

Carolina Ramirez: Emotional dysregulation & re-parenting our...

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SPEAKERS

Katy Weber, Carolina Ramirez



Carolina Ramirez 00:00

And so when you find a way to surrender, and just say, this is what's happening, this is my reality and how can I come through this with a understanding of how this is working for me, instead of how this is working against me Hello, and




Katy Weber 00:26

welcome to the women and ADHD podcast. I'm your host, Katy Weber. I was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 45. And it completely turned my world upside down. I've been looking back at so much of my life, school, jobs, my relationships, all of it with this new lens and it has been nothing short of overwhelming. I quickly discovered I was not the only woman to have this experience. And now I interview other women who liked me discovered in adulthood they have ADHD and are finally feeling like they understand who they are and how to best lean into their strengths, both professionally and personally. Okay, we are gonna get right into it with Episode 107, in which I interviewed Karolina Ramirez. Karolina is a Latina licensed therapist and parent coach who is based in North Carolina. She specializes in supporting parents of neurodiverse children as well as helping others to heal from emotional wounds, honor their truth and reclaim peace in their lives. We talk all about the neurodivergent nervous system and emotional dysregulation, and Karolina shares how parenting her 10 year old neurodiverse son helped her discover her own healing journey and her passion for supporting families. We also talk about strategies for re-parenting ourselves and our inner child. Karolina also happens to be one of the organizers of the ADHD Summit, which is happening this week. The summit is a free online event featuring interviews with more than 30 ADHD experts including yours truly and several former guests on this podcast. The Summit runs for four days this week from October 17 to October 20. And you can watch the expert videos absolutely free for 24 hours or you can purchase access to all of them for a year so you can watch them or rewatch them at your leisure included with that purchase as well are tons of bonuses including an ADHD resource guide, a guide to creating successful morning and bedtime routines. There's even email templates for communicating with school officials, which I'm super excited about. And you get a

whole host of additional discounts for subscriptions and other products. There's just too many things for me to list right now. So make sure to go to the link in my episode shownotes. To find out more the earlybird price is \$67 and that ends this week on October 20. And then that price goes up to \$117. So make sure to go now and lock in that lower price whether you are an adult with ADHD a parent of an ADHD child or a professional who supports ADHD families you do not want to miss out on this resource. I have been blown away by the value of this summit and I am honored to have been a part of it. In fact I met Karolina because she interviewed me for the ADHD summit and I just loved our conversation so much and really wanted to have her on this podcast to share her own story and her family story. I just wanted to get a chance to chat with her again because she is so wise and inspiring as you will find out so without further ado, here is my interview with Karolina Hi Karolina, thank you so much for joining me. And yeah, I'm really excited to hear a little bit more about your personal story.

 Carolina Ramirez 03:32

Thank you so much for having me, Katie, I'm so glad to be here.

 Katy Weber 03:35

I guess I'll start out by asking you know about your ADHD diagnosis and what was going on in your life? I know you mentioned that, you know, your son was initially diagnosed with autism and ADHD, when was that? How old was he and kind of what was going on in your life when you started connecting the dots in your own life.

 Carolina Ramirez 03:57

So I actually don't have an diagnosis on ADHD for myself, but I highly suspect that I do have ADHD. And it did come up for me through the parent journey of learning that my son has ADHD. And when I realized that he had ADHD, because he was having some trouble getting information from his teachers, processing that information, also being able to manage how he was able to focus in the classroom, I realized that I had a lot of trouble to getting distracted a lot as a kid. And I was that kid that was always like, Oh, she's a good student, but she talks a lot and we can't get her to stop talking. And so my son presents very similarly. He's very outgoing. He's a very friendly kid. And when one idea comes into his mind, he just wants to talk about that. It's almost like a high refocus. And I realized that I am the same way. So I started to really connect the dots, and then look really at my family history. And thinking that, wow, we all have ADHD in our family, it just was never, you know, acknowledged. And really realizing like, I remember having to help my nephews, because we grew up together. And they were just like, so difficult to keep sitting down at a table to do homework or anything like that. And now I realize like there was because of their ADHD as well. And I know that they also struggled in school. And at that time, we were told that they were struggling in school, however, there was a mistrust in the school system, with our family. And so they wanted to bus them to different schools, so they can get the right supports. However, our school was across the street at that time, and my sister who was raising all of us just was not comfortable with that. And so now it's kind of like it's coming full circle. Because when I talked to my family about the struggles that we have, with my son, and things that I'm finding out about myself, my sisters, my brother, they're all saying the same thing. They're like, wow, I struggle with that, too. Like, I can see

that now. Like, I think I also have ADHD. So yeah, so I definitely need to get on track to have the diagnosis done. But I also know that this is the work that I'm doing now. And so I'm using all of the practices and tools and help that I can get from talking to people like yourself, and also just, you know, learning more about ADHD so I can support others in that journey as well. It has been helping me, I've been applying that and it's been really helpful. Yeah, I



