

244: Unconditional Love During the Election



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Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 244. We're talking about love. What does it mean to really love others, to love your spouse, your kids, your friends and acquaintances especially during Covid, during virtual schooling, during election season? 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, Jen here and I'm recording this a few days before the 2020 election in the United States. I have no idea what the outcome will be. But I want to talk about coming from love during this very uncertain time. What uncertainties are we facing? Well, in the United States we have political uncertainty. We have Covid uncertainty. Should we wear masks? Should we not? Should our kids be in school? Should they not?

We have financial uncertainty many of us, scheduling uncertainty. How do you manage a career and your kids' virtual schooling? How do you manage everything that's happening? Uncertainty, a lot of times when we hit a really big place of uncertainty we go into survival mode. And when we're in survival mode we can get very insular, looking out for number one. Nothing wrong with that, you should put yourself, your mental health, your family and their mental health first.

But in the process of doing this, of taking care of ourselves, often we will decide that our viewpoint, our values, the things that are important to us are Truth with a capital T. We can have Truth with a capital T in politics, in our stance on Covid, in our stance on masks, and schools, and all the stuff that's going on right now. So far that we can make everyone else wrong, sometimes when there's tons of uncertainty it feels good to take a stance

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and to say, "I'm right, everyone else is wrong. And they're so wrong that they're crazy, they're nuts, they're stupid, they're," whatever else.

So I wanted to talk to in this episode about how we can come from love even when there is division. This is an important topic during a time when there is division. I'm going to share a few stories.

First, I was the beneficiary, is that the right word? The beneficiary of cancel culture this week, I'm not going to share details but I was in a group for our school district, something like Verona Area School District Connections. Am I outing someone? Maybe. Anyway, in this group the topic of conversation since August has been whether the kids should be in school or not. Currently our school district has K through 2, kindergarten through second grade kids. They have the option to be in person for half days.

My daughter is one of those kids; she has had a great time. There have been zero Covid cases among the K through 2 kids. They were masks. Our family is really happy with this. We're so happy that we hope that our daughter Jane, who is a fifth grader, will get to go back soon. It's working, no one's getting sick. Interestingly, it seems that there are some very vocal voices in our district that dominate this particular Facebook group, the stance that no, kids should not be in school, we're having a spike in our state. We need to stay home.

And there's a lot of fear, a lot of ideas, a lot of fact sharing, a lot of negativity on both sides. I don't want to say either way is right or wrong. I want to pull back and say, "Hey, this is a matter of values." And when we start to believe that our value is correct and that because I'm a good person my values must be true and everyone else should think like me, to be a good person, we get so stuck.

So coming from love I would propose right now would involve acknowledging that all values, all beliefs are correct for that person. That in

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a multidimensional society and world it's okay that we think differently. And how do we meet the needs of the entire group rather than just our needs? What are the needs of the entire group? It's so fascinating.

Well, in this particular Facebook group I had noticed a man sharing very intelligent opinions, thoughts about why the kids should be in school. And I went back into the group after a two week hiatus and someone had said, "Garrett has been removed. Where did he go?" And I commented, "I thought Garrett's opinions were intelligent and he shared some really great ideas. I really liked him. I thought he was very respectful." And then some – you know how this goes; you've been on social media you know how this goes.

People, because he differed from the majority opinion or from their opinion, they said, "He was just spouting his opinions, it wasn't based in fact." Well, I know about data, I have a PhD, I know what facts are. You can share any fact related to data, you all know this. Anyway, they said he had been removed from the group. And then I commented, "I really liked him." Within minutes I was removed from the group. So this was really fascinating. As soon as I was removed a bunch of people started to message me saying they had been removed from the group.

Everyone with a dissenting pro school during Covid, pro in person schooling has been removed from the group. It was amazing, and fascinating, and sad. And so I spend a lot of time asking myself, what would be going on in someone's mind that they would feel the need to eliminate any opinion that does not match their own? Is that love? What is it? Is it an instinct to survive? Is it an inability to handle the discomfort of differing opinions? Is it a belief that only one opinion is right? I don't know the answers to this.

But how do we come from love in this kind of climate, because this is happening not only with Covid, with masks, politically, in all kinds of ways?

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And I think in our Vibrant Happy Women world, at least we should start to think about how do we come from love in situations like these?

So let's start with a definition. Love, unconditional love in my opinion is letting other people feel, think, believe and do what they want, in as far as it does not infringe on another person's right to feel, think, believe and do what they want. How does that definition sit with you? Think about it. Let's start with teenagers. Teenagers, we just want to feel, think, believe and do what we want when we're teenagers. And when parents don't like that, parents can get a little controlling, conflict can happen. Look at that, conflict happens when we're not unconditionally loving.

Now, as parents, do we let our kids do anything they want? No, because there is that rule, in so far as it does not infringe on another person's right to feel, think, believe and do what they want. Fascinating. So how would this work in your world right now the day you're listening to this? Think in terms of your family. Do you allow your spouse or your partner to feel, think and believe, and do what they want? If you do, that is unconditional love. Now, this could be a head scratcher.

