

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)



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With Your Host

Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 259. We're talking in this episode about grief, and loss, and how to move through those very strong emotions. 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. We're talking about grief today. And you might hear that topic and think I'm out. But I want to encourage you to stick around because we all go through grief, and loss, and death, and transitions, health struggles, maybe a child goes to college. We all have these moments where we're leaving a phase of our past behind. And it can feel big, and heavy, and how do we grieve properly so that we don't get stuck?

The fact is there are a lot of shoulds in our world about how a person should grief. You should do it privately, it should last about two weeks at least in the US. You should get over it and these shoulds. No matter where they're presented they don't do a lot for us. They keep us pushed into a box stuck, frustrated, resentful. And I don't know about you but I want to live true to my authentic self. I want to live wild, and free, and to feel all of my feelings, and to never let any of them get stuck, to feel the good, to feel the bad. This world is 50/50 light and dark, life and death, easy and hard.

And we want to feel it all. We want to be here and show up so authentically, so fully, so real, that we feel it all and that includes our grief. So I'm talking to my friend Julie Nowell today. And she is a Canadian. I know you're guessing, where is she from? British Columbia. I don't even know what the universe is telling me but it just keeps going. She's from a different island, not from Vancouver Island where Nanaimo is. I've interviewed so many people from Nanaimo, it's hilarious.

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Well, she's from Salt Spring Island which is close to Nanaimo, it's right next to it. In fact when Julie leaves her island she will often take a ferry to Vancouver Island to go to Nanaimo. That's where her daughter does driving school for example. So it's such a small world and so amazing. Julie actually works for my business helping with bigger term marketing, and business, and social media strategy. And I love her perspective.

Well, you're going to hear her story of grief. I'm not going to give away what happened. But I want you to stick with this and notice what comes up for you. You might have memories of things that have grieved you. So many things have probably caused you some grief in the past 12 months I'm guessing. And how do we deal with these feelings, rather than ignoring them, or numbing them with wine, or sugar, or Netflix, or endless social media scrolling?

How do we open our hearts and breathe and let that emotion move through energetically? Well, you're going to learn how in this episode, we're going to talk about it. I really enjoyed this. And I want you to keep a thought in the back of your mind that grief doesn't have to be just for death, or just for divorce, or just for a health problem. Grief is when, you'll hear me say this in the interview but I want to say it here as well, grief happens when we leave a former version of ourselves behind.

Some people even grieve the loss of their past self when they have massive success, when they become wealthy, or when they have a new job. There's a grief that can happen from leaving your past self behind. So listen to this. Let your mind percolate around grief and let yourself just feel what you feel and see how it goes. Let's dive in.

Jen: Hey everyone, I'm talking with my friend Julie Nowell today. And we're going to be talking about death. But don't fear, this is an uplifting

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

conversation. Why we're doing this? Well, my son just came to me today and said his teacher who's normally really friendly said, "You guys, I've had a hard few weeks, my dad just died suddenly, my mother-in-law's dying." And his teacher cried. And then a few minutes later I jumped on a call with Julie who is a digital strategist who helps with my business. She's amazing.

And she's also a chicken farmer, put that in, you know, how's that for a title, digital strategist/chicken farmer. She's a mom of three kids. She lives on Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Canada. Yes, that's close to Nanaimo. I don't know how I keep having these people but I'm going to be heading that way one day. So I happened to call Julie today and she was talking about the loss of her pet. And Julie, I'm going to just have you jump in here and talk about that.

And this episode is for all of you who feel like you have lost something over the past several months, whether that's a loss of the life you used to have, or the loss of a loved one, or a pet, or the loss of who you used to be. So much loss but with that loss Julie's going to help us see there is also a newness of life. So, Julie, welcome and let's hear your story of loss.

Julie: Thanks Jen. Story of loss, yes, it's been a journey for our family, that's for sure, when we came to this island nine years ago. We moved from the city and we were fairly average folks who had this dream of farming and being so involved with wildlife and life. And I remember early on when we moved here somebody said, "Well, if you've got livestock, you've got dead stock." And being a person who had many a hamster in her days and many a hamster graves buried in our backyard that was a bit of a laugh and a hard thing to comprehend at the time.