Katy Weber 06:56

mean, and that's something I feel like, is a theme that is threaded throughout a lot of the conversations I have with women about ADHD, because so many women in adulthood come to their ADHD diagnosis through their kids, right? Their kids are diagnosed, they do exactly what you did, which is like, How can I help my kid? How can I be the best parent? How can I like hyper focus, I get all the resources and be a great parent. And then you're like, oh, yeah, I had all of this to this is, you know, I didn't realize this. I thought this was just who I was right, and not realizing that there's a name for this. But then at the same time, realizing that a formal diagnosis is really just one apart in a huge patchwork of like, what is my treatment plan? Right? Like, I feel like, I get asked a lot like, is a formal diagnosis necessary? And my answer, my answer is always like, no, but yeah, but no, but yeah, because it's, it can be really helpful. But at the same time, this diagnosis is really about identifying and developing that language between, you know, around some of these traits where you're like, oh, oh, that's ADHD. Oh, that's ADHD, and really, like, kind of understanding how to best live your life and how to be a good parent and all of that. Yeah. Yeah. Anyway, all of that was to say, I never am like, you know, if somebody hasn't been formally diagnosed, I've never like, Call me back where you are. Because for me, I feel like the journey begins so much earlier than a formal diagnosis.



Carolina Ramirez 08:24

Yeah, for sure. And I remember, you know, when my son was diagnosed, I was hyper focused on finding out everything I could about ADHD, and she would tell me, you know, that's not really that healthy for you, you're like, not sleeping, you're just, you know, doing research, research, research, and like, but that's what my brain needs to do in order to feel calmer. And in order to feel like, you know, I have more of a grasp of the situation. And so that's what I needed to do. And, you know, I didn't need to sleep for a few nights. I mean, I did sleep. But you know, it was just like, I was so interested. And that's the ADHD brain, right? We are hyper focused on things that really interests us. And I've always been about self development, and hence why I'm a therapist. And, you know, I've always been about how do I help other people through their challenges? And so when I received the diagnosis for my son, it was immediately Okay, dive in. How do I help my son through this diagnosis? And you know, it was really new to me at the time, even though I've been a therapist for over 15 years, but I've never had to deal with it in my home. And so it's very different when you're seeing clients outside and your practice, versus when you're actually living with it in the home and actually naming it and having a name for that because in my culture and how we grew up in our family, it was mostly Oh, you know, these kids are just very high energy and they're just like, Hi I believe and they're just like riding around and they don't listen, and they're bad. And so that was what we were used to. And I think a lot of us in our society were used to those labels growing up, when now I go back, and I have conversations with my nephews, because we are all coming to this together and this realization, and we're like, No, we weren't bad. It's not that I couldn't like, you know, it's just that I have so much to say that I couldn't stop talking in class. And then you

know, and the same thing goes for them. And it brings us a lot of healing, to do that. And to go back and say, like, you know, what, there was nothing bad about me, I just have been dealing with ADHD and not knowing it. And this is just how my brain works and processes things. And this is just how I move through in this world.



Katy Weber 10:53

Yeah, it's always interesting to see the level of acceptance from families, right, which some families are like, Oh, that's really fascinating. And I probably also have ADHD. And I'm always, I've always jealous of when I hear that, because I feel like my experience was the, you know, families denying that it exists, and just being like, no, that's just weed. That's just who we are. That's fine. The few very few family members I've even spoken to, I don't talk about it a lot with them, because they feel like they might be under attack, right. Like I hear about that a lot of parents who sort of feel like that, they feel very defensive about the fact that they may not have seen this or that go, this has got to be something else, you know, that they're not willing to be open minded about this. But it sounds like your family, for the most part has been really open minded and accepting.



Carolina Ramirez 11:38


Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And I think it's because we were, you know, closer, my nephews and I were raised together, my sister was also one that struggled through school. And it wasn't recognized that she had a learning delay and other conditions that she feels like she's self identified with. And I think it's because we are, maybe in the same generation, like, I do think that, like, my mother in law, may not be as accepting. And it's kind of like, you know, just push through whatever challenges you have, like, you don't have to use any label or any condition as a crutch. And so I do see some of that with some of the older family members that we have. But I think it's my generation, and the generation that came after me, that were just kind of like really being open and saying, like, Wow, all of this time, I thought that I just, you know, couldn't comprehend what I was reading, when in reality is just that my brain processes these things differently. And I needed to learn in a different way. Or I wasn't really interested in reading *The Great Gatsby* when I was in high school. But you know, that's why I couldn't get into it. And it wasn't that I just wasn't a good student, it's just that that type of reading did not interest me. And so we're starting to connect those dots and realizing like, we don't have to tie those things to our, our worthiness. And I think that's one of the root things that happens in in us who are diagnosed and don't really know what's going on and how we're processing the world, is that we start thinking about how broken we are and how unworthy we are. And that affects us. But when you start to acknowledge that it's just that you're processing things differently, it becomes more of a an acceptance, and you know, like this, it's okay, like, we all have our thing. And we need to just kind of remember what our challenges are. So we can support that in however way possible, and then also acknowledge our strengths so that we can move forward with those strains.




