

250: Courage to Follow Your Heart with Mollie Busby



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jen Riday

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 250. We're talking about listening to your heart and doing what you love. 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. 2020, what a year. I recently heard a great phrase I love and that is this. I want to see 2020 in the rearview mirror. Well, anyway 2020, interesting, just thinking back I remember when I first learned about Covid I totally freaked out. I felt so much anxiety and I shared that on the podcast. Then it went on and on and then about early August I thought gosh, I need to grow. I can't really travel right now, at least not where I was living. And I'm a little bored, if I don't do something I'm just going to spiral.

So I thought what have I always wanted to do? And then I remembered I want to be a certified yoga teacher. So I went online and did a quick search. I'm really funny that way, if I decide something I jump usually. And I searched for yoga teacher trainings in Wisconsin, found one locally, it was kind of meh, several locally actually.

But then this one popped up, maybe the third one I looked at and it talked about yoga teacher training all online over Zoom, I'm like check. And they did energy worked, it talked about something called a Kriya, and I thought cool, check, because I'm always open to learn new and interesting things about energy and beyond just the poses of yoga. So I signed up. I signed up, totally cool.

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So a group of women and myself we all have been meeting for five different five day weekends throughout the past several months. And I am almost there, in a couple of more days I will be a full on 200 hour certified yoga teacher. Isn't that crazy? All during Covid. So anyway I'm feeling quite proud of myself. So it's been a total blast, we've done yoga, we set up our cameras, we've talked about energy, we've talked about Kriyas, we've talked about the mindset of yoga. It's been fascinating and I've learned so much.

And I'm going to be bringing some of that to the Vibrant Happy Women Club this year. Yes, I'm going to be a yoga teacher in the Vibrant Happy Women Club, super fun.

Well, today I have a special guest for you and that is my teacher from the yoga teacher training, Mollie Busby. Mollie Busby is a fellow Wisconsinite but her story is anything but regular. And you're going to hear that in the interview today. Mollie has had a fascinating life. She is only in her mid 30s right now and it's utterly fascinating. I can't wait to see what she does with herself. Mollie's an interesting person with beautiful energy, and acceptance, and warmth, and openness.

And you can tell she's really taken all the yoga, not just the postures but all of the yoga mindset to heart. It's a part of her life. Mollie meditates 30 minutes every day without fail, not just in the morning but also at night she meditates. She is amazing and I learned so much from her over this time. So I thought I would interview her. In this interview you're going to hear Mollie talking about how she followed her dreams. She had a thought, she felt something in her heart and she would jump.

And so that's kind of the theme of this episode, doing what you love, following your heart with courage, jumping in and doing more of what you love. Maybe, just maybe that could be a theme for each of us throughout 2021. What do I want to do right now? I wanted to do yoga teacher training

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so I did it. And it wasn't always easy but it was absolutely worth it. So think about that, plant that little seed in your mind. What do you want? Who do you want to be? Where do you want to go? And plant that seed and see what presents itself to you.

Maybe, just maybe you decide to start saying yes to those little ideas, like you'll hear that Mollie has done. Well, I have prefaced this enough. Mollie is amazing, let's go hear her story.

Jen: Hey everyone, I'm talking with Mollie Busby today and she is from Wiseman, Alaska, 63 miles above the Arctic Circle. And I met her because she's the leader of my yoga certification program. She is the owner of three yoga studios, one in Wisconsin, one in Montana and those are called Yoga Hive. And then also the owner of Arctic Hive, a yoga studio and retreat center in Wiseman. She has six sled dogs and she lives with her husband Sean. What else do you want to tell us about yourself, Mollie? And also welcome to the show.

Mollie: Thank you so much for having me, Jen. I am so excited to chat with you. Oh my gosh, where do I start? I guess most people ask me if I'm originally from Alaska. And I'm actually from Wisconsin, which I know that's where you are as well. I grew up in the Midwest. I'm a Midwest girl. And what's funny to me is that the more people I meet in Alaska, my husband moved here a couple of years ago and I've made a little bit slower transition. I moved here a year ago. We've been meeting so many people.

And the number of people that we meet from the Midwest is astounding, there is always people and specifically from Wisconsin. So I feel like it really takes this like pioneer spirit but also you've lived through a Wisconsin winter too because the winter is – I mean we have a lot of months of winter. Winter is an extended season up here and so you really need to want to

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live here to be here. And then if you do want to live here the rewards of living here are incredible. So I really feel at home because I'm with my people, Midwest people, good people.

So I guess how I got here, I'll fill you in a little bit of my story. I wasn't always a yoga teacher. I didn't always know that I wanted to own yoga studios. When I was growing up I went to school at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. So I'm a Badger. And I graduated with a degree in journalism and retail. And my goal at the time was to become a style editor, that's specifically what I wanted.

