

272: Taking Your Friendships to the Next Level (with Laura Tremaine)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 272. We're talking about taking your friendships to the next level. 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.

Well, hey there. Welcome back to Vibrant Happy Women. I'm so glad you're here listening. Maybe you're driving your car. Maybe you're on a walk. Maybe you're folding laundry, whatever it is I hope we can have some fun together for the next several minutes.

Well, I love to have reviews from you. And if you haven't left your review of this podcast yet, please do so today at jenriday.com/review. I love to hear what you think. So I wanted to share one of those reviews today. And this person wrote, 'Jen is absolutely an expert in her field but she's also in the trenches with you. I love listening to the podcast to continually be reminded of the ways I'm able to enrich my kids' lives when I choose to intentionally take care of my needs.'

Thank you for leaving that review. But what really strikes me is what you said and what we're all needing to remember. We are enriching our children's lives when we choose to take care of ourselves. I often think to myself, the way I enforce this boundary now will give my kids boundaries. If I have a good boundary now, my kids will have a good boundary later. If I take care of myself now, my kids will be able to take care of themselves later. As happy as I am now is as happy is as my kids are likely going to grow up to be. So thank you for that wisdom, Dee Pippin and it's so true.

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There's so many ways we can enrich our kids lives when we choose to intentionally take care of our own needs, great wisdom there.

Well, today I have a great guest for you and you're going to love this fun episode. Stay tuned until the end because this guest is going to do a joint Zoom book club kind of thing with me and it's going to be fun. So stay tuned until the end when we talk about that. And without further ado let's jump in.

Jen: Hey everyone. Laura Tremaine is my guest today and she's a Hollywood housewife, author, avid reader and beloved podcaster. She grew up in a small town in southern Oklahoma and moved to LA, site unseen when she was 22 years old. Years of film and television production followed and in 2007 she married the director she met on her first movie set. For six years Laura wrote regularly on her Hollywood Housewife blog which opened doors of friendship and opportunity all over the world.

And now Laura, you have a book called Share Your Stuff. I'll Go First: 10 Questions to Take Your Friendships to the Next Level. I think this is really an important topic because a lot of my listeners for this podcast definitely say they want to find likeminded friends, not just acquaintances but those heart centered connections. So I'm so glad you're here, welcome.

Laura: Thank you so much for having me. I do think that this is a big topic right now after a year of people feeling distant from their friends, even if they desired that kind of a group before this, now they really do. They really are reaching for connection.

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Jen: For sure. So for you personally how did you kind of become an expert of finding heart centered friends, finding those true connected people in your life?

Laura: Well, I grew up in Oklahoma in a really small town where it's hard to not be connected in a small town. So that has always really mattered to me. I went to college in Oklahoma at OU and then I moved to Los Angeles sort of looking for adventure. I wanted to work in the entertainment industry. And when I got to LA I just felt like I didn't know how to make friends. It felt like the girl friend code was so different in California.

But also I was realizing that in my childhood and in my early adulthood, friends had also just been handed to me, growing up in a small town where just everybody knows everybody. When I went to college I was in a lot of clubs, I did the sorority thing. I hadn't really had to work at making friends. And then suddenly in my 20s, where I worked a lot and I was in a big huge city, I didn't know how to do it. I didn't know how to reach out to people. I didn't know how to cultivate a friendship that wasn't based on already seeing one another throughout the week or whatever.

So I had many years of loneliness, then I got married and had a baby, more loneliness. I felt like I was at home without anybody who also had a baby. I wasn't working anymore so those friends that I had made were really feeling like they didn't have much in common with me. So I just was lonely basically. I had a lot of friends from my home town but they were all back in Oklahoma and other parts of the country. So I started this blog, I called it Hollywood Housewife at the time because mommy blogs were very popular then. And that was like a kitschy but literal name actually.

