

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jen Riday

Vibrant Happy Women with Jen Riday

You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 248. We're talking about changing your thoughts and your identity. 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 there my friends, Dr. Jen Riday here and welcome back to Vibrant Happy Women. I am so glad you're here. I am here to help you get off that hamster wheel and find time for yourself so you can create a life you love. I'm a mom of six and I give you tools that work, tools like the Feel It to Heal It method, or the BE HER morning ritual. And today we're talking about changing your thoughts. Specifically we're talking about thought tables and changing your identity.

I have a guest today named Sara Horton. Sara is a mom of three and a nurse from Sandy, Utah. And she loves spending time with her family. She said, "Tell them I love spending quality time with my family, Jen, and I do." At the time of the recording, Sara and her family were just about to hike up into the mountains and cut down their own Christmas tree. She got one of those coveted Christmas tree tags. I've never done that. We don't have mountains in Wisconsin. We do have Christmas tree farms.

I'll admit something, I'm allergic, every time I touch a live Christmas tree or a live pine tree, or a live anything related to sap, anything related to pine trees I get a rash and my arms go numb. So I have an excuse. But anyway, Sara is my guest today. She's going to be talking about a low point in her life where she struggled with postpartum anxiety and depression. And she

had sacrificed everything to keep the ship afloat for her family. And she'd forgotten herself completely. It was a time when she didn't feel good enough and she became tired of feeling that way.

Luckily she stumbled across this podcast and the rest is history. Sara is going to share her story today.

How many of you listening feel like that's what 2020 has done for you where you're like, "And yeah, I'm done. I'm done. I'm done?" How many of you listening are ready for something different in 2021? Now is the time to start thinking about what that is. And Sara is going to share her story of changing her thoughts in a way that alleviated her struggles with anxiety and depression. And that made her so much happier. Now, this could sound cliché but you guys I'm telling you from my own experience, this stuff absolutely works.

You are in charge of your happiness. You are not a victim of anything around you. You can absolutely change how you think, and change how you feel, and change how you interact and hold those healthy boundaries. And Sara's such a good example of that. I'm going to ask you a couple of questions right now that I want you to ponder and tuck in your back pocket and pull out these questions whenever you're in the shower, or whenever you're doing some dishes, or whenever you have a moment to think. And here are the questions.

What do you want in 2021? Who do you need to be to have what you want? How do you want to feel? And what do you need to think to make it all happen? That is what really the Vibrant Happy Women Club is about, helping you identify what is important? What do you want? How do you want to feel? Who do you want to be? Being her is step one. We must be

the person we're meant to be, or the person we want to be before we can do or have the results we want, it's be first, then do, and then have.

And if you've tried un-fruitfully for years to have what you want and wonder why you never get what you want, it's because you haven't learned the magic formula of being her first. And one of my favorite tools to help us with this is the BE HER morning ritual which we talk about in the Club. And I've talked about it on the podcast as well.

Anyway, Sara is going to share her story and tuck that away, those questions I just asked you. What do you want in 2021? Who do you need to be to achieve it? What do you want to feel? And what thoughts do you need to think to get there? Alright, let's go ahead and dive in and hear how Sara made this formula work for her.

Jen: Hi Sara. I am so glad you're here. Welcome to Vibrant Happy Women.

Sara: Thank you Jen. I am very excited to be here chatting with you today. I was just really kind of humbled by being on your podcast and you asking to talk with me, so.

Jen: So I've known you for a while Sara. You were one of our first Vibrant Happy Women certified coaches that went through the program, so fun. And you've been in the Club for a while. How did you find Vibrant Happy Women? And what drew you into this world?

Sara: Well, yeah, it's kind of a long story; we can definitely can get into. I just started searching different podcasts at one point in my life. And came across your podcast and was like, "I'm going to give this a shot." Started

listening to it and really just loved the positivity and high energy, the high vibes that the people you were interviewing had and that you had. And so I was really drawn to it and just continued listening, and haven't really stopped.