And I got a job at this women's magazine, it's a regional publication of Wisconsin and I worked for them for three years. And it was such an amazing job, I really dove head first into it. I was styling photo shoots, I was working with make-up, and clothes, and fashion, and all of this stuff. And I just really, really enjoyed that. And I'm just going to go into the full extended story. We have a little bit of time here.

So at the time of my life, I mean I was 24 at the time, I'm 34 today, maybe I was 23. And I was really just looking for love at the time. I just wanted someone to share my life with. And I was assigned to write this article for the magazine, it was the Halloween issue and we thought intuitive women, psychics, intuitive folks, people who did Reiki, that sort of situation. So I had two feature stories to write.

And I went and saw this woman who – and her name was Laura Kool, she's from Madison, she's still doing this work. And I sat down with her and I thought, okay, I'm just going to write a story like I normally do. And she was like, "Hold on, I'd like to read you first." And I was like, what, I'm 23, I'd never had this done before, I'm just fresh out of college, pretty new to the whole experience. And so she said something to me that really stuck with me. She said, "Mollie, he's coming. Hang tight, you've just got to focus on yourself before that can happen. You've got some things to learn."

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And I'll never forget it because it really struck a chord with me, and I was like okay. And so that year I decided I'm just going to really focus on taking care of myself. I started cooking again. I started working out again. And actually at that time I lived right next to a gym and I had vowed to take one of every one of the fitness classes available, one of which was yoga. And I always tell people, I told you guys this in the training.

I hated my first class. I actually was like, well, that was interesting, not doing that again because it was just not a good setup. I didn't get there early. I got there kind of late. I had a spot at the front of the room. I felt like I didn't know anything and I really didn't connect with the teacher or the style of yoga that I had chosen. And I didn't know any better so I was like well, I'm not going to do that again. So I'll get back to yoga in a second.

But actually what happened was, and this is how I kind of came to meet Sean and where a lot of my now life has come from is I worked with a woman, Michelle. And her son Jessie had type 1 diabetes. And I didn't really know anything about type 1 diabetes at the time. But I just knew that Michelle and her son, they did bike rides and they raised money and he just had a chronic disease, that's basically all I know. And then in February of 2010 Michelle's son Jessie at the age of 13 passed away from complications with his type 1, it was incredibly sudden.

Anybody from that area of the country, I feel like everybody knew Michelle, the story of Jessie went far and wide. And the impact that he had was just profound on a lot of people. I won't go into those stories but I'll just speak about how I was lucky enough to be impacted by the story as well.

So I showed up at the funeral and I knew that Michelle's friend who is a professional snowboarder was going to be there. And so I was asking some of my colleagues, I was like, "Has anybody seen this snowboarder?" Because Michelle would always talk about this snowboarder who has type 1 diabetes who would always come and run these camps for Jessie and his

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friends. But none of us had ever met him or seen him. All we knew is that Michelle talked about him. And so they were like, “No, no, we haven’t seen him.”

So I went into the church and sat down in the pew and right in front of me was I discovered later, Sean Busby. And he walked up and gave a eulogy at the funeral. And Michelle actually introduced us that day as we walked out from the funeral. And I guess the rest was history. There was a lot in there but I just knew right away after Sean and I met and had a chance to talk that I was just going to marry him. I remember telling my dad, I was like, “Just so you know, I’m going to marry this guy.” A year later he actually did propose.

But one of the cool things that Sean and I really feel guided by, Jessie in our life is that I moved out west pretty soon after we met, within six months just to be closer to Sean. He was living in Utah at the time, working at a college prep boarding school. And really he had been asked to run more of these camps which he had loosely organized as a group called Riding on Insulin. And there was a group in Utah that really wanted him to run a camp in Park City.

And I said, “Hey Sean, I’ve been going to summer camp my whole life, maybe we could do this. Maybe this would be a good opportunity.” And so we really – I was like, “Let’s just do it.” And it was December of 2010 and I said, “We should probably start this as an official business. If we’re taking donations and if we’re going to do this thing, let’s do it.” And that’s just sort of the way that I am, let’s do it officially. So I had no idea how to start a non-profit. But fortunate enough to have a lot of smart people in my life, including a handful of accountants.

And so we filed the paperwork and alongside a couple of partners in Utah we ran the first Riding on Insulin camp in Utah in December of 2010. So it’s a ski and snowboard camp for kids with type 1 diabetes and their siblings

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and families. And so for me it was more of an opportunity just to kind of see what Sean does and to see how the camps run, because I had done tons of camp exercises and camp opportunities. And I used to take kids out in the back country for anywhere from three to seventeen days on bike trips or hiking trips or canoe trips.

And so that was really common for me to do but to be out there with kids with type 1 diabetes I was still very new to it myself. So once I saw it I knew and of course Sean knew, it's magic, it is amazing, anybody who's listening to this who either lives with a chronic disease or has a family member with a chronic disease.

