

## 260: Gentle is the New Perfect (with Robyn Downs)



### Full Episode Transcript

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**Jen Riday**

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## 260: Gentle is the New Perfect (with Robyn Downs)

You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 260. I'm talking with guest Robyn Downs from the Feel Good Effect Podcast about how gentle is the new perfect. This is good stuff. Stay tuned.

Hi, I'm Jen Riday. This podcast is for women who want to feel more vibrant, happy, aligned, and alive. You'll gain the emotional, physical, and spiritual tools you need to get your sparkle back and ensure that depression, anxiety, and struggle don't rule your life. Welcome to the Vibrant Happy Women Podcast.

Hey my friends, Jen here. And I have an amazing guest for you today, Robyn Downs from the Feel Good Effect Podcast is talking to us about letting go of that mindset of constantly striving, trying to achieve, and prove, and be good enough, makes me want to sigh a breath of relief just thinking about it. So this episode kind of blew my mind. You're going to hear me say, "Robyn, you just blew my mind", about three times. Well, she did.

You're going to listen for some really cool thoughts like that's not my A lane. Where is the middle ground? Does it work for you? What do I need right now? And so much more, she even has a cool term I've never heard before, taking a carcation. So this is a good one. And I'm pretty you're going to want to go jump over and listen to Robyn's podcast, The Feel Good Effect after this, highly recommend it. She's awesome. So don't miss this one. Let's jump in.

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Jen: Hey my friends, I'm talking with my friend Robyn Downs today. She's a mama, a speaker, an entrepreneur and the author of The Feel Good Effect: Reclaim Your Wellness by Creating Small Shifts that Create Big Change. That's what I'm talking about, small shifts. So Robyn uses simple science backed strategies that help you cut through life's clutter to find those small shifts. She believes in finding more calm, ease and joy in your

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life right now. And she lives by this really awesome motto, gentle is the new perfect. I love that.

She's also from Portland, Oregon, one of my favorite cities in the world. And I'm so glad you're on the show today, Robyn, welcome.

Robyn: Thank you so much for having me.

Jen: So, Robyn, you wrote *The Feel Good Effect*. How did you come to write that book? What's your journey that led to – I mean writing a book is a really big thing. And we all want to hear about how you came to this idea which is brilliant, gentle is the new perfect.

Robyn: Yeah. Well, I think that my story starts I think like a lot of us where I was really just – I was approaching life with a striving mindset which worked really well for me. So I was very much an achiever, and I believe in adding more to my plate and never taking anything away. I think that used to be my motto. And honestly, that worked for me pretty well for a little while. So I taught at a university, I did research in behavior change and habits. And then we're in a research center so I was working full-time, 60 hour week job.

Went to get my PhD in public policy because I was really interested in how people change individually in our lives, but also the systems that help change or create barriers to change. And during that time I had a lot of physical health challenges, multiple miscarriages, infertility. Finally was able to get pregnant, had my daughter who's now almost nine. And went right back to work because that's what I knew how to do. And so I kept adding these full-time jobs. So then I had the full-time job, and the full-time school, and the full-time parenting.

And one day I was going to work and getting all the stuff ready for daycare and my husband said, "What time are you going to be home?" And I looked

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at him and I started bawling, hysterically crying. And he was like, “Oh dear. I was not expecting this response.” And really what happened when he asked me that question was I didn’t know what time I was going to be home. And it sort of created this cascade effect of realizing that I had really lost myself and lost a sense of control of my life. And I thought how did I get here?

I thought this is what I wanted, I had a family, I had work, I had school. And I’m so unhappy and desperately unhappy. In fact I wasn’t even on the list. So I was juggling all these balls and I wasn’t even one of the balls. And that struck me as wrong but I didn’t know what to do. And so it sent me on this path where I thought that’s so interesting that I know theoretically all this stuff. I have multiple degrees and I know all these things in theory and yet I’m not applying them to my life.

And so then I kind of decided to do this personal experiment where I looked at the research and tried it in my own life. And when I did that I just thought oh gosh, so much of this research isn’t fully adapted to someone with my lifestyle. It’s a little more for someone that doesn’t have all these extra responsibilities. So I started to craft my own approach and through that I started my website which is [realfoodwholelife.com](http://realfoodwholelife.com). I started sharing recipes because even the recipes, I’m like, “Who’s doing this?”