But over nine years of raising animals and being so intimately connected with death it definitely made its impact and allowed us to create some sort of mutual respect I think, with loss.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

I had pets living in the city, and again the same thing, and any sort of loss grounded and halted our family's progress forward for months on end as we mourned that loss. I had lost grandparents early on as a child. And again it was sudden and always coupled with trauma, and drama, and pain, and I always kind of felt this weird lack of intimacy with it, and this lack of allowing that death to happen, and evolve, and allowing healing to evolve.

So when we came here and we got our first chickens and ducks, we actually got ducks, the first loss of our pet, our fowl was again coupled with trauma, and sadness, and tears, and screams from the kids of, "Why? Why did this happen? Why did this happen?" And this complete and utter anger towards that death and that experience happening, but as we had more chickens and more death, we started to fight less against that loss and question that loss less. And understand that with every loss we were hatching new chicks and we were having new baby goats.

And we were seeing that transition of life and the rebirth coming out of it as well. I'm a mom of three. We moved here when my youngest was two and a half and so this has been his life since he's – as he's known it. But the other girls were older and had experienced kind of both the suburb and lifestyle of pets and now this new lifestyle of farm, and livestock, and rural living. And so their transition through death was a little bit different.

But being able to see them understand that death happens, there's nothing we can do in many cases to stop it, especially when it's a chicken, and they don't put a lot of money into saving chickens these days.

Jen: That's funny.

Julie: So we did have the power to make sure that the chickens went quickly, and gently, and warmly, and safely, and without trauma and fear. And I think that allowing our kids to be empowered enough to know when something needs to die, and to help it or allow it to gently go in their arms

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

allowed them to be less scared of death. They were seeing it 'in the flesh', sometimes every week for a while there, depending on the season. They were seeing an animal go gently because we are helping it go. Or they're seeing an animal go traumatically because a prey animal got it.

They were seeing goats give birth and that joy that comes along with that, but then many years later having to say goodbye to that goat because it was sick or something went wrong. So it's allowed them this wonderful more intimate relationship with death that I growing up never had. I just I never had that. And I look at this wonderful experience now that they get to have to be able to say goodbye.

Jen: So when you were growing up you mentioned before we turned on the microphone, you had a different view of death. Tell us about that.

Julie: Yeah. Death was – I mean my father was German and he grew up in Germany during the war, loss was a huge part of his life and it was always something that was talked about as it was war torn, it was traumatic, it was horrible. My mom clung to life. We had dogs that lived far past their – when they should be alive, dogs in diapers and all that thing, because we couldn't let go. And so for me death was always something you fought against. And you never accepted, or allowed, or had a relationship with.

It was something that was, you know, I lost grandmothers and I couldn't face the fact that change was happening. I couldn't face the fact that they were going. And so I didn't allow myself the chance to say goodbye in a proper way because I was so deathly scared of it, ironically, that word. I felt that if I didn't face it, it wouldn't happen. If I didn't, you know, there was no accepting it. There was no meeting it in the middle. There was just pretending it didn't exist. And so the loss was always extraordinary, and painful, and deep.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Jen: So recently this week sadly you've had another death experience. Tell us about that and how you've been more in that energy of allowing rather than resisting.

Julie: Yeah. And I think it started two and a half years ago actually, this current experience is we had two dogs that were brother and sister. And we lost our first dog surprisingly and suddenly, she just came in from outside and lay on the floor and we knew she was going. And so our family was lucky enough, a strange choice of words as I tell the rest of the story, to be able to have our hands on her as she died. And we wrapped her up and we were able to say goodbye to her in our garden in the morning.

So noting that that first dog had gone, we'd spent the last two and a half years in a sense waiting for the next dog to go because they were siblings and the second dog was older. So we knew that this death was coming. We knew that we were going to be in a position most likely to have to make the choice for that death to happen, that this death wasn't going to be given to us, we were going to have to make it, you know, make the decision. And I knew that, and I think my husband knew too that he was going to have to be the one who decided because he is much stronger than I am still.

