

307: Aligning Your Career with Your Values (with Ashley Stahl)



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With Your Host

Jen Riday

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. On this episode I'll be talking with an amazing friend about how to make sure your career aligns with your skills and who you really are. 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, friends, how are you? Welcome back. I hope you are doing well in this first quarter of 2022. And I have a great guest today. We'll be talking about career choices. How do you know if you're in the right career? What do you do if you feel dissatisfied, or if you are in a career you love, how do you balance it? Are you on the right path? Are there tweaks you need to make? We'll be talking about all of that and more.

Now, before we dive in I want to share our review of the week from Arlee Kay, She wrote, "This podcast is a breath of fresh air, listening to Jen and her top notch roster of guests is like chatting around the kitchen table with my family. Their warmth and positivity is much appreciated." Hey, Arlee, thank you. I feel like we're around the kitchen table. In fact, I feel like you're all in my home in my living room with its pretty buttery yellow walls that have smears from my kids on them. We're all sitting there on my overstuffed couches having a chat.

I would love nothing more in the world and thank goodness for the Vibrant Happy Women retreat and the Vibrant Happy Women live event where I get to see you all in person and try to recreate that book club and friendship circle vibe. I love all of you for being here and listening. So, thank you Arlee

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Kay, for that review. If you haven't left a review yet, please give me the gift, do me the favor of leaving one at jenriday.com/review.

So, my guest today used to be a spy. Is that not cool? Okay, she was really just on the path to being a spy, but it does sound really cool. She was a counterterrorism professional. Ashley Stahl is amazing. You're going to hear her story. She is now a career coach and author of the bestselling book, *You Turn: Get Unstuck, Discover Your Direction, Design Your Dream Career*. Ashley is one smart cookie.

By the time the interview was over she had shared so many amazing facts. I turned off the camera and the recording and I said, "Ashley, do you have a photographic memory?" And she said, "Yes." So, she is one smart cookie and I loved everything she shared. So, whether you work or not, Ashley really does a good job of gearing this to any woman. We all kind of have things we can do. We have talents and gifts. We have a version of ourselves that is authentic, and we want to make sure the way we're using our time aligns with that authentic, true, core version of ourselves.

And she shares a really cool idea that there is no one purpose or one path, things can change just like Ashley was on the path to be a spy, now she is a career coach and I think that is so cool. You will love this interview. Let's go ahead and jump in.

Jen: Hey, everyone, I'm here with Ashley Stahl who is an expert on helping women and people kind of redefine what they want to do with their lives, changing careers. Do we need to change careers? Do we want to? What's our purpose? What are our values? How do you make that decision? So, Ashley, I am super excited to talk about this topic because so many of my

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listeners say that they get into their 40s, their kids get into school, or they begin to empty nest.

And they start to question, what's my big girl job going to be? What's next for me? Because people live longer and longer, we have a whole second half of life. How would you help people begin to answer that question?

Ashley: So many people have come to me over the years saying, "I need clarity." And what they're missing a lot of the time is that it's not clarity that you need. It's connecting to yourself first and foremost because as women we've been so domesticated. We've been taught what good looks like, what not so good looks like and how to be. And so more often than not the issue is not that we are not choosing what we're feeling we should do. The issue is that we are not connected to ourselves enough to even attune to what we want.

And that starts at such a young age. I mean even for me growing up I remember being told about such a limited scope of careers, veterinarian, a lawyer, a teacher, a firefighter. So, I didn't really know what I didn't know about what was out there. And I kind of bought into the belief that I should take a certain path, be a lawyer or whatever have you. And just didn't really know my options. And so along the way I think we kind of close our eyes to what is possible, and we stay focused on a path because having a plan makes us feel safe, and makes us feel grounded.

And we get disconnected from ourselves after listening to all the voices and all of the noise. So, anyone listening to the show right now that wants clarity I would say the first step is to grab a piece of paper and a pen and say to yourself, where do I go or who do I talk to that makes me feel me? What do I do that makes me feel myself? So, in my case, I come from California, I live in New York City.

