

Book Club Bonus Episode: *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan McCain



Full Episode Transcript

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with Lara Johnson

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Welcome to the *Mom on Purpose Podcast*. I'm Lara Johnson, and I'm here to teach you how to get out of your funk, be in a better mood, claim more with your kids. Manage your home better, get your to-do list done, and live your life on purpose with my proven method. This is possible for you, and I'll show you how. You're not alone anymore. We're in this together.

Hello! Welcome to the *Busy Mom's Book Club*. You could be watching this on a YouTube replay, or you could be listening to this on the *Mom on Purpose Podcast*. Either way, I hope you're going to enjoy the book that we're doing today. So, just really quick, my name is Lara Johnson. I'm a certified life coach for moms, and I love this book club because you don't have to read the book to join.

You can come and you can listen and learn about the book and how to apply the book. And part of my, like, critical mission, I feel like part of my purpose here on this earth is to make sure that we're all learning about who we are and what our purpose is. And I find that the more we discover about who we are by divine design—like, I truly do believe we all came with a unique set of skills and different aspects of our lives—the more we embrace that, the easier it is to fulfill whatever purpose that we have.

And so, that's why I loved this book so much. I will show you. It is called *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan McCain.

And what I have found with this book is that I felt very seen and very heard on a very deep level as I was reading this book. So, whether you identify as an introvert or you know someone that does, or you suspect that they have introverted qualities about them, this book club is for you. Okay. This book is for you.

So, we're going to start with a little bit of a game before I dive into some of my thoughts about the book, and then we'll go into, you know, the actual book itself and learn more about it.

So, this book club is for you, if you dislike small talk and you'd rather go to, like, deep conversations. I have found that this is me. That on many levels. I will ask very personal questions to people I really don't know very well. I can create very awkward scenarios for myself and for others, but that's just, like, who I am. I really prefer going deep, very quickly.

Another aspect... you'll know this book club is for you is if you find that you need a lot of downtime after spending time with other people, even if you love spending time with other people. I've noticed this a lot with church. So, as part of my church community, I am in charge of singing time for all the kids and teaching them songs about Jesus. And there's probably total—we're probably at like seventy-five kids. And even though I love it, I'm not musical. Let's be clear on that. But I love being with the kids. I love being able to sing songs with them and play games with them. I find that afterward, I'm, like, flat on my back totally exhausted. I need a lot of downtime

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after I go to church. So, if that's something that resonates with you, if you go out to a networking event, if you go out to a church group, volunteering, even if you're out with your girlfriends and you absolutely love it, but you come home exhausted, you know this book club is for you.

You'll also know that this book club is for you is if you find that the noise of motherhood and life is a lot for your body and for your nervous system. To the point where you feel like you get really agitated and overstimulated, and you'll start snapping at people around you even though you love them. You'll just find that your body is almost, like, on high alert.

The next one is if you find that you avoid conflict, that you are very sensitive to other people's feelings getting hurt, and it's like painful to your soul. Anytime that you engage in this conflict, maybe somebody is more explosive, and you retreat back very quickly.

And then the last one. You'll know this book club is for you is if you know someone that fits into any of the four prior things. Because (and we'll talk about this in the book) she talks about how there are a high number of introverts that live among us. And that most of them are masking as extrovert because that is the ideal of the nation that we live in. And because of that, and because they're rewarded for extroverted-type aspects of personality, many are masking to fit this, you know, extroverted ideal. And so, it's really hard to get clear on who is an actual introvert. And this will give you a lot of insight into yourself, or maybe loved ones, where there's maybe behavior that you don't quite understand. And you'll get a little more clear as we go through this book.

So, you know, and I'll tell you a little bit about, like, what I thought. What I was surprised about and that was, one, how big it was. Like, I kind of thought — you know, extroverted/introverted—I've never really studied a lot of research about it. This is a very heavily researched book, which I really enjoy. I really like reading stories and a lot of research about how they have come to the conclusions on introvert versus extrovert. Also, with that, I felt like I had to—it was very meaty, so I felt like I couldn't sit and read a lot of it at the same time.

Whereas, you know, some of our past books, they're a little lighter and I feel like you can kind of binge-read it pretty quickly. This was one I felt like I needed to take my time and really digest a lot of it. So, when she's presenting a story, it's not just, like, one story per chapter. There's a different story for each paragraph. So, there were a lot of stories. So, I'm not going to cover most of the stories and a lot of the research she shares, just because there was so much of it in the book. But as you read it for yourself, if you choose to do that, just know, and plan and prepare for that.