Jen: Were you at a low point, is that why you were searching for something like this?

Sara: So my journey kind of started, I would pinpoint it definitely after my second son was born. So I have three kids. I have a stepdaughter; she's 16, almost 17. And I have a five year old and a three year old little boy. And I really, really struggled with postpartum anxiety and depression after having my first son. And not really knowing exactly what I was going through, even though I'm a nurse and well in tune with my body I thought. And just kind of found myself really in like a weird spot and not really knowing why I was feeling the way I was feeling.

My emotions were all just all over the place. I didn't necessarily do anything about it after my first son, I just kind of picked up, went with the flow of things. And I had both my kids pretty close together. They are just shy of two years apart. So I didn't really have a lot of time to recover after having my first son, busy, busy with that first year of life and everything and then getting pregnant pretty soon after. I had my second son and found myself just in this whirlwind of emotions. At that time I was running one of the largest units in the VA Hospital.

We had just decided to pack up from our first home, my family and I, and move kind of across Salt Lake City to the Sandy area and with a three week old baby.

Jen: Oh my goodness.

Sara: So we were house hunting as we had two small children and then my husband had been talking about what he wanted out of his future. And he had decided, you know, we both decided, but we'll get into that in a minute, that he was going to pursue his doctorate of nursing degree. So he is now a nurse practitioner. So I had a lot of things all going on at once. And I did not know how to channel my energy. I'm surprised I was even able to get dressed in the morning to tell you the truth. I was just like on some sort of autopilot, not taking care of myself at all.

So once we got settled into our new house I just had this moment where I just knew I needed something. And I had started listening to your podcast kind of prior a little bit to all of this but I didn't really get stuck on it. But what really was like the changing – the pivotal moment I guess is what I could call it. I was sitting in my room and I had been feeling the darkest I had ever felt. I just didn't know where I needed to be in my life. I didn't feel like I was good enough in any aspect of my life, being a mom, a wife, a nurse, a daughter, anything. I just did not feel good enough.

And I knew I didn't want to feel that way and I knew that wasn't me. And so I kind of looked above and just asked for help up from God and everything. And the next day I actually had an email in my inbox from the Happy Vibrant Women Club encouraging women to sign up for the Heal your Heart program.

Jen: Oh wow.

Sara: And I was like, "That is weird." So I just, you know, I took it as a sign. Was like, you know what? This is definitely a sign. So I signed up for that. That's where I first kind of met you personally with the group of other women who were going through different things in our lives. I think we all kind of had different issues going together.

But it was just really amazing having that unity and knowing that I wasn't alone, that there are so many other women out there struggling with so many different things. And we're all seeking the same thing and that's some sort of normal, some sort of happiness, some sort of I don't know, maybe some big realization in our lives. And so that is kind of where my journey started in just really the self-love, the self-help.

Jen: So what changed from the time that, you know, what's your before and after really? Why do you think it helped?

Sara: So as far as I can remember in my adult life, I have struggled with anxiety, just I've been on medication for almost 15 years. I never truly feel like I had any coping mechanisms that I went to. I didn't pay attention to my thoughts, I just let my thoughts run me, I let them guide me instead of guiding my thoughts. So I guess after going through the Heal your Heart program, continuing to work on my anxiety, and coping skills, and meditations, and things like that and diving into the coaching.

I just really have learned how to channel my energy in a different way when I'm feeling anxious about something. First of all I know that it's there, so I am very well aware of my anxieties. I am aware of my triggers and I'm aware on sending my energy out to everybody else around me. So I think all those things, and my awareness of that, and me bringing it back, and knowing I'm in control has definitely changed how I react, how I think.

Jen: So let's have an example of how this works for you, something anxiety provoking happens, what would the old Sara have thought in the way you say you let your thoughts run you? And how do you handle it now specifically, what's the thought chain that gets you out of that?