And I started sharing myself online. And that became the big magic piece of the puzzle for me, was sharing myself online, this was back in 2010 through 2013 let's say. And that made a huge difference in my life. After

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years of loneliness, not really being able to make it work with people that I met up for coffee or whatever in LA, it was the sharing piece on the internet that kind of allowed me to find likeminded people or the types of people who also wanted to have a deep connection in our friendship.

And not all those people were local to me by the way. I had to really figure it out in an online space before I was able to translate it to my real life. But I did. So just through my blogging years, social media and then starting a podcast myself and using my voice and just sharing myself constantly over in a time, I realized how many other women my age were struggling with very similar thoughts.

They didn't feel like they had deep friendships but they were also as we got older sharing themselves less and less instead of sharing themselves more in order to make connections. People were feeling like they had to share less because of their kids, or their spouse, or their careers, or because we've been taught that sharing ourselves online is tacky, and attention seeking. It's narcissistic to share yourself.

So a lot of women as they get older they don't. And then what happens is their loneliness just increases tenfold. And they look up and they're in their late 30s, 40s, 50s, they look up and they're like, "Nobody knows me. I don't feel known or seen." And it's just because we sort of whitewash ourselves as we get older. And I wanted to just not do that. I wanted to encourage people to share and give them the questions and the tools to share themselves with my deep belief, my anecdotal belief that that will attract relationships in your life that are very fulfilling.

Jen: So you wrote these 10 questions on your blog first?

Laura: No.

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Jen: They're right in your book then?

Laura: They're in the book. Those questions are for the first time in the book. And then my answers to them or most of my personal essays that are answering the questions from my point of view are things I have never shared online for years and years, even with all the sharing that I have done. So the questions and the stories are really original to the book. But I've been doing similar questions on my own podcast every week, 10 Things to Tell You, and doing it on social media. I love a social media challenge.

Jen: Wow. So okay, 10 Things to Tell You, what kinds of things would you be sharing? How vulnerable are we talking here?

Laura: Well, I mix it up because I think that all of my friends, men, women, everyone, we have a lot of layers to us and sometimes we want to talk about our past trauma and sometimes we want to talk about our favorite lipstick. I really believe that. And I think that you can feel a spark of connection with someone on all of those layers. You don't really know what is going to fire someone up to be like, "I'm really passionate about that too", or, "That happened to me also", or whatever.

And so on the show, on my show I ask a question every week and it's everything. I like to talk about what people are reading. I like to talk about what people are resonating with on the internet. I like to talk about beauty products. I like to talk about all of those things. And my hope is that people, and I know people do this, who listen to the show. They take the question every week and they have text threads with their girl friends. They use the Marco Polo app; everybody goes around and answers the question.

It kind of gives everyone a conversation starter, instead of feeling like the random one. You don't want to feel random sometimes and text your mom

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friends or whatever and be like, “So everyone let’s talk about our broken places.” I mean that would be super...

Jen: That sounds like me. I’m always wanting to go deep, I hear you. People really want to know my lipstick color, really?

Laura: Absolutely, yes. They will be like, “That looks amazing on you.” And then it’s just sort of a touch point.

Jen: Yeah. I’m going to learn a lot from this. So what’s the first question you share in the book? And then you answer it for yourself I assume?

Laura: So the first question in the book is who are you? And it’s funny because my publisher was like, “Shouldn’t that be the last question? Can you kind of go through all these questions and then you’ve sort of determined who you are?” But when I’m asking people, “Who are you”, I’m not always going to the deepest place, like who you are on a soul level?

I really want people to answer it like what’s the first thing that comes to mind when you’re asked who are you? Is it that you’re a mother? Is it that you’re a southerner, an American? Is it that you’re a career person, you’re a writer, you’re an artist? What comes to mind for you first. And it’s often very telling how people answer this question because you can learn a lot from them about what they prioritize. If someone says, “Who are you?” And I know we don’t ask that question of people very often in social gatherings.