Katy Weber 13:51

Yeah, I think I love the language you used on your website where you were talking about like, rather than approaching this, like, if this is something we're going to fix, I use the word surrender. And I really liked that word. I wanted to make sure to comment on that just because

I felt like it's not I think we use the word acceptance a lot or just sort of leaning in and but I really liked the word surrender in terms of finding the good in in some of the things that might have initially presented as being a struggle or a challenge right can be so healing.

 Carolina Ramirez 14:24

Yeah, absolutely. And that's one of my words that I've used. A lot of people pick a word for the year like I think I've picked surrender for like five years in a row. Because just when you think you've got like a handle on things, a new situation comes up and it's kind of like, what am I going to do here? And so I've learned and through my spiritual practice to is just really becoming one with the process that is life. So not necessarily beating myself up and that's where the self compassion comes in. Because I think that a lot of us can be really hard on ourselves. Because we tend to be these overachievers, or we want to show the world that we, there's nothing wrong with us, like, let me show you that I can really do this or that I'm really smart. Or that just because you know, I'm talkative doesn't mean that I'm not like focused on what I need to do. But I think that a lot of it comes from us trying to prove ourselves to other people. And then when things go wrong in our life, or things become really challenging or difficult, or we're experiencing negative emotions, we tend to try to fight that somehow. And so when you find a way to surrender, and just say, this is what's happening, this is my reality, and how can I come through this with a understanding of how this is working for me, instead of how this is working against me? And so that's when the surrender comes in? Is how can I turn this into? What can I use this for? And what is this doing? For me? There's always a lesson there. Hmm,

 Katy Weber 16:10

yeah, I know, I feel like that's a conversation I have with a lot of clients who come to me where they're sort of like, okay, tell me what I need to do. What's going to work for me? How am I going to hack into this? How am I going to fix this? And my answer is always sort of like there's nothing to fix. Oh, that was beautifully said. So so just to backtrack with your son. So he was diagnosed with autism and ADHD. At the same time,

 Carolina Ramirez 16:32

he was diagnosed with autism first. And then in preschool, he went to a special school for kids that needed more assistance. The preschool teacher said, you know, I'm not really too worried about some of the traits that present with his autism. She's like, What I'm really worried about is his distractibility. She's like, because that is like the main thing that's causing challenges for him in the classroom right now. And so when she said that, I was like, Well, what do you mean distractibility. And she was like, it's very difficult for him to be able to stay on task for, you know, a certain number of minutes, he's got to move around a lot. His attention is very varied. And he gets easily distracted by sounds, sudden movement, anything that might fly across the window. So she had to come up with strategies like closing the blinds where he was around so that he wouldn't get distracted by something that was passing by. And so when she said that, I said, Hmm, I said, So do you think there's something else here going on? And she said, definitely, she's, I would look into ADHD for him. And so that's when I started the process of, you know, looking into an ADHD diagnosis. And we went to a developmental pediatrician, who

then gave us a checklist that was super long for both my husband and I to fill out, and also his teacher. And when we were checking off all these questions, it just became really clear to me like, wow, yeah, he he has ADHD as well. And so a lot of times, I also feel like his ADHD is just more pronounced than the autism. There's a lot of things that come with his autism, that present challenges. But most of the challenges that we face with him are related to his ADHD. So it's in a lot of overlaps, too. So it kind of gets a little tricky. But it's the emotional regulation piece. It's the sensitivity of rejection, dysphoria, it's you know, having that need to always need to be first and just kind of like, really, this sense of urgency that comes through him, that really tells me about how he's perceiving the world around him, and how also like his nervous system, because I do feel like ADHD is so deeply tied to our nervous system is dysregulated. And so definitely having that insight, and I'm so thankful for the teachers insight on that, we've been able to work more diligently on strategies that help him to calm his nervous system down is like what I like to say, because it's like you said, it's not about fixing it, there's nothing wrong with him, but really figuring out what works for him and putting strategies in place and supports especially in school that support him in the way that he learns and the way that he needs to move and the way that he needs to regulate so that he can show up and be the best kid that he can be in that system and in that environment. Yeah, I



Katy Weber 19:48

mean, I feel like that's something I'm questioning a lot which is you know, I think a lot of us are coming to err ADHD diagnosis and then realizing like, are we actually talking about autism here? because there's so much overlap, and there's so much, you know, inter weaving between seeking stimulation, and then over stimulation and the dysregulation that comes from over stimulation. And, and, you know, I feel like I'm constantly trying to question like, What are we actually talking about here? And also like, is this actually autism? So I'm always curious when the, as a parent, like, how are you able to kind of distinguish between, from from one to the other?