Jen: Yeah, two hours later you’ve got something to eat, yeah, for sure.

Robyn: Yes. Or my partner wouldn’t eat it, or my kid wouldn’t eat it. And I was like, “Why did I do this?” Or it made 19 dishes and I’m like, “Whoever created this recipe doesn’t do their own dishes.”

Jen: Yes, so true.

Robyn: And that led me to the podcast, The Feel Good Effect where I started talking about this approach and sort of how it changed my life, and

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really grounded me in small shifts. And from that the book, *The Feel Good Effect*, I had the opportunity to write the book. And it really, I would say came out in September. And I wasn't expecting it to come out in a pandemic. That was not on my radar when I wrote it. But I think it's really turned out to be the sort of this guidebook of handling life when it throws you a curveball.

And as a parent I felt like I was always getting those curveballs. So I was like, "How do you kind of curveball proof your life? And now how do you pandemic proof your life?" So that's really how I got here.

Jen: That's cool. So you were reflecting the whole way, noticing where things were out of balance and then you were able to make a shift. It sounds simple but not so simple.

Robyn: Right. And I think that what I realized too is I just had to unlearn a lot of things. So I was operating with a set of assumptions and mindset that I thought was going to get me what I wanted. And what I realized is maybe that's not true. Maybe the approach is broken and failing, and using a different way. So that's been really I think life changing too to realize okay, if I unlearn this way that wasn't working, there is a different option.

Jen: Yes, I can just feel the collective breath of relief, a sigh of relief because this idea, gentle is the new perfect. If more people like you were out there giving permission and providing an example of how it looks, the rest of us can follow. So what does it look like in your life? How is it different now with this mantra of gentle is the new perfect?

Robyn: Well, so I've mentioned this driving mindset which is really approaching things with the lens of perfectionism, which is really just mistake avoidance and impossible standards, all or nothing thinking. So black or white, all in or all out when we say, "If I can't do an hour workout then I can't do anything at all." The 10 minute workout doesn't count, that's

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that all or nothing, and then comparison. And so I realized that this approach of impossible standards, that I was never doing enough, and I was all in or all out. And I was always comparing, that didn't work.

So the alternative antidote is really grounded in science as well, which is self-compassion, flexible thinking and gratitude. So that's the way I operate now. And it took a while. I always talk about the brain, from a neuroscience perspective if you practice something for a long time it takes a little while to shift it. But it's not that I don't work toward something. I wrote this book. I have the podcast. I still actually get a lot of results in my life. But the way I do it is a lot more flexible and a lot more kind. So I can give you some examples. But I think that that's the biggest difference.

Jen: Okay, yeah, examples would be great. I love that.

Robyn: So one of my favorite examples of getting out of all or nothing thinking with exercise because I know a lot of us, the exercise is on the should list. And I like to get it on the good list.

Jen: The should list and a good list, okay, yeah.

Robyn: So if you know exercise is a should for you, I'd love to get it out of a should and to say, "Is there any part of it that's good? How can that connect more to your values and what you care about?" And have that meaning behind it. But also to get out of the idea that if you're in the all or nothing, all in or all out, how can you find something in the middle? So whether that's instead of thinking you have to work out seven times a week, you say, "Well, right now I'm doing zero." Maybe four is a good number for you to find a middle ground.

Jen: That was an aha, that was a big mind – what do you call those? It blew my mind. That's such a good idea. I just want to interject.

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Robyn: Absolutely.

Jen: Anyone who's at a place where they're doing nothing and they know what they want, it seems so doable to say what's in the middle, go for the middle, go for the middle, go for the middle. It's like that's that gentle feeling you're talking about I think.

Robyn: Yes, and to reclaim it. I think middle has a really pejorative meaning a lot of times. Even middle age, it's not a super big compliment. And I'm like, "Hey, you know what? Middle age is awesome." I don't clearly claim this middle thing as something good. And it's like if seven days is just not doable you can reclaim and redefine success as four days. You get to decide that. And so maybe it's the number of days, maybe it's the amount of time.

