

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 239. This one's all about when you're struggling to hang on. 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 friends, this episode is a sensitive one but an, oh so important one. If you've been struggling in any way with everything that's been happening, feeling like you're slogging through mud rather than having a light spring in your step like you might have had in 2019, this episode is for you. Or if you know another human being, a friend, a relative who is struggling with being happy, struggling with energy, struggling with mood or mental health, this episode is also for you.

So lately I have had some moments of struggle. My oldest was in a terrible car accident a while ago, I don't know how many weeks. And then a week later my 15 year old fell out of a tree trying to rescue a cat. So I've had my own mental health moments. Luckily my tools have been working pretty well. I've used feel to heal it where you essentially sit very still and go inward, kind of like you might do with a natural childbirth, and you just feel, and breathe, and handle those emotions, birthing and emotion.

So when my son had his accident I had a ton of adrenalin, I breathed through for about three hours and then I moved that on through so it didn't get stuck. And then when my son fell out of the tree only one of us could go to the hospital, one of us could go to the surgery. So I chose to help out with the surgery, it ended up being fine. I managed my thoughts, I did a brain download. I did a thought table. I chose to think the thoughts that he's going to be fine. The surgery's going to be successful. And luckily for me, at least in this moment, all of those tools are working.

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

Now, energetically I have felt tired. I think there's something to the nature of ongoing stress, and struggle, and uncertainty that can be extremely exhausting. And I want to talk about that today. I have a number of people in my life who currently have severe depression and/or suicidal ideation.

My oldest since having his car accident has no job. He has almost not even left his house. He struggles to shower, to brush his teeth. And this is an ongoing thing for him. By the way, I have his permission to share this. He wanted to add the caveat. He thought I should tell you that he thinks it's really cool that we're all able to talk about mental health openly without shame. He thinks that's really cool and he wanted to be a part of that. So I'm sharing on his behalf that, yeah, there are people out there struggling.

Another friend of mine is struggling with understanding the rules surrounding Covid and all the restrictions they feel oppressive. And her normal means of finding joy, and happiness, and connection, and dopamine means being with friends, and travel, and shopping, restaurants. All the things that gave her a sense of adventure in the past have been eliminated for now to a large extent.

Another friend of mine, she has dealt with a number of deaths this summer, death upon death, upon death. And she's in crisis, she's struggling. So I feel as if I have been surrounded by people with this struggle for a reason. Everything happens for a reason. Number one, I have tools that can help, so I feel good about that. But number two, I thought about it, and I thought why is this happening? I'm very closely in contact with people who are struggling with severe depression or suicidal ideation, what do I need to do with this? And I think some of you listening might be able to benefit.

Number one, whether you're suicidal or not, whether you're clinically depressed or not, I am daring to venture, daring to guess that your mood might be lower and less high vibe than it has been in the past. We have

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

virtual schooling. We have the uncertainty of a political season, the uncertainty of Covid, inability to connect like we used to in the past.

Tony Robbins teaches that there are six basic human needs. And as I share these six I want you to think about how you used to meet these needs for yourself in the past and how you might be struggling to find new ways to meet these needs for yourself now.

So those needs are certainty, just the word alone helps us see that maybe we don't have a lot of certainty right now, and that is a basic human need, so number one, certainty.

Number two, variety, how are you meeting that need when you predominantly spend your time at home, wearing a mask, going fewer places than you might have in the past? So we have number one, certainty, number two, variety.

Number three, significance, feeling like you matter, feeling like you're important to somebody in the world. That may or may not be happening for you.

Number four, love and connection. So you may be getting this need met really well at home, being with your family, or you may not. Maybe you've found that this time is very stressful for your relationships. Or maybe you're not quarantining or social distancing with other people and you're not getting as much love and connection. Or maybe you've found really cool ways to love and connect which would be things like Zoom, or more fun calls, or socially distanced walking partners, whatever that is. So we have certainty, variety, significance, love and connection.

And then growth, how are you doing with growth? Are you moving forward? Are you feeling stuck? Or are you moving backward? We have a basic human need to grow, and to improve, and to develop, to be better. This is

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

wired into us. It helps us to evolve as humans, to evolve our relationships, to evolve our planet.

So, finally, after certainty, variety, significance, love and connection, and number five, growth, we have number six, contribution. How are you doing meeting your need to contribute to the world, to make a difference, to make it better, to serve, to help, to lift?

So I'm daring to guess that if you are struggling with your mental health, or with your mood, or with depression, or suicidal ideation, all ranges of that spectrum of mood. It might have something to do with those six basic human needs and your ability to meet those needs for yourself during this very unique time.