Carolina Ramirez 20:27

Yeah, it definitely can get muddy. I feel like with autism, some of the bigger traits that will distinguish autism from ADHD is rigidity, and not being as flexible, needing to have things a certain way. So almost kind of like an OCD component. And, you know, definitely, you'll see more for some, not all, and everyone's unique, whether they're autistic, or have ADHD, everyone presents differently, which is why is also another reason that is so hard. But in our son situation is, you know, he does a lot of hand flapping, which is what we call stimming, and the autistic world. And so he does a lot of stemming, he does a lot of sounds from his mouth that are not necessarily words, but it's just that he needs to get it out of his system. And again, I really feel like the way that I've been able to digest autism and ADHD in our home, is to really tie it back down to our nervous system and how we are put together how our nervous system is put together. And so our brains are wired for us to be who we are uniquely, and respecting that nervous systems needs and meeting that person's needs. And however way possible. So, you know, I never shame him for having to stim or having to grunt, you know, there are times where we're in public where I would have to remind him to keep it down. However, I think that the beautiful thing about it is that it's he's learning as he gets older, he's 10. Now, he's learning that there are certain environments that he can do that in, and he feels comfortable doing that in and then there's certain environments that he won't, but when he's home, he's free to just

be himself. And sometimes he just needs to crash into the sofa, or like, you know, just jump around. And I let him do that, because I'm like, that's his way of regulating himself. And that's okay. And so I would say those are probably more of the obvious differences with autism and ADHD is that we see a lot more repetitive behaviors, some stimming, some maybe involuntary grunting or, or noises that may come from our children, and some OCD tendencies to and then with the ADHD, what I see mostly is just a highly distractible person, which again, I really don't like the negative tone that comes with that word. But it's just more like, you know, their attention is varied. And so it's like, I can go from one thing to the next in less than three seconds. And then I have to reel it back in like, Hey, bud, don't don't forget we were doing this. Okay. We were working on this. Oh, yeah, I forgot. Thanks. You know, it's kind of like, it's the it's the fast brain, you know, it's like going going going. I feel like there are some common traits. A lot of kids that have autism and ADHD can experience some sensory differences as well. And some overstimulation. The other part that is also a common trait for autism and ADHD, is the sensitivity rejection, dysphoria. And it just really depends on like, I think the individuals, their ability to perceive their world outside of them. There are some children that are on the autism spectrum that will be more what I call inward, and they kind of like live in their own little world and bubble whereas there are some kids like my son, who is what we would consider more mild autism, and he is able to kind of like also perceive his outside world, even though there are times that he's just living in Word to and that's okay. But definitely, the two can get pretty muddled. And it's sometimes hard to tease out. But what I like to tell my parents is just like, let's not focus on what's what, but let's focus on what can we do to meet their needs? And what is it better they need to do do they need to move? Let's get them moving? Does he need to jump around and make noise let him do that, you know, when is the time that he can do that? If you're, you know, going outside and you want to say hey, but you know, remember we're going outside maybe keep it down a little bit. it, but a lot of those traits that come up for them are involuntary. So sometimes they don't even have the capacity to control that. And that's okay. And as a parent, again, it's about the surrendering that it is what it is, and that there's nothing wrong, he's not hurting anybody, and keeping him safe and making sure that he feels comfortable as possible to be himself.



Katy Weber 25:26

I'd like to take a moment to thank better help for sponsoring this podcast. If you're a regular listener of this podcast, you know, I am a big proponent of therapy therapy provides me the best opportunity for verbal processing something that is so important for my kind of brain and my sense of self. What I love about BetterHelp is that it's not a crisis line. It's not self help. It is professional therapy that's done securely online from the comfort of your home, they assess your needs and match you with your own licensed professional therapist, and it's available for clients worldwide. So you get access to a broad range of expertise that might not be available to you locally. It also tends to be more affordable than traditional offline therapy and financial aid is available. If you visit their website and read their testimonials. There are actually quite a few reviews that specifically reference help with ADHD as a special offer for listeners of the women and ADHD podcast, you'll get 10% off your first month, simply sign up at [betterhelp.com/women ADHD](https://betterhelp.com/women-ADHD). That's BetterHelp h e l p.com/women. ADHD, and there's a link in the show notes. This podcast is sponsored by BetterHelp. Wow. So do you work with a lot of parents? Do you have like a parenting support group or something? It sounds like? Yes, yes,