I know for me I love the science around exercise snacking, so not eating while you work out. Although if you want to eat while you work out, by all means. But exercise snacking is simply doing short bursts of movement throughout your day, it's 10 minutes. What some studies have shown is that that actually has really great cardiovascular effects, mental health effects but also helps with blood sugar stability.

So if you're a person that really feels the pull to do the hour workout and it's just not – I mean if you're doing it, great, this is not a good example for you. But for most of us that's really a little bit tough on a regular basis. You can completely flip the script and say success for me means two to three exercise snacks today which could be just as simple as 60 steps. The effect that they show that I just mentioned that was with 60 stairs, not 60 flights, 60 stairs, so that's how you kind of start to rethink.

If this is not working for me, if it's not happening at all the gap between where I am and where I want to be is so large that I'm not going to get it. So how can I find something a little bit more flexible in the middle? And

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then if that works maybe you can add on or maybe you just stay there because that's what works for you.

Jen: Totally, that's great. As you were talking – I told you, you kind of blew my mind. I had a mindset shift from this. All the sports themed movies that we idolize in at least American culture, it might be the world, I don't know, where people are killing themselves to achieve a gold medal or whatever else. We've only been presented with this idea that that is success. But one of my mantras along with yours, gentle is the new perfect. Try to do B plus work or B minus work even, never even shoot for the A.

And a lot of us cringe because we were so drilled to believe we've got to get the A or the A plus. But those B students grow up to be the entrepreneurs, and the CEOs, and the leaders a lot of times. So I don't know, just food for thought, everyone.

Robyn: Yeah. Can I add on that because I just love that? So if you weren't a – I totally get the cringe part about being like, "No, I'm an A student and I'm always going to be an A student." I will just remind all of us that if you were an A student in school that was likely your only job. Or maybe it was your job and you played sports and maybe you had a part-time job, so at most three jobs. My guess is right now you have eight full-time jobs. So the idea that you could get an A in that many jobs is impossible and yet we still try to do it and then feel bad when we don't.

So it's like you can pick your A plus lane but all the other lanes can be B lanes.

Jen: Yes, so true. So you mean with the eight jobs, chauffeur, chef, laundress, yeah, you mean all the mom roles?

Robyn: Yes. I mean and even just for example when I was in high school and I played sports or in college, even in college most of my meals were



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taken care of through either dining services or something. I wasn't responsible for getting all the food, making it, cleaning it all up, doing that for four other people or eight other people, managing my life, my taxes and my mortgage. We just keep adding on these layers as a responsibility and we expect A work in all of those.

So I'm always like, well, pick a few to do A work but if you try for all, it's like at a certain point if you were adding more courses in school, you could not get A's in all of them because then you'd start really failing all of them. So it's like pick the ones that are really important then, then the rest can be middle. And that is so sustainable and you might actually have fun doing it.

Jen: Absolutely. And it's just, you know, we've all been aware of this but it's hitting me harder right now, thank you, that we're all believing a collective lie. Where do you think it came from and how do we get rid of it?

Robyn: I think it was – human beings typically will do the things that they get rewarded for. So if you're an A student you probably got really rewarded for that, praise. And that's not a bad thing. Or if you weren't an A student maybe you were really good at sports or something, music. There was praise there so you automatically think this is the way to do it, this is the right way. This is the way everything else has to be done. And that's what the invitation I provide I'm just offering to you is what if we reject that and collectively say, "No, doing the dishes, not my A lane."

Jen: Yes, that's work.

Robyn: Cleaning toilets, not my A lane. And knowing that we all probably do that ourselves, we probably do have different places where we put our energy and where we don't. But the places we're not putting it, we just either find more of the middle ground or we just let it go and not feel guilty about it.

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Jen: Yeah, middle ground. So what does that look like for housework?

Robyn: Okay. Someone just asked me this about cleaning her toilet. She felt bad all the time that she wasn't cleaning her toilets enough.

Jen: All day long she's thinking about toilets. Can you even imagine? It's so sad that we do this.

Robyn: It is. And every time she goes in her bathroom. And I said, "First of all think about how much mental energy you're using on the toilet." That adds up and at the end of the day one of the reasons we're all so exhausted is just this mental energy of feeling bad about things.