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The beach, the ocean, it always does something for me. It's so grounding. And so even in New York if I go over to Brooklyn there's a little tiny beach in Dumbo. So sometimes I'll be putting my feet in the water and just feeling it. And that brings me back to me. I take hip hop dance classes. There's something about the music that brings me back to me. And I have a lot of really beautiful girl friends inside and out. But I will say there's a few in particular that after I talk to them it's like wow, I feel so myself.

And so, when I'm feeling off course, when I'm feeling disconnected and when I don't have answers instead of saying, "I need to come up with an answer," I just think, I need to connect. I need to get back to myself. And I think that's what really making a U-turn and the concept of my book, and my podcast, and my work is really all about.

Jen: So, coming back to yourself. And I can imagine there's someone listening, probably a lot of women listening who say, "But I don't know who I am, I lost myself. Mothering kind of took that from me or I allowed it to be taken from me." How do you come back to yourself?

Ashley: You're not ever really stuck, it's just your thinking that's stuck. So, people will say they lost their self, but you're not really ever lost, you just stopped accessing yourself. You just stopped choosing to do that and it's not a natural thing for you to do anymore. So just like a muscle, you need to build that. And here's the thing, I mean feeling good feels good. So, it's kind of easy to notice, if you look at yourself in the mirror and say, "When was the last time I felt really good? When was the last time I felt really myself?"

And just start to take notice if you can't make that list, what are those things in your life that bring that out for you? And if you do feel like you've lost yourself, ask yourself the question. And that's why I love journaling. There's

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so much wisdom that can fly out of my fingertips that I didn't even know was in my subconscious mind. So, I love to open up my journal every morning with my cup of coffee. And I give myself five minutes.

And I have had clients who are mothers, and they are really back-to-back all day. And they have even found the value of waking up 20 minutes before their kids, their whole house, grabbing their journal, grabbing their coffee, having their moment to themselves. Because it's tough to feel like yourself when you're on go all day for everyone but you. So even giving themselves that 20 minutes, I've had so many clients tell me that they were just 20 minutes away from themselves every morning.

So, I have told them, write at the top of your journal what do I need today? What would make me happy today? And if maybe you're wondering something in your life, why isn't this working? It's really powerful to just be able to attune to your subconscious. I think that so many of us just get wired to forget that we are little kids inside. We all have these needs. And it's so important to give yourself that space to be able to do that. And it's interesting because people expect me, and I have a lot of career tips, I write about them in my book and share them in my podcast.

But unless you feel like yourself it's really tough to start to think, well, what are your gifts? And where are you talented? And what jobs are best for you or what business is best for you?

Jen: Yeah. Wow, that's huge. After the pandemic I feel like a lot of people don't feel like themselves. And it's a funny thing. I recently began playing pickleball with friends on a whim. And by extension they started playing a lot of boardgames. I had no idea something was missing in my life. But there is this competitive activity brings out a piece of me that has been lost or buried for decades. And I didn't even know she was missing. So, is there

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any truth to the idea that you should just try different things and see how it feels?

Ashley: Yeah. So, this is really powerful what you're sharing because what we are doing to people in their career is pretty much the equivalent of if our mom on our first day at preschool said to us, or our caretaker, "The first person you have a crush on, you're going to marry them, and you'd better get it right." That's what we're doing in our careers. So, I think it's really important to realize that we are moving, breathing, shifting organisms. And I surround myself with people who give me a permission slip to be as such because that is what it means to be human.

We are shutting ourselves, every few months our physical body on a cellular level is different every few months and so are we, so is our thinking. With every new belief we have about the world, an old way of seeing things is kind of dying. And we have these new versions of ourself. And so, I think being able to experiment is the key. And seeing your career through an experimental lens is the key to having a fulfilling career. And that's why we see so many people who are fulfilled and self-expressed who have been very much not linear in their career.