Carolina Ramirez 26:38

definitely. Yeah. So I do work with parents right now. That's what I'm doing is parent coaching. And so I and I work specifically with parents of neurodiverse neurodivergent children, because I'm so passionate about breaking the stigmas and dismantling systems that are keeping our neurodivergent loved ones down. You know, I also feel like there's a huge component to it, that we have this stereotype of when we say autism or ADHD, that it automatically means that this person is not going to have a great quality of life, and that we automatically go to what we may have seen on the TV or on, you know, the movies. And it's not like that, I guess, you know, we come in all different shades, we come in all different sizes, and all different IQ levels, right. And so we have to start raising more awareness. Because I know that when I received the diagnosis, there was a moment where I would just felt like I was doomed. You know, like, oh, my gosh, what am I going to do? My child is autistic and has ADHD, like, his life is just gonna be in shambles, when in reality, that's like completely the opposite. He's doing amazing things. And I know he's gonna continue to do amazing things. But there are there challenges that come with that, absolutely. But it's about helping him learn, like what those challenges are, and how he can work through that, because we all have them. Like I know, I certainly struggle with emotional dysregulation. And at first, I used to beat myself up about that. And I'm like, What is going on here, like I am a therapist. And now I'm a mom. And it became worse and when I became a parent, but I'm just I realized now that I can easily go from zero to 100. And so now that I'm aware of that, I have strategies to help me in that moment, when I feel the anger rising, you know, and I'm in a situation with my children. I literally take myself out of the situation, I just walk away, I go into the pantry, or I step out into my front porch or my backboard. And I breathe, because before I do something that is going to scar them. And before I show up as a parent that I don't want to be, I need to figure out what helps me and it's not going to be pretty and 100% all the time. It's no one's perfect, but I've definitely come a long way. And at first it was just like beat yourself up because look at you like what are you doing. But I didn't realize that I also had emotional dysregulation, and that it was really intense. It's these intense emotions that come up for me and it was the same thing that my son was dealing with. And it was the same reason we got a diagnosis is because he had these intense emotions and these intense reactions. And I am a true believer that our kids mirror back to us what we need to work on. And when I started seeing all these things, I said, Wow, I said, I am very similar to him and I just never reacted the way he did because I was raised differently and I was scared of my parents. But I really do feel like this generation is Creating a consciousness for us as parents and as society. And we're waking up to ways that we were being controlled ways that we were being taught to be compliant and putting others needs in front of ours, just to say that we were good kids, I want to help other parents get through that journey, because it's not easy. And it's not for the faint of heart. And it's isolating, and a lot of parents feel lonely. And they feel that doom that is unnecessary. And so I'm really trying to dismantle all that stereotypical thinking that we have about ADHD and autism, because we got to do better.



Katy Weber 30:39

Yeah, I know. And I, I feel like my diagnosis has helped me become a much better parent to my kids. And not only because of the, you know, like you were saying, like, there's so much of that is recognizing the strategies that I can have in place, before I get to a point of emotional dysregulation of myself, you know, some of the things that I always thought, What's wrong with me, I'm such a terrible mom. And so I am able to recognize it, I always call it the having notes in the margin, around like, some of the stuff as it's coming up where I can, um, you know, my diagnosis has helped me develop a language around what's happening to me, in a way that has made me be a better parent, but it's also really allowed me to realize I was always a good parent. And I wasn't seeing that, you know, and so I think that's having the confidence to say I

am a good parent has helped my parents and, you know, it's like, it builds on itself, just to believe that, you know, like, the wizard behind the curtain, like the power was in us. And, and how much of our self concept is dependent on that understanding of like, this is what is going on. And as opposed to what's wrong with me, and always defaulting to the what's wrong with me part.



Carolina Ramirez 31:54

And I really liked to touch on like, re parenting ourselves, because a lot of that, for me, was because when I did express emotion as a child, I was shut down very quickly. And when I see my kids expressing their emotions, it's hard for me to sit there and hold it for them. And I learned through them that it was because the little child and me because we all have it, and a lot of us don't realize it that when we are out of control, it is the little inner child in us that is feeling out of control. And as the adult now we can go back to re parenting ourselves, by allowing ourselves to feel those emotions, and to say to ourselves, that we got us that you're okay, that it's okay for you to cry, it's okay for you to feel these big emotions, they are to hold you. And I feel like if we go ahead and do that, and re parent ourselves, we will become the parent that is a much more calmer presence, and also can hold space for our kids. Because we know, with ADHD comes big emotions, big reactions, rejection, you know, you feel everything more deeply. I always feel like ADHD brains are just more intuitive also. And we just have this different wiring that makes us more sensitive to other people's energies, their emotions, the environment around us. I mean, I can, my energy will change really quick with just a, you know, blink, like I can just tell like that, that energy change in that room, and it affects me. And so it's kind of like a combination of of us being an empath and a highly sensitive person and then have these ADHD traits, that again, doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with us, it just means that we have to be very aware of how things are affecting us. And, and again, it comes back to a lot of times and how we were programmed as children and how we were taught whether or not we could express ourselves. And sometimes that's what really comes up as the anger or the out of control version of ourselves is that inner child that needs to be healed and re parented so that you can just be a better person all around.



Katy Weber 34:35

Yeah, I totally agree with the empath part. And I think they're I feel that a lot with many of the conversations I have with women on the on this podcast, just reminded me of personality tests and how like, what are the questions I always struggle with with personality tests, as is, you know, do you like meeting new people? Like, I don't know. It depends, like, are they interesting? What is it I do did I eat that day like, you know that feeling of like things can change on a dime when you're talking to somebody, right? Or just like, I'd never know if I'm gonna go into a room full of people and be the life of the party or immediately want to turn around and go home. And so it's like, I'm so dependent on what I always used to call the vibe, right of like, I'm like, I'm so dependent on the vibe from people. And so I think it's interesting, too, with the conversation around masking and how we kind of develop personalities based on who we're with. And most of my personality is often in dependent on the whoever I'm talking to. Right. So it's like, that chameleon personality, right? Which again, it's like, is that such a terrible thing? It all depends on how you're willing to look at it. But anyway, it just reminded me of those, those questions I've always really struggled with. And I think I was talking to

somebody recently who was like, I can, depending on the day, I can do like a Myers Briggs test and have like two polar opposite personalities, because it all depends on what mood I'm in that day.