Sara: Okay. So I am a very, very busy person during the week, both me and my husband we both work. We've got to get our kids out of the door to daycare within a certain amount of time. So we have a limited kind of morning timeframe that we work with. Before this, in the mornings I would get so anxious about getting out the door. It was like oh my gosh, I'm going to be late. Oh my gosh, someone's going to be waiting on me or I'm never going to get the kids and out the door dressed in time and just putting that pressure on myself.

Or oh my gosh, my husband is not helping me enough right now. He should be doing all of these things to help us get out the door in the morning. When in fact those were just all my own negative thoughts keeping me from being free and knowing what was really important in the moment. So the new me in the mornings, is just kind of like alright, cool, we've got this. It's okay that things aren't running perfectly.

My toddler who's screaming that he doesn't want to put his shoes on, okay, well, that's fine. We won't put his shoes on until I'm right at the door of daycare, that way he's not throwing them off in the car and tossing them across the car on our drive there and frustrating me even more.

Jen: Smart.

Sara: Yeah. Focusing on what my husband is doing to help because that is where I was faltering is focusing on all the things that he wasn't doing when in fact there are so many things that he was doing. And so changing my perspective on that as well and knowing that we're still going to get to daycare, we're still going to get to work. The problems in the world are not going to stop just because I might be a couple of minutes late, or somebody might have to wait on me for a couple of minutes because I'm taking care of my family.

And that's just kind of the biggest thing is what is most important to me right now in this moment? And what's the most important thing that's going to be there after work?

Jen: Yeah. So a lot of people would say, "Well, that's fine and good Sara, so you have new thoughts." But what's your tool, what's the way that you were able to get to those thoughts and to believe those new and more empowered thoughts?

Sara: Definitely what has helped me the most is this last year in going through the coaching program. And quite honestly I think that going through the new identity that we kind of ran through and went through as coaches, and what we can teach other people, really helped me slow down so much and figure out how to have those new thoughts. The biggest thing is using the tools that a person learns in doing that. And figuring out what is important to you, what are your values? What areas do you need to grow in? What things are you okay with letting go? And it's a lot of work.

Somebody can't just decide they're going to change their thoughts and the next day everything's great. You have to practice, practice, practice, practice. And I think one of the biggest things is the thought tables, practicing those, writing it out on paper. Writing it out in your head, that's kind of where I've gotten with it, is I'll sometimes go back on to the paper and write things out. But in my head I run myself through a little thought table.

So a lot of times the negative thoughts that cross my mind I am able to stop myself before going into any action, or reaction and stop myself and uplevel right there and say, "No, Sara, that's the old Sara. The new Sara thinks this way, more positively."

Jen: Yeah. You have this new identity. So we talk about thought tables in both the coach certification and the Vibrant Happy Women Club. And for someone listening who doesn't understand, what's a thought table? Do you feel, like can I put you on the spot and you run us through one or tell us what it is?

Sara: Yeah. So thought tables basically yes, are thoughts, feelings, actions and results. And each one of those also has a fact behind it. Your thought is just something you think. But then there's also a fact behind it that I think that I have a full sink of dishes. And I'm so mad that I have this full sink of dishes. What's the fact behind that? Well, there's dishes in the sink. So a fact is obviously something that can be proven by a court of law or very factual. My thought about it is this sink is super full and the feeling I get from it makes me angry.

And so maybe I go do something else without doing the dishes. And then of course my result because of my action of not doing anything about it, my result is that the dishes are still in the sink and it's still full. So up-leveling that thought of thinking well, there are dishes in the sink but if I just take five minutes to get them done that's all it will take. And that seems more reasonable, or that seems easier to do in my own head if I think that way versus there's so many things to do, I'm never going to get this done.

The dishes are so dirty, they're everywhere, and I just think, it will take me five minutes, I can get it done. Follow through with my action, the sink is clean, I'm feeling happier, just kind of really simplifying those negative emotions.

Jen: And seeing how our thoughts really do generate feelings, so you was saying and thinking, "I have so much to do, I'm never going to get those dishes done", made you angry. And thinking I can just knock this out in five

minutes, made you feel a little more hopeful. And those feelings are driving everything. When we feel angry or anxious we often take no action. And when we feel hopeful, or positive, or excited we will take action.