I said, "Okay, so there is a couple of options with something like cleaning toilets." On the one extreme you could really just be like I'm going to come up with a toilet cleaning schedule. I'm going to teach everyone in my house how to do it and we're going to have clean toilets every week, delegate, and you're good." Another option would be to get those like – what are those? Just scrubby brushes with the disposable ends, and put one in every – if you have more than one bathroom, not everyone does.

But if you had multiple bathrooms you put one in every bathroom and you give a person the bathroom and they clean it. Maybe the barrier for you is just dragging the disgusting toilet brush into every bathroom.

Jen: Yes, for sure.

Robyn: So just get it. Another option would be clean them once a month and let that be okay.

Jen: And don't forget Vanish Drop-Ins.

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Robyn: Right. So usually when you start to ask how can I find the middle ground here? There is actually a lot of options in between, whether it's delegating, hiring, buying something that simplifies it, or just doing it less. And just saying, "This phase of my life", where if you have little kids, "It's a phase of life where I have dirty toilets and when the kids are older they're going to be all clean, but I won't have kids at home anymore."

Jen: And so the thought process goes from I can't do this, I suck at this. I'm never going to get this to the question, where is the middle ground here? Again I can just feel that collective sigh of relief, where is the middle ground here? A new way, it's a totally a big paradigm shift.

Robyn: It is. My sister – I'm very minimal, I really love a clean place and it's very important to me. So it's something I can just incorporate, it's a good. My sister is not the same as I am. Her car is just full of stuff, just full.

Jen: Her house is clean. Her car is bad, yeah.

Robyn: And she always feels bad about it especially when we're together. And finally I said, "Do you know I don't care what your car looks like inside?" And she's like, "I always feel like you're judging me." I've never said a word to her. And I think this is the emotional labor that we're doing all the time. I said, "Laurel", my sister's name is Laurel, "I don't want my car to be like that and that really doesn't mean that I care what your car's like. Is this working for you?" She has two little kids, two under four; husband's a full-time firefighter during the pandemic. She's solo parenting.

I'm like, "Is this working for you?" She's like, "Yeah, it doesn't bother me." I said, "Then let it not bother you."

Jen: Plus she's giving permission to everyone else who rides in her car to let their cars go too. I think that's a gift.

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Robyn: Right. I'm like, "Laurel, if you're okay with it, if it doesn't bother you, then you can let it go that what anyone else thinks about your car. It doesn't have anything to do with them." And the next time I saw her she's like, "You know what? I feel great about my car because I realized how much I was worrying about it, now I just don't anymore." I was like, "Well, that's a win."

Jen: That's so good. What about morning routines, how do we do this feel good effect to our morning routines?

Robyn: Great question. So for me the hour morning routine, I was always like whose idea was this?

Jen: I have to tell you Robyn it wasn't long ago that I was doing a three hour morning routine. So I'm hanging my head in shame.

Robyn: No, please don't, no shame here.

Jen: I'm teasing.

Robyn: Well, and I always go back to like does it work for you? This whole thing of life is a buffet, you get to take what you like and leave what you don't.

Jen: Yeah, true.

Robyn: So with the morning routine I'm sure there are times in my life where that would have worked. But when I had an infant it didn't, and then when we were doing preschool drop off it didn't. And then now in the pandemic it doesn't. But it wasn't good for me. So the morning routine part wasn't a should. It was the structure that wasn't working. So I always had to ask, "Do I want to make this a priority? Yes. Is it working how I'm trying to do it? No." So for me the solution was mini wellness routines throughout the day.

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So my morning routine is five to ten minutes and then I do a midmorning break, an afternoon break and an evening break. And actually the afternoon mini reset has been so much more life giving than doing the whole hour in the morning. So actually it's had, for me, a better effect but also I just can do it on a regular basis. So that is how I feel good effect, the morning routine.

Jen: What is your strategy to remember, that's my problem, remember the other parts of your routine, the afternoon, the lunch one, whatever?

Robyn: I think rather than picking a time, I mean if you have full control of your schedule then picking a time works really well. I do not have full control of my schedule right now, just with people in the house and stuff. So I've been anchoring it onto other points in the day. So for example, my daughter gets done with virtual school at 2:30. And I get her a snack and a book, and then that's when I start my mini routine.