Carolina Ramirez 36:02

Through. I love that, yeah. And like or even times when we commit to doing something, and then we, you know, it comes time to go to that commitment. And you're like, Oh, why did I commit to this, like, I was a bit on my really like, happy time, because right now I've just like wanting to stay home, and I don't want to do anything. But totally I feel we really need to be self aware. And, and that self awareness takes practice. And it's really a moment of reflecting. And it doesn't even mean me, I like to journal. So anyone who loves to journal, I highly encourage journaling to really get your thoughts out. And it's literally just writing exactly what's on your mind, and not judging it. And just letting it don't even read back until you're completely done. Just literally get your thoughts and on paper, or on a computer if you'd like to type better. But basically, you know, really getting to know yourself and learning to kind of like be an observer, a lot of people think that meditation means that you have to sit and quiet and just like hum to something. But meditation is really anything that you can do to be an observer of yourself. So finding a way to step outside of yourself and just observe like, how am I acting right now? And why am I reacting this way? What is triggering me to react this way in this situation. And and you may not be able to do it in that moment. But even if you do it just five minutes after that moment happened, because that's going to be very good information for you to figure out what it is that is problematic for you with a situation. And it could be that the people around you are not good for the energy that you're meeting at the moment. Or it could be that you're just like you said tired, fatigued, hungry, didn't get a chance to like, go for your walk today. And so all those things affect us. And the more that we can become self reflective, and aware of how we need to take care of ourselves, in order to be the best person that we want to be, it's going to be key for us to be able to really thrive and to really reach the goals and be authentic to ourselves, is what I like to say to my parents and anyone that comes in my life.



Katy Weber 38:34

I love that beautifully said and I love your take on meditation too, because I think that meditation sometimes feels like a very scary word to a lot of people, especially with ADHD because they think, you know, they think stillness, and then they're like, nope. And I love that idea of being in the present tense. We're coming back to this idea of surrendering and acceptance. You know, I remember I wish I could remember who it was that had said this. But I remember reading somewhere that basically, you know, all negative emotions happen either in the past or in the future. So negative emotions, right. So it's like, you know, negative emotions in the past or regret or things that involve the past. And then there's negative emotions for the future. So it's anxiety, fear, all of that is all future related, right? But when you're in the present moment, you have a break from negative emotions. And I just remember always thinking about that in terms of meditation and how it really, like you said, it's really about being mindful in the present, trying to stay in the present moment and being observing of the present and kind of giving yourself a break from the constant back and forth between past and future negative emotions, but



Carolina Ramirez 39:43


and that's self compassion to like, you know, what you're saying is self compassion, because a lot of us can be really hard on ourselves, especially when we're experiencing a negative emotion. Right. And one of the things that I've also learned on this journey is to really take away the notion that an emotion is negative or bad, because emotions are just emotions, right? They can be difficult, absolutely 100% difficult, right. And like, you know, when I'm feeling depressed, or when I'm feeling anxious, that is a difficult emotion for me to sit with. But what I like to do in those moments is just really, like you said, stay in the present moment, because meditation is really about being here in the now. And a lot of times, what I do is I'll just focus on my breath, you know, as I'm walking around, or standing still, for a moment, when I'm starting to feel anxiety when I'm starting to feel down or sad about something, and really acknowledging, you know, this makes me really feel sad. And why is this making me feel sad? Or this is making me feel really anxious? Why is it making me feeling feel anxious, and so really is more about approaching it with a curiosity, versus like, I shouldn't be feeling this way. You know, this is not good for me, I'm like, I know where this is gonna go. And I totally get that there, there are times where I can spiral down into a very dark place. And I think that that's also something that comes with ADHD, we just have a coexisting vulnerability to experience anxiety to experience depression. Once we become aware of that, we can just say, Okay, I'm going through something that's really difficult right now. But this is not necessarily bad. This is telling me something, you know, maybe your depression is coming, because you are working too much and not spending enough time creating moments of joy, maybe your anxiety is coming is because you're committing to projects or things that don't necessarily align with what you know, you truly want to do. We have to kind of figure out what's a healthy level of anxiety, because we all need to experience some anxiety in some way, because it helps us to sometimes get to a next level. But if it's causing you really draining anxiety, and it's draining you from your energy, then you really have to go back and look and say and reevaluate that and say, what is it about this that's causing me to feel this way? And again, just approaching it with curiosity, and being very gentle with yourself, and that really, you know, the self compassion piece really goes hand in hand with the repenting part is kind of like how can I hold myself in this really difficult moment. And, you know, self compassion was something that I had to really delve into and practice. Because for the majority of my life, I've just been really hard on myself. And then, you know, I thought by beating myself up, I would get further, when in reality, I achieved many things by still beating myself up, but I didn't feel good about myself. And now what I learned through self compassion is that I just give myself the love that I need. Because a lot of times we are waiting for someone else that can give that love to us. When in reality you you are the person who you need to give WsL to. And that's what self compassion does.