And so yeah, and we believed that the dog was telling us. And it's almost like, again, a weird dichotomy of when you're choosing to have children. The first person says, "Okay, I think I'm ready." And then the second person says, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, slow down." And then the second one a couple of months later says, "Okay, I'm ready now." And the first person says, "Really, you don't want to talk about this?" It takes a bit for you both to be on the same page because one person pushes forward, the other person holds back.

So we'd had discussions of saying, "It might be going to be time." And then my husband would say, "No, he looks pretty good today." So my husband did, he called me, he had been at home and he'd left and he had come

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

home, and he texted me and called me and said, “I think it’s time.” I said, “Okay.” And he goes, “Do you think that I can do it on my timeline instead of allowing everybody else to say goodbye?” And I said, “Yes, that’s okay.” And so he made the call and I was a couple of hours later. He picked up the kids from school and the dog was gone.

And it was difficult for our family, our children because they didn’t in a sense ‘say goodbye’, although as we’ve been saying to them, we’ve been saying goodbye for the last two years. And so this is an okay transition. And so we all touched deeply into our grief that night and throughout the weekend and we said goodbye to our lovely puppy, he was so loyal to us for 15 years in our garden. And I think that that’s a really important thing to remember is I never allowed the grief to touch me. And I almost imagined it like fingers.

You have to allow your memories and your thoughts to go there. You’ve got to allow those little pokes of grief, or those little pokes of loss to kind of run through your body so that you can become comfortable with them, and move through them. There’s no jumping around grief, there’s no jumping over it. You’ve kind of got to go straight on through the middle of it. And the more you allow those conversations, and talk about it, and those fingers of grief to kind of touch you, the more gently I think you move through it.

And so we spent the weekend doing that, we touched the grief, we went deep into it. And then we started looking for a new puppy. And through loss comes life, and a new puppy is there for us. And it’s going to be welcomed to our family. And it’s never a replacement, but it allows kind of the shadow to go over so that all that’s left is the memories.

Jen: Yeah, that’s beautiful. I love how you said that. A friend recently shared a thought that – I wonder what you think of it which is this; all grief is essentially a loss of the self we used to know within a certain setting and the beginning of a new self. And it’s not so much the loss of an object, or a

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

relationship, or a person as much as it's a loss of our relationship to the world without that person or that relationship. How do you feel about it?

Julie: I love it. I mean yes, it's a loss of – it is, when I look at this dog, we had him for almost 15 years. So we got him before my son was born and when my middle child was six months old. I was a puppy when we got this puppy. And he brought us through this journey of moving from the city to this new lifestyle. So saying goodbye to him, I mean we've got a 17 year old now. And our next dog, I mean my husband and I are talking about that. We're like, "My gosh, this next puppy we get might meet our grandchildren, oh no, what's happening here?"

So I think as well with these losses and these big moments in our life, we see our aging, we see our transitions, we see our changes. And that's sometimes a lot to kind of take in and adapt to. I look at this 17 year old who had this dog by her side for the last 15 years, seeing this new puppy and knowing she won't be here for it. She is also experiencing this huge change and transition. But that's that big part of saying as we change out of one thing we're transitioning into another and how neat to think that this new puppy coming into our family next week may meet my grandchild.

Jen: Yeah, that's really neat, really neat, yeah.

Julie: But I think that's kind of pretty cool. And who are we going to be in 15 years?

Jen: It's like a milestone, these life and death, they are milestones, we measure so much of what we're doing by these – when people are born and when they die. Yeah.

Julie: Exactly, yeah. And we all know that death is there. It's coming. And so it allows you to sit more firmly in the moment especially as we get older

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

to say, “Okay, yeah, this is something unique and special. This is birth, this is newness. This is something fresh. And it’s only here for that small moment. So let’s really enjoy it and embrace it.”

Jen: Yeah. I’m curious if you can, take us a little deeper in your family’s grieving process. You mentioned those fingers of grief and allowing them to poke. What did that look like? Did you just share memories?

Julie: Yeah, we did, we talked a lot about our favorite memories of our dog, Tugger. We talked a lot about how important our animals are to us. So just in generally what dogs have done to our lives. We took our – my husband of course who went two feet straight into the pool of grief said, “Let’s look at all those wonderful photos that we’ve got.” And the kids put together a slideshow.

