

215: Courage to Love Your Life (with Jennifer Louden)



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Jen Riday

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Jen Riday: You're listening to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast episode number 215. We're talking about discovering what's next by looking at the before and the current of our COVID-19 world. Stay tuned.

Hi, I'm Jen Riday. This podcast is for women who want to feel more vibrant, happy, aligned, and alive. You'll gain the emotional, physical, and spiritual tools you need to get your sparkle back and ensure that depression, anxiety, and struggle don't rule your life. Welcome to the Vibrant Happy Women Podcast.

Hey, my friends, it's Jen. I'm so glad you're here listening. I hope you are thriving as best you can emotionally and physically. If you have the virus or knows someone who has the virus that can be scary and I want to challenge to just ride those waves. Allow yourself to feel what you feel whether that's fear or panic or calm, whatever, ride the wave. It is just a wave and we can feel our emotions and be fine.

Now, my husband and I just recovered from coronavirus, most likely, we weren't allowed to be tested. I want to give you two pieces of advice. First, take vitamin C, mega dose. We were taking 3,000-4,000mg a day and that really helped. Or at least I was, my husband took a little less than me, and do the deep Wim Hof breathing. I'll link to that in the show notes at jenriday.com/215.

Now, these are not substitutes for social distancing and not catching it at all which is much better, but if you do catch it a number of my friends are saying they're having excellent luck with vitamin D and vitamin C and deep breathing exercises. I particularly like the Wim Hof breathing because it boosts your immune system and so check it out. The link will be in the show notes.

Now, emotionally I've been thinking a lot about our pre-COVID-19 world, our current COVID-19 world, and what's going to be happening post-

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COVID-19 and my guest today, Jennifer Louden joins me in that conversation as we discuss her book, *Why Bother? Discover the Desire for What's Next*. Many of you have commented to me that you're loving the change in energy during this calm, relaxed, less hectic time. Yes, there's anxiety and there's death and there's people I suffering. I get that. It's okay to feel the struggle of this moment, but also, it's a chance to notice what you maybe want to change in your post-COVID-19 world.

I know for our family; we're going to have fewer activities and more family time. That's one thing I've figured out. So, without further ado, let's go ahead and dive in. You're going to love this. Jennifer Louden, by the way, is the author of many, many amazing books including *A Year of Daily Joy* and you're going to love her new book, *Why Bother? Discover the Desire for What's Next*. So, we'll be talking about that right now. Let's dive in.

Hey, everyone, I'm talking with Jennifer Louden today and she's a personal growth pioneer who helped launch the concept of self-care with her 1992 best-selling debut book, *The Women's Comfort Book*. She has written five additional books including her newest book, *Why Bother?*

As an entrepreneur and educator Jennifer has offered women's retreats for over 25 years and she has addressed audiences in the US, Canada, and Europe. Two fun facts about Jennifer, she has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and her work has been featured in Brené Brown's book, *Daring Greatly* and *Dare to Lead*.

She lives in Boulder County, Colorado with her husband, Bob, and her dog, Stuart, and she has two grown kids who live in the Pacific Northwest. Welcome to the show, Jennifer.

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Jennifer Louden: Wow, thank you, Jennifer.

Jen Riday: So, do you go by Jennifer or Jen?

Jennifer Louden: You know, it's a great little story. So, I was Jennifer my whole life except to my sister and my dad, I was Jenny to them. Then when Bob and I, my husband – my second husband, we started dating we did a lot of email flirting because we both had kids and we couldn't see each other as much as we wanted and I was lazy and I started signing my emails, J. He started calling me Jen, and then his whole family started calling me Jen and I became Jen. So, I go by either one though.

Jen Riday: I'm Jen as well, so I'll just call you Jennifer and you can call me Jen, how about that?

Jennifer Louden: That's okay.

Jen Riday: So, Coronavirus world, tell us how you're handling the current events in your neck of the woods in the Boulder area.

