

Ep #200: Keeping Your Commitments



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With Your Host

Jen Riday

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Ep #200: Keeping Your Commitments

You're listening to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast, episode number 200. We're talking all about commitment. Stay tuned.

Hi, I'm Jen Riday and this podcast is for women who want to slow down, find balance, and love more. You'll learn how to get off that hamster wheel and to make time for yourself without the guilt. How to love yourself and get your sparkle back, and how to create a phenomenal life. Welcome to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast.

Hello, Happy New Year, and welcome to the brand new reformatted, overhauled, and improved *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast. I'm Dr. Jen Riday and I am so excited for our journey ahead. And in the next few episodes, we're going to be talking about commitment; the perfect topic for this time of year.

Many of you have probably set a New Year's resolution by now. And New Year's resolutions notoriously don't last very long. In fact, only 8% of us keep our New Year's resolutions. Why does that happen?

I can imagine you've scratched your head a few times, like many of us have, and asked yourself, "Why haven't I stuck with my commitment?" Hopefully you're still going strong, but if you're not, this is the episode for you. Or, if you wonder how much longer you're going to be going strong, this is also a great episode for you.

Commitment is defined as an agreement or pledge to do something in the future, or an engagement to assume an obligation at a future date. You're making a commitment to do something in the future.

A commitment is defined as a promise or a firm decision to do something. For example, maybe you've made a commitment to workout five days a week. Or maybe you've made a commitment to give your daughter money

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for college. Maybe you've committed to pay your taxes, like most of us have. Well, when we fail to honor our commitments, we can start to lose trust with our self.

Commitment is also defined as a state or an instance of being obligated or emotionally impelled. So that means, if you have enough juice, enough purpose, enough why behind a goal, you are more likely to stay committed. So, I want you to think about one big thing you would like to achieve, either this month or this year. Narrow it down to one thing.

What is your why behind that thing? Why do you want to do that thing? Why do you want to go to the gym every day? Why are you not eating sugar or flour right now? Why have you begun intermittent fasting? Whatever it is, what is your why?

Maybe you're going to the gym every day because you have discovered that, when you work out, you're more focused and productive all day long. That's a juicier why than saying you're going to the gym to get that hot bikini bod. And that's fine. The why is personal to you. The reason you're committing to something is personal to you.

Maybe you realize you want to spend more time with your kids this year, so you commit to finish your workday by 4PM so you can spend the entire evening with your kids, which is a commitment I made last year. And it turned out amazing.

Maybe you want to have more fun as a family, so you commit that one night a week is Family Fun Night. We did that as well and that was Tuesday night. And we've had so much fun going to movies, eating at different restaurants, trying new activities, and it's really a memorable experience, which is one of my priorities; that my kids form positive memories with each other and with us as their parents.

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Now, moving onto a more practical approach to commitment. Yes, it is an act of showing integrity to yourself; doing the thing you said you were going to do, even when nobody is watching. By the way, I use this phrase all the time with my teens. Integrity, are you doing the right thing, even when nobody but you knows about it?

Well, we want to have integrity with ourselves. And if you are a person who has broken your commitments to yourself over and over and over again, which means you're not doing what you said you're going to do, you can begin to lose trust in yourself.

Well, one of the easiest ways to restore that trust is to start small. Perhaps you decide today that you are going to commit, this week, to drink eight glasses of water every day.

Now, in the past, maybe you've not stuck with such a commitment. But part of commitment is deciding now that you're going to keep your commitments to yourself. You're going to do what you say you're going to do.

So, one of the easiest ways to make this happen is to write down and schedule when you're going to do what you said you will. I like to use a planner, a written planner, because it's easier. Some people like to use Google Calendar. But the simplest way to start keeping your commitments is to wake up each day and look at what is scheduled and honor your commitment to that schedule.

Commitment and time management then, you'll notice, go hand in hand. When you follow your planned schedule, you are committing and keeping your promises to yourself. When you train yourself to do what you say you're going to do with consistency, you develop the skill of commitment; doing what you say you're going to do. And what happens as a result, you are more likely to achieve all your goals. You are more likely to grow and

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stretch and become and persevere and shine and sparkle, which is the goal of our lives, to be our best selves.

Now, one of the biggest pieces of keeping a commitment to yourself is to track your ability to keep the commitment. So let's say, at the beginning of the day, you have committed to do your morning routine. And maybe that involved drinking some water, exercising for 10 minutes, and reading something spiritual for you, or writing in a journal.