You probably already know what I'm about to say is that the next best medicine to the medicine that you take where for type 1 diabetes people have to take insulin. They're insulin dependent their body doesn't make their own insulin. They have to deliver it automatically via insulin pump or injections or something like that. And the next best medicine to that is a community. Is somebody who understands what you're going through. I think, and I've listened to your podcasts and I know you talk a lot about your experience, you're a super mom, I think it's amazing.

And how amazing is it to talk to other moms who know what you're going through. Somebody who has never had children can't necessarily relate. They can empathize but they really haven't been there. And so the same applies in what is the most profound way to witness people with chronic disease? And so these kids, they were just free for the day. They didn't have to worry about being the kid that has to give injections, having to maybe keep it a secret that they have this chronic disease because they're ashamed for whatever reason.

They don't want to tell people about it because you don't want to be the – you don't want to stand out, especially if you're a teenager. You just want to blend in. So at Riding on Insulin everybody's the same, everybody has type

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1 diabetes and if you don't you're a sibling that understands what it's like to have a sibling with type 1 diabetes. And so just saw how special it was and we both knew. I was like, "We need to do another one."

So that same year – well, the following year, going into January of 2011 we ran a camp in Wisconsin. And then we ran a camp in Colorado, and then we actually ran a camp in New Zealand. Sean and I had done a little traveling down there and he had a lot of diabetes contacts. And we held a ski and snowboard camp at an indoor ski resort just outside Auckland, New Zealand. And so after that year I knew, I was like, "This is too special to not take it seriously."

And I remember saying, I think I said it to Sean's parents, I was like, "I'm going to do this. This is going to be my full-time job." And everybody was kind of like, "Okay Mollie, that's great." No one really wants to hear their kid say, "I'm going to start a non-profit." But I clearly wasn't doing it because I was like, "I'm going to make a bunch of money and whatever." No, it was for Jessie first. And we really felt like he was guiding our path because everything was very clear.

And we've been so incredibly fortunate with all of the donors and the partners that we've had over the years that have supported this organization. We're still, you know, Sean works full-time. He's now the Executive Director. I ran the company for seven years and then kind of stepped back when yoga took off. And we run camps in three different countries around the world. We run them in Australia, Canada, US and New Zealand. And it's just incredibly rewarding. So that's really where a lot of my experience with business came from.

And that's why I tell this story is – and going back to Jessie for a second. We got engaged in March of 2011 and we decided on the date we were going to get married which was six months later to my mom's surprise. She was like, "We're going to have to plan a wedding in six months?" I was like,

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“Sorry mom.” But we decided on the date, September 24th and called all of our friends and family just to say, “Hey, hold this date.”

And we called Michelle and I said, “Hey, we would really like you to be there, here’s the date.” And she goes, “You’ve got to be kidding me.” And we were like, “What?” She was like, “You know that’s Jessie’s birthday?” And we were like, “Oh my goodness.” So we had no idea.

And so it was just so – it was the only date that worked for us. And so it was just a really powerful reminder of we really feel like he brought us together. And every time we have the opportunity when winter comes around to go run camps for kids we’re just reminded that just how powerful this organization is. So that’s kind of the beginnings.

Jen: Serendipity.

Mollie: Yes, all the serendipity, whether you call it that or coincidence or whatever. We just really feel guided by Jessie and I just feel so fortunate to be on the staff, so the non-profit is – that’s where I learned a lot about business and how to create a company, how to hire employees, how to manage systems, how to organize events, just a lot of learning on the go.

And I was fortunate where I was paired up with a business consultant. There was a foundation that paid for this man to work with me once a month every month for I think it was about three years. And he was my business guru and he taught me a lot, everything that I knew in the beginning days. And so during that time, so I’ll kind of wrap it up here, getting back to yoga, how the heck did I transition away from – not away from skiing and snowboarding but a little bit more toward yoga.

So I had vowed never to do a class again if you remember, because my first one was awful. So I had moved out west and I was working on the non-profit and I really needed friends because I’m used to having all of my

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friends and family within a really close proximity to where I live. And living out west I knew no one except for Sean. And he and I both knew that I really needed some girl friends.

And so there was this one girl that I really wanted to be friends with and her name was Brittany. And Brittany really liked to do yoga after work. And she also worked at the – everybody worked at the boarding schools. It's a very small town. And so I knew I wanted to be friends with Brittany and Brittany liked to gather all the women together after work and do these recordings of yoga classes. And Brittany knew most of the yoga poses.

And so Brittany would be at the front of the room and we all would practice a little bit further back so we can look at her if we didn't know what we were doing because there was no yoga studio or a yoga teacher, we were just listening. And that's actually where, number one, I made my best friend. I'm still best friends with Brittany. But I also started learning that yoga made me feel really good.

And I think what was really powerful in the beginning was actually listening to the yoga, not watching, because I wasn't dependent on having to watch someone because I was really tuning in to how it felt in my body. And you really had to listen to the teacher, which now being a yoga teacher I know it's really difficult for a lot of people to keep listening to the teacher because there's so much to think about in a class, where you're putting your limbs at any given moment and how to breathe.