Jennifer Louden: Well, I live with a scientist who works in large-scale conservation, so he's someone who understands science, follows science, so pretty early on he got pretty alarmed and curious. I would say early January. A big part of what I do in my business, like half of my business is live workshops and retreats, so I got curious really early because I realized that this may really change what my business looks like both short-term and long-term and really impact my income and I have a book coming out. I had an entire book tour planned.

So, I started following it really early on. What's so fascinating to me about something like this that a lot of people have had experience is you wonder if you're crazy.

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Jen Riday: Oh, that's me. Yeah.

Jennifer Louden: Like, am I becoming a prepper? We went and bought groceries really early on and we were like ashamed a little bit. Like, "Nobody knows what we're doing."

Jen Riday: That's so funny. My husband is also a scientist and we were kind of prepping ahead and I would talk about it with a few people and they would just stare at me and I felt nuts. But now here we are.

Jennifer Louden: I pretty much knew we were going to have to cancel the book tour pretty early on and we've canceled two retreats so far this year, but I waited because I didn't want people to think I was crazy.

Jen Riday: Yeah, right. Oh my gosh. So, you have two kids in the Pacific Northwest. What's that like living through a crisis situation so to speak and they're not there. Do you worry about them or are you feeling okay about them not being with you?

Jennifer Louden: I do worry. My daughter works in healthcare. She works in pediatric mental health and she has been exposed. She has not developed the virus. It's more than two weeks now and so she was working out of the hospital at home and that felt great and they thought that she'd be able to continue to do that, but they're trying to bring everybody back on to the floor even though that's not where she does her work anymore. So, she's now back in the hospital and I had a few really hard days with that and she did, too, but now she's like, "Mom, don't talk about it. I'm fine." So, I'm just compartmentalizing.

Jen Riday: How about you guys? Do you leave at all or are you just staying at home all the time?

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Jennifer Louden: I'm staying at home. At first, I went out to the post office I think two or three times in the last three weeks, very carefully, and mailed a bunch of books to people who are going to review the book. I stopped even doing that and Bob does a grocery shop every two weeks as if he was practically in a hazmat suit. So, yeah, we're pretty much staying home. We have done a little social distancing. We have a lot of friends in the neighborhood and when we see each other in the street we'll stand six to eight feet apart, but now we're even worried about that with the different information about the aerosols. I go out to run, but now we're worried about that. It's really hard to run with a mask on.

Jen Riday: Yes, for sure. Do you have a treadmill?

Jennifer Louden: I don't. This is so crazy. I cannot run on a treadmill, I get dizzy and I'm afraid I'm going to fall off which totally I know is in my head, but when I've been in places where I can't run which I was recently for a funeral and there was no sidewalks or anything, you know those places in America where there's just all freeways. I'm like, "That's okay, I can get on the treadmill and do it." I think I made a mile before I had to stop.

Jen Riday: Yeah, treadmills are funny that way. You've seen videos online where people go flying off the end.

Jennifer Louden: I'm afraid of them. It's really insane. I mean, I'll run up a mountain, the side of a mountain, but don't give me a treadmill.

Jen Riday: Yeah, exactly. So, you're at home and you talked about your kids, worrying about them a little bit and a big thing I've heard from many women who listen to the show is dealing with the emotions of it all. So, how have you dealt with the anxiety and the uncertainty and anything else you might have experienced emotionally?

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Jennifer Louden: Well, I have both the honor and the –

Jen Riday: Curse? I'm just kidding.

Jennifer Louden: Maybe it's more irony, yeah, the big part of my work is helping women deal with their feelings and challenges and all the stuff that we deal to try to be whole human beings who show up for our lives. So, I've been leading my community through this. I've been doing podcast interviews about the new book. So, I have a tremendous amount of awareness of my own process. At the same time, you can't short circuit your own process, you have to go through it.