And you've written it down, you know what you've committed to, and you wake up at the time your alarm is set and you begin to follow your commitment. And you do well. Well, at the end of the day, I want you to celebrate that success, to track how you did.

If you can track your success every day, you'll start to see patterns. "How did I do with my commitments today? Well, I wanted to follow my morning routine. I was doing well, but then my baby woke up and I had to drop everything." You'll start to see patterns of what's stopping you, what's blocking you from keeping your commitments to yourself and you can make an adjustment.

The next day, you can plan a schedule that works better or provides greater flexibility when you're interrupted by kids or some kind of an event. Similarly, let's say you set the goal to drink eight glasses of water a day. By tracking your result, you can see how you're doing.

Now, going back to commitments, think about all the goals you've set in the past. Maybe you've set a goal to lose weight for the past 10 years, and by April, you've kind of lost maybe 10 pounds, but end up, if you're like most people, end up gaining much of it back before the end of the year.

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Well, what happens when we are succeeding? More often than not, you are focused on your goal and you are tracking your results. So if we want to stay successful in our commitments to ourselves and doing what we say we're going to do so that we can grow in a massive way in 2020, we must get into the habit of tracking.

Now, I know exactly what's going through your mind right now if you're like most people. You'll say, like I used to say, "Jen, I hate tracking." Know, now, let's pause there and notice that thought, "I hate tracking my results." That thought, more likely than not, is going to generate a feeling of dread and a feeling of, "Ugh," and a feeling of, "Ergh," for lack of better terms.

And if you have those feelings, do you think you are going to continue to engage in the action of tracking? And if you don't track, what is going to be your result? Like most years in your past, you probably are going to have the result of quitting because the things that we track are the things where we end up changing and growing. The things that we don't track end up fading into nothingness.

That is why corporations and sports teams and schools track their results, because that is the only way to see where you're at, like a roadmap, and to keep moving forward. So, if you want to get to the end of 2020 with a different result than you've had in years past, you must commit to the act of tracking. That commitment will help you with all of the other commitments. It's like a ripple effect.

So, how do we do it? Well, I like to purchase a 90-day planner. In fact, in 2021, we will be releasing the *Vibrant Happy Women* planner. Oh my gosh, it's awesome because it has tracking. And you're like, "Jen, thanks for telling me that a year in advance." Well, this is my commitment to you. It's already in progress.

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It might come sooner, but my point is, grab some kind of a journal or a planner, maybe a 90-day planner or a monthly planner. Grab anything. They're all good. And add a component of tracking your results.

Now, don't go crazy and track everything. Track what matters to you. Maybe this is your year to focus on your marriage and you are going to rub your spouse's back for 15 minutes a day because you've noticed it smooths everything over, it increases your feelings of love, because we tend to love those whom we serve, and it makes your marriage better.

So, every day, if for the next 365 days, you track that, you'll start to notice, "Okay, I rubbed his back five days this week, ye-haw, now I'm going to do six days next week." Or you might notice, "I've fallen off the wagon. I'm not really scratching his back. What's going wrong?" And then you can notice the obstacles that are getting in your way.

Now, this might sound intense to you, but I want you to pause and consider the alternative. If you don't commit to the act of commitment, which involved tracking, what will be your result at the end of the year? More likely than not, without some form of tracking, which keeps you focused on your goals. You will fall off the wagon, like most people, 92% of Americans, who forget to follow up on their New Year's resolutions, and you'll end the year feeling like you're running on a treadmill and not getting anywhere.

I want a different result for you. I want you to get excited and hold a vision of yourself in December of this year, December 2020, having achieved the result you crave. Maybe that's losing 40 pounds. Maybe that's a way happier marriage where you walk in the door and want to give your spouse a kiss. Maybe it's getting along better with your teens. Maybe it's changing careers or writing that book.

Whatever it is, figure out what it is that you want, number one. Number two, what is your why? Why do you want it? "Because I want to be a more

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vibrant and happy mom,” or, “I want to have a more vibrant and happy marriage.” Figure out what juices you up. And then, number three, track your results every day.

Notice your thoughts about tracking. And when you’re tracking, notice our thoughts about how you did that day. Keep them positive. Remember what I said in episode 199; our thoughts cause our feelings and our feelings lead to actions or inactions, and those actions or inactions get us our results.

This means, if you start your tracking process saying, “I hate tracking, I’m going to fail,” what feeling follows that? Probably a feeling of demoralization, failure, low mood, which will lead to what? Inaction, which will lead to what? You failing to achieve the result.