Jen: So I have to be a little nosey. Which parts do you do when? Because I'm really intrigued by this idea, routine wise, what's happening in the morning versus the afternoon?

Robyn: I love this question, be as nosey as you are, I'm one of those people if I go in their house I'm looking in their medicine cabinets. What's in here? Again I always ask, "How do I feel and how do I want to feel? What do I need right now?" Which is really like if you're trying to learn a little bit more kindness and self-compassion, that's a really good tactical tip, just ask, "What do I need right now?"

And I have found that what I need in the morning is a big glass of water and some kind of movement. But it does kind of have to be a gentle movement. I'm not ready for hit jumping around kinds of workouts. And it needs to be something where I am – and it's interruptible for various members of our household. So for me that looks like a 10 or 20 minutes Pilates flow in my

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jammies. And then a big glass of water and a shower and that's my morning routine typically.

My afternoon routine is, typically what I need at that time of day is a big deep breath because by then I'm starting to feel I need to do this and I need to do this, and this didn't happen, because my energy's getting pulled. So usually what I'll do is get her set up with a snack, do a quick assessment of who needs what, do they have what they need? And then I'll go in a place where I can be alone. And I know for some people that's like a closet, or a carcation, [crosstalk] in the car.

Jen: A carcation, I haven't heard that. That's good.

Robyn: And I'll usually get a cup of tea and I literally will just sit with the tea and not do anything for five minutes. And it's like I don't even have to do breath work, I can just inhale and exhale and not be needed and not be doing for a few minutes. And that's been pretty crazy good because it reminds me that my wellness routine doesn't have to be about productivity. It can just be about taking care of myself and a reminder that I'm worthy of a little bit of a rest or to drink my coffee without getting, you know, we all do the thing where we reheat our coffee 97 times in the morning.

I'm like, I'm going to drink this whole tea just sitting here and not being interrupted. And sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't. But that five minutes is a huge reboot for me on a lot of days where I just kind of need. It helps me navigate through, now we're going to do dinner, and bath time, and all of that stuff.

Jen: That's really good, I like that. So everyone, if you haven't found the morning routine for you, try this, split it up, that's the feel good effect. That's good. What about decision fatigue? You talk about that in your book.

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Robyn: Yeah. So the fatigue formula which is a combination of decision fatigue and task switching, so multitasking which is all of our lives now, right?

Jen: Yes, oh my gosh.

Robyn: And I like people to know that there is science behind this that the more decisions we make, so that's decision fatigue when I'm making all these decisions. And the more times we have to switch between tasks that adds up to a drain on our mental energy, which depletes our willpower. So when you get to 4:00pm and you suddenly feel like you have 'no willpower', what's really happened is you've just depleted that willpower battery all the way down to zero.

And so there's a way through that but it's just one, even knowing that for example, the research shows that we make on average – well, let's see, I'll give you a guess. How many food decisions do you think you make in a day?

Jen: Oh gosh, 30.

Robyn: Okay. So the research says it's closer to 270. And that's not even for a caregiver. But they're so behind the scenes that we don't even notice that they're happening. So it's like what am I going to make for dinner? When do I need to start it? Do I have the ingredients? Do I need a recipe? What site should I go on? Oh gosh, this site has 97,000 recipes, which one should I choose? Wait, does my kid have an allergy? Do I need a substitute? Those are all decisions that we're making all the time.

Jen: Yeah, that makes sense. You just rattled through 10 decisions in one second practically. That makes sense. Wow, that's intense.

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Robyn: It is. And so we're doing it all the time. And if you have kids, and partners, and with the change in our routines since March, there's additional decisions. And that's just food. So if you add in all these other decisions that we make, it's no wonder we're tired at the end of the day. That's just one reason.

So, one, I just suggest to notice that, where are the decision heavy parts of your day, or the task, multitasking heavy parts of your day? And can you put in what I call a decision template to make the decisions ahead of time or to make them once so you don't have to keep making them? The decision template most people are familiar with is like a capsule wardrobe. So you just, you know, you decide here's the color palette, here is items that go together.