And it *is* fantastic. I just, for me personally, I felt like I had to digest it in little bits. So, she breaks the book down into, like, first is the introduction; and then she breaks it down into four different sections. And we're going to go through each of those

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sections. That's kind of how we're going to format this book club. But, just to start, I'm going to talk about what she mentions in the introduction.

And so, in the introduction, she says that—let me see if I can find it, actually, really quick—she talks about some of what our society values here in the United States. She says, "we are told that to be great is to be bold. To be happy is to be so sociable. We see ourselves as a nation of extroverts, which means that we've lost sight of who we really are."

And so, I like that. She really mentions that straight from the beginning: to be great is to be bold. And then she said—no, I lost it—to be happy, "to be happy is to be sociable." And this is, like, the extroverted ideal. And as part of this, she said, "we as a nation put a lot of value on individuality. But that value of individuality comes from a very specific type of individual. And that's somebody that puts themselves out there. Now, the more you put yourself out there, the more value our nation puts on that individual."

And this was really, like, hard to swallow, but it made a lot of sense to me because what I have found in my past is that when it was hard for me to do these things, I thought I was fundamentally flawed and therefore not as good as someone else that could do these things, instead of really honoring that's just not who I am.

And I was able to see that, and we'll talk about this in just a second, that there was this extroverted ideal that existed in the world. That we put a lot of value and pressure to perform in that way, because, therefore, you could be happier. You could be more valuable to whatever. You know, your work, your community, whatever that might be.

But what I really love is that in this book, she talks a lot about, you know, our quiet power, our quiet strength. And she lists some really amazing examples about people that were really great: Warren Buffett, Gandhi, Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, just to name a few that she uses as examples. They became great because of their introversion, not in spite of it. And I really appreciated that.

She said that because for every single one of us that does identify as an introvert, that's exactly what it is. We can succeed and be happy because of our introversion, not in spite of it.

So, she goes on to share in the very beginning—and I'm just going to briefly read these just because I think it's so beneficial for each of us. She talks about how there's like a spectrum, you know, that we fall on and there is a very informal quiz that she gives us in the book. But, of course, I love quizzes. I will always take a quiz if it's given to me.

So, just kind of think about this for yourself. The more truths that you have, the more likely you are introverted or the more introverted you are.

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Okay, so the first one, I prefer one-on-one conversations to group activities. Second, I often prefer to express myself in writing. Third, I enjoy solitude. Fourth, I seem to care less than my peers about wealth, fame, and status. Fifth, I dislike small talk, but I enjoy talking in depth about topics that matter to me. Six, people tell me I'm a good listener. Seven, I'm not a big risk taker. Eight, I enjoy work that allows me to dive in with few interruptions. Nine, I like to celebrate birthdays on a small scale with only one or two close friends and family. Ten, people describe me as soft-spoken or mellow.

Eleven, I prefer not to show or discuss my work with others until it's finished. Twelve, I dislike conflict. Thirteen, I do my best work on my own. Fourteen, I tend to think before I speak. Fifteen, I feel drained after being out and about, even if I enjoyed myself. Sixteen, I often let calls go to voicemail. That one made me laugh. I do that every time. You can ask my mom. She'll tell you. And it's my *mom*. Like, I should be able to answer this from my mom. Seventeen, if I had to choose, I prefer a weekend with absolutely nothing to do instead of too many things scheduled. There we go. Number eighteen, I don't enjoy multitasking. Number nineteen, I can concentrate easily. Number twenty, in classroom situations, I prefer lectures to seminars.

And so, yeah, so Ansi is sharing over in the chat. She said, "Yes. I remember taking the quiz. Only five falses."

Yes. I only had four false and so, and even on that, I was like, oh, you know, some of these I could probably see. So, it made me laugh as I took that quiz. And as I went through those, it was, "Oh, my whole life is making much more sense."