So, Sara, you mentioned one of the things that thought tables has helped you to do is to slow down and to understand your priorities. So speak to us in the greater context of the pandemic and the year 2020, what have you learned and what do you hope to do as you continue to move forward with your life?

Sara: Yeah. That's a great question because I feel like Covid has definitely caused a lot of people to slow down, whether they really have wanted to or not. But I think it's such a great thing for society as a whole because as a busy mom, a busy person, full-time job, full-time kids, full-time husband, it's just one of my main things that I really got out of finding my new identity and figuring out who I am is I found out that I never slow down. I just am busy, busy, busy, do, you know, I always feel like I need to be doing something.

And so one of my main things that I try to focus on is how can I slow down in the moment and truly see what is important? And I feel like this has helped me so much in being more present, being more in the moment, feeling like I'm a better mom and that I am giving more attention to my kids, or to my husband, or wherever that attention needs to be in the moment. Instead of on housework or all the million things that I have to do that may not matter right now.

And so I feel like with a lot of the things shutting down due to Covid, and a lot of other stressors people are going through, we've all been forced to slow down just a little bit and shift our focus back to family just a little bit more. This was something I wanted to do pre Covid but I guess this is one

very grateful thing that has come out of the pandemic is allowing me the opportunity to slow down even more and not worry about what we're going to do every single weekend or things like that.

Jen: Yeah. So as you think about 2021 what are your top priorities and how do you hope to carry what you've learned in 2020 forward?

Sara: For 2021 I just want to continue being me, being happy, focusing on my family and my intuition. Happiness is something that I've learned is solely my responsibility. And so I just really want to focus on continuing to work on my self-care and not lose that, working on self-love. Because the more that I focus on that for myself I feel like the energy that I'm radiating, and the positivity that I'm radiating has improved every aspect of my life. It's improved my relationships with my husband, my kids, coworkers, everything.

And so that's a huge focus is just continuing to be happy, following my intuition and trying to spread that to other people, that's another goal of mine, is I just feel like all the things that I've learned the past few years, I wish everybody would know, I wish everybody could know that. Because then maybe we would reach world peace.

Jen: Wouldn't that be great? Yeah, [crosstalk].

Sara: Yeah. I'm just going to put that out there in the universe, world peace.

Jen: So, Sara, at the time that this podcast is airing the Vibrant Happy Women Club is open. What advice would you give to someone who likes what you have to say and likes the idea of realizing yeah, we are responsible for our happiness? There are tools out there that absolutely

work that help with depression, and anxiety, and changing identity, and building that self-love. What advice would you have for them?

Sara: I think that the advice that I would give them is get into the Club and start doing the work. I feel for myself it was very hard to try and change, and help myself without a very supportive group of women that I knew were going through the same thing. Having all these other people who you can call your friends, even though you've never physically met them, somebody that's going to kind of just from the get go love you unconditionally, and help support you. And they want the best for you.

These are the kind of people that you meet in the Club because everybody wants to improve themselves. Everybody wants to find that happiness. And so for me that's a huge thing and being kind of accountable, but also continuing to stay motivated, and positive, and make it a habit as far as changing your life. I really, really thrived on that group support. And just hearing what people were going through each week and helping them, and then them helping me.

And so with the Club, having access to a lot of the different tools that you can use for all areas of your life and self-help and self-love, all the different Facebook classes and groups and things like that that you run, Jen, have been amazing. Because there's so much opportunity to, you know, with all the different time zones we all live in and everything, there's just opportunity all the time to go to a class or go to a meditation, sit down with a group of women on a Zoom call and just chat about life.

Jen: I love that. And kind of like you said, that's my experience as well. We tend to be like the five people we interact with most. And if I personally were only interacting with my husband and kids I think my thoughts would descend rather than ascend. There is so much power in being around

others who are thinking, or at least trying to think on a more up-leveled plane. And we lift each other, there's great synergy. So thank you for sharing that.