So, I want you to commit to tracking your results every day, especially your results toward your most important goal. If you narrow it down to one, what will happen is your ability to focus on that goal and track that goal and commit to that goal will spread into every area of your life and you’ll start to notice greater commitment to all your goals. When you say you’re going to do something, you end up doing it because you know you’re going to be tracking it at the end of the day.

Now, one more tip, you have this planner, you’ve written down exactly what you’re going to do and when. Honor your calendar. When it’s there on your calendar, you are more likely to stay committed because you’re committing not just to tracking, but you’re committed to following what’s on your schedule as closely as possible. Yes, emergencies come up, but when it’s on your schedule and you’re committed, you’re more likely to follow through.

Now, notice your thoughts about calendaring. Maybe you have a thought that you’re saying, “Jen, I don’t use calendars like that. I feel too constrained. I feel too stifled and controlled.” Stop. Notice, without

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judgment, what feeling does that thought generate for you? “I feel controlled, I can’t follow through. That’s not me.”

Well then, you feel like you can’t do your calendaring. Then you’re likely not to do your calendaring. And what will happen? You’ll probably end your day spending too much time watching Netflix or scrolling through Facebook or Instagram. Another wasted day, another lost result where you’re not moving forward.

And since we are human beings that are wired for growth, you will feel a bit empty when you’re not growing. And this ends up being the mother’s dilemma because we spend so much time taking care of everyone else and not having a goal, a focused goal where we’re making progress toward a goal.

We can feel like we’re treading water, like we’re not getting anywhere, and that’s the worst feeling in the world because we are wired to grow and to make progress, however small.

So, set an intention. Set a commitment now that you are going to pick one area, one where you’re going to grow and that you’re going to stay committed to that. It goes on your calendar. You do what you say you’re going to do at the time that it’s scheduled, and you track at the end of the day.

If you learn this one skill, your entire life will dramatically change by the end of 2020 and beyond because commitment is the foundation of successfully achieving all your goals; commitment to your calendar, commitment to your time and your schedule, commitment to tracking, doing what you say you’re going to do.

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One final thought, let's talk about failure. Some of us are all or nothing. We go all in and that is one big reason we end up breaking our New Year's resolutions, because we have one failure and we think all is lost. We throw up our hands. We jump off that wagon and quit.

Commitment is a willingness to fail over and over and over again, to tweak your perception of what failure really means, and to instead say, "Failure is a sweet opportunity to learn something, to learn what caused me not to stick to that commitment today? Oh, when my teenager comes in wow, all heck breaks loose." Or, "He's really loud, I have to go work in this different place or I have to go workout at the gym." Or find your way to tweak it.

Failure, one small failure, becomes one amazing and big learning opportunity. So instead of looking at failure as final, look at failure as a learning opportunity every day. I would encourage you to fail this year, over and over and over again.

If you commit to continue to fail, you will get to the result. The pathway to success is lined with failure. Think of Thomas Edison, who invented the lightbulb. He failed 1000 times before he got to success. So, I want you to celebrate your failures. As long as you're tracking them and learning from them, this is the path to success. Now, my friends, you've got this.

To recap, I want you to commit to one focused goal. Number two, schedule it on your calendar and follow your plan. Number three, track your commitments at the end of the day. How did you do with drinking the five glasses of water or the eight glasses of water? How did you do with going to the gym? How did you do with giving your spouse that massage?

Whatever it is, track it. and maybe the bonus tip is, be happy when you fail, as long as you're tracking and committed to doing it again the next day and again and again and again. You're going to be at an entirely different

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outcome at the end of 2020 and having the results you want. And that is our goal.

Now, for those of you in the Vibrant Happy Women Club, we're going to be talking about how you are scheduling your commitments in your calendar, how you are tracking, and your thoughts about failure. And you can study more about this in your Podcast Study Guide.

Throughout the next few episodes, we will continue to talk about commitment, along with priorities, and time management. I am so excited because this becomes the foundation for all the results you want to achieve throughout your year. We are going to rock this. It is an amazing journey ahead and I'm so excited you're along for the ride.

Thank you so much for listening and take care.

If you enjoy this podcast, you have to check out the Vibrant Happy Women Club. It's my monthly group coaching program where we take all this material to the next level and to get you the results that will blow your mind. Join me in the Vibrant Happy Women Club at jenriday.com/join.