And it was this just big aha moment that I had on some of it, like my awkwardness that I've always felt like I had, wasn't actually awkwardness. It was just introversion. And so, what I really like is that in this first section, she starts talking about the extroverted ideal. And she provides a really interesting timeline for us, where she says, you know, starting back, you know, as we are looking through history, you know, prior to about the 1920s. So, I'm going to say prior to 1920, there was a culture of character. Now this culture of character, she explains, it was more focused on how people behaved in private, but starting in about 1920, there came a culture of what she calls personality. Now this introduction of personality, this culture of personality, started to focus on how other people perceived that individual. She said, suddenly, it went from inner virtue, which is the culture of character, to outer charm. And when we look at it that way, like, we all think, "okay, we don't really need to care what other people think," but when you really see it in this way, and I'm going to continue to describe it, the extrovert ideal, we do put a lot of pressure and a lot of value on how other people perceive us. How extroverted, how open, how charismatic we are, how magnetic that we are. And this is the culture of personality. And so, she shares the example of Dale Carnegie, where he, you know, he's a very famous author. You know, he has a lot of business courses, you know, like the—I can't remember the name of, like, his business school that he created—that still continues on.

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And it really was this shift from, like, going from a farm boy to being one of the top salespeople, and then training and creating business courses based on this culture of personality, which started in about 1920. And so, it was interesting because then she goes on to say, you know, in about 1940, this continued to shift to where universities started to put a lot of value on all the extracurricular activities.

You know, extroverts are very good on teams and being involved with everything and juggling a lot of stuff. And so, then, at this point in 1940, universities started to also weigh in on how extroverted somebody was, and how charismatic and magnetic they all were. Those were the people they wanted in their university. They weren't giving a lot of space for the brilliant, introverted minds.

Okay. So, then, it doesn't stop there. She says by about 1961, a third of the prescriptions that were being given by doctors were for anxiety for "not fitting in." Isn't that fascinating? One-third of the prescriptions were for anxiety, for people, for not being able to fit in.

That was, like, how they advertised it. Okay, and this is just, you know, continuing to snowball. She said by 1990, the DSM-IV or the V, I'm not sure. It's the like Bible of mental disorders, like every disorder that we have classified out there is within this book.

Okay. The DSM-something. She said that by 1990, they actually listed the fear of public speaking as a disease. Not just something that's, like, scary for people, but an actual disease was listed in there. And so, it was just fascinating to me to see the history and how this has evolved over time. And to, like, give ourselves some permission that, like, we're living in a really hard world as introverts.

And this is, like, very deeply ingrained in our society. So, then she goes on to say, you know, after 1990 and continuing to where we're living right now, she calls it "the rise of the charismatic leaders." And you'll see this in a lot of the self-help industries. And she uses the example that, you know, as the rise of self-help came about, it was what they were teaching and what they were preaching was to become more extroverted, because that's where you are happier and that's where you're more successful. And so, she shares an example about Tony Robbins, where the whole experience that he has, the way that he teaches, is very charismatic. It's very extroverted. And the things he's teaching are to help harness your power to be able to be a better salesperson, to be able to be more successful, to be able to put yourself out there in this way. And that's when your life will be better. That's when your life will improve.

So, I love that example. Especially because I'm very deeply ingrained in the self-help industry. And I've seen that for myself. How, especially when I launched my business, I really felt like that's what I had to do. And I floundered for a long time because it felt so unnatural for me. Now I've learned to harness a lot of my introversion. I've learned to know when to be extroverted. We'll talk more about that, on really being able to, you know, develop some of those extroverted skills. Like, I've

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always kind of laughed, even before reading this book, that I'm an introvert trained as an extrovert because there are times where I do need to have some of those skills. But for me, it was really beneficial to see that this is very deeply ingrained in our society. And that's why, for the longest time, I was feeling very flawed for who I fundamentally am. She goes on to share an example about the Harvard Business School, where the extrovert ideal is very deeply ingrained. Those are the people that they are recruiting and actively fostering those skills.

So, she shared a couple different examples about how the people that are most vocal within Harvard Business School are the ones who get their ideas accepted. And this will come into play in just a little bit. And she said that as they are fostering this, what they're really looking for are the people that are slow talkers that are more introverted. They are not the ones that are really thriving and being successful. And they are not the ones that are really getting the support of their classmates and all of that. Because in order to really succeed there, you have to be more vocal. You have to be the loudest person in the room. And that can be really challenging for a lot of the students that are introverted there.

And she interviews and talks about, you know, a lot of people there. So, what I wanted to share, you know, just briefly, is where this extroverted ideal has come into play for me and how it has been very difficult within business. And I've had to learn how to harness my own power. And so, for, gosh, it was probably for like a year and a half, two years, that I sold corporate workshops.