Jen: Aww.

Julie: I know, can you believe it, like way to rip it right open. But you have to see those images. You’ve got to put yourself back there otherwise when they surprise you later on it’s going to be so raw. We build a beautiful, a spot to lay our pets to rest. My husband does a beautiful deep grave for them and we line it with cedar boughs. We’re in the forest and things like that. So our pets are tucked in, into the forest. And we build a huge garden around them and loaded it full of bulbs and stuff so that we will always see that coming back. So they are part of our life.

We talked a lot as well when we lost this dog about when we lost his sister, because to us they were a pair. And so we talked a lot about that experience and memories of her and what that was like. And we talked a lot about what’s coming next. For our kids going through that grief and allowing it to move forward and saying, “Okay, but that’s not the end of the world. It’s not the end of our experience.” It’s one experience that we were

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

so grateful and lucky to be able to enjoy. What do we want our next experience to look like?

Jen: Wow, yeah, looking forward.

Julie: Yeah.

Jen: Oh yeah, heavy, but so beautiful at the same time.

Julie: Yeah. And we're not shy, well, the kids and myself we're not shy about grief, we share our grief as well. My kids all reached out to their friends and as soon as they kind of wanted, which was quickly to say, "This happened. I felt this loss." And so they're also okay with acknowledging their grief and acknowledging their loss, and having that conversation with their friends. Because how dare we only share the joy.

Jen: Yeah, that's true.

Julie: We've got to be able to have relationships where we share our loss and our sadness and allow the community to come forward and support us in that. And it doesn't matter if it's a hamster, or a snake, or a dog, or a horse, or a human, or a friend, each of these losses allow their moment to be held, and looked at and then put to bed.

Jen: Yeah. I appreciate you sharing this and I've heard your chicken crowing. Is that chicken crowing? Am I saying it right? Well, that's the word, the verb, crowing.

Julie: Yeah, crowing.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Jen: Cock-a-doodle-doing. So tell us more about just your life on Salt Spring Island to lighten things just a bit here. And how you got interested in chickens because I think your lifestyle sounds fascinating.

Julie: I have no idea how we got interested in chickens. I don't know if it's always been there. But for me I've always been interested in animals fully, completely and in general. And we were, back in 2012 we were living in the suburbs and we had three kids, a big house in the suburbs with a big yard on a cul-de-sac, and jobs.

And we were just like, "My goodness, this is just – shouldn't it be easy now? Shouldn't we have made it?" My husband and I kind of kept looking at each other. I'm a Gen Xer, so I grew up with my parents being internally fearful that I would never be able to – a house, or get a job, or do these things. And so my husband and I accomplished that and we said, "What are we doing? We accomplished something that we didn't want. We accomplished something that was what our parents wanted us to have."

Jen: Ooh. That's big. I wonder how many people listening are saying the exact same thing.

Julie: Yeah. Our parents wanted us to have stability, and a house, and a mortgage, and all these things. And we weren't happy, in a nutshell. So we kept looking to try and kind of band-aid it. We're like, "Well, maybe if we buy a ski cabin and we get away from our house." And I kept thinking how ridiculous is it that we're willing to go further into debt to escape our life? Why don't we just change our life? And we realized at that point that band-aiding and putting a little fix on this, or an escape wasn't going to be the solution that my husband and I wanted.

And so we decided pretty much in a weekend to quit our jobs, and sell our house, and move, and start again. And so we did. And we didn't know where, or what, or who, or when, or how. But we kind of trusted the

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

unfolding that it would all kind of become apparent. I'm a huge believer that when we put it out there, hopefully, we have to put it out there, something right will come back. And we came to this little island and said, "Well, this looks like a pretty good place to set up shop."

And we had this discussion of what if this doesn't work? What if we sell our house, we move to this island, we can't find a place to live, we can't get jobs, we can't do anything, what happens? And we both decided that even if the worst case scenario happened where we could not rebuild to the life that we had before, we would still be happier having tried.

Jen: Right, yeah.