So, it's this disconnect a little bit between giving other people other ideas about emotional processing. At the same time, I think I spent the first two weeks almost completely frozen. Some of that was a disappointment of a lot of our book plans going away, we can't get media attention it's just COVID-19 24/7, so a lot of it was processing my own disappointment and then my own fears for the kids. My parents have died so I'm not worried about them, but I am worried about my in-laws that they're being really good.

I feel like part of what I've been doing is leading and then going and taking a nap.

Jen Riday: Yes! That sounds identical to my experience. Yeah, I would say 10 to 12 days frozen and paralyzed, then I had to work through it all. I just processed the whole experience I feel like right up front. It was overwhelming, but I'm glad it's over.

Jennifer Louden: Yeah, and you're, of course, processing of being ill yourself. But you know, it's fascinating for me personally, if I can stay with

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that for a second, so the book has a lot of my own stories of my own life and deep periods of time that I went deep into my own “why bother?”

I really thought by writing the book that would never happen again, but what’s happened as I’ve come out of this frozen period is realizing I’m not in a why bother period. I love my work, I love this book, but I was getting close to one because I’ve been hustling so damn hard. I was getting really close to being burned out. I got close to being burned out the end of last year doing the same thing, again all around the book and around work.

So, even though I should be hustling my butt off for this book, I am not because I have to walk my talk or I can’t live with myself. I’m honest to a fault. I mean that, I’m not complimenting myself. So, I find myself really in this period of great relaxation and letting go even though financially we’ve just gone from thinking I’m going to have the best year to probably the worst year.

So, I think I’m finding the lessons of my book in a deeper way and it’s kind of astonishing me. I’m not sure it’ll last. I almost feel weird talking about it because I don’t want to sound like I’m having this incredible happiness while people are dying. But I think that’s part of what unprecedented events, which is this pandemic – as one student of mine said today, “It’s not like I have the pandemic toolbox or manual.”

I think what it is, is it’s messing with our priorities and changing what we think is important in ways that may surprise us.

Jen Riday: Yes, exactly. There’s, I feel like the pre-COVID-19 world for many of my listeners and this sounds like your followers as well, overwhelm, lots of overwhelm and approaching burnout. So, during the COVID-19 time and probably a post-COVID-19 time tell us how your book helps us identify who we are or what we want throughout all of these phases.

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Jennifer Louden: I've been trying to think about this because I want to help people understand why they might want to read the book right now, but not be an ambulance chaser. If I see one more ad for yoga pants or sweatpants, it's like, "Okay, no, I don't need more sweatpants, thanks." So, what I think the opportunity might be is there's a sense for some of us, not for all of us, some of us are overwhelmed with our kids and our spouses and our partners being home and we're very, very afraid about money, but there is a general sense of, for some of us, of hitting pause. What could we do with that pause that might help us know what we want to care about or engage about or what changes we might or might not want to make, may or may not want to make when we come out and that's where I think the book could be useful.

If that's coming up for you, "How can I go back to that job? What will it be like? How do I want to engage in this marriage?" If you're suddenly locked in with this person and wondering, "How's this going to work? What is most important to me?" Sometimes it feels really obvious, of course, what's most important to me is I love my people so much. My daughter and I did dance church together on Sunday. Do you know what this is?

Jen Riday: I haven't heard of it, tell us.

Jennifer Louden: I hadn't either. So, I love dance, I love putting on good music. I do this as part of my retreats, but this is groovy music with a little bit of exercise routines in there, but super hippie, wavy, we call it "tilt the world." So, she and her friends invited me to a Zoom room so I could see them dancing and then the dance church was streaming the music and the instruction and we all did it together.

Now, having things like that happen that we know exactly what's most important to us, our family, but beyond those questions I think we may be wondering what do I really want to bother about? Some of us were in a why bother period, we were feeling lost before this started and we can feel so

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much more lost and so much more, what's the point? If I couldn't get my life cooking before this, how am I going to get my life cooking afterwards?

Jen Riday: So, your book is called *Why Bother? Discover the Desire for What's Next*. Some of us are still in a state of panic and worry, some of us are starting to think about the after COVID-19. So, tell us more about your book and how it could help us with that discovering what's next.

