

EPISODE 030 - BALANCING LIFE AS A WORKING MOM WITH EMILY LEY

WITH NANCY RAY

Intro

It is an interesting thing being a working mama today. We're navigating new territory in so many ways with social media and boundaries and choosing the best things when we have so many choices in front of us. Today I'm talking with my friend, Emily Ley about the joys and struggles of being a working mama and how we can incorporate simple practices into our lives to really create the lives that we want. You're listening to Work and Play with Nancy Ray, Episode 30.

Much of our daily lives can be divided into two categories: work and play. Simply put, that is where our life and our legacy take place. This is a podcast all about learning to work and play well, which leads to a healthy soul and a fulfilling life.

Listen in.

Content

I am so excited to have Emily Ley on the Work and Play podcast today. She is one of the most authentic people I have ever met. I kid you not, she's been a friend of mine for several years now. I've watched her grow as a mom, as a business owner. But she never loses that on authenticity. Every time I hang out with her, she makes me cry, and it's not in a bad way. It's because her heart for life, her heart for her people, it moves me. She really wants the right things in life. She's doing something really wonderful with her work and her play.

I think that what I love most about her is how much she values the little things, the moments in between, exercise, taking care of yourself, really finding that kind of balance between work and play and what that looks like. So you're in for a treat today. She's incredible. If you don't know her, she's the founder of simplified, a brand of planners and organizational tools for busy women. She's been featured in Forbes, Family Circle, Better Homes and Gardens, Glamour, Good Housekeeping. Her products are now in Target, which is cool, really cool. I kind of felt super special that my friend was in Target.

I was walking down the aisle at Target one day. I saw all of her planners there, and I was like, "Go Emily." I texted her a picture of myself next to him. As a friend, I'm so proud of her. I'm so proud of her because she's never compromised her faith in the Lord. She's never compromised what she believes in, which is her kids and her family about everything else, and she

has such a way of teaching and sharing her heart that is just so inspiring. So you're in for a treat today. Emily lives in Pensacola, Florida with her husband, Brian and her kids, Brady and her twins, Tyler and Caroline. She's just such a joy. Oh, and she's the author of three books. So two books that are already out and one that's coming out, and we're going to talk about those in the episodes. So I'm really excited for you to listen into our conversation today.

So today on Work and Play with Nancy Ray, we have a dear friend of mine, Emily Ley. Emily, thank you so much for being here and welcome to the Work and Play podcast.

Nancy Ray:

Hi, friend. How are you?

Nancy Ray:

I'm so good. I'm so glad that you are here with us, and I know you're going to have so much to share. One of my favorite things about you is just how you share straight from your heart every time. There's no fluff. I know you have so much wisdom to give to our listeners. So thank you so, so much.

Nancy Ray:

I could not be more excited to be here. This topic is something that's so near and dear to my heart, so thanks for having me.

Nancy Ray:

Of course. Well, before we get started and diving into all of life as a working mama and balancing it all, just tell me a little bit about you. Tell me about your family and your work right now.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. So I am a mom to three kids, which I still have to pinch myself sometimes and be like, "You have three children."

Nancy Ray:

I feel the same way. I'm like, "Wait. What? When did that happen?"

Nancy Ray:

Wow. They were long prayed for, and they're wonderful. I have an eight-year-old boy named Brady, and I have twins who are four. Tyler and Caroline. My husband, Brian and I have been married for almost 11 years, and we live in Pensacola, Florida, which is also crazy to say because we just moved back home a year ago.

Nancy Ray:

That's already been a year?

Nancy Ray:

Yes, a year.

Nancy Ray:

Wow.

Nancy Ray:
It was a year just recently.

Nancy Ray:
Wow.

Nancy Ray:
So yeah. We're thrilled to be back here. I'm the founder of a company called Simplified, and we make day planners and organizational tools for women, and I'm also an author. So I've written a couple of books and have a new one coming out soon.

Nancy Ray:
Yeah. We're going to talk about that. I'm so excited. I love your books. I've bought them.

Nancy Ray:
Thank you.

Nancy Ray:
They're so great, obviously not the new one, but yeah. So okay. I have seen you go on this journey from before Simplified, before Simplified Planner and Simplified, your company is what it is now. We met when you were a stationery designer. So could you kind of give a one-minute synopsis of how you started your business and all the changes that happened to get you to the point where you are today and kind of how motherhood happened in the midst of all that too?

Nancy Ray:
Oh my gosh, Nancy. We've been through so much together.

Nancy Ray:
I know. It's crazy.

Nancy Ray:
We met so long ago, everything was so different back then. Yeah. So I have a master's degree in non-profit management. So I was climbing this corporate ladder and doing all the things that I was always told I was supposed to do and just found myself at a place where I felt like I really wanted the flexibility that my own mom had when I was a child. She was a teacher. I knew I wasn't born with that special gift that I feel like teachers are born with. But I wanted to be creative. I wanted to help people. I wanted to do something with my whole heart and have the flexibility to be a mom as well. At the time, I was working like 60, 70 hours a week. So I always laugh and say, "So I decided to start my own business and work even more."

Nancy Ray:
Yeah, exactly. I think I'm going to be working less, but oh, no.

Nancy Ray:
Right. It never really works all that way. But I started just teaching myself graphic design. I

started a little stationery company. I did wedding invitations and monograms and just all sorts of things and eventually left that full-time career to pursue my design company full-time. Eventually, after kind of battling with infertility for a while, my husband and I had our first son, Brady. I found myself just completely and totally overwhelmed and eventually decided to make a trip to Target and find something that could help me get my life together.

Nancy Ray:

When I didn't find a planner or anything that could really just help me wrangle it all, I decided to create one. So the Simplified Planner was born out of my total overwhelmed. My career since then has really just kind of followed the path of my life and the things that I have struggled with as a working mom. I've been fortunate enough to be able to write about them and share some organizational tips and tricks through different books and also just really honestly share the story of the way that God has allowed me to embrace my imperfections and settle into the messy seasons of life and really push aside and let go of that idea that we all have to have it together all the time, which is oddly funny because that's why I started my company because I really wanted to have it all together all the time.

Nancy Ray:

Right. Don't we all? I mean, of course. Yeah.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah, absolutely. So it's so much fun. I love my job so much. I feel really fortunate to be able to do something I love for living, and I also have these three children that I love and adore, and it's a lot, but it's awesome.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. I mean, I feel like I'm looking at you, and your kids are eight and four, and my oldest is four, and then I've got a two-year-old and a seven-month-old. So I'm thinking about... There must have been seasons when your business goes through growing pains and you're growing and then your family goes through growing pains as you're growing as a family. What were some of the hardest seasons for you in your business and in your family because all of it grew at the same time?