So now I'm going to share those six again and I want you to allow your brain to expand a little bit and come up with new ideas, new ways, your new normal of how you might meet those needs a little better going forward this week. And I will add my own ideas.

So, certainty, what certainty can we have during uncertain times? Well, we can create some by eliminating or dramatically reducing our time on social media and our time watching the news. Those platforms tend to right now, at this time at least, generate fear and uncertainty. Eliminate them. How can you create certainty in your life right now? Maybe you create the certainty of a morning routine, the certainty of an exercise regimen, where you know I'm going to do x, y, z and I'm going to feel this way afterwards. Certainty, you can create that for yourself with routines at home.

Now let's move on to the next one, variety. It might not be the variety you've had in the past. But how might you create more variety in your life right now? I love this one.

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

We are going to be talking about this one in particular in the Vibrant Happy Women Club throughout October. We need variety, novelty, newness, fun, adventure, all of those things. We need those and we're going to work together to create variety in our lives, adventure in our lives every day of October. So that's going to be fun. We're creating fun, we need it. It will boost our mental health. It will help us meet one of our six basic human needs.

So if you'd like to be with us, join us. By the way, the doors are closing until 2021. Your last chance to get in is October 8th. And if you want to be with us for all of October, join us ASAP. I'll mail you out the workbook so you can join us for creating that variety and fun in our lives. So that's number two.

Number three, significance, you want to know that you matter, don't you? And if you've been stuck at home with just your kids, and just your spouse, you might not be feeling that significance, because sometimes when we get stuck in ruts, nobody is really showing appreciation. Everyone's bored with everyone else, blah, blah, blah. And maybe you even feel this way towards your spouse. You're not feeling like they're very significant right now. You're getting tired of all the togetherness, I don't know. Maybe your experience is different.

But how can you meet your need for significance? What would make you feel significant? What helps me to feel significant is helping other people, doing nice things for them. Hey, I made you this hot chocolate. And to watch their eyes light up, maybe they'll give you a big hug. That adds that feeling of significance. You can extend that by doing something kind, like calling a friend, sending a handwritten letter. Wouldn't that be amazing to receive a letter?

Everyone's shutting down, withdrawing and sinking a little bit, I can see this in my circles. But just remember, you have this need for significance. And

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

by doing it, you're going to lift someone else higher, help someone connect with someone, do something that lifts someone else.

Okay then, love and connection, kind of related. Love and connection, where are you getting this met for yourself? If you're like my son, you're not. He has withdrawn further, and further, and further. He's falling into a deeper and deeper pit. He broke up with his girlfriend. The only person he is seeing now is his roommate, and even then that's few and far between because his roommate works. My son is not working because of the mental health issues.

And so this is what I'm doing to help him. I brought him home, I said, "Hey buddy, are you ready to come over? I think we need to give you some vitamin D. We need to do some walks. We need to give you some green juice." By the way, he's on medication, he has a psychiatrist. They're figuring it out.

But I want to do as his mom, everything that I can do. So taking what I have, my ability to rock a morning routine, it's going to pay off here. I'm seeing how maybe, just maybe I was meant to be his mom. He's facing this specific struggle in his life and it looks to be ongoing. It's been happening since eighth grade. I hope it goes away with time, crossing fingers. But to help him function and have small wins.

So he actually just came over just now. I called an Uber for him and I said, "It's on the way. Put a toothbrush and some deodorant and one clean outfit in your bag and this Uber will pick you up in five minutes." And he magically is so desperate to get out of the pit he's in, even though he's a very independent 19 year old. He said, "Sure, oh, okay." And I heard the first spark I've heard in his voice for several weeks.

He came. Then I had a little kind of a mental checklist for him. I said, "Hey, bud, cool." And I could see right away. You know when you look in

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

someone's eyes and you can tell they're hurting, they're off? I could see it right away. I said, "What's up, have you not been getting any sleep?" He said, "Well, I decided to pull an all-nighter last night because my psychiatrist ordered some lab work today." And I thought, oh, ouch, "You know sleep is correlated with mental health." He's like, "I know, probably not my smartest move."

So I said, "Well hey, bud, here's a towel, go take a shower, brush your teeth. How long has it been since you did those things?" "Oh, a few days." And he did and then I essentially, I said, "Hey, here is where you can sleep, go get a nap and then when you're done we'll go get your labs. We'll get a haircut. We'll go buy you a new outfit." And his comment meant the world to me. This was my way to show love and get that connection I need and help him in the process.