Julie: Yeah. Because we didn't want to go through life in a stability that was so uncomfortable without trying to take a risk for something that might be better. We were – and nine years later I can say it worked. We moved here to this island, we rented. Then we bought a house. There was a 1,001 ups and downs, there was a million mistakes made. There was challenges, there was tears, there was blood, sweat, there was everything.

We came here with the sole purpose of wanting to have time. So we felt that – there's two things we felt when we looked at our kids, one was that the only thing they really ever wanted in life was us, our time, and our attention, and our time. So we wanted to put ourselves in a position where we had more time, and we weren't racing around everywhere. The second thing we wanted to teach our kids was that it takes a risk and it takes effort to be happy, that happiness doesn't just happen, we have to work at it, we have to take risks to go after what we want.

Happiness doesn't just land in your lap accidentally. You have to go and fight for your happiness and fight for what you want in life and make choices. And we wanted to show our kids that it was okay to say, "This is what I want, and this is what I'm going to go build for myself." And it would

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

take a lot of hard work to get there. We wanted our kids to see us not be okay and living an okay life. We wanted our kids to see us living a life that we loved and one that we built by design in a sense.

And so that goes back to the chickens, don't worry, long story. So when we kind of summed it up we said that what we really wanted was a couple chickens, which to us meant space. And we wanted a boat because that to us meant time. And yeah, so we started with three chickens and we don't have three chickens anymore, they are a gateway drug to farming.

Jen: The chickens are the new gateway drug.

Julie: Yeah, you get a couple of chickens, suddenly you've got ducks, then you've got a goat and everything gets out of hand. So we've kind of gone through a whole range of livestock. And we have settled on the fact that we really are just chicken people. I would say chickens are kind of like dogs whereas goats are like cats and so if you're a cat person...

Jen: I didn't know that.

Julie: Definitely get a goat, they're a little coy, they're a little, you know, they're like pet me, pet me, no don't, no don't. As a dog person I totally didn't get goats. I think they're neat but they don't get me. And as a dog person, chickens, they come running when you've got treats. They busy themselves, they're independent. They're great.

Jen: And you have special chickens, tell us about that.

Julie: We do, yeah, we've got fancy chickens. Why would we have boring chickens? My daughter went deep dive into chickens and which meant we went – so for her 11th birthday she asked for an incubator and fancy eggs for her birthday which I think is amazing as an 11 year old girl, no 12 year

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

old girl to ask for fancy eggs to hatch. So everybody pitched in, we got her an incubator. She went and chose these fancy chicken eggs from breeders. And that got her into showing chickens.

And so now we go to the chicken shows, it literally is exactly how it sounds, very, very nerdy. And the night before we're washing our chickens, and blow drying them, and making sure they're shiny, and it's horrific. But she also sells her eggs and sells her birds and is raising money because she wants to be a vet.

Jen: So she's going to pay her, kind of for some of her college with this?

Julie: Yes, definitely.

Jen: Cool. So what's the fanciest chicken egg you've shipped out, what's the name of that breed?

Julie: She has Sultans, yeah. So they're one of the rarest breeds of chickens. And she was selling eggs for \$17 an egg, which is a lot, yeah.

Jen: Wow. So you're shipping these eggs fertilized or unfertilized?

Julie: Yes. Well, theoretically they should be fertilized. It's hard to know until they start growing.

Jen: And then you wrap them up and ship them?

Julie: Yeah.

Jen: And how are they staying warm en route and stuff?

Julie: Well, they don't really need to stay warm.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Jen: They don't.

Julie: They can cool, as long as they don't freeze. But yeah, we wrap each egg carefully, and place it in a box, and bubble wrap, and label the heck out of it, 'fragile, fragile, do not shake'. And it's crazy the odds of hatching.

Jen: What are the odds?

Julie: I've had a 100% eggs hatch and we've had 20% of the eggs hatch. So yeah, it is [crosstalk].

Jen: And you send more than one so there's better odds?

Julie: Yeah, normally a dozen.

Jen: It's like chicken IVF. You've got to send more than one egg.

Julie: Exactly. But it's like when you're spending \$15, \$17 an egg you're kind of choosy about how many you get but it is a risk but as is any animal coming out. But yeah, so it's been great for her. She's been able to purchase a laptop with her chicken money. She's got money in the bank. She's got a good little business going.