Nancy Ray:

It did.

Nancy Ray:

Your family grew, your business grew, all of it did. So there was some serious shifting and moving parts in you and in your life where you had to put your foot down and say, "No, this is not how we're going to do things." Because your business could easily overtake things. That's just how business is and running your own business. So what was the hardest season in your life over the past 10 years as everything has kind of shifted and changed for you?

Nancy Ray:

Oof, that's such a good question. You're going to laugh, but it's the season you're in.

Nancy Ray:

I'm not going to laugh. I mean, I kind of assumed that. But it's always good to hear that it's just a lot when they're little.

Emily Ley:

It was the most difficult, amazing, trying, growing season. I look back at it, and it almost puts a lump in my throat because I feel for that girl that I was then, and I know what a rich season it was. It was rich in effort and prayer and just friendship. Also, it was very, very hard. When my children were little, when they were... I mean, they're still little, but when they were tiny, I would say the twins were probably a year, and Brady was five. We lived in Tampa, so we didn't have a lot of family around at all. I felt like my business was growing. It was doing all the things it was supposed to do. Everything on paper looked amazing. I had just released my first book. Our company was just exploding. I mean, we were being carried in 800 stores around the world. I was on airplanes all the time. It was just on paper. It was like, "Wow, this is amazing." I probably looked like I was keeping it together, but inside I was just literally crumbling. It's funny because this new book that's coming out, I started the entire book with the story of me pushing a stroller around my neighborhood with my twins in it and with my oldest by my side and with our mutual friend, Kristin. I would just put one foot in front of the other, and I would just cry. She kept saying, "You got to get outside. You got to push. You got to just push through this and talk it out and lean into it." It was so hard. It was me hitting a wall and saying, "I have to choose something. I can't do everything all at the same time and be amazing at all of it. I'm going to have to choose where my heart is going to be." You know that verse for where your treasure is, there your heart will be? It was that for me. I had to choose my treasure, and I had to say, "In this season with small children, I'm going to choose them, and I'm going to say no to some business things and realize that this is a season, and there might be another season to come where I can say yes to more." Which is very true, now that I'm on the other side of it. We quit our wholesale program, which was 40% of our business. We were able to keep our entire team of women, but we dropped those 800 stores. It was so scary and so hard, but I just knew, no matter what happened, I was never going to regret that decision to put my heart where I would know my treasure was. Yeah. It was a thick season.

Nancy Ray:

I think, as moms, you just underestimate how much your children need you in those small years because I'm feeling it. I'm in the middle of what you're talking about right now. Weeks ago, that's me. What you're describing is me just crying, sobbing, saying like, "I cannot do all of this. There's only so much I can give." It eventually will catch up to you in one way or another. Several months back, I announced I'm closing my business. I'm feeling the kind of things that you were feeling when you closed down the wholesale part of your business because... But it's like I'll never regret it. I know I'll never regret it.

Nancy Ray:

There's a reason they call it in the trenches, right? People look at moms with small kids, and they're like, "Oh, you're in the trenches." It's like, yeah, well, you get it now that you're in it. But it's so encouraging I think to hear it's okay to just sob your face off some days when you're feeling so overwhelmed, but that that emotion and the overwhelm can drive you to make the best choices for you for your family and for your business.

Emily Ley:

It is. Yeah. It's like this beautiful... I mean, looking back, I can call it beautiful. At the time, I called it awful, but it's this beautiful tension of... I just really feel like God was pushing me and saying, "I'm putting this pressure on you, these feelings, all of it because I need you to make a move. You can't stay where you are or something's going to happen." So I have a question for you. Did you ever feel like in that season? Did you ever feel like, "I am so fortunate to have a career I love, to have this family I love. I shouldn't complain. I should just figure out how to make it work."?

Nancy Ray:

All the time.

Nancy Ray:

Because I really struggled with that a lot.

Nancy Ray:

All the time. Why am I so upset and so overwhelmed when I have a job that I love and kids that I love. There's almost this guilt in that, that feeling of like, "Why am I so ungrateful, or why..." It's not that I actually wasn't ungrateful. I was very grateful. I was so thankful. But it's meshing the fact that I'm so grateful for these things, but it's still too much. There's still too much on my plate for me to be a healthy whole person and to be the best for my family and the best for my business. I just felt like things were kind of spinning out of control, and I was just an emotional roller coaster on any given day.

Emily Ley:

Same.

Nancy Ray:

It's just so much. Yeah.

Emily Ley:

Yeah. It's so true.

Nancy Ray:

So I'm right there with you.

Emily Ley:

Brian, eventually, he's always my voice of reason, but eventually, it was like, "Emily, you don't

have to live like this. We can get a different house. We can move. We can change our spending habits. We can do whatever we need to do to get you back to happy Emily.” That was like a punch in the stomach to me, like, “Whoa, you’re right. I’m not her when I’m like this, and I’ve got to lighten the load because you’re right.” It was just too much. It’s almost this counterintuitive way of looking at life. We always think we need to find that next opportunity. Say yes to the next best thing, keep building, keep growing. I eventually thought, “You know what? What if we just did life different? What if we just said no to some things?” Instead of looking at what we could add to organize our lives better or... I’m a trained simplicity expert here. So it’s in my nature to be like, “Oh, this is messy. I should be able to organize all these pieces to fit just right.” When in actuality, sometimes it’s not that you need a better organizer. You just need to take some things away. That was what changed the game for us, was saying, “What are we going to let go of?” Because everything is optional. We can choose what we’re going to say yes and no to.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. I’m thinking about the fact that I cleaned my playroom this week, and the playroom, I literally have... I mean, in the last probably year, all of these toys have been added through birthday parties and Christmas, and it was suffocating in there. Every time I would go in there, I would organize that, and the kids would just make tiny little tornadoes, would make a huge mess. I just said, “Okay, we’re done.” I literally put movies on all day for them for two days in a row, and I got everything out. I filled up I think four trash bags of trash and then seven bags of toys to give away. I just had to do it without them being in there because they’re so little, and they would fall in love with everything I’m trying to give away.

Nancy Ray:

But I realized that I couldn’t keep organizing all of this stuff because that’s not how you do it. You actually have to just get rid of it. I feel like that naturally organized everything. When there is extra space in the shelves and extra space in the room, I was like, “This is going to be so much easier to keep organized.” I think that’s how it is with our life is we keep trying to organize all of the stuff, but it’s still organizing all the things that are too much for us, when really, in reality, we need to just get rid of some things in order to feel like we can breathe again.