And corporate workshops are very fun. I always thought that's what I would be doing. I would really enjoy being in the corporate space. But in the very beginning, one of the very first workshops that I did, I was presenting to a bunch of PhDs about working from home. This was back during COVID and working from home with our children. And it was a really good workshop; I'm not going to lie. Like, I know my information really well, but I am not the fastest talker in the room. Like, when I get excited, I might talk a little faster, but for the most part, I'm very intentional. I'm very, and she talks about that in the book—like, I think before I speak. I'm very specific about the words that I say. And that's just part of who I am. And the feedback that I got, you know, from the workshops that I did for these PhDs is that they didn't value what I said because I wasn't smart. Now, what's interesting is I did the exact same workshop for a more—it was like a construction company. They built furniture and they very much valued it. The only difference was the extrovert ideal. Like the PhDs, because I was speaking slower, they took that as I was not as smart (because this is such a deeply ingrained thing within our society). Whereas when I was among, like, construction workers, where that extroverted ideal may not be. They're all working on building their own furniture. It was a very different experience.

And so, that's just one of the examples I wanted to share. Where it's okay if you've come across this extrovert ideal and you have gotten negative feedback because you didn't live up to that ideal in some way. That doesn't mean there's something wrong with you, okay?

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Just to be very clear, all introverts have had that feedback at some point. That's okay. It's okay to realize that, to forgive the people you know, and to really own, like, who you are at this point, and to still believe in yourself and the natural abilities and talents that you have. They just might look different than somebody who is extroverted, okay? It doesn't mean there's anything wrong with you.

So, then she goes on to share, you know, that's kind of the history, that's kind of like the charismatic myth that you have to be a Tony Robbins or Harvard Business School, like, outgoing vocal student there. What she goes on to share is that introverts actually change the world. And I love the examples that she uses, because what she talks about is that introverts are the ones that see and hear the world. Okay? They're the ones that are hearing the suggestions. They're the ones that are observing the world around them. And they're implementing those things because of that.

They're the ones that are out there changing the world on a much different scale. And we'll talk about how, in a minute, the difference between how the extroverted person can change the world, and sometimes they can sabotage the world, whereas, you know, the introverts can also change the world and sabotage it, as well, if they're not harnessing their own innate abilities. So, the example that she uses... let's first stay here where the introverts see and hear the world. The first example she uses—she talks about Rosa Parks and shares the example, like, how Rosa Parks was a very quiet woman. She was a woman of strong Christian faith, very integretable.

And when she chose not to give up her seat, it created such a movement. Not because she was loud, not because she was a giant—she was also very small in stature—but because her quiet strength was so integretable that people couldn't help but rally behind her. Like the character that she had was so intense and so, strong that it created a year-long boycott of the Montgomery, Alabama buses, and I really appreciated that they use that example. One, because Rosa Parks is a hero of mine. When we talk with our kids, we've got books on Rosa Parks. We talk about her a lot. But also, because it really showed me that our quiet strength, our quiet power, can create movements.

She was not the charismatic Martin Luther King Jr. She was one that was, you know, behind the scenes. Not because of the character. She had it. Like people couldn't help but rally behind her. And that's what happens when you find your quiet strength and you find your purpose and you start moving forward. People can't help but rally to the movement that you feel, and they will want to join the ranks with you.

So, she also goes on to talk about, you know, with introverts, is that with the rise of social media, we have the ability to create movement in a new way that may not have been possible for us before. And she—I'll tell you why I'm laughing in just a second—but she talks about how, sometimes with social media or with screens, it provides that barrier for us that we need in order for us to feel secure. And I've found that in my own business that it is sometimes easier for me to post and to interact with people online than it is for me to go to a networking event and sit down and talk with

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a bunch of people. And so, I've always laughed with my, like, coaching friends that I feel like because I've gotten to know so many people through social media, all around the world, which is such a huge blessing. But I feel like when I actually meet them in person at an event, I need a t-shirt that says "I'm more awkward in person. #introvert" because that's me.

I think people, you know, in these settings—I'm very talkative and I'm talking about things I'm passionate about, but then if you put me in, like, a social situation where I'll probably meet you in person, it'll be very awkward. And so, I think sometimes it takes people, you know, by surprise a little bit because I'm very different when you're hearing me in this kind of situation. Honestly, 100 percent.