Jennifer Louden: The genesis of the book was very painful and strange which I spent four years writing a memoir about a dark stretch of time in my life when I was very lost and my dad died, I got a divorce, a dear friend died probably from suicide, and I thought I was going to write a book, a literary memoir. A memoir like wild that you would sit down and read and after four years and 500 pages I gave it to a friend who's an editor to read and she had the lovely task of telling me that the book did not work at all.

Out of that, out of the process of writing it and what I learned from writing it and then studying what my story became I came with the roadmap for the *Why Bother* frame. But the heart of it is, what I discovered was, so often in life we're in transition. Something is taken from us or something loses its meaning. Something changes whether it's by our choice or not. We talked about transitions, there's books about transitions, but I found something was missing. What I found was missing was letting desire, letting the feeling of what do you want, what do you enjoy, what gives you pleasure flow again before you figure out exactly what's next. And what gets in the way of that and why that's difficult.

So, that's really what the heart of the book is about and why it might be useful right now is because we might have more time to explore that without having to figure everything out and lock it down which is what I always did in the past. I'd go through a transition and then I'd be like, "Okay, that was fine for a week. Now, let's figure it out." That figuring it out

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seems to be part of what gets us not fully through the process that we really feel that love of life again.

Jen Riday: You know, the phrase, “figuring it out,” it almost makes me think of being in your head whereas desire sounds like it’s being in your heart. Is there any truth to that?

Jennifer Louden: Yeah, heart and body. It’s a very embodied feeling. Desire is a scary word and I tried to get rid of it. I tried to come up with other things, but what I realized is we need it because of its baggage. It has so much baggage and fear and history around it, but to me, it’s how we feel life flowing through us. Everything in your life that you’ve created or that surrounds you that’s created by other people started most of the time, not all of the time, but most of the time through desire.

Somebody thought, “I’m interested in that,” or, “I wonder about that,” or, “I want that,” and they made it happen. You can’t get away from it. Desire is always part of our lives, but how can we have a relationship with it that’s life giving? It doesn’t mean we get what we want. I am new ager. This is not law of attraction. There’s none of that. It’s not like, “I want it, so I get it.” It’s wanting as a way to come alive and be courageous in my life.

Jen Riday: I heard someone say once that most of us are really good at knowing what we don’t want. “I don’t want my husband to be a jerk. I don’t want my kids to whine,” etc., but few people seem to know what they do want. So, how does that match up with your process of figuring out what your desires are?

Jennifer Louden: Yeah, I think we’re really good at denying, blocking, complaining, saying, “Well, everybody else can have that but me,” falling into resentment, resignation. There’s a process in the book and in no way do I mean it to sound linear, but it’s just to give you an idea of how you

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might move from what's the point? Why bother? Back to feeling in love with life again. That's really what the book is about.

The first one is leave behind, and what I discovered in my many why bother times, especially the last long one about 10 years ago was that part of what kept me stuck was replaying what should have been still true. So, I have a series of the things that you might need to leave behind. It could be anything from I'm too poor to I'm too ill to I'm too old, and I'm not saying magically you're going to leave these behind, but until you begin to see how your story about the past, what, again, has ended or been taken from you or is no longer possible because of the virus you can't move on. You can't feel desire again. You're saying, if I can't have that, that that I had I won't allow myself to have anything else.

Jen Riday: Oh yeah, so a lot of people right now might be saying I want the exact same financial situation, I want my kids' prom back, I want their graduation ceremony, and you're saying we've got to let that before go?

Jennifer Louden: That we begin to entertain the idea that we can because one of the things that blocks us from moving to what's next and opening to it fully is not dealing with our disappointment and I think that is one of the things that could really hurt us coming out of this virus. We're all disappointed. I mean, I think about the Olympic athletes, some of them are not going to get to compete, they're not going to be able to do it, they're going to age out or that moment of their prime is going to pass and we all have our version of that story. I'm so furious I don't get to do the things I wanted to do to promote this book. I'm so furious we're not going to do our Grand Canyon trip we've had planned for a year and we've all got those things.

