

Toni J Collier

HOW TO HOLD JOY AND PAIN

We were designed to hold more than pain. We were also designed to experience joy even when it's tough.



**BY TONI
COLLIER**

INTRODUCTION

Here's the truth: Joy and pain and hurt and hope can actually coexist. We are not monolithic creatures who are only capable of experiencing one emotion. Let me prove it to you. Have you ever gone through a hard break up? Whether it was a friendship, a dating relationship, or even a marriage. And while it hurt you incredibly bad and caused so much pain, weren't there moments where you watched something on TV, a friend told you a funny joke, or you just thought of something funny and laughed? Don't we get weird in those moments? Like we say to ourselves, no wait we can't be happy right now we can't laugh a little or smile a little right now, we're supposed to be upset and hurt? What if I told you that actually it's the opposite? That even when it feels like we are surrounded by darkness and pain, we can actually experience hope and joy too. And it is actually in the darkest of moments that letting in glimmers of light is the most important. So, let's learn how we can hold Joy and pain in the same, exact breath.

With you,
TONI



01.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAIN

Stop numbing your pain. Stop stuffing it under a rug. You're worth more than that. You deserve to have space in this world for the pain that you feel. David in the Psalms took space to grieve and cry out to God. Jesus took time to cry out to His Father in Heaven. And God invites you into a life of freedom when it comes to your pain.

As Brene Brown teaches, the second we begin to numb our pain, is the moment we inevitably numb our joy.



02.

ANTICIPATE THE JOY

Typically I've heard that I should anticipate pain. But, pain is inevitable. I grew up with pain, trauma, abuse, and all of the hard things life throws at you. When joy came knocking, now THAT was wild.

I would self-sabotage. I would imagine ways things could go wrong. So much so, that I couldn't enjoy the joy. But we were made for Eden. We were made for the joy and happiness that God gives freely. So, anticipate that joy will come to you. And when it does, lean all the way in, know that you deserve it, and soak in every single moment.



03. PRACTICE NAMING YOUR FEELINGS.

With the wave of emotional honesty and vulnerability going around, you've likely heard someone say something about naming your feelings. But have you done it though? I don't mean to call you out! I just believe that the closer we are to our feelings, the closer we are to surrendering our pain at the feet of Jesus.

When we begin to say things like "I am scared to accept good things in my life." And "I am feeling crushed under the weight of this pain" we begin to position ourselves with our hands out instead of fists clenched. Holding our joy and pain can be done gal, especially when we let God hold it with us.