Yeah. It's just one of those things that just kind of makes me laugh about myself. And so, what I really appreciate and what I've come to love and really be able to harness my ability on, is that social media does provide that medium for me that maybe I probably wouldn't have had if I were only doing in-person events.

So, the other thing that she talks about, which I thought was very fascinating when we're talking about this extroverted ideal, she talks about the evangelical culture. And I loved one of the things that she said. She says, you know, there's kind of this extroverted ideal that has seeped into the evangelical, the Christian culture, that "if you don't love Jesus out loud, then it must not be real love." So, she talks about really being able, like as an introvert, being able to share your beliefs on Jesus Christ or to keep them very private, because introverts like to, you know, talk about things on a very different level, then, you know, standing solo and telling everybody within their church community.

And so, I just wanted to share like a really brief story on that. So, many years ago, I served a mission for my church where I got to go and teach people in Canada about Jesus Christ. And it was so painful. Like, you can go back and ask some of the other missionaries that were with me where, you know, we would be walking and people would just walk by and I would just stand there, like a statue, like, completely frozen. Like, I couldn't talk to them. And I remember feeling so guilty that if I really loved Jesus, then this wouldn't be hard. And it was like this constant battle that I hit up against. And so, when she shared this experience or when she shared this, you know, evangelical culture and this extroverted ideal within the terms of, of, you know, church service, it was like, "oh my gosh, this makes so much sense on why I honestly, like, couldn't say the words to a stranger, even though I really love Jesus."

So, I appreciated that she brought that in there. And so, when she's talking about it again, like, she's bringing us back to what are our strengths as introverts. And so, then she talks about, you know, really getting clear on who we are as introverts and really recognizing what our strengths are and that we don't have to meet this extroverted ideal in order for us to be really strong, passionate leaders.

One of the things that she also mentioned before we go on to the next, you know, section, she talks about how introverts like to work independently. And oftentimes,

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that working independently is the catalyst for innovation. So, she said as part of this extroverted ideal, is that there is a term called "group thinking." If you've ever studied communications group thinking, it's like when a whole group together, like somebody introduces an idea and people follow along with that with the idea without actually questioning it. So, group think oftentimes, where somebody will introduce an idea, that's not actually a good idea. Because nobody questions it, everybody kind of gets on board with this idea. It actually gets you an unwanted result. And so, the thing that she talks about here is that the new group think, that we should elevate teamwork, now, has seeped into workplaces. This has seeped into our schools. This has seeped into so many different aspects of our lives, like pushing our kids to sports or, you know, whatever. Because we think that teamwork is the most essential thing for us to learn.

She said... well, I'll also add in here that as I was reading this, it was funny to my mind that I was thinking how when our kids are young, we all want them to play independently, but yet we hold them to this ideal that we all have to learn how to work in a team. But then when we're at home, we're like, "no. Like, leave me alone." So, they're getting kind of like these mixed messages as children on, like, do you want us to play independently? Do you want us to learn this teamwork? Plus, like whatever they're naturally drawn to. And so, what I really appreciate is how much she dove into, like really understanding this. So, she says on page 84, she talks about some of the studies they've done, like with programmers, for example, and programmers are typically more introverted because they're able to work on their own. But what she noticed was that there was one company that had a lot of top performers. She said the top performers overwhelmingly worked for companies that gave their workers the most privacy, personal space control over their physical environments and freedom from interruption. I really thought that was so fascinating.

And then she goes into the open space concept that a lot of businesses have introduced because we have elevated this teamwork idea, meaning there are offices that are cubicles. Everything is out in the open. And I remember going to see my husband who works for a tech company. Well, he works for a different tech company now, but the one before, they had this open space concept. And I remember walking in and it, like, took my breath away. I was like, "How does anybody work like this?" Like, it was so uncomfortable for me just to see it because I need to, like, hunker down and work independently. And I do really well in that scenario. Same thing back when, you know, I was working in an office. This was back, you know, before I had kids, when I actually, like, went into an office and I was put in a room with three other—well, there were three of us total. And I just remember feeling so uncomfortable. It wasn't that I cared that they saw what was on my screen. It was like I needed to mentally barricade myself from, like, all the stimulation, and I needed to just be in my own world. And so, I had to, like, mentally create that space for myself. Not that I didn't love my coworkers. I had fantastic coworkers, but it was very overwhelming to, like, my nervous system.