Jen: That's so good.

Julie: So entrepreneur at heart, so teach them to be self-sufficient and how to sell.

Jen: Yeah. So Salt Spring Island, I didn't know it was a famous place when you first told me you lived there. But tell us about the island, and it's one of the top 10 best islands in the world, right?

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Julie: Yeah. It's funny; I think two years ago, Lufthansa Airline had a big spread in one of her airline magazines about the island. And we were like, "There really seem to be like a lot of Germans here this summer." So it was the number one island, number one place to visit in Canada was our little island, so it's pretty crazy.

Jen: Oh, heavenly.

Julie: Yeah, cidaries, it's an island filled with farmers, and artisans, and craftsmen and we have a huge Saturday market which is one of the best known Saturday markets and people come from miles around to visit. And it's filled with artisans, ocean everywhere, and huge boating culture. And a great place to grow up, just a great place to grow up.

Jen: Yeah, I've listened to you, it sounds like your kids know about everyone on the island it seems like that are their age.

Julie: Yeah. It's funny, when we were looking at places to move we knew we wanted to live rural but we didn't want to live on the outskirts of anywhere. We wanted to live somewhere that was rural but its own community. And so I mean we have very, very specific borders of our island obviously. But it is still so rural and so grounded in a sense.

We always laugh, we have something I think it's the highest medium income in all of Canada here because we have all these wonderful people coming here and retiring early and moving to our island because it's such a unique place to live. And so all these kids will be sitting in class and you never know which one is the pharmaceutical billionaire's kid, or which is the kid that's living up the mountain off the grid because everybody's just a Salt Springer. And there's these extraordinary opportunities for whatever takes your interest.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Jen: Well, so you're right there by Vancouver Island and I've mentioned on the podcast about a million times all the people I know from Nanaimo. And now I'm in a pickle because there's this dilemma, am I going to go move to Salt Spring Island or am I going to go to Vancouver Island?

Julie: Definitely Salt Spring. So Vancouver Island's way too big, way too busy, so yeah. I mean our lovely little island doesn't have a single stop light.

Jen: Yeah, that's nice, yeah. Do you have an ice-cream stand at least?

Julie: We have two. We've got...

Jen: Ooh.

Julie: Yeah, we've got Glad's which is an ice-cream candy store and we've got Harlan's Chocolates which does gelato. That's where my kids work. They work at the chocolate shop.

Jen: Really?

Julie: Yeah. So amazing gelato ice-cream. And we have a ton of food trucks too, so it's a little food trucky kind of island. We had a vegan ice-cream food truck. So that was pretty cool.

Jen: So when you leave the island you get on a ferry that takes you where?

Julie: Well, I can choose. I can choose to go to Duncan which is close to Nanaimo. Or I can choose to go to Victoria on another ferry. Or I can choose to take the longboat to Vancouver.

Jen: So do you go to all three places? Where do you go the most often?

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Julie: We rarely go to Vancouver because ugh.

Jen: Okay. Been there, done that, yeah.

Julie: Yeah, been there, done that. But mostly, I mean we go off to Duncan which is by Nanaimo to get feed a lot for the farm.

Jen: Yeah, for the chickens.

Julie: Yeah, exactly. And I mean my daughter's doing driving lessons so we have to go to Nanaimo every weekend for driving lessons, so things like that, yeah.

Jen: Cool. It sounds amazing. I loved your thoughts though. This was fun to talk to you. We did this on a whim, I was talking to Julie and I'm like, "Wait a minute. We need to record this for the podcast." And I'm so glad we did.

Julie: Good, yeah. I think that fearing death is a really common thing and I know that a lot of people when they first move here, we've had people move to the island after discussions, wanting to get into this lifestyle.

And it's having those conversations about if you have livestock you will lose stock, they will, this is a natural part of life. But what a gift to be still respectful, I think there is a line of having so much loss that you can't even notice it anymore. But to be able to raise kids in a way that they can respect, appreciate, acknowledge death, to allow them a way to embrace and enjoy life so much more.