Emily Ley:

Absolutely.

Nancy Ray:

I think, as business owners, you and I can say, “Oh, let’s remind ourselves, ‘Hey, we own this business. We can make it look like what we want it to look like. We can make our lives look like what we want it to look like.’” But a lot of people listening might not own their own business, or they might work for somebody else and have a nine to five and still struggle with this motherhood and work balance. But the truth is we still own our own lives. You might not own your own business and have the flexibility to maybe cut back on hours or stop the wholesale side or close your business, but you still own your life. You still have the opportunity to say no to things and to clear off your plate. You don’t have to sign up for every single extracurricular activity, or you don’t have to-

Emily Ley:
So true.

Nancy Ray:
... volunteer at your church all the time. You can just say no just to get to a point where you're a healthy and whole person again.

Emily Ley:
That's so true.

Nancy Ray:
Yeah. Some of it, I think it is the season that you're in. Sometimes the little years are hard. You can do things to help that. But sometimes you just have to kind of get to the other side, and it will free up your time and space a little bit. But there are some practical things I think that we've learned along the way that we can do to make the seasons of our lives that change a little bit more fruitful, a little more simplified to where we can be our healthy whole self, we can show up and not feel constantly overwhelmed as a working mom.

Emily Ley:
So true. It's so true. I often remind myself too when I'm in a season of, we call it "the thick." When you're in the thick, right, and you're in a season where things are really heavy and you just have a ton going on and you look around, and you're like, "What can I say no true? What ball can I drop here?" Maybe there's a season where you can't drop any of the balls. You can't put anything down. I've definitely been there as well. I think those are those seasons where it's so important to just take care of yourself, to give yourself more grace, to go easy on yourself and to remember that those times, for me at least, it's when God is doing the most work in me and in my family and my kids. Especially with little ones, it's so easy to feel like, "Oh my goodness. Day after day, I'm just feeding children or cleaning up after children or doing laundry." I mean, laundry in and of itself. "I'm doing, and I'm doing, and I'm doing." We don't often reap the reward of that season until much later. I had this moment this morning actually. I mean, it was probably 3:00 AM. Yesterday was just one of those challenging parenting days, where everything kind of goes sideways, and everyone's off-kilter. I kind of went to bed frustrated and I woke up in the middle of the night to Tyler, my little boy, he's four. He came in my room, and he goes, "Mom." I sat straight up. "Yes, is everything okay?" He said, "I had a really bad dream. I need you to pray over me that we don't have any more bad dreams tonight." I was speechless. Brian heard it, and he even kind of laughed.

Emily Ley:
I say that to him. I do that for him. I had no idea that he heard that. That he internalized that, and he knows that he can go to mom. I'm going to cry. I had no idea that sunk in and it sat with him because I probably said it in the middle of doing 10,000 other things, but you just never know what's sticking or when God's going to turn around and be like, "I'm going to give you this little nugget of goodness for you to tuck away to remember the next time life gets hard and stressful."

Nancy Ray:
That's so sweet. I know. It makes me tear up too because when your kid comes through and asks

for prayer, it's like everything you ever could want as a mom.

Emily Ley:
Literally. Yeah.

Nancy Ray:
But when they're fearful and they come to you, that's like, "Oh my gosh." That's the sweetest thing. But you don't think about that happening. You're just kind of doing life when you're praying over them or when you're putting them to bed or saying like, "God will protect you." Or like, "Mommy is here for you." It's just normal. But when they get it, that's the most precious. It's like little rewards kind of built into parenthood that you get-

Emily Ley:
Totally.

Nancy Ray:
... along the way. That's so sweet.

Emily Ley:
Totally. Brian rolled over and he said, "You loved that, didn't you?" I did.

Nancy Ray:
That's the best. Well, I want to talk about... because I feel like you have a lot of practical things that can help mamas who are working. Your book simplified. The one thing that I'd still tell people about that changed the game for me was just do one load of laundry a day. That seemed so simple, but no one had ever told me that before. I was like, "Oh, I can do that. Not just that, but to do it on speed wash." I'm like, "Why haven't I just done that before?"

Emily Ley:
Combine all the colors together. It's fine.

Nancy Ray:
Yes. Combine all the colors and use the little color catchers that you use. It literally changed the game for me. So I kind of want to talk about a few other boundaries or practical things. What are some boundaries, especially in this season that maybe, I don't know, you can speak to the season that I'm in now. You can speak to the season that you're in now, just being a mom and working and what are boundaries that you set? What are practical things that you do to help balance your work and being a mama?

Emily Ley:
Oh, this is one of my favorite topics because I feel like, we as women, we don't sit around enough and have conversations, like, "How do you get dinner on the table every night? Can you just tell me how you do it because it's so stressful." Okay. A couple of just really simple and easy things that we do. The laundry trick is something my mom taught me when my first son was born, and it is absolutely game-changing. Then the trick to that is you have to put it away the same day too, which is just probably the hardest part.

Nancy Ray:

It's absolutely the hardest part. I'm not there yet. I need to get there, but yeah, just putting it away. It's so true.

Emily Ley:

Yeah, that. Okay. So end of the night, there's toys everywhere. There's shoes kicked off. There's homework or whatever on the kitchen counters. For us, what we do is we go and grab a laundry basket, and instead of saying, "Okay everyone, it's time to clean up," we put on a song on whatever speakers we have, and we will put on like a dance party type song, so that it's high energy so the kids will move quickly. We set a timer for, say 10 minutes, or if they're a little kids, say the length of the song. We take a laundry basket, and we tell everyone, "Anything that's out of place, just throw it in the laundry basket," and then we're done.

Emily Ley:

So everyone just kind of runs around the house, and we grab the shoes and the books and the toys, and we throw everything in the laundry basket. Then once the song's over or the timer's off, you dump the laundry basket, sort it by where it needs to go, and then everyone takes a room. So Brady will take all the things to his room. Caroline will take all the things to the kitchen or that kind of thing. It makes cleaning up every day so much simpler. Then in the morning, you wake up, your house is clean. You start everything off kind of on a fresh start. That has been just something that we literally probably do every day.

Nancy Ray:

I'm looking forward to doing that, I dread cleaning up my house after dinner. Right now, we put the kids to bed, the kitchen's a mess, the living room's a mess. It looks like me and Will cleaning up everything because we do like a tidy house before you go to bed. So we'd wake up to a clean house, but it's all on us. But I love the idea of incorporating the kids and having them put things away and making it fun like that. That's so great.