Okay. So, that's where she, like, really talks about that we have to intentionally start creating these spaces where we can work independently, and with, you know, with privacy and be in control of our environment.

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Okay. So, I really wanted to spend a lot of time on that because it's going to make everything else easier. As you start exploring the rest of the book again, realize there is nothing fundamentally wrong with you if you don't fit into this extroverted ideal. So, she goes on to say, you know, is it your biology or is it yourself? Meaning: is it nature, are you born with it, or is it nurture (meaning there is the environment that you've been raised in to create different aspects of it)? And so, she said back in 1989, you know, trying to figure out how much control we have over this extroverted/introverted stuff, somebody by the name of Jerome Kagan (I think is how you say his name) took 504 month-old babies and showed them different sensory things, like new things, like a cotton swab, or, you know, like, a picture of something or a sound, just to see how they reacted. He said of those, there were 20 percent who were highly reactive, meaning their arms started moving. 40 percent, which were very low reactive, meaning that they didn't, like, respond to these different things. And then another 40 percent that were kind of in-between. So, what they suspected was the ones that were highly interactive or highly, highly reactive would be extroverts. But it was actually the opposite. So, those babies that were highly reactive went on, and they continued to study them, I think, all the way up until adulthood. The 20 percent that were highly reactive to the different stimuli were the ones that were introverted.

Now this whole section had a lot of really great science about the brain and all of that. So, I'm going to briefly talk about that, but if you want to dive deep into it, you will have to get the book. But what he [Jerome Kagan] talked about is that when they looked at a part of the brain called the amygdala—hopefully I said that right—this is what they call like the emotional brain. This is where your basic instincts of, like, flight or fight or freeze, come from. And he said the more active the amygdala was, the more your heart rate increased. And the more stress hormone of cortisol was released into your body, caused your body to be overstimulated, which means that you are more introverted.

You're more... you want to stop and observe the world because your body responds at a higher level to it. Your nervous system is much more sensitive to the environment. As a result, you are someone that observes and thinks and feels on a much deeper level. And what was interesting about this is he said that highly reactive children then turn into highly reactive adults, which are introverts. He said they're kind of like orchids, meaning that they can wilt very easily when they're overstimulated, but in the right atmosphere, they can really blossom and flourish and become very strong. He said it also depends. You know, that's where the nature comes from. Some people's amygdalae just react higher.

Okay. That's the nature part. We're just born with that, he said. But on the flip side, given the environment that it's placed in, a highly reactive child can either become a hero, learn to harness those strengths, or a bully. Like they're so reactive to what's happening that they start acting out. And so, really, the way in which we nurture what our nature is, is going to determine whether or not we really succeed or fail. So, he then goes on to talk about—I keep saying he because I'm talking about Kagan in this situation, which was Jerome Kagan, who did this experiment. But *she*, meaning Susan Kane, goes on to talk about free will, meaning what we do with our nature.

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She goes on to say that our brains are very elastic, meaning that we can learn and adjust as we go, and we can shape our brain. She said, at some point our brain has the capacity to take our fears and learn how to self soothe them. So, the amygdala—part of the nature is very highly reactive, meaning we get overstimulated, but all of those fears that are overstimulating, we have the ability as part of our free will to learn how to soothe those fears. And as we start soothing them, our amygdala will still fire rapid fire, but we start learning the coping skills in order to handle that. So, it never goes away. It's still part of us, but it's not overcoming us. And I've seen how much that's true for me. Like, there are certain things that I will still do where it's like, "gosh, am I not over this? Like, why? Why am I still so stressed out about this?"

And I'm always amazed that like, even though I've, like, gone through it so many times, I'm learning how to self soothe at a much quicker pace. She goes on to say that, as part of this, we have to make sure that we are learning our sweet spots. And I like the word that she used there. Like our sweet spots for the self-soothing. Now, within these sweet spots, we are learning what is our stimulation, what really makes us like over stimulated. And at this point, this is where we learn how to create an environment. We're learning how to work with our body, you know, all of these things, in order for us to start calming our amygdala, calming our emotional brain, as she calls it. Now, this is part of our survival strategy. This is why we've been so successful is because we have learned to become very adaptable, and to adjust, and find those sweet spots where we can succeed. And so, this is where we really start to harness our power.

