

285: When Life Feels Hard



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With Your Host

Jen Riday

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Hi, my friends. I'm Dr. Jen Riday. And you're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. I'm talking about digging deep and getting gritty when life feels hard. 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.

My friends, it's August, nearly the end of summer in the northern hemisphere. And wherever you are in the world I'm guessing you might be on your last nerve, especially if you've been around your kids, you've had a little bit too much togetherness. You've handled the uncertainty of the pandemic, the ups and downs, the frustrations, all the things. I am with you. I lived with all six of my kids, ages seven to 20 over the past four months. And I've been feeling pretty done D-O-N-E period. The fighting, the mess, the chaos, the confusion, the uncertainty.

And why was I living with all six of my kids? Well, my oldest moved home to save money because he wanted to move to California. He's been planning this for a while. He thinks it'll be a better location, a sunnier place to live. And it will help him with his depression. A smart move, I support him. Well, the 18 year old decided to go along. He just graduated in June and he stayed here because why go get an apartment? So, I had all six kids here.

And last week or about 10 days ago they packed up my oldest son's Honda Fit with their bare minimum possessions and they drove away. No jobs planned, no place to live planned, just being the free open spirits that they are. Fine, all fine and good. Now, I was nervous because my oldest has had a lot of car accidents, like we're talking eight I think. I might have lost count. And he was driving. But they're adults, I can handle my nervousness, they drove away.

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Now, a day later I'm thinking they're somewhere between Wisconsin and California. Imagining, okay, in a few days they're going to be there. They're going to find a place to live on Craigslist, they'll find jobs, they can start their lives. Oh no, I get a call and they say, "Hey, mum, we're in New Orleans." I'm thinking what? "I thought you were driving straight to California. You guys don't have enough money for this road trip. What are you doing?" And then I remembered, yeah, they're adults, fine.

"Well, mom, we're just taking a road trip. We thought we'd see the sites on the way to California. Who wants to drive across Nebraska?" Okay, they have a point. Sorry, Nebraskans, sorry, Natalie, I see you there. Anyway, two days later, two more days I get another call. Their voices sound serious.

They're on speakerphone and I hear this, "Hey mom, we're in Austin. We're going to tell you something. Before we tell you, just be happy we're at least telling you. Also, you're going to be getting some paperwork in the mail so we had to tell you. We thought you'd rather hear it from us than get something in the mail and wonder what it is. So just be happy we're telling you. Also, we're going to pay for the lawyer..." I can't say more because it's not my story to tell. But needless to say, tears, worry, frustration, frustration, frustration. Asking myself where did I go wrong?

Watching more Netflix than usual, feeling so sad and so short tempered, all the feelings. I've been wishing my husband could handle this. He can't due to his anxiety. So, I've got to do my strong momma bear thing and letting them be adults. Well, after a multiday pity party I came back around and remembered some important action steps that have always helped me and that I think might help you if you've been feeling defeated or overwhelmed in any way.

Here we go. Number one, start your day with positivity. Perhaps you wake-up and decide hey, thank you God for another day to do what I love. Or

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thank you universe for this beautiful blue sky. Start your day with something that primes the pumps with positivity, that gives you that positive thought, which gives you a positive feeling, and some dopamine. Start your day with those positive thoughts. You could like many days I used to do in the past, you could wake-up and say, “Oh, not another day.”

Or you could wake-up and be thankful for another day to do what you love because that’s always on the table, isn’t it?

Number two, spend five minutes intentionally thinking only positive thoughts. Studies are clear when you think positive thoughts your brain releases dopamine and you feel better. Gratitude journaling, thoughts of gratitude are just as powerful for your mood as an antidepressant in many studies. So, without thinking I’ll be grateful, I’m grateful for three things. I want to challenge you to spend five minutes, set a timer and be grateful and think only positive thoughts for five minutes. Bonus, if you make this into a gratitude journal but you don’t have to.

You can stand in the shower every day or when you’re brushing your teeth, and doing your make-up, and train yourself to think five minutes of straight positive thoughts. It will do wonders for you.

Number three, be totally present with your breath for one to two minutes. A lot of our mood issues stem from thinking too much about the past, what went wrong, what should have been, what could have been, or worrying too much about the future. What might happen, what could happen, oh no, I’m so worried. When you train yourself to stay in the exact present moment for one or two minutes a day your brain gets better at it. It’s like lifting weights.