Sara, what do you hope that your kids will learn from you through the changes that you've made? What do you hope they'll gain that you've gained?

Sara: My hope and this is one of my driving forces is I want to show them that I am a happy mom, and what it takes to be happy. And that happiness comes from within. I hope that my daughter and my boys grow up to be confident, and loving, and happy human beings. I think that's what we all strive for with our children. But I think if you're not modeling that then it's not something that's going to come easy to them. And so I feel like I have to be my best role model for them. And I'm definitely not perfect.

I mean I struggle with anxiety still every single day, but being able to filter through my toolbox in my head and say, "Okay, what's going to kind of help me get through this issue today?" Or I'm going to do a quick bold meditation and just calm myself down. And being able to come at them more lovingly when we have a hard day or they've had a hard day. And helping them get through some of the hard times in life, giving them the tools.

I want to pass the tools on to them so that they can start from square one and knowing how to control some of these things because it's a hard world out there sometimes.

Jen: Totally. And isn't it funny, we all have collectively as a society, the majority of people have a belief that people make us mad, situations are hard, that our children are frustrating. But it's like you said, we can control

our thoughts and our feelings. And ultimately nothing is anything unless we think a thought about it and generate that feeling, which puts all the power back in our court. We can think anything we want and generate any feeling we want as long as we have that awareness about what's happening in our heads like you mentioned.

Sara: Yes. That is absolutely true. It's just amazing how much I have been able to kind of let go as far as some of my depression, some of my resentment for past things, some of the things I might have gotten angry about in the moment where I'm just like, "Okay, whatever", now.

Jen: It's so cool. It's so cool. That's great. Well, one last piece of advice from you to our listeners here.

Sara: I would say obviously you are the one that's in control of your own happiness. I do have a quote here too that I had written down that I really liked. The quote is, "I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened." And so I think that it's worth understanding that we struggle with anxiety, that most of the time you're really worrying about nothing or something that's actually not really going to happen.

If you're worried about money, most of the time you think oh my gosh, go to the worst case scenario and we're not going to be able to feed our family next month, or we might not have a roof over our head. But for the majority of people I would say that it always works out somehow. And so worrying about all those future things is just something you shouldn't focus on because a lot of times the worries you have never happen.

Jen: That's good. A lot of times the worries you have never happen, so why waste the energy? Yeah. That's great advice. Well, Sara, I want to thank you for being on the show. What's next for you? I guess I'm going to slide

in one more question. You're now a certified coach, what's next for you? Are you pulling that into your career? Do you have bigger plans for after that?

Sara: Right now I'm just kind of going with the flow. I feel like that's been my motto the past few years, just learning all the things that I've learned and being happy and thriving and being a happier person. So I don't have any big plans, I just got a new job within the VA system and so I'm kind of focusing on that right now. Coaching has definitely helped guide me in being able to help manage people a little bit better and just bringing some positive energy to the workplace.

And it's fun because my coworkers know that I'm a certified life coach as well. And so they're always coming to me for advice or doing little...

Jen: Really?

Sara: Yeah. So I've actually done a few guided, little guided meditations with people at work. I'm actually teaching a class on thought tables on Tuesday. So I am using those things, I'm using the stuff I've learned in the coaching even though right now I'm not necessarily focused on a business with the coaching. I'm still using it, so that's exciting.

Jen: That's so cool. Well, good luck with your new job and I can't wait to hear how 2021 goes for you. I'm making it an amazing year because 2021 set the stage for that, right?

Sara: Yeah. Put it out to the universe, it's going to be great, good things will happen in 2021.

Jen: Totally, I'm totally in with you. Thank you so much for being on the podcast, Sara.

Sara: Thank you Jen, it was so good talking with you.

I love talking to Sara, it's been fun watching her change and shift. I remember meeting her and she had really huge anxiety. And she is so calm and she has a calmness that seems infectious. You want to be around Sara because she's so soothing, and gentle, and confident, and calm. So it's really, really been fun to watch these tools work for her.