So after a while Brittany went off and took a couple of teacher trainings. And we all kind of decided to move away. Brittany moved to China for a year. Sean and I moved to Whitefish, Montana and we were kind of settling down there. And Brittany had moved back from China after a year because they were teaching over there. And she said, "I'm going to open a yoga studio in Denver." And I thought this is great, I said, "I have a ton of

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business experience, I would love to, you know, I want to hear how it's going, I want to help you do it."

And I got to see firsthand how she opened her yoga studio and created some clients and started teaching. And in the meantime I was still learning from her and I still do learn from her. And I took a little mini training that she was doing and I took another training in Boulder. And I was like, "Man, there is something to this, I love this. I can't wait to teach yoga." And so I came back to Whitefish after kind of this trip of seeing her studio take shape and taking some trainings. And I was just determined to teach.

And then I got back to Whitefish and I realized there was really no yoga home for me. And this is not to knock down any of the yoga studios that existed at that time in Whitefish, there were some great studios. But anybody who's ever been to a yoga studio knows that the moment you walk in you either feel at home or you feel like – I don't know, it's like going to a gym. You either feel the vibe or you don't. And if you don't you probably don't go back, you go find a different gym or you find a different accounting firm, or a legal. You just feel the vibe of where you walk in.

And so I didn't feel that and there was a day where it just – I was driving and it just dawned on me, I was like you need to start a yoga studio. And I went home and I was like, "Sean, I need to open a yoga studio." And he was like, "Well, you have a job, you're running a non-profit." And I was like, "No, I've seen how Brittany's doing it. I really think I could do this." And that was May of 2015. We had lived in Montana for a couple of years at this time. I didn't know a ton of people, it wasn't like going back to Wisconsin where I just had family and friends, but we knew enough people.

And I was like, "No, I'm going to do this." So within a month I opened. And I just kind of said, "I'm going to do this."

Jen: Wow, that's fast.

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Mollie: It's really fast. And that's just kind of a reoccurring theme, we always say this, "Yogis don't wait." And I think my life has really been a testament to that, there's nothing to wait for. Let's just do this. So I opened in a month and I give Sean credit for the name Yoga Hive. Initially, I mean our last name is Busby, so bumble bees and bees and especially the symbolism of bees has been kind of a through line in my life and especially Sean's family being the Busby's and now our family. And so that was really important.

And when you start to Google the symbolism of a hive and what bees cultivate, and the nectar, and the honey, it just goes on and on, it's so good. So Yoga Hive, simple as that. And after we opened it was just a really great opportunity for me to just experiment and to be able to be a teacher. Because I think ultimately that's what I've always wanted and that's what I've always been working toward, especially with my early years in summer camp and teaching kids to canoe, and hike, and just leadership facilitation and ropes courses.

And so once we opened less than a year later we opened another studio in Columbia Falls, Montana. Less than a year later than that we opened another one in Kalispell, Montana, and then after that I just knew, I was like, "I would like to open a studio in Wisconsin." And everybody said to me, "You're crazy." I was like, "Maybe, but I still can't not..."

Jen: Because you weren't living there.

Mollie: Yeah. I was like I can't not listen to my heart, and it took a couple of years but we opened the Yoga Hive, Wisconsin in January of this year. Not really recommended to open a yoga studio just prior to Covid but how would we know these things? So here we are. And actually I closed two of our Montana studios permanently due to all the hardship of Covid-19. But again we ebb and flow. In all things business included, there are times when things grow and there are times when things shrink. And so looking back at where I was a year ago, I have no regrets.

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And no really choice to go back anyway and I'm just really proud of where we are. So flash forward year today what I love to do most is create community for small groups. And I do that in a couple of different ways, like we talked about our retreat center. Sean and I have spent the last year building. And when I say building I mean experienced a lot of time building off the grid. We've been on the DIY network show, building off grid for a house that we built in Montana.

We've lived in yurt for three years in Montana. And then when we moved up here to Alaska we've also been living off the grid. And so we built this retreat center, we have a fiberglass igloo. We say igloo but I know that when I say igloo some people actually think we live in a dome of ice. But it's not the case, it's made of fiberglass and it has its own insulation and a wood stove and everything, so not that primitive. But we built three cabins on tundra and permafrost in this incredible location called Wiseman. So if you want to Google exactly where it's at, it's Wiseman, Alaska.

And it's far into the Brooks Range, 63 miles north of the Arctic Circle. And it's by far the most incredible place we've ever been. We've spent a lot of time traveling above the Arctic Circle in Norway, and Sweden, and Finland, and Iceland. And the Northern Lights viewing in this part of Alaska is unmatched anywhere else. There's over 80% of the days are clear. And as you may or may not know there's a lot of darkness especially around this time of year.

And when you have a lot of darkness with not a lot of sunlight there's more opportunity to see the Northern Lights because you can see them when it's dark out.

Jen: Yeah, that makes sense.