But if someone is going to answer it and they only answer about their job let’s say, their career that they’re very proud, that they want to be known for. And then you find out further into friendship that they’re a parent. And it’s interesting that they downplayed that aspect or the opposite which I’ve also seen is true is people really play up their parenthood, or their relationship status, that they’re married or whatever. And then you find out

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later that they have this stellar career. Well, why didn't they lead with that? And I don't think that there's a right or wrong here.

But I do think that whatever comes to your mind first of who am I, and then also if you were to ask this question to a friend, or a partner, anything, what they say, how they answer it is really telling. They might emphasize something that you didn't know was that important to them. Or they might de-emphasize something that's really important to you. So I just think it's a super interesting question and it does not have to be so deep.

I wanted to start with that in the book because I wanted us to just be like but just think about who we are and how we want to be seen. How we want to answer this question before we go to kind of the deeper layers.

Jen: Wow.

Laura: Yeah. To answer the question for me I talk a lot in the book about my anxiety. I'm an anxious person, that's the first thing that I say in the book.

Jen: Interesting.

Laura: I have had anxiety my whole life. And as a little girl I would pull clumps of my hair out till I had bald spots. And even now as a 41 year old woman, when someone says, "Who are you", in my mind I'm that little girl with bald spots. And so I live with that. I'm an anxious person. And then I also write in that same chapter that I'm an Oklahoman who lives in California. Is a huge part of my identity that I grew up in a small town in Oklahoma but then I have chosen for my life to live in Los Angeles, I choose that.

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And those are huge parts of my personality. I'm also a daughter and a mother, and I write those things. But I just think when we ask ourselves who we are again we don't have to go to the deepest soul searching journal entry of our life. Just who are you, how would you introduce yourself? And it can be so interesting.

Jen: When you asked that question I went a totally different way. So you're going with kind of a character trait or a struggle and where you've lived. My brain didn't go to any of that stuff. I could have said mom, I am a coach. My brain went to a few character traits. So I don't know what this says about me but mine, I wrote them down right away when you asked it, fun, smart, confident, strong. I've done a lot of work around my identity. But literally those came to mind. So I'm like, does that mean I'm arrogant? What does this tell us?

Laura: No, I love that. I think that it means that you're strong, that you see yourself and want to position yourself from a place of strength, like a rooted person, that's what I hear when you say that. But I also started with an anxiety trait. I did say I am anxious in the same way that you said you are confident. I also think I am confident too which is funny for people who don't know a lot about mental health, that they don't understand that those can both be true. I'm very anxious and I'm also very confident.

Jen: It's such a great question. I could talk to you all day I already know. I love deep questions. Okay, well, what's the second question? Because this is a lot of fun and everyone listening, be answering these for yourself because this is kind of like a conversation.

Laura: The second question is who was there?

Jen: Oh my gosh. Where?

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Laura: Well, I answer this question three different ways because this question, I did not know this until I published the book and now I've been talking to readers for a few months and realized how much this question touches people. Because you can mean all kinds of things, you can answer this as like a best friend who's been there through all the stages of your life. You could answer this question from an acquaintance.

I write in the book about someone that I barely, barely knew, but I had just moved to LA when 9/11 happened and I didn't have a TV. And he let me sit on his couch all day and watch the coverage of 9/11 and we didn't talk ever after. And so that memory of that big enormous event in American and in my life is tied to borderline of stranger. And sometimes we can have these moments of if you're on the subway and something huge happens, or you get a phone call at work and there's a coworker who happens to be standing there when you get the biggest news of your life.

Sometimes when we're answering who was there, it's a very random person. But then it can also be like I said, really deep and important friendships. Maybe you think of a friend who was there in a really important time in your life and that person is no longer in your life for whatever reason. And so you might want to explore that, just say it out loud, this person was really there for me and now they're not.

When I was talking about this chapter in particular with some readers in a book club I was doing. It's funny because I actually wrote this chapter from a place of who was there, I answered it pretty literally. And a lot of people took this question, their mind immediately first thing inversed the question and thought who was not there because they had a parent who was not there for them, or a spouse, or something.