Katy Weber 43:13

That's beautiful. I feel like I'm just going to have this podcast episode on like replay when I'm feeling low, I'm just very inspiring. When I was diagnosed with ADHD, it completely turned my world upside down. I looked back at so much of my life, my grades in school, my multiple careers and hobbies, my friendships, my marriage, motherhood, my relationship with food and my body, like all of this with a new lens. And it was overwhelming to say the least, if you've been diagnosed with ADHD, and you're feeling blown away by this new insight into your brain and how it operates, I totally understand I can help you begin to sort through this chaos, explore who you are and how your brain operates. So you can finally start to lean into your


strengths and begin to use them to your advantage moving forward. Together, we can work to identify what obstacles you've been facing, and create strategies to help you start living a more fulfilling, gratifying life, head over to [women in adhd.com/coaching](https://www.adhd.com/coaching), to book a 30 minute initial consult with me. So we can figure out if my brand of one on one coaching is right for you. Again, that's [women and adhd.com/coaching](https://www.adhd.com/coaching). And you can find that link in the episode show notes. So I want to shift for a little bit because I want to make sure we get to talk about the ADHD Summit. That was how I met you. Holly had reached out it's you've got an incredible lineup. And this is the first time you've worked together with Holly or Yeah. So let's talk about the summit and it started. It's this week. Why don't you sort of walk me through how you came up with the idea and some of the speakers and I'll certainly have all the links in the show notes to all of this.

 Carolina Ramirez 44:51


Definitely. And I'm so glad that you mentioned that because you are one of our speakers which I loved our interview so I cannot wait for our listeners to listen Then on to that interview, Holly and I are two therapist Holly psychologists. I'm a licensed clinical social worker. We're both in the Raleigh, North Carolina area. We've worked together in the past, locally, and we decided that we wanted to take this summit and share it with the world. And so we came up with the idea of having an online summit to focus on ADHD, because really, all of our work is focused on supporting parents, and professionals of those who are working with our ADHD children or teens. And so we sat down and we said, what is it that we needed? What is it that we needed when we received a diagnosis for our kids. And also, along our journey, how these kids are teenagers minds are 10, and four. And so we really sat down and started to think about all the things that we would have wanted as moms, and as therapists who work with families of neurodivergent children, what they would need. And so that's how we came up with getting all of the speakers who are just amazing, the interviews have so much great information packed into them, about how to deal with you know, executive functioning, issues, motivation, organization, procrastination, mental health, social skills, sleep, diagnosing ADHD, and learning delays or learning differences, how to collaborate with the school, how to ask for evaluations. So really, we're trying to come up with a package that really encompasses everything that a parent or a professional could use and apply to help their ADHD kids in their life. Because we know that if we're able to walk, walk our kids home to a place, whether it's home, into our physical home, or home into themselves, right, because I always say homecoming is really coming back to ourselves. And so how can we help our kids and start from as early as we can, to make them feel whole, and make them feel supported. And again, it's like what you said in the beginning, it's not we're not trying to fix anything, but we're trying to truly acknowledge that ADHD exist, because there still is that stereotype that ADHD doesn't exist. But really, it truly does exist, and it does need accommodations. And it does need support. But it starts with education. And it starts with knowledge, and the how to apply those. And so that is what the ADHD summit does is to bring all of that together, and package it up in a nice little bundle for parents and professionals.

 Katy Weber 47:57

So it's four days of absolutely free access to all of these incredible videos and interviews, which nobody will ever get through in a day. Right? So then if you want to hold on to them to have access later, is it for a year? Or what's the price point if you can't listen to them all?

 Carolina Ramirez 48:19

Yep, so each day, we have a category. So day one is diagnosing ADHD, physical health and mental health. Day two, we're focusing on school and learning. Day three, we're focusing on behavior. And day four, we're focusing on home. And so as you said, each day is going to be released for free for 24 hours. So you can watch any of those interviews or all of the interviews, but like you said, you're probably not going to get through all of them. So right now, we're running a discount. So if you purchase the summit, before the 20th, midnight on October 20, you will receive a \$50 discount, and you'll get all of the interviews plus some amazing must have bonuses for \$67. And so that price will go up after the 20th to \$117. So we really want to encourage everyone to go ahead and purchase the package through the early bird discount before midnight on October 20. And so again, some of those bonuses that you're going to receive if you do purchase the summit is going to be a discount bonus on many applications. So applications like June goalie. There's also other parenting courses from some of our speakers that have generously given a parent discount to their parenting courses or their parenting coaching. And there's also going to be in how to create a peaceful morning routine, accommodations for school all of these things are downloadable and templates for tools that you can use, directly copy and paste. And so you're gonna get a lot of tools that you can add to your toolbox that's going to help you along the journey of being a parent of ADHD, kiddos, really, it's a no brainer for you to just go ahead and purchase that package. So you can have it all and you have access to all of the interviews on demand for an entire year.