Emily Ley:

Little kids can get in there too just at least... My kids still require a lot of direction. Okay. Tyler gets distracted by the Legos. So we're like, "Okay, Tyler. Come on, pick up the Legos. Put them in there." But it's that constant planting of the seed and saying like, "This is what we do as a family, and this is important to us that we wake up in the morning and everything's kind of back in order." My mom had a really good tip that she shared with me the other day. We really struggled with meal-planning because neither Brian nor I were blessed with the cooking gene. We're not very good at it, and we don't really like doing it, but we do it, obviously.

Emily Ley:

So my mom took a piece of paper, just a regular piece of paper, and she made a list of go-to meals that is probably got, I would say 40 meal names on it. For herself, she sorted it by beef, chicken, vegetarian, that sort of thing. Whenever she sits down to make her meal-plan for the month, which is not what we do, but I aspire to do, she will look at that list and say, "Okay, these are things that we like to eat that are easy to make, they're healthy, and I don't have to reinvent the wheel every time I sit down to do it." Then she takes a monthly calendar. She uses the monthly spread in the Simplified Planner, and she will write down for the entire month, what they're having

for dinner. It's just she and my dad at their house now. But she'll write down four, five days a week what they're having for dinner, and it might change, but it's all there, and she only has to do it one time a month. It's brilliant.

Nancy Ray:

That's so smart. I also feel like I don't know why meal-planning sneaks up on me every Sunday, and I do it weekly.

Emily Ley:

Same.

Nancy Ray:

I'm like, "Oh, I got to do the grocery shopping and the meal-planning." I just get stuck in a rut with the same four meals pretty much-

Emily Ley:

Me too.

Nancy Ray:

... all the time. My poor family is probably so tired of tacos and spaghetti and whatever.

Emily Ley:

Same here.

Nancy Ray:

I'm like, "Okay." It's so smart. It takes a little bit of time. It takes a little bit of planning. For me, just the mental space of thinking about meals or maybe searching if you've favorite blogs. I recently have been really into the Naptime Kitchen blog. I don't know if you've heard of her, but she has great, healthy, pretty easy meals that are... They pushed me just a little bit to get creative with my food or trying a new recipe. But they're simple. They're really easy. So I think that just taking the time, right, just a little bit of time on the front end saves so much stress and last-minute frenzy on the back end, which is really the whole premise of your business and having a simplified planner and just taking the time to plan the things that are most important in your life so that you can live, and you don't have to stressful.

Emily Ley:

It's so true. It's also so important, I think. This was something I kind of realized in writing this last book is breakfast for dinner, if my kids come home and find out we're having eggs and bacon and cinnamon rolls from a pan for dinner, they're thrilled, and it's so easy. Whoever said we can't have easy dinners. Right?

Nancy Ray:

That's awesome. Yeah.

Emily Ley:

I mean, we'll do like BLTs or breakfast for dinner, or we'll do... A PB&J is a great dinner sometimes. Cut up some fruit on the side. I mean, I for so long felt like I needed to make what my mom was

making at her house. It's just she and my dad, and she is an amazing cook. Our lives look different over here. So I've really given myself the grace to say you are in a season with little tiny kids and both parents working, and you are going to love making scrambled eggs for dinner. That's so fine. There's so much goodness in just sitting around the table together over whatever.

Nancy Ray:

So let me ask you a question about work stuff and boundaries with work and having kids. Because for me, I look at you and I'm like: Okay, how do you have so much going on and you dream up new things, and you're writing a book, or you've written, well, you've written three books, and I have an entrepreneurial brain that I have a hard time turning it off. So even though I'm home with my kiddos after work, I'm still thinking mentally about all the things that I didn't get done that day, or I'm dreaming up new ideas. So is that something that you deal with, and how do you handle that? Because I really want to be present. I have habits in my life where I put my phone down, and I really try to finish, but sometimes my brain just like won't let me off the hook, and I'm like, "Quiet down, brain." That's what I want to say. But how do you handle that, and what are some good work boundaries that you've put in place that that's a good cadence for your family, but also just for you as a mom?

Emily Ley:

I think the biggest realization I ever had about work and family and balance and all of that was that I felt like balance was this thing that one day I was going to achieve, I was going to get there, and I was going to get a trophy, and I was going to be able to say, "Look, I figured it out. I'm balanced." It is absolutely not a thing. The word in and of itself, it doesn't happen. It's not a finish line that we get to. I've always said it's like riding a bike, that you're constantly shifting your weight from left to right. You're on the bike. So you're thinking about work and life and family and all the things. Sometimes you're leaning a little more heavy toward the family side because of whatever circumstances, and sometimes we're leaning more toward the business side or the work side, no matter what that looks like, and that you just keep doing that to keep from face planting, to keep from falling off. Once you give yourself the grace to say, "My life is fluid. My family and my business are both important to me, and they're both part of who I am, and I'm not going to beat myself up because I'm thinking about one or the other while doing different things."

Emily Ley:

When I gave myself the grace to say like, "It's okay if I'm playing Legos and my mind is wandering off to whatever I need to prepare for tomorrow or whatever emails I didn't get to." It's also very normal to sit at my desk and start thinking about, what are my kids doing at school right now? Maybe I need to go move the laundry or whatever. It's so normal. For me, it was just a big old heaping dose of grace that I needed to say, "It's okay to be in many places at once." I think that's just who we are because we're passionate people and we care deeply about a lot of things. Also, tactically around boundaries, full disclosure, my kids go to school full time now, all three of them to the same place for the same hours, and it's like this whole new ball game over here.

Nancy Ray:

Really? Yeah. I just can't wrap my head around that yet. I'm not there yet, but that sounds amazing.

Emily Ley:

It's very clear cut boundaries for me. So I aspired, even when they were small, just figured out, until you can get to the place where they're all kind of doing the same schedule and you can have a clear cut schedule at that point. Once that happened, it just became a lot easier. But I still set boundaries of like when I go to pick my kids up from school, I stop working about 30 minutes to an hour before the end of my day so that I can write down my to-dos for the next day in my planner. I can tidy up my desk and not feel like I left things undone but buttoned up enough to where I can come back to it the next workday. That has really helped a lot with just the mental game of like, "It's time to transition from working to mom."

Emily Ley:

The other thing, and this is going to probably be a surprising answer: exercise. I bet you realize this, too. When I am not taking care of my body and my spirit and filling myself with what I need to be the best version of myself, things unravel. They just do. Life is just harder. So I make myself move my body every single day. I make myself have a couple minutes in the morning to just sit down and regroup and figure out the plan for the day because if I don't have those touch-points, those things that I know I need to do to fill my well, I'm not the best version of myself. I'm not the most capable of riding the bike.