Well, my friends listening out there now, if you are tired of feeling like you're not good enough, you're tired of struggling with anxiety, or depression, or wondering what do you need to do to feel normal, or to feel happy, or to feel confident and motivated. The Vibrant Happy Women Club is the place that will give you the tools you need to make the change, just like Sara did. I want to invite you to join us, the Club is now open. You can learn more and sign up at jenriday.com/join.

This is the cool thing about the Club. It was closed for a bit. We have revamped some things. When you come in and join us the first thing you will get is a kind of a mini course called The Fundamentals. In The Fundamentals you will be taught step-by-step how to do a thought table, how to do the BE HER morning ritual, how to do a bold meditation and how to use the Feel It to Heal It method. Now, these four tools are just that, they are fundamental to your happiness.

And if you mastered just these four things it will absolutely change your life, not just for 2021 but beyond, forever. It has worked for me. It's worked for

hundreds of other women. I promise you that, you can absolutely be in charge of your happiness like Sara talked about. You can be happy no matter what. That is really the foundation of my life, I will be happy no matter what. And when things start to slide I pull out my tools, I know what to do, I get it right back to where I want it to be. And I will feel as happy as I choose to feel. You really can do this.

So after you learn the fundamentals, the thought table, the Feel It to Heal It method, the BE HER morning ritual and the bold meditation, we go into weekly experiments I like to call them, weekly opportunities in all the main areas of your life to practice these tools. In the first month we'll be talking about time management. How do you use a thought table to finally believe and have the confidence to be excellent managing your time?

Remember, we can't have things; we can't achieve anything unless we manage and master the thoughts about the goal we want. When we master our thought it will generate a positive feeling. And from that positive place we can take actions that last and that stick. So if you've ever wondered why you can't stick to your calendar you need to join us where we'll be applying the thought table to do that. We'll be talking about self-love in February and on and on.

We'll be talking about energy, boundaries, parenting in a conscious way, how to get along with your spouse but to still prioritize your healthy boundaries. How to manage finances, how to decide the identity you want to have. Who do you want to be? How do you want to feel? We're going to go through an entire curriculum that lasts the entire year of 2021. And you need to join us if you are ready to up-level your life. Like Sara said, you are modeling happiness for your kids. Are you satisfied with the happiness you've been modeling?

Are you satisfied with the boundaries you've been modeling? The way you handle your time, your finances, your health, your identity, your self-talk, all of these things matter. And if you want to take it to the next level and experience an up-leveled happiness, a deeper joy, letting go of resentment, and frustration, and anxiety, and depression, you want to feel the freedom of choosing how you get to feel. You can learn more at jenriday.com/join.

There's several variations, by the way. You can join us and just get a digital workbook and participate in the classes that I teach. There's a level where you can join a Soul Circle where you meet every week with a certified Vibrant Happy Women coach. And that's what Sara was talking about, where you get to learn you're really not alone, that others feel exactly how you feel and others have successfully overcome some struggles and found a way to be happy no matter what.

Or there's a third really cool level where you can have weekly one-on-one coaching and be a part of the Soul Circle and attend everything that I offer, plus get that physical workbook. So check it out, there are levels, you get to decide how much involvement you want to have, how much you want to change and grow, how fast you want to get there. We have something for everyone.

Well, everyone thank you so much for listening. And I want to challenge you to put your happiness first in 2021. Let me say that again. Put your happiness first in 2021 because your kids, your loved ones, your family, your friends, they're watching. And as much as you give yourself permission to prioritize your happiness, they will do the same. The fact is your kids will grow up to be about as happy as you are now. And I know you want to show them a better way. We want to give them everything we can give them.

So prioritize your happiness in 2021. How do you want to feel? Who do you want to be? What do you want to achieve? And what thoughts do you need to think to get there? Thank you so much for listening today. I will see you again next week. Until then 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.