And sometimes I just am learning that people are going to answer these questions even if you ask them from a positive place, it's such a pain point

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for them, that they can't help but for it to bring up an absence, which is fine and that's how you're going to answer that question. But it's just also kind of a place to give kind of credit to people. Credit where credit is due, this person was there or isn't this an interesting story that a stranger helped me after a car accident? I don't know. There's a million ways you could answer this. But who was there, that's question number two.

Jen: That's so good. I'll tell you what I wrote down right away. I was surprised. I had a quick emotional response. I have had three home births, and I had midwives present and I thought of them, the midwives were there. There was this theme of being cared for. They told my husband, "She gets to stay in bed for two weeks. You better take care of everything else." And he took that very seriously. I just felt so incredibly nurtured unlike any other time in my life. And then of course I thought about my best friend.

And then I thought, well, gosh, who's not there, I wasn't thinking about my spouse or my kids. I don't know what that says about me but I'm glad I did feel that love and support from a few memories there, that's cool.

Laura: Yeah, that's beautiful.

Jen: Yeah. Wow, these are fun, this would be really great for a book club I'm guessing, like you were doing with it.

Laura: Yeah, I did a book club with it as part of my book launch. And then a bunch of people, a lot of people have chosen this book as their book club selection. And so I don't know. In the past two weeks I've popped in on 10, 12, I visited virtually these book clubs of their own and that's super fun too. It's so nice to see people use the book as a book club book because the questions are built in. You don't have to come up with a discussion question.

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Jen: Yeah. So Laura, hearing you talk, I have just right now in this moment decided that we are going to talk about your book in the Vibrant Happy Women Club throughout June, that's when this is airing. And would you like to come join us for a quick little book club one night, one evening?

Laura: I would love to. This has become one of my favorite things to do now that the book is out and into the world is join in on these book clubs and see how people are responding to the book. See which questions resonated with them. It's super fun. I would love to join with the Vibrant Happy Women.

Jen: Okay. So we will be doing this in the Vibrant Happy Women Club, obviously you'll need to join us to be a part of it. And the date and time will be announced there in the club. Thank you Laura, I'm so excited about this.

Laura: Yeah, so fun.

Jen: Let's hear one more question from the book, any one that you want.

Laura: A chapter that people have really loved, I'll go with that one. It is chapter number nine and the question is, where are your magical moments? And in this chapter what I'm asking is for you to share the things that have happened in your life that seem like unexplained, like ESP moments, or ghost moments, or just winks from God. However you view something that seems magical and just not of this world that maybe you don't share it very often because you're afraid if you share it it'll make it less magical.

Or you're afraid if you share it that people won't believe you, that this thing actually happened. And I want people to be able to share their magic moments, have a place, a reason, an excuse to share their magical moments because like I said, a lot of times people don't. But also I am

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super inspired by other people's magical moments. It doesn't matter to me, I don't need to get facts on the ground of if it exactly happened the way this person experienced it.

Hearing them share what was magic to them, something very special, it's really inspiring. It makes you think of your own. It makes you see them differently. See what they're holding as this special time. And also I just think these days hearing about magical moments in a world with a lot of hard news and stuff like that. It's a feel good moment of connection. And a lot of people resonated with the various magical moments that I share, a little bit long to share in this conversation because they're kind of complicated.

But it's been really beautiful to hear readers share their own magical moments with me and I just love it.

Jen: I just have one that comes to mind. I saw a humongous meteorite enter the atmosphere right above our neighbor's barn. And I was the only one that saw it. It was really cool.

Laura: That is really cool.

Jen: I made sure to wish on it and not tell anyone just in case.

Laura: I love that. It doesn't have to have a lot of meaning. It doesn't have to be like you didn't save the world with your magical moment or whatever. It can just be I got to see this beautiful thing and it really touched me. That's so magical.

Jen: Exactly. This is neat. Are you an extravert, Laura?