It might take a little more work upfront but then every time you walk into your closet it's like a breath of fresh air. These go together. I know everything in here I like. And not putting a bunch of mental energy every morning into trying to find something that fits, and that's clean, and that goes together.

Jen: Do you do a capsule wardrobe?

Robyn: I'm not that fashionable. I will say that I just don't have that many clothes. So what I have, I wouldn't say that I, you know, some of these people who I have followed on Instagram who have capsule wardrobes and they're like, "And here's my accessories, and here's my boot collection." I'm like I have a pair of shoes. So I think for me – but that's also because I don't care that much. I think if you love fashion then that's your good. I just want to look presentable and not put a lot of thought into it.

So I will say that if you looked in my closet you'd probably be surprised at how few things I have. I know that everything in there is comfortable. It fits me appropriately and I like wearing it, and it's easy to wash. So for me



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that's my criteria. I don't dry clean and everything I wear gets something on it at some point in the day so I need to be able to wash it. So that was my decision template for what's in my closet. It's less capsule wardrobe. It's very practical I would say, but yeah.

Jen: That's cool. But that idea of creating a capsule for all decisions, have you thought of a few that applies in the same way?

Robyn: Yeah. So, one of my favorites is instead of meal planning, meal mapping, so meal mapping you just assign a meal type to each day of the week, so for me I do Monday through Friday. And so Monday, I can even tell you the details of my meal map. And I have a breakdown on the site for if anyone wanted some more examples. But we do Monday night is chicken in a crock pot with rice. Tuesday is Taco Tuesday. Wednesday is chilli. This is our fall, winter, we change it up in the summer. Thursday is pasta night and Friday is burger night.

I don't have to think about what's for dinner. I think about within that template I have a lot of different chicken in a crock pot recipes. So it's really like well, maybe we'll do chicken and veggies with the peanut sauce tonight. Or we'll do the lemon herb chicken over quinoa. So we have a variety but we don't change, one set of variables is consistent.

Jen: That's brilliant. Okay, give me one more, another area where you can create capsules. This is blowing my mind again, what is up, Robyn, you're amazing.

Robyn: We could do another food one or we could do an exercise one.

Jen: Exercise one, yes.

Robyn: Yeah. I think again for me it's like deciding ahead of time what, why, when and how. What kind of exercise and movement does my body

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want this month? Because I could spend a lot of time even deciding between – there's eight million types of streaming exercises online.

Jen: That's true.

Robyn: It's like this month am I really going to be most likely wanting to do Pilates, yoga, running, walking, just honing in on one or maybe two. And then making some decisions about how long and how frequent, so back to that beginning of our conversation, what's realistic this week or this month? If I'm going to do Pilates, how many days per week is sort of my general goal and for how long am I going to do it? I don't necessarily assign it a time of day because I have, for me that just is an exercise in frustration.

But I do try to like, for me it's before math because I have to be available when math is going on. But that's a decision template because now I'm like I have held some of the variables still. So then when I do have a moment to move my body I'm not and where is this workout coming from? And I just decide all those things at once. And then when I have a moment, maybe 10 to 20 minutes I'm not like, well, am I doing Peloton today? Wait, I was going to find something on YouTube. But by the time I have done that I have lost my 20 minutes to work out.

So it's just like boom, I now have a plan. I know what I'm doing, when, what, how, how long. And then when I have 20 minutes I don't have to think about it.

Jen: Oh my gosh, this is cool. You could do capsules for your toys, for my spouse's tool bench. I had a dream about this, the books that you have. Wow, this is big.

Robyn: Yes. So a book is a great thing too. I personally have found with kids that doing capsules does work well because if you take a bunch of their toys out and you just leave a few they play with those. Kids have

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decision fatigue too. And you'll notice that in your playroom, the more stuff they have they won't play with any of it. And they'll tell you they're bored. How are you bored?

If you take out the options and leave them three they'll play with what they have and then you can rotate it, just take a bin, put everything in it, take some things out and then rotate what's in available and the rest goes in the bin. But if you're a person that says, "Oh no, I just love clothes." Then you don't need a decision template for that because that brings you joy. Or if you're a person that's like, "No, I need every book I've ever read." Cool, leave all your books.

But if you're getting overwhelmed by it, if you're noticing that mental energy drain, that's when a decision template might be useful.