Now, she goes on to say that as we're looking at the introverted/extroverted—Now it's important to recognize that not only is our amygdala or our emotional brain different, we also process a hormone called dopamine. Now, dopamine is what gives us like that high, that natural buzz. The extrovert—we all have the way we react to what she calls a "reward sensitivity"—the extrovert will get a higher buzz from different rewards. The introvert gets a lower buzz. Now for the extrovert she kind of mentions this—like really good example she uses in the book is like gambling. When they win and they get that dopamine hit, extroverts, they get a much higher buzz. It's more fun for them. And she said, you know, it's kind of sad for the introverts, but here's the interesting thing is that with the extrovert, the buzz, it also causes them not to see warning signs because they're too high on their buzz. She said, now the opposite is that the introverts can see warning signs. And because of this, they can see those warning signs... And so, I loved the example that she shared. I actually, like, was sitting in bed and I, like, sat up in bed and I was like, I told my husband, I'm like, "you've got to hear this" because, you know, he's introverted as well, and I'm like, "this makes so much sense to me!"

Where, you know, we, as introverts, don't have as high of a reward sensitivity; we don't get as high of a dopamine hit, but we can also see things that other people can't. So, it's like this secret superpower that we have. And so, the example she talks about in the book is with the 2008 housing crash. And she has very specific examples of where there were introverts that knew it was coming. But because of their introversion and because they hadn't learned how to harness their power, they were not heard over the extroverted ideal leaders that were happening. And so, even

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though, like people could see that it was coming, they couldn't get their voices heard to the level of, like, really being able to motivate change.

And so, she said, it's not just, like, enough to be an introvert and to be okay being an introvert. It's learning how to use your gifts to your benefit so you can be heard. So, when these warning signs do come up, whether at work or, you know, in family, in a relationship with your children, you know, whatever that might be, you know how to harness those abilities to get your voice heard.

So, she then goes on to talk about, you know, how to harness strength. She talks about for us, as introverts, it's important for us to find our flow using our gifts. She says that the biggest challenge may be to fully harness your strength. She said, you may be busy trying to appear like "a zestful reward-sensitive extrovert, that you undervalue your own talents and feel underestimated by those around you. But when you're focused on a project that you care about, you probably find that your energy is boundless," which I have seen this time and time again.

She says, don't let others make you feel as if you have to. She says, "if you enjoy depth, don't force yourself to speed. If you prefer single tasking to multitasking, stick to your guns. Being relatively unmoved by rewards gives you an incalculable power to go your own way." She goes on to say that "introverts also need to learn how to trust their gut and share their ideas as powerfully as they can. That doesn't mean trying to be an extrovert." She says, "ideas can be shared quietly. They can be communicated in writing. They can be packaged in highly produced lectures. They can be advanced by allies," which I love. The example, again, going back to Rosa Parks and, like Martin Luther King Jr., really helped. Like he was her ally and helping her advance the cause. She said, "the trick for introverts is to honor their own styles instead of allowing themselves to get swept up in the prevailing norm."

And I really appreciated that she talked about that because it's so important for us as introverts to get super clear on what our strengths are and the more that we get so clear on that, the more we move toward it, the more courage we have to act in our own way. That's when amazing things happen. And it's interesting because I've seen how much that's played out in my parenting.

You know, as I've really looked at my own children, they don't fit the extroverted ideal. They are neuro divergent. I've got one that's autistic. I've got another that's suspected, maybe. She's definitely introverted, and we've tried to push them to sports, you know, all those things that we did in the beginning. And I was able to step back and realize that's not where their strengths are. And me being able to measure them to some other kid that was extroverted did more damage to our relationship than anything else. And I had to let go of what the extrovert ideal was and to be able to really understand what their power was as more of an introvert.

So, then she goes on, you know, in the third section, I'll just mention it briefly. She talks about cultures. She says she doesn't mean to gender—or not gender. To racially stereotype a whole group of people. She said she's looking at the research

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behind it. She said typically, Asia is much more of an introverted continent and the US is much more extroverted. And she said that it's important to remember that soft power can win people over-aggressive power can push people away. So, there is a place for us just, like, there is a place for this whole continent of people and the changes that they're making. And so, she had a lot of really amazing research on that.