 Katy Weber 50:24

It's incredible. I mean, it's I sort of, I feel like I've seen summits like this in the past. And this, I can't believe how much of an incredible resource this is. So yeah, I will definitely have a link to purchase that in the show notes. And on my website. I can't believe you guys put this together. This is incredible. So excited.


 Carolina Ramirez 50:44

Yeah, it's gonna be amazing. And so I'm just really excited for all of the listeners and our audience to really have a chance to have this summit and basically is kind of having like tips and tools in your pocket.


 Katy Weber 50:58

Yeah, right. And like I said, I I've realized also, since my diagnosis, how much I require repetition, and listening that sometimes I can hear the same message over and over again, and it just doesn't land. And then I'll need it. And it speaks to me in a way that it didn't before. And I'm so I'm, I love having access to things. And there's so many of my previous guests on this lineup too. So I'm like very excited because there's so many brilliant women. Awesome. Okay, so now I'd love to ask all of my guests, if you could rename ADHD to something else, would you call it something else? And I feel like we've talked so much about, you know how this really isn't a disorder. But you know, and that's something we talked about, I talked about a lot with my guests, which is like, this doesn't this isn't a disorder, but it's at the same time, like we really

can help be helpful when looking for support and accommodations to have it being taken seriously. And so I feel like, you know, we're always kind of going back and forth between that. But do you have an approach? What would you call it? If you could call it something else?

 Carolina Ramirez 52:01


Yeah. So that's a great question. By the way, I love that because it goes right hand in hand with the stigmatizing ADHD, right. And I agree, we need to figure out a way to forge a new name for it. And I don't know that I necessarily have a new name for it. But I really what I focus on mostly is how it affects our nervous system. So really looking at it from the point of like, what is your nervous system telling you right now for what you need. And so sometimes that means you need movement, sometimes that means you need to sing. Sometimes that means you need to walk, sometimes you need some sunlight. So what is it that your nervous system needs, because at the end of the day, our neurobiology is not wrong. We are wired, how we're wired, because of what our individual and unique needs are. And we are authentically beautiful, each individual and unworthy. And so how you show up in this world is absolutely needed and how I show up in this world is absolutely needed. And so really tending to the garden that is you is going to be key. So really honing in on those needs that you have, and asking yourself, like what is it that my nervous system is asking me for right now, you know, do I need to rest do I need to go for a walk? Do I need to make a trip to the beach because I need to hear the waves crashing and I need to smell the beach air, whatever it is right. And I know that sometimes those things are not as easy to do, but really listening to what it is that you need. Because I promise you, if you lean into those joys, you will have a better life and a better balance of you know who you want to be and who you want to be for the world and for your kids and for your work. So really it's about tuning into what it is that our nervous systems needs. And being unapologetic about what it is that you need to do for yourself.

 Katy Weber 54:09

It's so powerful. I just want to have you on speed dial I feel like I would need like affirmations just like follow me around. That's so incredible and just really beautifully articulated. So if somebody's you know, wants to work with you, I guess you're so you work with parents but you also work with individuals Correct? Yes. Yes, your website is I am Karolina ramirez.com Right? Yep. Is there any other way for somebody to reach out to you and find out more about you?

 Carolina Ramirez 54:37

You could also find me on Instagram. That's probably the social media platform that I'm most active and haven't been as active as I could. But Karolina Ramirez LCSW is my handle on Instagram, but really the website is probably the best way to reach me. You know, I work with clients nationwide. Via zoom And so anyone who wants to reach me can go through the website and email me through there. That's probably the easiest way.

 Katy Weber 55:09

Awesome. Yeah, it's so wow. I love your perspective. Thank you so much. I feel like it's been a real a nice like daily affirmation with I love that So yeah Well thank you so much I'm so

real nice, like daily affirmation with. I love that. So yeah. Well, thank you so much. I'm so excited for the summit this week. And I'm really just so honored to have been a part of this incredible lineup. I really loved my conversation with you too. I can't wait to listen to it again. And yeah, that those links to your, your website and your Instagram and also especially the summit are all going to be in the show notes. But thank you so much, Karolina, it's been absolutely wonderful to hear your personal story. So thank you.



Carolina Ramirez 55:43

Thank you so much for having me.



Katy Weber 55:50

And there you have it. Thank you for listening. And I really hope you enjoyed this episode of the women and ADHD podcast. Also, you know, we ADHD ears crave feedback, and I would really appreciate hearing from you the listener, if you're a fan of the podcast, please take a moment to leave me a review on Apple podcasts or audible. And if that feels like too much, and I get it, then just take a few seconds right now to give me a five star rating, or share this episode on your own social media to help reach more women who maybe have yet to discover and lean into this gift of neuro divergence SE and they may still be struggling and don't even know why. And if you'd like to find out more about me and my one on one coaching for women with ADHD, head over to [womenandadhd.com/coaching](https://www.womenandadhd.com/coaching) and you can always find that link in the show notes. I'll see you next week when I interview another amazing woman who discovered that she is not lazy or crazy or broken. But she has ADHD and she is now on the path to understanding her neurodiversity and finally using this gift to her advantage. Take care till then