Jen: Okay. So the decision template, if we want it, where do we get it? You said it's on your website?

Robyn: Well, so the decision template, the whole discussion that we've just had is in the book, it's a chapter. But then I do have a meal map and it has four recipes that are linked there free for the five nights of the week. So if you just wanted to see, I get it, you could do a taco, a fish taco one week then the next week a beef taco, and then the next week a fajita taco. Then you can see how that all looks with links to recipes.

Jen: Should we put that on the show notes?

Robyn: Yeah, it's [realfoodwholelife.com](http://realfoodwholelife.com). But I'll send you the exact link just because there's no decision fatigue. We just want you to be able to find it right away. I'll send you the link.

Jen: Yeah. The show notes are somewhere on [jenriday.com](http://jenriday.com), that's all you have to know. And this is episode number 260. So you'll know by going to

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 260: Gentle is the New Perfect (with Robyn Downs)

260, alright, cool. Well, Robyn, this is good, I'm totally going to grab your book. You and I, we've got some things synchronous. You guys are going to hear from Robyn again. I'm having her back. I already announced this now. Will you come back, Robyn?

Robyn: I would love to.

Jen: Good. Well, thank you so much for sharing all this wisdom, this research based wisdom and see you again someday.

Robyn: Thanks so much for having me.

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Wasn't that amazing? So many great tips, I love that Robyn takes this very practical doable approach to growth and achieving what you want and not in a striving way but in a how do I want to feel way. And I was thinking, Robyn's podcast is really cool but it's very different from mine. And I was trying to think, what is the difference? We both have a degree. She was all but dissertation for her PhD. We have so much in common, this love of academia and research.

And I decided I am really quite feelings focused. The Vibrant Happy Women podcast is a lot about feelings, and processing emotions. So I think there's a beautiful transsection between what Robyn is doing and what we're doing here with the Vibrant Happy Women podcast and I think it's cool. It's cool that I got to know her and that I got to feel her vibe and she got to feel mine.

So thinking for the future, I'm going to ask you some questions to remind you what we talked about in this episode. What is happening in your life right now that is not your A lane? Where is the middle ground? If there's something where you're doing nothing and you have an ideal of what you

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think should be happening, where is the middle ground in there? What is working for you? What do you need right now? Some of her great questions and last but not least maybe you need a carcation today. Well, I love this and we're going to continue this discussion further in the Vibrant Happy Women Club.

We have a new theme coming up in the club and that is emotional resilience. How do you handle the emotions of any situation? We talked in this episode with Robyn about finding the middle ground and being more gentle in our approach. Giving yourself that space to not have to be perfect also opens up space to process your feelings. Your feelings about your marriage, your kids, your body, your situation, your job, the thing you thought your life should be by now, the death of a loved one, or a miscarriage you might have had.

All of these things create an emotional imprint in our brains that it can affect our thinking as we move forward. Well, in the club in the next few weeks we're going to be processing letting go of any of those stuck emotions that don't serve us, and developing a deeper understanding of what does it mean to truly feel our emotions? What is a dreams dealing emotion? There are five emotions that if you spend a lot of time feeling them they tend to keep you stuck. Those emotions are shame, worry, self-pity, doubt and overwhelm.

And we don't want those so we're going to be working through those. I'll teach you how to let those go. How to spend less time there so you can shift back into the emotions of enthusiasm, excitement, motivation, determination, love, joy, peace, those emotions generate so many positive feelings that you will take an action because you're feeling good.

When you feel good you're going to take an action that gets you a result you want. Closeness with your spouse, more smiling, more laughing, more connection with your kids, less yelling, less overeating. It changes

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everything. So that's what we'll be doing in the club over the next month. Please join us if you'd like to make some progress in this area. We would love to have you. There are soul circles filled with beautiful, amazing, awesome women there to support you. I provide a video lesson every week and there's a workbook that can be delivered direct to your door.

You can do this work in a gentle, calm, but growth minded way that feels awesome. Alright my friends, it has been real fun, it's been real cool. And you've helped me feel real vibrant and happy and I hope I've done the same for you. Make it a great weekend. I'll see you again soon. And until then 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](http://jenriday.com/join).