My stories are privileged stories and some of us are not going to be able to see our grandchild born or our own child born for partners who can't be in the – it's huge. We've got to deal with that disappointment. We've got to

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deal with our disappointment perhaps in people around us who aren't rising to the occasion the way we wish they would. That's really going to keep us from going through whatever regeneration and moving on to what's possible next. That's very specific to this time, I think.

Jen Riday: So, for you, you went through all of those challenges that you wrote about for four years, the death of your dad, and a friend dying of suicide, and all of those things. So, what did it look like for you, tangibly, if you could put it into words of dealing with all of those disappointments and maybe we can apply it to our situations now?

Jennifer Louden: Well, I think in terms of this first stage, leave behind, what I don't want it to look like for other people is not being able to let go of my own guilt around I wasn't with my dad when he died, my own guilt about how I handled my divorce, not being able to help my friend. What keeps us stuck is that replaying and by far what keeps us stuck is beating ourselves up for the choices that we made. The woulda, coulda, shouldas, and I know it sounds so cliché to y'all,

I really understand that, but when we really stop and reflect about how we're being cruel to ourselves and how we're saying, "I should've been able to, I should've known, I should've done," that really truly when I look back is the single biggest thing I did that made me stay longer and suffer more and really almost blow the great relationship that I'm in now that came after my divorce with my current husband.

Jen Riday: Yeah, so drop the shoulds, leave that victimy, guilt story behind and so you mentioned Bob, what is the next step that led you to keep that relationship?

Jennifer Louden: That's actually a couple of chapters down in the book. That's in the desire section of the book. Nothing to do with that kind of desire. It has to do with the desire to finally allow myself to be loved and be

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seen. But the next one is ease in. In the beginning I give you some ideas of things that you can do around trusting yourself, around something called self-compassion and grit and really about deep agency. I think that's really important for right now with the COVID-19, I found myself in the first few weeks, I don't want to say being a victim, but kind of forgetting that I had any choice.

I started to almost tell myself, "I'm supposed to be depressed because this is happening. I'm supposed to be suffering because this is happening." Instead of letting whatever was here come through and go, "Well, right now I'm happy because it's a beautiful day," or, "Right now, I'm so happy I get to wave at my neighbor across the street," or, "I'm enjoying reading this book so much. Now, I'm really sad because I'm thinking about my friend who's sick."

So, a big part of the message of the whole book is you matter, your desires matter. What you want to create matters and that's so true right now. I think it can feel more difficult because we know everyone else is suffering so much.

Jen Riday: It's so interesting, it's like a giant, collective grief and many of us are upset that people aren't feeling the same of us. I've noticed a lot of people saying, "She should feel bad. She shouldn't be this happy. They should feel horrible because they're not social distancing properly." Everyone has this version of the right way to do this right now and we're all trying to "should" all over each other.

But I love how you said, "deep agency" just to give ourselves and everyone else this freedom to feel and do what feels right for us. That's beautiful.

Jennifer Louden: That includes, I've seen a lot on social media and the Internet there's whole meme about how productive you're supposed to be during this time.

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Jen Riday: Yes.

Jennifer Louden: If you want to say, “Forget about it,” to that, that’s great, too. There’s a lot of guilting of parents who are homeschooling their kids now. There’s a lot like, “You should be learning Japanese and writing a novel and painting and exercising three hours a day.” So, please feel free to say no, no to that as well.

Jen Riday: Exactly. Like you said, the self-compassion, maybe it’s even as much as prioritizing how we feel above what we accomplish or do.

Jennifer Louden: I think that is excellent advice for right now and excellent advice for if you want to use this time to figure out what’s next or to regenerate from burnout or over-hustling or taking care of everybody to such a huge degree if that opportunity is here then I think what you’ve just said is a very important part of it.