We somehow have this belief that when we're married our partners should do a lot of what we want if they love us. But that's not true, that's putting a condition on the relationship. In fact that is a form of codependence. Our partners should feel, think, believe and do what they want. And we also get to feel, think, believe and do what we want. It is the ultimate beautiful freedom, two whole and complete individuals coming together as partners with a clear boundary that yes, we each get to feel, think, believe and do what we want. That is a healthy relationship.

We can do the same thing with kids, preschooler, can they feel what they want? Can they think what they want? Can they believe and do what they want? In as much as we don't want them to harm themselves. Can a preschooler wear what they want to school for example? Can they cry? Do

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they have the freedom to feel, think, believe and do what they want? School agers, same question. Think about your kids. Do you let them feel, think, believe and do what they want as long as their safe and they're not infringing on other's rights to do the same?

Teenagers, this is where it gets juicy, allowing them to feel, think, believe and do what they want. So this works really well on the family. Now, back to this idea of cancel culture and division in society, unconditional love is letting others feel, think, believe and do what they want. Trusting that everyone can look at their facts, has a certain level of experience that brings them to think a certain way, to feel a certain way, to believe a certain way. And none of it is wrong. None of it is wrong.

Everyone gets to feel, think, believe and do what they want as far as it doesn't infringe on other's rights to do the same. I don't think we should be out murdering, whatever, speeding, wrecking cars all over the freeway. There needs to be some rules and limits for kids and for society. But in terms of politics, Covid beliefs, whether we should be in person schooling or virtual schooling, how do we meet the needs and honor the thoughts, feelings and beliefs of the whole of society?

We need to step back and let go of right and wrong in our marriages, in our relationships with our kids, in our society. When it comes to values, maybe there is no right or wrong, these are all just choices. Every thought, every belief ultimately yields a result. Does that result help or hinder our society? Does it help us to love and come from love or does it hinder that? You get to decide that. I think as we advance, and progress, and evolve as a species, we're all getting a little better at listening to our hearts and our intuition about our version of right and wrong.

What's important to us? What are our values? And can we meet our own needs, help ourselves meet our own values and help others do the same? So as you contemplate this over the next few days, weeks, whatever is

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happening in the US, I recorded this before the election. Just make this a mantra, people can feel, think, believe and do whatever they want. That is unconditional love. The only exceptions are when others are put into danger or it infringes on others rights to feel, think, believe and do what they want.

So this woman who cancel cultured me, she can do that, I don't have to hate her, because she can feel, think, believe and do what she wants. But there are results that happen. When she cancel cultured me for being different, not agreeing with her, it kind of creates more division and less love. If she had had the mantra, she can feel, think and believe whatever she wants then she might have listened, let me express my opinion, not remove me from the group.

I want to challenge you to come from love, to engage in unconditional love by understanding everyone really can think, feel and believe what they want. And those thoughts and feelings will drive actions; will lead them to certain acts of doing that reflect their values. Values are the things, the thoughts, the ideologies that are important to us. Freedom is the opportunity to believe, and think, and act according to those values. And that is one of the best things about living in a country that is a democracy.

How do we expand that and come from love this month? Just keep that mantra in your mind. People can feel, think, believe, and act and do whatever feels right for them. And you get to do the same and no one is wrong. How do we honor everyone's right to do those things? How do we love everyone even if they differ from what we think? Crazy thinking, a crazy way to view things but super beautiful.

Here's the benefit, as you do this you will let go of all the stress, and resentment, and frustration you feel about others' decisions. I promise you, this mantra, if you begin to believe it, will eliminate so much hurt in your life. Your spouse forgets to take out the trash, he can feel, think, believe and do

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what he wants. You can say, “Hey, honey, you forgot the trash,” that’s fine. But you’re not coming from that place of resentment or anger that they didn’t think like you. They didn’t agree with you, they didn’t prioritize like you.

And whatever happened at the election, people can feel, think, believe, vote, act and do what they want, what’s important to them. And we can still love them, coming from love.

I want to challenge you this month to think about this every day with every interaction. Say it with me, people can feel, think, believe and do what they want. And that truth will release you from so much frustration and resentment, which we all need. We need to come together and to experience that love for our families, our kids, our neighbors, our coworkers, our state, our country, our world. That is my challenge for you this month.

And we’ll be talking about love all month long, especially in the Vibrant Happy Women Club. By the way, the club is currently closed. I’m so sorry. But we are in the process of making some really, really amazing preparations for 2021.

I’ll give you a hint, if you want to up-level every area of your life in 2021, loving yourself, loving your spouse, loving your kids better, having healthier boundaries, working on your energy, nailing your morning routine. Understanding and having clarity about what you want for 2021, how you want to feel, how you want to show up, how you want to contribute to our new post or continuing Covid world. How do you want to be in 2021 so you can make it your year?

We’ll be talking all about that all year long in the Vibrant Happy Women Club. So stay tuned to learn more about how you can be a part of that.

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Alright my friends, you get to feel, think, believe and do what you want, go and let others do the same and hold sacred that idea of coming from love. People can feel, think, believe and do what they want and you're going to be okay because you get to do the same. And that is unconditional love.

Thank you so much for listening. I will see you again soon. Until then make it a vibrant, happy and unconditionally loving 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.