Nancy Ray:

I 100% agree. So to go back to talk to at the end of your day kind of routine, I call it my shutdown complete routine. So 15-20 minutes before then in my workday. I actually read about this in the book, *Deep Work* by Cal Newport. He talks about scanning your inbox, seeing if there's anything urgent. This is all happens the last 20 minutes of your workday. Answer those emails so they're not waiting on you and you know nothing else is urgent. Close your inbox and then write down all of your to-dos for the following day, and then say the words out loud, "Shutdown complete." Which is so nerdy, so nerdy.

Emily Ley:

I love this.

Nancy Ray:

But you say it out loud, and that signals to your brain, "Okay, done working now. Go be with your family."

Emily Ley:

I love it.

Nancy Ray:

On the days that I do that, I really do feel like, "Yeah. I might think about some more work things." But I'm not trying to finish my workday in the presence of my kids, which is oftentimes what happens when I don't do that little ritual. So I totally agree with that. Onto your exercise point, let me just say, I cannot say amen enough to that because I... So, Beaufort, my youngest is eight months old. He just turned eight months old yesterday at the time of this recording. I have been in this... I have been in this season of no working out, none to the point that I have started to feel anxiety and stress about my physical body.

Nancy Ray:

I think the Lord has been teaching me lately, “Hey, your body is the gift I gave you to house all your emotions, all of your dreams to help care for your family. It’s literally the way that you respond to life. You live in your body.” I know that sounds so dumb, but I feel like I live in my head so much. I forget about my body because I just go, go, go on my to-do list or taking care of the kids that I forget about me. I think as moms, when you have kids to take care of, when you have a business you’re running or work that you’re doing exercise is one of the first things to go, and that’s been the case for me. I worked out for the first time this weekend in months. I came home and almost started crying, and I was like, “Will-”

Emily Ley:

Oh my gosh.

Nancy Ray:

Literally, I was like, “Will, I cannot tell you what that just did for me.”

Emily Ley:

I had the same experience this weekend.

Nancy Ray:

Really?

Emily Ley:

Not even kidding you. Yes. Brian was like, “What is happening? Why are you crying?”

Nancy Ray:

I’m really like, “You don’t know. You don’t know what this just did for me.” Nobody was crawling on me and touching me, and I did something for me, and I sweat, and I moved...

Emily Ley:

It’s hard, and I did it.

Nancy Ray:

... right, and I did it. I felt in touch with me for the first time in a really long time. So if you’re a mom and you are like me, and you’re saying, “I can’t. There’s no way I can work out or exercise because there’s just so much demanded of me.” Let’s just together listen to Emily and say like, “Well, it’s actually possible, and it’s not just possible, it’s necessary. It is necessary-

Emily Ley:

It’s so necessary.

Nancy Ray:

... for you to feel balanced.” I always say balanced isn’t a thing. I totally agree. It’s like riding a bike. If you look at balancing the hours in your day, take two hours here for meal-planning, two hours here for time with your husband, two hours here for quality time, two hours for sleep, two

hours for work, two hours. If you divided it up over two hours for friendships, two hours for your faith, over 24 hours, that would look “balanced”. But you can’t survive like that. That’s not a true thing. But even though balance isn’t a thing, I think feeling balanced or feeling at peace is a thing, and that’s what we’re going after is the feeling of it, not actually the reality of it because that’s a myth, but the feeling of it. Doing things like what you’re saying, it’s so, I don’t know, refreshing. As I listen, I’m like, “I want that. That’s going to make me feel more balanced.” Even though I know balance isn’t a thing, if that makes sense. So yeah-

Emily Ley:

I know. That’s so true.

Nancy Ray:

... just taking time in the morning or working out or finishing my workday, just kind of closing that out 30 minutes before the kids get home. All of those things can help you just feel a little more level-headed, which is awesome.

Emily Ley:

It’s so funny. My whole life, I’ve felt like I always look at complicated situations and think, “How can I make this easier? How can I make it simpler?” That’s what my whole business was born out of, this me questioning things and saying, “Does it have to be this way? Can we make it easier?” So Grace, Not Perfection, my first book, I wrote in the thick of that, young twins, little boy, living far away from family, having a growing business. I wrote it about giving ourselves grace throughout that process and letting go of perfectionism, a simplified life, I wrote, which has just tons of tips for simplifying and kind of these things we’re talking about, meal-planning and laundry and all that. Late last year, I hit another roadblock where I knew I had to write a book. I didn’t know what it was going to be about. I went upstairs to talk to my husband, and I was crying, and I said, “I don’t know the story I’m supposed to tell, and I feel so lost, and I feel so...” It started pouring out of me. I said, “I just feel so overwhelmed, and I know better. I know the things to do to make life easier. I know how to use a planner. I know how to meal-plan. I know the laundry thing, I know better. But for whatever reason, my life feels so full and so loud and so out of control, and how am I supposed to write a book in this season?”

Emily Ley:

Brian was like, again, voice of reason, he said, “This is your story. That’s it.” I looked at him, and I was equal parts like, “What?” And also like, “Yes.” December 31st of late last year, I got on a call with my whole team, there’s eight of us, and I was like, “Guys, I’m going into hibernation.” Which is what I thought it was at the time. It looked like hibernation because I was quitting social media. I was getting out of my inbox. I was walking away for 30 days to say, “There is something in our world, in our society that’s underlying this whole epidemic of burnout that I see in women of all seasons, of all ages, in all situations in life. I don’t understand it. Why are we all so burned out all the time and so overwhelmed?”

Emily Ley:

What I’ve learned is that our modern world has introduced so much noise and so many ridiculous standards. I call them ridiculous because I’m a little passionate about this. So many standards into our life that were not necessarily meant to be there. I had to strip away so much, so many of

the things that we don't question. We know meal-planning and laundry and those things, that's important. It's so important to find the ways to organize and simplify those things because they're not responsibilities we can let drop. But when I started looking at the noise in my life, just the notifications and the red dots and my phone and the ringing and the radio on and the billboards and the commercials and just the amount of information that was coming at me, I mean, this is just one side of it, but I don't know that God intended us to live like that, to like have all those things in our lives and just it's an option for us to organize things a certain way or lighten the load as far as our commitments go and that kind of thing.

Emily Ley:

We get the choice to have those things in our life or not, too. I think there's this deeper thing going on that we might not all be aware of that is draining our batteries in the background of all this other stuff.

Nancy Ray:

I'm like thinking so many deep thoughts as you're talking. One of the things that I keep thinking of is this hasn't been taught before because our grandparents and our parents didn't struggle with these things. So we're having to forge this new territory of technology and social media, and we're desperate for somebody, like show us the ropes of how to live life without being overwhelmed and to live the life that we all want to live when in reality, social media and other emails and technology, it can be all-consuming, and it's designed to be addictive. I talk about that in my episode on social media. They're literally, and I'll leave that link in the show notes, but they're designed to be addictive.