Jen Riday: Yeah, cool. So, step one, leave behind the stories and the shoulds and the guilt, and then two, kind of ease into that deep self-compassion and agency.

Jennifer Louden: And I matter.

Jen Riday: I matter, okay.

Jennifer Louden: The three is settle as in settle down. Again, what an opportunity we have. The roads are quieter. I was reading in – I forgot, it might have been CNN or *New York Times*, *New York Times* that people who have seismic devices in cities doing research not about earthquakes, but just about how much seismic activity comes from cars and buses and trains, it has just almost come to nothing.

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Jen Riday: Really? I didn't know that.

Jennifer Louden: Yeah, so from the level where certain decibels – the sound, for example, would be causing damage to your ears, it's gone down to the sound level of conversation. So, we are quieter, in general, around the world. How can we bring that into ourselves for the sake of really listening? What is calling me? What do I want?

We're so used to being distracted and pinged and being just all over the place and this just feels like such an extraordinary opportunity to settle down, to listen, to get quiet. Again, maybe not. Maybe that freaks you out. Maybe it's too much. Maybe you want to be really hyperconnected and be on Zoom with your family and be texting all your friends. That's fine, but if you can carve out a little bit of time to absorb some of that quiet and take it in it's really essential to going through this sort of inner part of the transition.

Jen Riday: I believe, we never did qualify for testing, but I believe my family just finished up, hopefully, knock on wood, finished up our recovery from COVID-19. It took about three weeks I would say. Lots of ups and downs and the breathing and the body aches, all of the things, but the beautiful thing about napping or lying horizontal so much of the day which we did because if we didn't it would come back with a force and a vengeance, was so much meditation and quiet and thinking time. Sometimes I feel like sickness or illness can be very sacred for that reason.

Jennifer Louden: I so agree with you. I've had some of the best epiphanies of my life when I've had a fever. Not that I want this fever. I'm not saying that.

Jen Riday: Right, right.

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Jennifer Louden: Yeah, I think we're all in a place where we can settle and listen more deeply perhaps than ever in our lives or maybe since we were kids. The whole world is on a retreat.

Jen Riday: Yes, isn't that the funniest? I saw social media posts and I kind of changed it and reposted but it said, "Morning agenda: 8:30am walk from the bathroom to the kitchen and have breakfast." Then, they created this whole agenda, "10:30 group cleaning workshop," and I thought you know, if you just pretended this was a retreat it would be kind of an amazing one, right?

Jennifer Louden: I think, too, for those of us who have the privilege to do this instead of using this time to hurt or watch the news incessantly or just indulge in worry after worry, could we carve out some of this time to really settle down and journal? I give you a lot of different prompts in the book and really listen to, how can I bring this sense of life and desire and pleasure back into my life?

Jen Riday: I agree. I couldn't agree more. I'm starting to dance around what my post-COVID-19 world looks like. For example, one of my daughters she has always really struggled with school and she seems to be somewhat thriving in this version of school with us at home and I'm starting to dance around asking her, "How do you want it to look afterwards?" "I like online school," she keeps saying.

I don't know what I'm going to decide, but I'm going to ask you that same question. How do you think you'll keep your slower pace to some extent or how would you like to when this is all over?

Jennifer Louden: I love that. That's a great question and I love your story. I bet you're not alone in the questions you're dancing around. I feel like what I'm trying to – you know when you start a fire and you just have a little

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bit of embers and you're blowing on them and you're trying to shelter them from the wind. I feel like that's what I'm trying to do with myself right now.

I have been a very ambitious, achievement-oriented person, making money, selling books, having accolades, that's been really important to me even as I developed a great interior life and a great family, but that's always been like, "Okay, but as long as I'm doing that well, I'm okay." So, I think one thing that I'm going to be working on and I am working on now. I'm working, blowing on, right? Nurturing, trying to feel the truth of that I can be delighted with my life.