If you did a wall sit or a plank for one to two minutes every day, you better believe you would get stronger. And the same thing happens when you practice one to two minutes of total presence and present moment mindfulness. This is hard, just stare at the table you might be sitting at or

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the steering wheel you're driving at. Well, stare at the road actually. If you're on a walk just notice what's around you, totally present. Not letting any past or future thoughts even come into your mind.

When I get home I'm going to do the laundry, I'm going to do the dishes. Push it away. I'm looking at a pine tree. I am seeing all the pine cones on this pine tree. Look at the rain and the dew dripping off that pine tree, one to two minutes a day.

Okay, number four, move yourself up the energy scale through moving your body. What does that mean? The energy scale. We have low vibe emotions. We have high vibe emotions. The low vibe emotions are shame, sadness, anger. High vibe emotions, excitement, love, joy, peace, happiness. And it's a scale. And we can actually move ourselves from low vibe to high vibe, not just through thinking the positive thoughts and being present and mindful like I talked about but through moving your body. So, turn on a tune, crank the music and dance.

Or stand in the mirror and pull your shoulders back and lift your sternum and chin and look in the mirror and say you love yourself. Or go walk or change your posture, or your movement. Anything you do can help. When you're depressed, notice how you move your body. You'll tend to contract, move toward a fetal position if you're lying down, you'll slouch, your arm swings are small. And notice how your body moves when it's happy. Your shoulders move back, your chin is up, your voice gets louder, your arms swing bigger. Every movement is just more grandiose.

Well, you can reverse this process and just start moving your body as if you're already happy, already high vibe and your mood will follow your physiology. It is powerful. So, number four, move yourself up the energy scale by moving your body.

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Number five, write down what you do want. Many of us are so focused on what we don't want, trying to avoid pain, that we forget about there's this whole other side of the coin, what do we want? And what would feel pleasurable? Pain versus pleasure. And this is important to distinguish because law of attraction teaches that whatever we focus on, increases. So, if you're focused on all the things you don't want, I don't want to be fat, I don't want my kids to have legal troubles, or to be homeless or jobless. I don't want a tornado to hit my house. I don't want, whatever.

You might attract more of that negativity. And scientifically speaking, your brain will focus on what you tell it to look for. This is called the reticular activating system, the RAS. If you're telling your brain, I don't want this, I don't want this, I don't want this, your brain is going to look for those things that you don't want. And you're going to become hyper focused on things that generally can feel negative.

In contrast, I want you to write down the things you do want such as I want a new Honda Odyssey. I love my minivan. I want a new Peloton tread, that's a Peloton treadmill. We can't even wait. I want to have a new walking buddy or to have more walks each week with my current walking buddy. You've got the idea. When you focus on what you do want, your brain, that reticular activating system is trained to see all the things that are already aligned with what you do want. And hence you're going to generate more positive feelings.

Here's how I recommend writing them down. We know the importance of gratitude journaling. So, you start this piece of paper with one gratitude for something you already have and word it in the present tense. Would sound like this, I am so grateful that my family is healthy. That is so true. When I write it down I feel gratitude, totally grateful. Then for number two on the list, write down something that you don't have yet as if you already have it in the present tense, as if you're already feeling grateful for it.

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In fact, if you do this right you will generate gratitude that for law of attraction purposes will help you to attract that thing into your life because the feelings we generate are magnetic and attract more of the same. So, for number two you might write, I am so grateful to have a Peloton treadmill, I love it. And feel the gratitude as if it's already there. Then alternating back and forth between things you already have and things you want. Your focus then is completely on gratitude, what's going well in your life and what you want, all generating that gratitude and attracting more of that to you. So, try that out.

Number six, this is important. You need to match who you want to be with who you are. So, at home do your actions with your kids and spouse, match the person you present to the rest of the world. Do you serve and love others in a way that is consistent and authentic with the person you want to be? If not, don't beat yourself up but just keep working on aligning who you actually are and who you want to be. The more you focus on who you want to be, making sure your actions match, the more that alignment will happen. And that's very important. Serve others, love others really is what it boils down to.

Then number seven, this one's easy and fun. End your day with a powerful question, what is the best thing that happened to me today? Again, you're training your brain all day long and then at the end of the day to see all the things that are amazing. The more you train your brain the more it will see it. It's just computer software. It will see what you tell it to see. So, ending your day with that question, what is the best thing that happened to me today is powerful.