She goes on to say, that like, "when do we actually act like an extrovert? And is that okay? And is that still in honor of who we are?" And this is what she talks about in the fourth section on how to love, how to work. So, there is a theory based on a man... I think his name is, it says Professor Little. I think his first name was Brian.

Anyway, Professor Little, who is a very well-known public speaker, is an amazing professor. He's also very introverted, and he talks about something he calls the "Free Trait Theory." He said he believes that fixed traits and free traits coexist, going back to our nurture versus nature. He said, "according to the Free Trait Theory, we are born and culturally endowed with certain personality traits. Introversion, for example. But we can and do act out of character in the service of core personal projects. Introverts are capable of acting like extroverts for the sake of work they consider important, people they love, or anything they highly value. This is how a lot of us are able to really harness our powers; is that there is a time where we may step into the extrovert ideal, very intentionally because it's for a core personal project. It's for someone or something that we really love. And we're doing in service of that. Now the important thing, and this is kind of where we're going to start wrapping up, is that it's important for us to recognize that we don't stay there. We may visit that for a time, ok? Imagine this is, like, you here [drawing a figurative "you" on a white board] in your introverted place and you're going to step over it into the extroverted place. Now when we step over, it's always in service of something that we're very passionate about. If we stay there too long, we will burn out. We will become so overstimulated. We will be completely so out of sync with our body that our nervous system actually shuts down. And I've seen this, you know, and I've talked about it in past book clubs. Like with my fibromyalgia, like suppressing my emotions, like trying to be someone else and not really honoring and listening to my body. What started to happen is my entire body started to shut down.

And what I realized as part of that was not only did I need to honor what I was feeling, but I needed to honor why I was feeling those things, because I had this belief I was fundamentally flawed. And so, when he talks about like giving, going back to Professor Little who had this Free Trait Theory that she talked about in the book, said, you know, you can visit this for a time. Like he goes and speaks very publicly. And then it's important for him to come back to what he calls "restorative niches," where he has built in times where he can find a place to go back into retreat. It's not being a hermit; it's being restorative to who you naturally are.

And it's funny because as I've thought about this for myself, and I was able to look around, like, "where do I do this?" I don't always—well, I do it a lot of times when, like I mentioned with church, like I come home and I sometimes sit in my bedroom, sit in

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my closet. Like I need time to, like, restore myself, but I also noticed that I do this in a lot of public settings. For me, one of my restorative niches is that when I am in a very large group, I will always sit on the outside, on the right side, kind of toward the front. It allows me to see the speaker, but it allows me to take in all of the stimulation around me without having to feel overwhelmed by being in the middle of it.

One of the other examples is that I've also noticed that I get very overstimulated when I'm on a vacation. And that was really overwhelming and really hard for me because my body would shut down when I'm wanting to go and have fun with my family. And so, I've had to build in, like, if we go do an activity in the morning, I'm taking a nap in the afternoon.

I'm sitting by myself, and my kids are on electronics so that we have separation where I can spend some time being restorative to my introverted state. So that's really what she talks about. The last little bit, and I'm just going to touch on it, is really being able to honor what our children feel. And I was appreciative that she spent time talking about this. She says to create an environment for your children in order for them to flourish and to harness their natural abilities as an introvert, without holding them to that extroverted ideal. When you do that, they become who they're meant to be. They become that strong, powerful example of quiet strength, that quiet power. And that's really starts from you as a mom. So, I want to leave just a couple minutes. I know we're at two o'clock, so, if you need to go, you are welcome to, but I always like to leave a couple of minutes at the end.

Just really briefly, I'm so excited that we have been able to do this book club. We are going to be taking a break for the next two months. I am hoping that by book club next month, there will be a baby here. I am eight months, almost nine months pregnant. I am ready to have this baby. I'm ready for the next phase of crazy to start. My hips will much welcome that. So, we will not be having book club for the next couple of months.

So just be on the lookout, you know, for the emails for the calendar invites, because we will start back up, most likely, in January for book club. So, if you're listening to this on replay or on the podcast for the next couple of months, we will have some past recordings also included, so you're still getting those bonus episodes on the podcast, because I love sharing those with you. And we've done some really, really amazing books that are on our YouTube channel, but not on the podcast. So, for the next couple of months, we won't be doing it live. I'll just be sharing some of those past recordings.

All right, so thank you everyone for joining. I'll see you all after the baby comes.