I can be in love with life no matter what if my income – it scares me to say this, like I don't want to sell my house. I don't want to – it's not like we have an extravagant life or anything, but you know, I don't want those changes, but I also don't want to go back to that measuring, hustling, feeling like the wolf is always at my heels a little bit. Completed created by me. No one else does that to me today. I don't know what it will look like practically though. You know, I really don't.

Jen Riday: That's an interesting thing in the US, I feel like whenever my in-laws who live in Switzerland, the pace is very, very, very different. Everyone's out for 3-hour walks and they vacation for 6 to 8 weeks at a time and I'm curious to see if in the US there might be a shift towards longer vacations and more down time and like you said, being delighted with a life without the accolades no matter what.

Jennifer Louden: I do think for some people there will be. I think a lot of it will be dependent on well, obviously, how much choice you have financially, but also how much inner resources you have because if I didn't have a rich inner life and a wonderful marriage, I wouldn't be able to give those accolades up.

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We go back to the beginning of the process, what do we have to leave behind? Really what that whole section is about we have to leave behind our stories about our identity. “Well, I was this person,” or, “I used to do this,” or, “I could do that,” or, “I wanted that.” We get stuck there, so the work is can we let go of our made-up story of who we’re supposed to be or who we were to let what’s next come to us.

Jen Riday: That’s really, really, really good. I love that.

Jennifer Louden: So, I’m living it. I wrote about it and I’m living it. So, it’s not a one-time only thing. You get to do it again and again.

Jen Riday: Yeah, so letting go of that made up story of who we were and who we thought we should be it’s almost like opening up to something totally different. It’s scary.

Jennifer Louden: It is scary, but it’s also when we again, I talk about this in the book some ways to make it safer for our brain, but when we can practice making it safer then at least for moments of time it becomes so joyful and exhilarating. Really when I was thinking yesterday during dance church with my daughter and everybody, so I’m alone in my living room. Bob is out on a long run and my kid and her friends in their little zoom windows and then I can see these people dancing on the screen next to them, I put them side by side and I’m dancing and I’ve been losing myself in the dancing. I was just having that experience of that exhilaration. That exhilaration of life and being alive. I think that’s our deepest desire.

I think that all of our deepest desire is to be here, to accept ourselves, to accept each other, to love these moments even when they’re really painful. I know lots of people listening are having painful moments right now and sometimes they’re too painful to open to and that’s okay, too, but in general I think that’s what we’re striving for. The strength and the resiliency and aliveness to say okay, I’m here for this. When I look back at my why bother

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times my regrets now are not my divorce or the financial mistakes I made or creative faceplants that happened to me, they're that I ran away from things.

Jen Riday: Wow, yeah.

Jennifer Louden: That I didn't stay present. That I didn't work to forgive myself. That I didn't stay there. That's what I want the book to help people do.

Jen Riday: That's brilliant. Well, everyone definitely go out and grab Jennifer's book, *Why Bother? Discover the Desire for What's Next* because this is a beautiful maybe once in a lifetime, unless we make it more often, opportunity to discover what we want to do in a post-COVID-19 world or even just what we want to be now while it's happening.

Jennifer Louden: Yes, I agree. I really do. At least that's happening for me. There's nothing where I have to go out and do. If we're not in transition and you're like I'm just trying to survive with the kids home without duct taping their mouths every day, right on.

Jen Riday: Yeah, right, exactly. That's beautiful. So, Jennifer, your book is not out yet. When does it come out again?

Jennifer Louden: We moved up the date because we thought it might need to come out sooner, so it comes out April 21st.

Jen Riday: Okay, and you have some really cool pre-order bonus opportunities, right?

Jennifer Louden: When you buy it we immediately give you the first chapter so if you're like you were listening to this and you're like, "I need

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that book,” you’ll get the first chapter right away. Then we’re going to do a fun, virtual book event of some kind, a workshop and we might have some guests on April 22nd, so we’ll have a live event then.