For me I see my career as a playground and as an experiment. And when people hold on so tightly to their vision, that they're not loose enough to be nimble and allow things to shift, they're not making themselves available to the truth of their path. And so, I've had so many people come in and they'll say, "I have a job offer and it's in Berlin, and I live in San Francisco. And should I take it, should I not?" And they go through so much agony.

And my job has been really to hold their career with the lightness that I hope that they will and say to themselves, "What's the worst that can happen?" And I remember this one client in particular, they said, "Well, the

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worst that happens is I give up my really awesome apartment in California. And then I get this other place in Berlin and then I don't like the job." And I'm like, "Okay, then what?"

And they're like, "Well, then I have to go back to California." I'm like, "Okay, so how much money is it going to cost you to do that? You're going to go there, if you don't like it, you come back." "\$10,000." "So, you're looking at \$10,000 and three weeks of serious inconvenience to move and find out?" And they're like, "Well, yeah." And I'm like, "Okay, so how do you feel about the idea of moving to Berlin? What comes up for you? What is your body feeling?" Because I mean there's a reason that scientists are calling our gut our second brain.

There's 200 million neurons in our gut the size of a cat or dog's brain. So, what that tells us is there is an intelligence to when our stomach sinks or when we have butterflies, when we feel those nudges. And so, I trust that. And when I ask people, "How do you feel?" And it's profound because sometimes people will come to me, and they'll be leading with their head. And they'll say, "I got this job offer and it's so good for my career and I'm so excited about it." And I'll say, "Okay, well, how do you feel when you tune into this job and doing the job?"

And they'll say, "Awful. But the salary is so amazing." And it's like, look, we need to put a ladder from your head to your heart and we need to hold your career more lightly because the more you hold it in your head and you hold it heavily, and the more you treat yourself like a fixed being, the less fulfilled you are going to be. And that's why I've called my book and my show, You Turn, why a U-turn is because to me it's about that critical moment of transformation where you get radically honest about something in your life that needs to change.

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And instead of pushing down on that wise voice that is telling you what you know, you decide to listen to it and honor it for once.

Jen: Yeah. That's powerful. It's like, how do you turn off that prefrontal cortex that keeps trying to get you stuck so many times and listen to the body? It's such a tricky thing to do.

Ashley: Yeah. A lot of people have different places that they hang out when they're really stressed out. So, I like to go hang out in anxiety. And the thing about it is that it's a full-time job. And that's what's so cool about it for people is that if you go hang out with anxiety when something's making you anxious, you can't even tend to the actual thing in front of you because anxiety is now taking over. People have those coping mechanisms. So, some people have anger, some people have fear and panic. Some people have overwhelm and they shut down and their brain turns off.

I just get anxious and nervous. So, I think it's important to understand what your thing is, where you go when you're not feeling totally regulated. What does it look like for you? How do you behave when your nervous system is activated? And then you know when you're in that, I'm in my thing right now. I can't trust my thoughts right now. Your brain, your mind, your thoughts are not trustworthy. They're not a trustworthy source when you are off kilter. And you might not be able to get yourself back on kilter in that moment and say, "What can I do to come back?"

But the very least you can know, don't trust the voice in your head right now. It's off. Just get grounded, just get back into you, get back into your body. There have been so many times, even with my book, I check the reviews on Amazon every now and again. And it gives me such a pick me up to read about people who are loving the book and figuring out what they want to do with their career because of it. And the other day I was kind of

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off kilter and I ended up reading a really awful review. And there's so many good reviews.

And there are just a couple of people of course that don't love it. And I remember, my mind was already pretty off kilter from the day that I was having when I read it. And I was like, wait a minute, I can't trust anything I'm thinking right now. And so, I think being able to at least have dominion over that is an edge and being able to know thyself, know when you're not aligned.