Laura: I'm not. I'm a super, super introvert.

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Jen: Wow, I wouldn't have guessed that. So how do you pull this off or do you just have to go recollect yourself afterwards and reintegrate with yourself?

Laura: Yeah, just need a lot of recovery time all the time. I have to build in a lot of recovery or transition time. And then during the pandemic where I have two little kids, and a husband, and a dog, and we were all at home in lockdown in Los Angeles for 11 plus months. It's a lot on the introverts of the world, it was a lot, but it's okay, we did it. We did a lot of breathing.

Jen: So are the roaring 20s coming, what do you predict?

Laura: I just read a great article about that yesterday. It's so funny you say that. I don't know. Maybe they are. This will be so interesting to watch. I feel like we have been living in a time in history that will be studied for decades to come, even prior to the pandemic I thought that. The last four or five years and we're still in the middle of it. We are, yeah, we are part of history. I want people to be writing stuff down.

That's another part of this question is I want people to write stuff down. It doesn't have to be for public consumption, although I really love people documenting the pandemic, or the election, or their own things on social media. But if that's not their jam, to write it down in a journal because I don't know that historians are going to get this exactly right. I am much more interested in what the average person, what their experience was like.

Jen: Oh my gosh, isn't that the truth? How often do historians care about just the stay at home mom perspective during the pandemic for example?

Laura: Exactly. But that is so interesting. If you can go back and read a book about the great depression, or you could go back and read your

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great-grandmother's letters during the great depression which would you rather read? You'd rather read her account of what it was like in her town, in her kitchen. That's why I want women to be writing this stuff down. You don't have to be a good writer. You don't have to be even that consistent about it. Just make a bullet list every now and again about what's happening, what it feels like in your home and in your life.

Jen: Yeah, totally. And there's so many beautiful journals out there, how could you not? Just go get one and write a few things, keep it in your bathroom if you have to with a pen. I love this. Alright, well, Laura, where can people follow you? I think they're going to want to. And you have an awesome podcast as well, tell us all the things.

Laura: I do have a weekly podcast called 10 Things to Tell You, the number 10, things to tell you. And that's the social media channels, the podcast is that. My favorite personal place to be is Instagram where I am [laura.tremaine](#). But you can find all of this, if you just want to remember [lauratremaine.com](#) has links to the show, and my book, and my social media channels.

Jen: Cool, thank you. Everyone get the book, Share Your Stuff. I'll Go First. We will definitely be talking about it in the club, in June, I can't wait. Laura's going to be a guest. I will share the date for that later. And Laura, thank you so much for being on the show.

Laura: This was so fun, thanks for having me.

I told you, you would love Laura. I loved her energy. And after we turned off the recording, I said, "Laura, if I ever move to California we're going to be best friends." I had so much fun. So definitely plan on joining us in the

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Vibrant Happy Women Club for this special Zoom book club where Laura and I will lead you through the conversation of discussing these 10 questions from Laura's book, Share your Stuff. I'll Go First. It's a little Vibrant Happy Women Club book club.

As a member of the club you'll not only get access to this awesome book club with Laura that's happening over Zoom, but you'll get access to the Vibrant Happy Women Club workbook. And then in June we are talking about heart centered parenting. How do you be that parent who is patient, and loving, and upbeat, and able to hold space for your kids in a conscious, present, connected way? Essentially being the mom we all wish we had had.

Well, that is the goal, that's what we're going to be talking about, plus there are guided meditations, access to my award winning Time Mastery for Women program and so much more. The club is the place to be if you want to experience more of those heart centered connections that help you to go deep and form these friendships.

And again, of course in June we'll be doing Share Your Stuff. I'll Go First, a Vibrant Happy Women Club book club, a night with Laura Tremaine. I can't wait. It's going to be amazing. Join us at jenriday.com/club. Alright, my friends, I will be back again next week. Until then may you make this day and week very vibrant and happy. 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.