Mollie: So that then – really amazing. And then I also still have the studios. I run yoga teacher trainings since Covid. We run all of our trainings online

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virtually via Zoom live, which is why I've had the privilege of working with you Jen in this training that's going on. And so yeah, and I love, love showing people the profound impact of the philosophy of yoga. And so not just as you know and have learned, it's not just the poses that we learn and the shapes that you go into that you think about yoga for flexibility of body, but also flexibility of mind and the flexibility of spirit.

It's absolutely had a profound impact on my life. And so being able to empower others to embody that, change their own lives. And then hopefully change the lives of the people they teach, it's the best job in the world, I love it so much. So that's the long story of how I got here today.

Jen: Yeah, that's great. You mentioned being able to go to Norway, and Sweden, and Iceland. So how far are those? I mean I know the Arctic Circle is really small and they're all really the same thing. Obviously you don't have border control or anything up there. So do you just hop on the snowmobile? Do you drive on roads to go to those countries?

Mollie: Yeah. So we have spent – I think we've been to Norway four times. And really the reason we originally went to those places, so Sean is a professional snowboarder. And what he does is called backcountry snowboarding. So we don't go to resorts and ride chairlifts. We go into the backcountry and find, you know, you're just driving in a car and you'll look to your right or your left and you'll say, "Well, that looks like a really awesome mountain."

And we park the car and sometimes we use a snowmobile, sometimes they use helicopters. Sometimes you use what you need. But most of the time we are using our own two feet. So we do what's called skinning and you put this carpet material on the bottom of your skis, or Sean has what's called a splitboard. The snowboard splits in two and you put this carpet material on the bottom so that you can kind of walk uphill with your heels free and you don't slide backward.

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And so we skin up mountains and then you get to ski down. And most of the time no one has ever, you know, no one's skied the line you're taking so the hope is always that the powder is good on the way down. It's not always the case. It's kind of like life. Sometimes it's the worst ski ever. But there are those moments that you just live for that you never forget. And actually most of those moments that I live for will have been experienced in Norway. It's one of our favorite countries to visit.

And so we've spent a lot of time up there and we're both just kind of very much called to the north and spending times in those areas. And one of the last times we were there we, yeah, we drove, you can drive right into Sweden. There are roads that take you into Sweden and take you into Finland. And we stayed up there and just kind of experienced the backcountry and experienced the Northern Lights. And a lot of times, especially in Iceland when we've been there it gets pretty cloudy, just the different weather patterns and different location geographically.

And so yeah, sometimes we stay in guesthouses, sometimes we'll camp, winter camp in our tent, that's a lot of what we usually do is winter camping. Now in Wiseman with Arctic Hive it's very nice camping. We have cabins and we have an igloo. And the igloo actually has...

Jen: Yeah, it's [crosstalk], yeah.

Mollie: Exactly. And the igloo has big glass panels where you can see the Northern Lights from inside with a warm fire.

Jen: Yeah, I've seen that on the Instagram. By the way, everyone, you need to follow Mollie on Instagram, it's so fascinating, this essentially another world up there where you live, seriously. What's your Instagram handle?

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Mollie: It really is, I forget it, I have normalized a lot of this, Jen, so there's been a lot of stuff where people are like, "Wait. What do you do?" I'm like, "Yeah, we haul up our water from a creek in jugs and then we filter it." And people are like, "Wait. What?" And I'm like, "Right, this is not normal, let me explain."

Jen: So what's your Instagram handle in case anyone wants to follow you?

Mollie: Yeah, it's Mollie of the North M.o.I.I.i.e. of the North.

Jen: That's such a good handle. So are there roads that essentially circle the whole Arctic Circle that take you through all those countries up there?

Mollie: Yes. So it isn't like it follows the Arctic Circle. But for example in Alaska, so we really live at the furthest possible place you can get on a maintained road by the government. However the road that you take, let me just put this in perspective. So if anybody's ever been to Fairbanks, Alaska, it's a northern central city in Alaska. And from Fairbanks you take a road that's called the Haul Road or the Dalton Highway. It hasn't always been a public access road.

It's a road that you can take to – people might have read about Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or Gates of the Arctic National Park which it's very unlike other national parks. But you take the Dalton Highway north for about seven hours. It can actually take you anywhere driving six and half hours or it can take 10 hours if there's really bad weather. And this is a road featured in shows like Ice Road Truckers.

And so a lot of the traffic on this road is actually truckers. And they're taking hauls from Fairbanks, from lower Alaska, from the lower 48th, all the way up to the oilfields up at Prudhoe Bay at the end of the Dalton Highway. And so it's not for the faint of heart. It is, it's some of the most extreme driving, it's probably the most extreme driving ever. But what some of the preparation

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that we've had for this driving is, if anybody's ever been to Iceland in the winter the roads there are – the weather is outrageous.