Emily Ley:

Dopamine.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. We have to just kind of step away from our lives and say, "What do we want our lives to look like?" So yeah. Okay. So the title of your book is called *When Less Becomes More: Making Space for Slow, Simple, and Good*. I read that title, and immediately, I felt it wasn't just like I want to read it. I felt in my heart as a mom and as a working mom, I crave this knowledge. I crave, how do I do less? How do I have more space for slow and simple and good because that's what we all long for? I want to talk about... So I've scanned the table of contents. I can't wait. Every chapter looks amazing. There's three that stood out to me that I want to ask you about.

Nancy Ray:

The first one is on rush. I think it's chapter one, less rush, more rhythm. The second one is social media, less distraction, more connection. The third one is parenting, less great and more good. I'm really excited to ask you about that. So let's talk about the rush chapter, less rush, more rhythm. What's your heart there, and what are some things that you share in that chapter? Because my MO is rushing, and I don't make want that.

Emily Ley:

Me too. I know.

Nancy Ray:
So what's the gist of that chapter?

Emily Ley:
Oh, Nancy. When I wrote this book, that chapter was the first one I wrote. When I wrote it, I read it into my phone, and then I played it back to myself and sobbed through every chapter, and I read the audiobook version, and multiple times, I had to stop because it's like this thing in my heart that I didn't know was there, and this chapter, in particular, it's like this worldly standard that we've subscribed to that we have to do everything in a hurry. Last night, I kid you not, I'm on my phone, and I'm looking at videos of my kids because it was their first day of school yesterday, and I was looking at videos of when they were tiny, and I hear myself in these videos saying, "Okay, come on. Let's go. Okay, come on. Here, let me do that for you." Or, "Okay, come on. We have to go to this place." It's just the way we live life, and there's... You don't know how fast you're doing things until you stop, and you think, "Were we meant to operate at this speed." We operate at this speed because we have so many commitments. We have so much going on in our brains. We don't have margin on our calendars in our lives.

Emily Ley:
There's noise around us that's constantly pushing us to the next thing, the next thing, the next thing. I wrote that chapter first because I think that was the first realization I had that, why was that season of my life so hard when I had itty bitty twins and a business and all these things going on and an older child. It was because I wanted to check all the boxes. I had to check all the boxes. So we operate at max capacity all the time. We don't give ourselves the freedom to say, "I'm going to unsubscribe from a few of these things. I'm going to turn down the noise. I'm going to let myself stop and just take a breath. I'm going to give myself a Saturday with nothing to do." Right?

Nancy Ray:
It sounds so daring.

Emily Ley:
Give ourselves that.

Nancy Ray:
That sounds so daring.

Emily Ley:
What is that? I don't even know. I think the reason I was so emotional writing this book and I still just feel such a connection to it is because it's impossible to do this perfectly. But in unearthing all of these things and trying to untangle and unbecome this woman that I've become, that is who the modern world says I have to become, there is so much beauty on the other side, and it is not that hard to achieve. Just like you said, the woman who lived 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 30 years ago before the internet was created, her life looked so much different than ours.

Emily Ley:
There's this place in the book, I think it's in this chapter, but I detailed this day of this woman who wakes up, and it goes out her door and looks at the weather and thinks like, "Oh, it's beautiful outside, but it might be a nice day for a coat." And goes in and has a cup of tea and waits for her

babies to wake up, and then they wake up, and it's this whole day of very analog living that we don't do anymore. I mean, if we want to know what the weather is, we just hop on our phone and see that it's X degrees outside and we know what to do. But it's like everything has become so convenient and automatic that we don't take time to do things. So we're impatient.

Emily Ley:

I mean, the other day, I was about to water a plant. I was filling up the watering can, and I remember thinking, "Why won't this just hurry up and fill so I can water the plant?" How beautiful to just take a minute to breathe while the water fills up and then water the plant. Right?

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. It's the little things like that. It is.

Emily Ley:

It's the little things that add up.

Nancy Ray:

So tell me about the social media chapter. Less distraction, more connection. I think that is... I mean, I look at the generation that we're raising, Lilian, Lyndon, and Beaufort, and your kids and just how, oh my goodness, I think about my kids all the time and how they're not going to know phone calls without a face attached to them, FaceTime. They understand phone as something that I never... When I grew up there was a phone with a cord attached to it on our kitchen counter, and you held it to your ear. They're going to know these tiny computer devices. I think about social media connection and how most high school relationships these days start via text message, and that's how they communicate. I'm like, "This whole social media, less distraction, more connection is something we weren't designed for clicking and tapping and connecting via screen. We were designed for real connection." So what does that chapter speak to?

Nancy Ray:

When I took 30 days away from social media, I thought that I would come back to it and have a real problem with it. I thought that I would come back and be like, "I don't want this. I don't need this." Which was going to be interesting because I built my whole business on Instagram. But what happened was I came back, and I actually felt like it's a great tool when used the right way with the right boundaries in place. I had to just come at it with fresh eyes. I realized two very important things. I realized that I was suffering from what I call compassion fatigue, which is a very delicate subject and something that I want to honor in the right way when I explain it. Are you ever on Instagram or Facebook and you're scrolling and you see a very sad story of some sort? For me, it's always got to do with a child, and I'll read the sad story, and I cannot let things go.

Emily Ley:

I internalize them. I feel very deeply about them, and then I would scroll onto the next thing, another sad story of something tragic that's happened in our world and then another thing and another thing. I started to realize that, in the past, we would only hear of stories, good or bad or sad, we would only hear about them from a friend who would tell it to our ears or maybe would read it in the newspaper of something that happened a week ago. Now, we're scrolling and with just the flick of a finger, our emotions are going up, down, up, down, up, down. For me, I was internalizing

that, and it was real problem for me. I had to learn that it's okay to see a story, say a quick prayer for that story, those people and hide it. I had to learn that I could control the content coming into my brain and into my heart because I don't believe that we were made for so much of that. That scares me for our kids, just the type of information and how much of it and that sort of thing when they become of age for that, which is a whole other conversation.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. It's hard because if have this compassion fatigue, and I love that you put words to something I've been feeling for so long, you have that. So you have to weight. I have got my hands. I'm weighing a scale right now. It's like on one side, you feel so heavily, you want to do something, you have a way to connect with a hurting family, and you feel it. The other hand, you also don't want to grow desensitized to it. You don't want to be calloused to those things, which is why I think we feel it so deeply. But at the same time, you're exactly right. We were never meant to carry so many burdens of people that live hundreds of miles from us. We were meant to carry the burdens of people close to us in our own communities that live near us. That's how humanity has lived for thousands of years. Those tragedies or things that are hard, they come up for sure. Life is hard. They come up. But they don't come up so often like they do in our feed.