He said, "Wow, small wins, see, everything's coming together, mom." Just those little, little things made all the difference to him and it made me feel good in the process.

So, now, if you're one of the people on the end of the spectrum with my son, barely able to put one foot in front of the other, mentally, physically, whatever. Just take a deep breath and reach out to one person for help. Let them do the loving and connecting. Let them love and serve you. But you've got to do that one thing to say, "Hey, I need help functioning." Here are some things that Jen Riday says I should do, give them this list." Get enough sleep, take showers, brush your teeth.

Bonus, if you want to wear deodorant, you don't have to. Bonus for me, if you want to shave your armpits, that's always a good one, I'm just adding some humor there, you don't have to do that. Walking, having some fruits and vegetables, getting a hug, looking in someone's eyes, talking to another human, whether it's on Zoom or otherwise. Those would be some great first steps.

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

So if you feel like you can take that little list, go back and replay that, write those basic steps down and give yourself some small wins, baby steps. It's the small baby steps, the small wins that accumulate to get you out of that pit, that struggle you might be lost in. So if you can say at the end of today as you listen to this that you showered, that you brushed your teeth, maybe you went outside and sat in the sunshine, you are winning. Small steps, ask for help, ask for someone to help you take these small steps. It's obviously for my son meaning so much to him.

Now, you might be listening and saying, "Jen, why didn't you bring him earlier?" Great question, usually in the past he didn't descend this far into the pit. And I'm trying to let him learn to manage his mental health and not be a helicopter parent. I'm definitely not a helicopter parent, by the way.

So this is new for me, to bring a 19 year old home and say, "Here you go buddy, we're going to get some small wins." And to see already he has a sense of hope to know someone's helping him out of that pit. And now I don't know how it will end but I feel good trying and I feel happy that today we're making some progress.

Okay, so we talked about certainty, variety, significance, love and connection. Now, let's talk a minute about growth and contribution. When you're depressed, or your low mood or low energy growth can seem nearly impossible, so I want to advise you to come back just to basic simple self-care, brushing your teeth, showering, a little exercise, eating something with vegetables.

I love to buy the Suja brand, Uber Greens, green juice. The primary ingredient is vegetable, yes, there is a bit of grapefruit juice in it to give it some good taste, but I think it's delicious. I love it. I'm going to give my son some of that as soon as he's done napping. Maybe your growth right now is just to keep walking, just to keep doing that basic self-care.

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

If you want to take it to the next level, teeny tiny next level, get yourself into a safe space where you like to be alone, mine is my bed, I have a chair, maybe on a walk. And just feel what you're feeling. I'm feeling heavy. All these people are suffering around me. What should I do? A podcast episode, okay, I can do something. I can contribute. I can show love and connection.

I'm meeting my basic human needs by using my small skill set, however small yours is, however big it is, what can you do to grow? And essentially that right now might just mean putting one foot in front of another. And how might you use your small skill set, or your large skill set, wherever you are, to contribute to help another? Those meet your six basic human needs.

So to recap, right now we need to meet our six basic human needs in new ways. And those are certainty, variety, significance, love and connection, growth and contribution. Now, if that seems daunting, just pull it back, and do your basic self-care. Get up and breathe, stretch a little. Drink some water. Make sure you've got enough sleep. Put your phone away in the eights. Get into bed and lights out in the nines. Eat some vegetables. Go hug someone. Look someone in the eye.

Do everything you can to give yourself the dopamine, and the serotonin, and the endorphins, all the good juicy stuff in our body, in our chemicals, our hormones and everything else to feel the best we can feel right now. And it might not be as good as we felt pre 2020, but that's okay, we're getting stronger. If you're moving forward, you are rocking this. No more space for negative self-talk here. If you just keep swimming, as Dory would say, you are succeeding. That's all you need to do.

And I'm holding space for you, sending you all my love. Whatever you're feeling, it's valid. And wherever you are just take one little baby step. Certainty, variety, significance, love and connection, growth and contribution, meet those basic human needs for yourself. And often, in the

239: When You're Struggling to Hang On

process, you'll end up helping someone else meet those same basic human needs as you try to love and connect, as you create this fun and variety, as you grow or try to contribute. So you've got this, sending you all my love.

If you want some help with this, if you want accountability, join us in the club. We're doing this, one foot in front of the other. I'll see you again soon. Until then, make it a vibrant, and happy, and a just keep swimming week. Take care my friends.

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.