Jen: Yeah, well said. Thank you. Thank you for being vulnerable. I know your loss is raw, your loss of...

Julie: Tugger, our little Tugger, yeah.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

Jen: Tugger.

Julie: He's a good boy.

Jen: Do you know what you'll be naming the new puppy or not yet?

Julie: We do, yes, the kids saw him last night and I don't know where the name come from but they all just started calling him Ollie.

Jen: I like it.

Julie: Yeah, I think we have an Ollie doggy coming.

Jen: Ollie doggy.

Julie: So I mean he's lovely, so it'll be a really neat new journey for our family to go on.

Jen: That's cool. Julie, this was awesome. If anyone wants to ask you anything about Salt Spring, or chickens, or digital strategy, where can they reach out?

Julie: I'm on Instagram under Jules Nowell, N.o.w.e.l.l. And I'm on Facebook as well and you can always just Google me. I've got my website up under my name so you'll find me.

Jen: Cool. Awesome. Julie, I love you, you're amazing. Thank you so much for being on the show.

Julie: Thank you for having me.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

I want to ask you a question. How do you grieve a loss? What do you typically do? Do you go to that Netflix, scroll and find something to binge on? Do you go through social media endlessly? Do you go for the wine or the sugar? Or have you learned to fully experience your emotions? I have an interesting thought on emotion. I feel like 2020 and beyond perhaps has increased our capacity to feel the full range of emotions, the struggle, the painful, the uncomfortable emotions, and the positive amazing emotions. We can't have one without the other.

You can't feel full joy without having been into the depths and the low points. That is the human condition. That is the human experience. Are you fully allowing yourself to feel it? Do you fully let yourself feel grief every time there is a transition, or a loss, when a child goes to college or you end a relationship, or someone leaves the planet, someone transitions on from a job, you lose a friendship? Do you allow yourself to feel? Grief is so beautiful because it slows us down, and allows us to remember, and enjoy, and process.

This topic reminds me of my favorite emotional resilience and emotional processing tool, Feel It to Heal It. It's a four step process of feeling your emotions, labeling them, allowing them, and essentially letting them pass through you. If you learn to do this well you'll develop a confidence that is unbreakable, a knowledge that you can handle any situation from loneliness, and anxiety, and worry, and grief, all the way up through anger, and frustration, and resentment, to love, joy and peace.

You can handle all of the range of your emotions when you know how to process. And this makes you powerful, and free, and fierce, and emotionally resilient. And the coolest thing is when you develop this emotional strength your kids pick it up simply by watching you. Your kids will be able to do it just by seeing how you do it. It is so fun to be able to give my kids the gift of emotional resilience, something I'm not sure I developed until the past five or ten years and I'm still working on it.

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

If you would like to learn more about Feel It to Heal It so you can be confident in any situation knowing that you can handle any emotion, even the heavy ones like grief that happens with death, or loss, or frustration, or resentment, or shame, or overwhelm, everything. If you'd like to be strong in every emotion and teach your kids to do the same join us in March in the Vibrant Happy Women Club. We'll be focusing on Feel It to Heal It, talking about emotional resilience. And I promise in just 30 days you will grow leaps and bounds in your ability to handle any emotion.

I always wished I could let everything roll off my back. And I wished it for years and it wasn't until I discovered and created the Feel It to Heal It method that I realized, wait, I'm able to let things roll off my back because I process emotions so much quicker.

If you'd like to experience a lightness of heart and a freedom that comes with knowing you can handle anything emotionally, any trial, any struggle, even when your son flips his car and you get the call that, "Hey, your son has been in an accident, it's really bad." Or your son falls out of a tree. Or your son has suicidal ideation. This is so much of what I was experiencing in 2020. You can handle it. You can be so strong and so fierce. And I want you to know that's possible.

And that's a big part of what Vibrant Happy Women is about, helping you be vibrant, and happy, and to get back to the emotions you want to experience even with the things that happen in our world, even with those years that are like 2020, even with grief, and loss, and change.

I will be back again next week talking with Robyn Downs about the feel good effect. Until then make it a vibrant, happy and emotionally strong 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

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

259: Grief and Loss (with Julie Nowell)

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.