Emily Ley:

Yeah. In that frequency. Yeah.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. Wow.

Emily Ley:

The same can be said for positive things, and that's where the comparison game comes in, where we look at the highlight reels of everyone we know. I mean, I still deal with it. I mean, I see everyone else's kids that went to the first day of school, and they were perfectly behaved, and our first day of school morning was a little more challenging. You just-

Nancy Ray:

I feel like if anybody is posting that the first day of school is well-behaved, it's just not even true. I just am like "and moving on" because there's no way. There's no way. I think first day of school and most days of school to follow are just-

Emily Ley:

Yeah. Tactically, you don't have to follow 1,000 people. You can follow five people. You don't have to follow anybody. That kind of tactical thing is important too. Then the other piece of social media for me is that you can be on your feed on whatever platform, and you can go from your second cousin's bat mitzvah to how to throw a gender reveal party to the best way to roast Brussels sprouts in two seconds. That kind of brain flittering is one of the most draining things, I think. It drains us off that energy that we want to have for our families or for our work. It drains us of focus.

Emily Ley:

Then we go to our kids, and we're like, "Okay, come on. Let's go, let's go, let's go." Because our brains are so used to flittering that fast. So for me, that you either figure out how to control your

feed better, which is highly impossible, or you spend less time on these platforms and you spend more time face to face. For me, it's always going to go back to there is a lot of beauty in a more analog existence than we realize, and there is also something being lost when we add these modern conveniences that we think we just have to adopt. Right?

Emily Ley:

One of the examples I gave was when I was a little girl. I think this is the reason I fell in love with books and writing and reading, was our local library had a bookmobile, and the bookmobile was an old RV. They turned into a little traveling children's library, and they would come to the Kmart parking lot by my house, and my mom would take me, and we would go inside, and they had one bean bag chair and tons of old books. I would choose two or three books, and I would look through them to choose the perfect ones and then drive home with my mom. I would hurry up and read them so we could go and exchange them when the bookmobile came back.

Emily Ley:

Now, what do I do when my kids want a book? I pick up my phone, I go to Amazon, I hit buy, and it comes the next day. It's so convenient and also something is being lost there.

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. So let's talk about parenting because so much of what you're saying is parenting woven through this. We feel rushed. We're taking shortcuts, and that's... At the same time, we're feeling this pressure to throw the most glorious birthday parties, the most extravagant first day of school pictures. So there's this pressure because we can see other people doing it differently than us and we feel like, "Oh, I'm not doing it that way, and I'm missing out." So the tagline for me in this chapter of your book is what caught my eye the most of any other chapter? Parenting less great, more good. That's anti-everything our culture says. So what do you mean by that?

Emily Ley:

What if we raised our kids to be kind, to be welcoming, to be thoughtful instead of raising them to be valedictorians, right? My oldest is so bright and so thoughtful, and he's everything wonderful in a little boy. Yet I find myself holding him to a standard that I don't hold myself to. I wrote this thing, and I don't even know if I'm going to be able to say it out loud because when I read the audiobook, I choked up real hard. But what if when our kids... Let's say my eight-year-old. When he comes to me and he's so upset because somebody kicked his Legos down, his brother probably. What if I just held him instead of reprimanding him to be like, "Dude, it's fine. You're good. It's just Legos. He didn't mean to. Get over it. Let's move on." What if I just held him for a minute and let him get the last of those tears out while he worked through his eight-year-old emotions? What if we honored the imperfections in ourselves by letting them slide a little bit in our kids? What if we didn't reprimand or try to redirect or correct every little thing, which is what I catch myself doing sometimes, trying to be like, "Nope, Nope, we do this."

Nancy Ray:

All the time. Yeah.

Emily Ley:

Or, "No, that's not the right choice." What if we raise good kids instead of great kids because isn't

good kind of great?

Nancy Ray:

Yeah. Yeah. That makes me tear up too because I think that we're trained or taught or caught or whatever. Just by example, you want to speak life and say you can be whatever you want to be. You can do whatever you want to do. Those things are good and true to say. But just focusing more on who they are and allowing them to process their emotions and not just being so quick to fix. It is our job as parents to guide them into what's right and what's wrong and to learn one day how to control their emotions. Not ignore them or not have emotions, but acknowledge them. Yeah, control. Even that, as I'm saying, I'm like, "I don't want to control their emotions. I want to allow it." But I do want to help them-

Emily Ley:

To navigate.

Nancy Ray:

... as parents, how to navigate them, how to feel fear and kind of know that feeling and know how to walk in that fear and walk through it to the other side of accomplishing something so that it doesn't hold you up in life or feel anger and process that anger and then walk through it and learn real forgiveness because forgiveness comes after feeling anger and hurt, not stuffing it. So I just so appreciate that message because it's just different than how we parent. I'm talking about myself. I want to just fix and teach and go and do and yeah, just focus on raising good people, raising good, little, kind, precious humans that are confident in who they are and they know they're loved for who they are, and that's it.

Emily Ley:

Yeah. It's so interesting too, once you start thinking about life this way, you realize how tangled everything is. All of these topics are so tangled together. Once you start pulling one thread to try and maybe unbecome the busy, busy, busy, busy women, we are, once you start to pull one thread, you start to see the rest of it unravel and loosen up a little bit, and it becomes easier to take a less as more approach to a lot of things. For me, it was almost exciting. I would do some of these things in one area, and then I would realize like, "Oh, we don't have to always have the radio on in the car. We can actually just sit and talk. We don't have to have big fancy meals. We can have PB&J and chips and fruit and the kids will think it's awesome." So it's like one little step forward, and then you start to realize that you don't have to live life everyday overwhelmed.

Nancy Ray:

It all comes back to, the fact that you're in control of your life, you can choose to do things differently, whether you're working mom, whether you're not a working mom, whether whatever it is, you have the power to choose the rhythm and the boundaries and the things that you let in and the things that you keep out. It's just so inspiring and has provoked a lot of thought in me this morning, like what can I do to really make space her slow and simple and good because that's really what we want anyway? Wow. Thank you for all of that. So good.

Emily Ley:

Of course.