What would be a national emergency in a lot of places in the US, you go to Iceland or you go on the Dalton Highway, it's just another day in the winter. It's like yeah, we have gale-force winds, it's just what we do. And then you go to, you know, Sean does a lot of speaking, public speaking in Texas. And they get a dusting of snow and the airport shuts down. It's like, no, we're not going anywhere.

So yeah, we're fortunate to have a road to go into. But a lot of the villages in these northern parts of Alaska, there are no roads. It's fly in only. And Wiseman for the longest time was a village that was fly in, that's why the road is there.

Jen: How many people live in Wiseman right now?

Mollie: I don't know the exact population this moment.

Jen: Well, roughly.

Mollie: But it's probably 14.

Jen: I love it.

Mollie: Exactly, it gives you an idea.

Jen: So a few families. And so you live not even in Wiseman, you live rurally out there where your igloo is, totally rural in the woods. And you guys get out there on your snowmobile and you have six sled dogs. Do you ever get around with sleds as well?

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Mollie: Yes. So the snow machine takes us from the village. It's about a mile from the village to where Arctic Hive is. And so in the summertime we can drive in a little bit further but in the wintertime we use the snow machine. And yes, we do use our dogs. We have three older dogs and we have one puppy and then two a little bit younger. And so we're definitely not professional dog mushers. We have a lot of people that we look up to and we ask for advice from.

But I'll tell you what these dogs have been put to work especially during this build project. We'll hook them up to part of our access trail that's pretty steep. And so sometimes if there's overflow from the creek or there is a rain event and then it freezes you cannot drive a snow machine up or down a hill of ice, it's just not recommended. We don't want to die out there, you can't. We're 270 miles from the nearest grocery store or hospital. And so we will use the dogs to pull up, like we had all of this insulation and we had lumber.

Imagine everything that you need to build a house, it seems like every time we had stuff to haul we couldn't use our machines. In the summer we use a wheeler and in the winter we use a snow machine. And for whatever reason I feel like this year was a year of just not being able to use it, whether it was mud, or ice, or whatever. So put the dogs to work. They earn their lunch and we love them.

Jen: Yeah, and they would pull your lumber up the hill and you get your own water out of – it's Mollie Creek, named after you?

Mollie: Yeah. And we didn't name it Mollie Creek.

Jen: It's so cool, you have a creek.

Mollie: But our friends in the village named it Mollie Creek. So I'm not so self-serving, I'm like, "I command this Mollie Creek." But yeah, we go down

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to the creek and in the winter we have to use a sledgehammer to make sure our hole stays open. And we fill up buckets and then fill up jugs. And either sometimes, most of the time we will haul it up and then at some point we have a higher part of the trail where we can't get the snow machine to. And so we'll sled it up. But there are days where you've just got to haul the water all the way up, you just haul it yourself.

And I will tell you there's no better way to warm up when it's negative 20 than hauling water, or hauling wood, or chopping wood, or any of these things that we do outside.

Jen: Yeah. You're there right now. How are you talking to me? Explain that to our listeners.

Mollie: There's actually, because of the pipeline and because of the oil traffic on the highway, again that's why I said, the Dalton Highway wasn't always a public road. But it's maintained now because of Alyeska Pipeline, the pipeline that goes from Prudhoe Bay down south and carries all the oil. So because of that there are different stations on the highway where there are cell towers. And so we use a cell booster to get access to the cell tower. And most days we can get connection. So it's definitely very fortunate.

But even, you know, people are like, "Well, why don't you just get satellite internet?" It's actually so far north and the satellites end up being so far low on the horizon that it's not even possible to get some of the better satellite internet up there. So in terms of being connected, we're at the mercy of whether or not our booster gets us connected with the cell tower. And it's for an industrial haul road. So it's definitely not LG or 5G or all that stuff, no.

Jen: I have been in a 200 hour yoga teacher training with Mollie. I just Googled yoga teacher training in Wisconsin and I saw you as Mollie and I saw that you had some focus on energy. And you had more of these earthy

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elements that I love. And I'm like, "I'm in." Because Covid was going on and on and I thought I need something to help me grow this year. And then it's all online. So I found it and then I realized in the first class you said you were in this A-frame in your yoga space.

And you were teaching us from the Arctic Circle in Alaska. I thought you were from Wisconsin and I was blown away going, "What?"

Mollie: [Crosstalk].

Jen: Yeah. You taught us virtually over Zoom, amazing content. But the fact that it's even cooler that you're in Alaska doing this, I love it.

Mollie: Yeah. It's a little bit of a time difference. So I have to wake-up pretty early. That's the only downside. I have been online teaching far prior to Covid. So when Covid happened it was an incredible shock for all businesses. But for us I was like, "We're taking this online, that's it, everything's going online. Here we go, buckle up." So yeah, it's been an amazing transition for us and a very natural transition. I love technology. I love still being connected with people.