Then, a little bit later probably after a month or so, we haven’t quite set the dates yet, we’re going to do a five-day live, online training based on questions on the book. So, I’m creating a five-day, the only way you can get it training that will help you. Because while I feel like the book is fantastic, I think questions come up around how do I bother about this? Or how do I get the energy? How do I deal with people who don’t want me to bother about what I want to bother about? So, we’ll be doing a live training about that.

Jen Riday: People get access to that training just for buying the book?

Jennifer Louden: Yes, just for buying the book, and then the last thing we’re going to do is around the end of May is we’re going to choose one person to win a free retreat. If we ever are allowed to be in person again, there’s two this year. One is in July in Taos, New Mexico and one is in September in North Carolina in the mountains, so that will be a big prize.

Jen Riday: Where do we buy the book to enter to win those things?

Jennifer Louden: Sure, it’s JenniferLouden.com/why-bother.

Jen Riday: Well, thank you so much this has given us a lot. I know me and I’m sure everyone else a lot of food for thought. What do I want? What would help me feel exhilaration of life, the exhilaration of life and being alive? It’s really great.

Jennifer Louden: Thank you, and can I say one more thing about it?

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Jen Riday: Sure.

Jennifer Louden: I really want everyone to know that I believe that the exhilaration of life, that this process of why bother is nothing you have to do, it's always going on. You show so many ways that you bother every day. So, it's not about having to create anything from scratch, it's about letting yourself open and relax to it and letting the natural creative process take you and wake you up.

Jen Riday: That sounds really nice. Open and relax into it, instead of have to do it, yes. Jennifer, this is beautiful and it's so needed right now. I think it's amazing that your book was – you didn't know it'd come out during this time, but it's perfect timing, right?

Jennifer Louden: Well, I hope so. I just hope it helps people.

Jen Riday: Yeah. Everyone go to JenniferLouden.com/why-bother and pre-order now and you'll get access to all of the workshops. Maybe you'll win that retreat. That'd be cool.

Jennifer Louden: Yeah.

Jen Riday: All right, thanks, Jennifer.

Hey, I hope that gave you some food for thought. That can inspire you as you think about what are you experiencing right now during this great pause, the great pause of Coronavirus? What do you want your life to look like now and beyond? What are you enjoying now? Even though there's tons of struggle and sadness, and I acknowledge that, and it's hard. There is also so much learning and growth and clarity happening with this slowing down time.

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I want to encourage you to decide how you want to feel now and beyond Coronavirus. Where do you want to spend your dollars? Where do you want to spend your time? What is important? What are your priorities? Start to journal about that and get really clear because we have the opportunity to create and to avoid conforming and to truly be courageous in creating the life we want. Just like I quoted at the beginning of the interview, Dr. Wayne Dyer, said, “The opposite of courage is conformity.” So, let’s not conform, let’s be courageous.

Maybe that, for you, means engaging in beautiful, quality self-care before you face your day. Maybe it means taking an hour just to sleep and nap or relax. Who says you have to go, go, go, and do, do, do? Maybe this is our time, this great pause, to concentrate on who we want to be energetically, how we want to show up emotionally and with the energy of love.

Well, I enjoy this conversation so much. Before I go, I want to let you know that soon we will be starting the Vibrant Happy Women online coach training. We’ve been creating this over the past couple of months and I have to tell you it’s excellent. I believe it will be the best coach certification available out there.

If you like the idea of learning everything there is to know about behavior, emotions, motivation, along with being handed a toolbelt filled with all the best tools for “fixing yourself” and helping other women to do the same, email me at support@jenriday.com and I’ll get you all the details. By the way, coaching online is the perfect career for a COVID-19 world and beyond. So, as you think about what you’re doing now and what you want to do the Vibrant Happy Women online coach training might be the perfect avenue for you. We’d love to have you. So, again, email me at support@jenriday.com and I’ll give you all the details.

All right, my friends, thank you so much for being here. Keep going. Keep feeling the way you want to feel. Keep breathing, keep being your best self.

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Keep taking time to love yourself and take care of yourself. You're going to be okay. I'm sending you my love and my support and make it a vibrant and happy week. 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.