Okay, so let me recap. Start your day with positivity. Spend five minutes intentionally thinking only positive thoughts. Be totally present with your breath for one to two minutes. Move yourself up the energy scale through moving your body. Number five, decide what you want then write it down, perhaps alternating it with things you already have in the present tense.

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Number six, match who you want to be with who you are, serve and love others. And number seven, end each day with the powerful question, what is the best thing that happened to me today?

Now, I have a bonus for you as well. And that bonus is this. Now as the kids head back to school and you contemplate a little more space in your life, take a big leap in the right direction and do something for you. We're not talking about a little thing like a shopping spree or a Manny petty. I'm talking about a big thing. What is a big leap that you could take, trying something you've always wanted to do, getting out of your comfort zone, doing something that will change the way you think and experience your life?

I'm going to challenge you to take that big leap and do something for you. And that is the bonus tip today.

Now, I'd like to recommend something big and amazing that you could do just for you. This September we begin our next round of the Vibrant Happy life coaching certification. And I want to challenge you to enroll, to do that big thing that's just for you. This is where the rubber meets the road and you can train your brain to have empowered, positive, high vibe thoughts and feelings. As a student you will meet weekly with a class of 10 students. And learn how to think, and feel, and experience your life in a different way, in a high vibe and empowered way.

You'll learn not only how to do that for yourself but how to help your spouse, your kids, your friends, your loved ones slowly shift how they think and experience their lives as well. The whole shift in the end is from disempowerment to deep, deep empowerment, knowing you get to think, and feel, and experience life exactly how you want, even when your kids, or your spouse, or your mother-in law aren't doing what you think they should do. Or when life feels tricky or hard.

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This is the human condition and the human experience. There will be 50/50 good and bad, hard and easy, pleasure and pain. And that's okay. The question is how are you going to go forward through that uncertainty, through the chaos, through the overwhelm? How are you going to think about it? How are you going to feel about it? What results will you get in terms of your health, your income, your relationships, all the things that are important to you? You have the power to have exactly what you want, to feel exactly what you want in any moment.

A long time ago I believed a thought that I'm going to be happy no matter what. And I went about trying to change my circumstances, to get my kids to change and my spouse to change, and to change how I exercised and when I exercised. And if I changed enough things then I would be happy. But nothing could be further from the truth. We get to be happy right now by choosing happiness. So, the new phrase becomes I am choosing happiness right now no matter what.

Do you believe that thought that you can be happy right now, even if your kids are somewhere between Wisconsin and California and needing to hire a lawyer? Even if your spouse did that horrible thing or your mother-in-law said that thing, or the finances look iffy, or the pandemic leads to uncertainty, or world events leave you heartbroken. Can you shift your emotions not in a toxic positivity way of course? We need to feel our emotions. But to have the tools, and the skills, and the knowhow to understand, hey, I can choose happiness right now no matter what.

I encourage you to take that bonus step and do something big, take a leap just for you and enroll in the Vibrant Happy Women life coaching certification, not only to change the way you think and experience your life, but to form some lifelong friendships with your amazing classmates and me. And to start the next level, the next step, the next chapter of your life, a chapter that feels more empowering, where you're doing something for

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you, where you're in charge of your results. And you are. It doesn't matter what anyone else is doing. This is your chapter.

We have four videos where you can learn more about the coaching certification. You can watch them and enroll at jenriday.com/coaching, jenriday.com/coaching. My friends, believe this, you deserve to feel amazing. You deserve every good thing and it's all there for the taking if you just learn how to align your thoughts, your feelings, your actions and your results. You've got this. You've got this.

Now, let me recap our seven steps and our bonus tip. Number one, start your day with positivity. Number two, spend five minutes intentionally thinking only positive thoughts. Number three, be totally present with your breath for one to two minutes. Number four, move yourself up the energy scale through moving your body. Number five, decide what you want then write it down alternating it with what you already have in the present tense. Number six, match who you want to be with who you are. Remember love and service.

And number seven, end your day with the powerful question, what is the best thing that happened to me today? And finally, the bonus, and this one I feel is important to do soon. Take a big leap in the right direction, do something huge out of your comfort zone that is just for you so you can start your next chapter of doing what you want to do and being who you want to be and living life on your terms.

My friends, I love you, you've got this. Even if you're struggling just come back and listen to this episode again and again. Remember the seven steps plus the bonus. Take that leap. You've got this. I'll see you again next time. Until then make it a vibrant and happy week. Take care.

If you enjoy this podcast, you have to check out the Vibrant Happy Women Club. It's my monthly group coaching program where we take all this

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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.