And with Sean, who, I didn't mention this before but he also lives with type 1 diabetes, that's his connection to Riding on Insulin. And he also lives with lupus. And so anybody who lives with chronic disease knows that Covid plus chronic disease does not equal a good time. So we have really been extremely isolated physically from people. We've been in our little bubble with the dogs. But we have been able to stay so connected. And these teacher trainings are like I said just my favorite thing to do is to kind of walk people on this path that I have been fortunate enough to walk on, so yeah.

Jen: And you're 500 hours certified and you actually went to India to really go deep with yoga. Tell us a little bit about that.

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Mollie: Yeah. Oh my gosh, I love traveling and anybody who knows me and my life prior to Covid, it's like I went from being on an airplane four times a month, hopping all over the place, to this studio, that studio, this training, India, wherever. To no travel, which I'm so grateful for it and I absolutely love being here in Alaska, in hindsight it's really pushed me to be where I want to be. But I have been to India three times now. And really my decision to go there, it wasn't like oh my gosh, I want to go to India because this is where yoga comes from.

It was more practical. I was like I really want to take some more advanced training. I was running trainings. I've run them for the last three years. And I was like, "Yeah, I really want to learn some new material." My friend Elena was like, "Hey, I'm going to go to India and take this 300 hour training." So the 300 hour training comes after the 200 hour training with Yoga Alliance, that's the governing body of yoga. And so I said, "Well, I'll go with you, that sounds cool." I kind of surprised myself by saying that.

And Sean was like, "You're going where?" And I was like "Yeah, I think I'm going to go to India. Elena found this great school and it looks good." I just looked at the website I was like, "Okay, good, they're doing some chanting, they're doing Sanskrit, great, I'm in." That's all the research I did. And then, Blaine, my colleague who – she owns the Yoga Hive, Colorado, we work very closely together obviously as part of the Yoga Hive family. And she was like, "I'll go with you." I was like, "Great, let's do it."

So Blaine and I signed up and we called Elena, we were like, "Hey, did you book your ticket?" And Elena was like, "Yeah. Actually I'm not going to go." And Blaine and I were like, "Oh, what." So we kind of like to think that Sattva, the school that we went to, it found us. And we went to India and my family was really grateful that I was going with someone because Sean was like, "I'm not going to India. No, thank you." And so we arrived in India, we got to Sattva which is just outside Rishikesh just at the foothills of the Himalayas.

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And I took one class with my teacher, Anand and I was like, “Oh my gosh.” And so we learned, really the new things that I learned there, it wasn’t more like poses or things that you think of when you think of standard yoga. It was a lot more about the energetic side of yoga, breath work. We do these activities called Kriyas, which combine a whole bunch of different aspects for a really specific outcome. It’s kind of like a yoga recipe. And it just took yoga over to the next level for me. I was looking for a way to heal some of my own wounds from things that I have been through in my life.

And I wanted to do it myself, I’m a self-starter. And I wanted to learn more about why things are the way they are. Why are we here on this planet? And the philosophy and teachings that I learned through Anand at Sattva, you know when you just you hear truth, it just rings throughout your whole body, you can feel it in your heart. It’s not somebody saying, “Hey, here’s the truth.” You can just feel it. They don’t even have to say it. You’re like what you are saying vibrates in a very visceral level for me and a deep level. And I just couldn’t deny that. So on day two, I always talk about this.

Day two of training I was like, “I’m coming back here.” And then when I got home Sean was like, “What do I need to expect now that you’ve been to this training?” I was like, “Well, I’m going to go back.” And he was like, “Okay, like one time?” And I was like, “No, you should just not ask that. I’m probably going to go back a lot.” And so I went back two more times last year, once in April I went to a master teacher training program again with Anand.

And then I went back in November as on a kind of a scouting, because every November Blaine and I are going to run retreats. And take people to India on this, you say pilgrimage, whatever you want to call it. But just going to Sattva, they have a summit every November where people from all over the world come. And take classes and all the master teachers like myself, we teach classes and it’s magical. And we were supposed to go this November, but of course we cancelled it.

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And we're just really looking forward to nailing down the dates for next November to take people to this magical place. So yeah, and I've studied online a couple of times since Covid because they have also put a lot of their stuff online which is awesome. And yeah, it's changed my life. And you've gotten to experience that content that we've added to our 200 hour yoga teacher training and it's some powerful stuff.

Jen: It is. It is. I don't even know how to summarize or encapsulate everything I've learned but I'll just ask you an interesting question, we'll see where it goes. So Mollie knowing what you know from everything you've done in life and yoga teacher training and being so in touch with the earth. For you personally is the purpose of our time on this earth? A big question.

Mollie: Good, a really easy question. A really big question but actually through what I've learned the answer to me is very simple. And what I believe my purpose here is, is just to realize myself. And I'll kind of unpack that because I think in the same way that I've normalized composting toilets and living off the grid and all of these things. I've also normalized yoga philosophy. And because I live and breathe this every day, I put these practices into play in my business, and in my life, and then I teach them to other people.

