well, my friends, you must first choose to become aware of what you are saying to yourself.

Michael Arnold:

You must make the choice to choose, to become aware of your state of mind. This takes practice and it's worth it. I mean, seriously, when you start spinning and thinking the worst, just take a moment, take a moment. And pause. You have to ask yourself, is this story that you are presently currently telling yourself hurting you in your day? Or is it helping you? If the story is hurting you such as I can't get sober

or Monday's suck ask yourself, why, why are you telling yourself this? Are there any clear facts that really show you that this story is entirely true? The next thing you can do, it's not act on that story. Even if you're caught up in it. That doesn't mean you have to lash out at someone or runaway to distraction or comfort. Just sit with the story. Notice how it's making you feel.

Michael Arnold:

Notice the physical sensations in your body. Notice that you're caught up, but don't act, just stay with your awareness, because guess what you guys, when you are aware, you have a choice when you choose to run and not acknowledge. That is when you stay stuck. That is when you won't change your state of mind and you will stay in a place, you know, that you don't want to be. Now let's get excited because we're going to get into the practical application now of how you can start to pay attention to these stories that you're telling yourself. First things, first, number one in the morning, seriously. Right? When you get up and get your day going, take a moment to recognize what you are saying to yourself. Really recognize it. Your thoughts and ask yourself, man. Yeah. Is this harmful or is this helpful? And ask yourself, you know, is this really where you really want your mind to be next?

Michael Arnold:

I want you to be able to set reminders in your phone. I'm sure most all of you have a smartphone. You know, so set reminders in your phone. They go off at least two times a day. That's simply say Pause. When those reminders go off, take a moment and check in with yourself. What is going on in your mind? What are you thinking about? Is it productive? Is it derailing you when you just can't focus? If so, sit in it and choose differently. Lastly, have a closed mouth friend that you can talk with about these things. Sometimes receiving an outside perspective helps to make you realize you're either doing just fine or you're wasting your time with that story in your head. Like I told you guys, this is about growth. I want you to just take a minute now in marinate and choose to reflect on everything. I just told you about stories, about what you might be telling yourself and take that time today, tomorrow this week, and really dig deep and notice what you're telling yourself. Really notice what is going on in your mind and choose to make the choice, okay? Own it and shift it. If you need to.

Michael Arnold:

That's good. Take a deep breath. You guys, I want you all to just take a deep breath and realize, but you have the ability to choose what goes on in your head. What it really comes down to is that if you change your story, you can change your life. It is about growth, transparency, and inspiring you to get out there and change your state of mind. Now, next week, you guys, we're going to continue this topic. We're going to continue to talk about the stories we tell ourselves, and I'm going to bring on a pretty rad guest. This guest, her name is LauraBeth Burkehalter. She goes by LB and she is a recovery warrior. She is the Director of Community Engagement for Jade Recovery. More importantly than what LB does for a living in the recovery space. LB just really exudes that energy that you really just, you get captivated by. And I am so grateful that LB is going to be on this podcast next week for her to be able to share with you her experience behind how she has chosen to change her state of mind. All right, now, I want to end this episode by reminding you, if you or someone you know, is struggling with addiction, please call the Harmony Foundation at (866) 686-7867. Recovery is a journey and Harmony gives you the map.

New Speaker:

See you next week.