Nancy Ray:

Okay. So the book comes out November, 12th. It's called, When Less Becomes More. You can find it on Amazon Now. It's available for pre-order already. If you know you're going to get the book or you think that you probably will get the book, I just want to encourage people who are listening, don't wait after it comes out. Go ahead and get the pre-order because that will help get this crucial message into more people's hands because it really helps with book ratings. Am I saying that right? Is that right?

Emily Ley:

You got it. Yeah.

Nancy Ray:

I'll just go ahead. Also, it's like \$13, and what an amazing Christmas gift. This is planning ahead, but come on now, November 12th is the perfect release time as for a Christmas gift for a woman in your life who might need to hear this message. So yeah, I'm excited. Super excited to read that. Okay. I'm going to ask you a really fun round of questions now. These are a little more lighthearted. What is a book that you're loving or something that you've read recently?

Emily Ley:

Oh my goodness. So I love fiction books. Oh, goodness, what is a good fiction book I just read? I love historical fiction. So right now, I'm reading The Alice Network, and it is about a female spy network in World War II. I love audible and I love to listen to fiction books to give my mind a break from everything else. Yeah. I'm in the middle of it. It's great.

Nancy Ray:

So great. Okay. What's a product that you're loving? It could be anything, household, work, any product that comes to mind that you have used a lot or that you really love recently.

Emily Ley:

Okay. Are you ready? It's kind of pricey. It's an Ember mug. Have you heard of these?

Nancy Ray:

No.

Emily Ley:

It's the mug that keeps your coffee warm.

Nancy Ray:

Oh, yeah, yeah. I have. Yes.

Emily Ley:

I waste so much less coffee now because my coffee gets... I drink coffee all day long, and my Ember mug keeps my coffee warm, and so I drink one cup of coffee instead of three half luke-warm because-

Nancy Ray:

We have heard that over, say like a yeti that keeps your mug hot. What's the difference, I guess?

Emily Ley:

You tell it the temperature you want it to be on an app, on your iPhone. Here we go with all the convenient things in life. You tell it the temperature you want it to be, and it keeps it hot.

Nancy Ray:

What?

Emily Ley:

It's great.

Nancy Ray:

Okay. It doesn't burn the bottom of the coffee or anything like that?

Emily Ley:

I thought that would happen, and it doesn't. It warms it from the entire cup and not from the bottom.

Nancy Ray:

That is cool. That's really cool. I'm assuming you can get that on Amazon. Is that right?

Emily Ley:

Yeah.

Nancy Ray:

Okay. I'm going to look to that. That's awesome.

Emily Ley:

It was my Christmas gift. I love it.

Nancy Ray:

That's so cool. Okay. If you could share a meal with anybody, who would it be?

Emily Ley:

Oh, my great-grandmother. I was named after my great-grandma. She passed away before I was born actually. She was a single mother in a time where there were no single mothers or not very many at least. She was just strong and beautiful and had a heart for God like no other, and I would love to have met her.

Nancy Ray:

Single mommas are my heroes. They're amazing. Wow. Okay. What did you want to be when you were little?

Emily Ley:

I wanted to be a children's book author, and I still do.

Nancy Ray:

It's going to happen. Oh, it's gotta happen. That's awesome. You're well on your way. That's so sweet. I just picture you in the little bean bag you described reading all the kids books, and that is so great.

Emily Ley:

That's where it started.

Nancy Ray:

I love that. What are you most proud of in your life?

Emily Ley:

Oh gosh, my kids. They're who I want to be when I grow up. They're just, I don't even know. Brian and I always say that God had no mercy on the noise level in our house when He gave us our kids. There's no wallflowers in ours. There are three very big personalities, and they are just bright and smart and sweet and thoughtful and wild and challenging, and I'm so proud of them and who they're becoming.

Nancy Ray:

I love that. What does work and play mean to you?

Emily Ley:

Oh, work and play. I love the name of your podcast because, to me, it means that funny dance about balance, that work and play, and how do you involve both in your life because they're both important, and as passionate women, we love them both? How do they mix and mingle? So yeah.

Nancy Ray:

So great. How do you maintain a healthy soul and a fulfilling life? Deep question to end on.

Emily Ley:

I love it. I love it. I believe, as women, we need to fill our Wells with a lot of things. For me, that means truth, surrounding myself with Godly women and God's words so that I know truth when I need to fall on it or I need to lean on it. Good healthy food is something I've realized as I've gotten older. Good healthy food and exercise. I have to take care of that. Like you said, that body God gave me to do the work and play that he put me here to do.

Nancy Ray:

So much of what you've said today is simple, right? It's simple, but it's not easy. It's not always easy to follow through on these things. But if we can do it, we can make up our minds just to embrace those simple "no"s and the simple yeses and a lot of the wisdom you share today, I do feel like we would be well on our way to maintaining a healthy soul and a fulfilling life. So thank you. Thank you for being here today. Tell anyone who's listening, where can we find you?

Emily Ley:

Yeah. So you can find my books anywhere books are sold. Our website is emilyley.com, and you can also find me on all the social media places at Emily Ley and at Simplified.

Nancy Ray:

So great. Well, I cannot wait to get my hands on your new book, *When Less Becomes More*. I'm going to leave a link to it in the show notes today for anybody who wants to grab it after listening to this episode. Go ahead and grab it and pre-order it. Or if you're listening to this podcast after the time it launches, just go ahead and do yourself a favor and grab a copy of it. Emily, thank you again so much for being here, for sharing your wisdom and your heart with the Work and Play-

Emily Ley:

Thank you.

Nancy Ray:

... listeners were so grateful for you.

Emily Ley:

Thank you so much. It's been so much fun.

Nancy Ray:

Today in the Work and Play Cornerstore, we're going to add one book and one thing, and it's going to be themed around my talk with Emily. So the first book that we're going to add is obviously Emily Ley's new book that's coming out soon, *When Less Becomes More*. The second thing I'm going to add is that fine mug that Emily talked about at the very end of our episode, the Ember, which is a fancy-schmancy little coffee mug that keeps warm all day long. It literally heats the bottom of your mug, but it never burns the coffee. I don't know. Sounds really cool to me. So if you're interested in those two things, check out the links in the show notes for the Work and Play Cornerstore.

Thanks for listening to Episode 30 of Work and Play with Nancy Ray.

Everything I've mentioned today can be found in the show notes at nancyray.com/podcast/30. You can find me at nancyray.com or follow me it Nancy Ray on Instagram or Facebook almost daily. I'm going to close with words from my friend Emily and her book, *Grace, Not Perfection*. She says,

"We live in a society of more faster and extra, so we feel the need to respond more faster and extra—such a useless exercise. So much joy can be found in slowing down."

I hope you find some time today to slow down.

Thanks for listening, and I'll see you next time.