So what does it mean to self-realize? It really means that all of our experiences in our life, and when I say this, please note I'm really simplifying this. So it can be hard to say, "Well, I've had some pretty horrible experiences." Yes. Everybody has their own set of experiences and things that they have been through, things that they have achieved, things that they've 'failed at', things that they have, you know, some people have kids, some people have dogs, some people have business, some people have all of those things. We all have these different pathways.

And what we're all doing in our own special way is experiencing things within our own universe because what's really profound when you think

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about it is that every single person doesn't know something unless they have experienced it. And actually this is a lot of the philosophy that's really helped me through some of these hard times that our world has gone through. We're a very divided country. It's a divided situation in the planet right now. And it can be hard to look at somebody, I'll say 'on the other side' of what you believe and say, "Well, they're just a horrible person."

But really if you can think about it, they're thinking the same thing about the other side. And that's because everybody only views life from their eyes and their experiences. And if someone doesn't understand or you don't understand how somebody else is, especially if they make you frustrated. It's because you have not lived life through their shoes. You don't know them. And we think we know everybody now, especially with social media, you look at somebody's photos you're like, "I know her." And that's what makes us feel connected to people, that can be a positive.

But it can also drive a stake between us because you're like, "Well, I know her and she is a x, y, z person because a, b, c." And when we take a step back and stop worrying about everybody else, and we start looking at ourselves and we start looking at the experiences that we encounter. And we start observing how we interact with the world, that's when we have the opportunity to change.

When we look at what we've gone through and say, "You know what? I've had to go through the same situation three times and I'm ready to change the pattern. I'm ready to change the way I do this so I have learned." And then we change, we evolve. And this is actually what we call living an enlightened life. A lot of people are like, "People do yoga and meditate to get enlightened." As if there's some moment when all of a sudden, boom, you're enlightened so you're good at mediation and you're good at yoga. I promise you that's not how it works.

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And we live an enlightened life and you know this and you talk about this in your podcasts and the things that you put out there. It's like it's a process, we're always learning. And the only time when you can say, "It's going to get easy", is if you decide that it's going to get easy and you do the work, and you examine, and you realize yourself through yourself, not through the experiences of others.

Jen: Yeah, it's so true info.

Mollie: So I think that's an answer.

Jen: Yeah, beautiful, I love it. Thank you so much Mollie. If people want to learn more about you or your yoga teacher training, which I highly recommend everyone, where do they go?

Mollie: Yeah. So there's lots of ways to get in touch, you mentioned my Instagram handle Mollie of the North, then follow Arctic Hive AK on Instagram. If you want to find out more about the teacher trainings just search Yoga Hive Studios, Yoga Hive, Montana or Yoga Hive, Wisconsin. You can search for the one closest to you. And we have a teacher training starting this January 14th online. So you can take it from anywhere in the world.

And if you have questions you can ask Jen, she's an impartial person because she's enrolled in it and she will be a yoga teacher by the time you're listening to this. I'm so proud of you because you've accomplished.

Jen: Yes, I'm a mom of six who became a yoga teacher during Covid. If I can do it, you can do it, totally, all from home.

Mollie: It's amazing.

Jen: Can you imagine?

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Mollie: You're an incredible woman. Well, I think it's amazing.

Jen: Well, I mean even from home it was so convenient. I mean yeah, it took time to get those 200 hours in. But from my bedroom it wasn't bad.

Mollie: Yeah, from my bedroom. It's chilled. When you're lying in bed you can do anything armed with a phone or a computer. I was just going to say the other way is on my website, molliebusby.com m.o.l.l.i.e.b.u.s.b.y.com. Those are all the ways, or if you're interested, if you're affiliated with anybody with type 1 diabetes you can find ridingoninsulin.org, ridingoninsulin.org. That's our website and our programs there.

Jen: Awesome. Mollie, you're doing such great things in the world. And I'm grateful to have met you and that you would be on the show. Thank you so much for being here.

Mollie: Thank you for having me, Jen, this was fun to chat, I appreciate it.

I love that I could share Mollie's story with you. I've been very enamored with her throughout the yoga teacher training, thinking wow, what an adventurous life. And you know what? We all can have adventure in this way. What makes Mollie different from many of us? Well, she hasn't been afraid to have an idea, poke at her brain or knock on her heart. And she hasn't been afraid to jump in and say yes. Mollie is a yes woman, she says yes. And look at where it takes her.

What would that look like for you to say yes to the things that knock on your heart or poke at your brain? What would that look for you to do something adventurous, or fun, or exciting, or to commit to your own growth and transformation? I want to challenge you to do that in 2021, to put that growth, and that experience, and that transformation, and that happiness first. Because the way that you live will inspire others to live the same way,

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collectively in our families, with our friends, in our communities we rub off on each other.

And as some of us, maybe us as vibrant happy women, as we live more vibrantly and happily, others will be inspired to do the same. That is our birthright. I believe it's an obligation to live as happy and vibrantly as you can. Well, thank you so much for listening. I will see you again next week. Until then do what it takes, say yes to living a vibrant and happy life. Take care.

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