Jen: Powerful, yeah. I didn't realize there was this term, it's 'pulling a geographic,' during the pandemic so many people moved because they knew they felt lousy. And rather than get aligned again and back on track, they made these decisions in moments of I need to make a change. Panic, let's move. So, kind of like what you're saying, it's a fine little line or a delicate dance between your left brain and your right brain essentially, or feeling aligned, or out of whack. So, I like that [crosstalk].

Ashley: Well, that's a fun point you bring up because I think geography is actually very underrated for a lot of people. I think where you are, your environment is proven to influence your focus, your inspiration. To me to move is to grow. When you move somewhere, you're in something new, it's new neural pathways in your brain, new places, new thoughts usually follow that. So, for some people it is so real that moving will give them that inspiration.

For others it's very much like that Rumi quote where the real voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes which is much more of an inside job.

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Jen: For sure, for sure. I love that. So, you yourself used to be a counterterrorism expert. And you made a big career shift. So, tell us about that. That's a big change. I love the idea of both. So, who is the Ashley of counterterrorism versus the Ashley of today?

Ashley: Yeah, I am no stranger to career pivots myself. And I think that's what has given me so much confidence to write about them. But I started in college just like everyone. I mean we're like what, 18/19 years old? Our brains aren't even formed till we're 26. So, we're having to make this life path choice, pick a major. And I don't even know who I am or what my favorite color is and I'm having to pick a career path.

So, I remember going to the career services office and she gave me all the three word directives like follow your bliss, and follow your passion, and do what you love and the money's going to follow. And I remember leaving feeling even more confused than ever. And what I've learned now is – my core message of my book and everything I've done is don't do what you love. Don't follow your passion. Do what you are. And so, I didn't get that at the time. And to me where you are is about your natural gifts, your natural talents.

Who wants to push a river in their career? Why not go with the flow of the river? And so, my work as a career expert now is about figuring out what direction is this person's river going in their skills, in their values, and how can we match their career with it? But back then I didn't really get it. And so, I just took the fact that I was interested in culture, that I had a skillset around learning foreign languages. And I just decided, you know what? I'm going to major in government, and history, and French, not because I'm an overachiever, but because I've been speaking French since middle school.

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And I'm indecisive, and I don't know what to pick, so I'm just going to pick all of this. And then I felt wow, all those questions started to come in of what do you want to be when you grow up? And I just wanted to have a plan, a really sparkly plan. I wanted to hold on to it and feel safe because of it. So, I gave everything to my counterterrorism career path because it made me feel like I had a purpose, I had a direction.

I had these little moments what I call in my book, turn signals where there's little whispers in me telling me that this wasn't for me. I didn't want to listen to it and make a U-turn because the thing about U-turns is that they're usually quite inconvenient unfortunately. But the only thing more inconvenient is staying stuck where you are.

So, I ended up giving myself to the government, going to graduate school, learning Arabic, becoming bilingual in French, wanting to join the Central Intelligence Agency as a spy. I've always had a knack of making people comfortable, being able to have conversation. In the same way Gen Z has been impacted by the pandemic, the millennial generation, my generation, we are very impacted by the recession and 9/11. And so, I wanted to be Carrie in Homeland and find Osama Bin Laden.

And so, I did everything for that path. And I ended up networking my way into the Pentagon as a defense contractor in a high level role. And along that journey, on the periphery I was really good at job hunting. I was so scared being in the recession that I was in survivor mode, just networking my face off, falling on my face, saying the wrong things. Eventually I started to learn how to talk to people. And from there I got so many job offers that all my unemployed friends from grad school living in Washington DC were asking me what I did. And I started helping them with their resumé.

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They would all say, “You should be a career coach.” And I remember thinking, what does that even mean? I’m 24 years old, 25 years old. And I just taught what I knew which was job hunting. And then eventually that became clarity after having hundreds and then thousands of clients in my online courses, that gave me the confidence to say, “Okay, now I’m in a position where I understand what options exist in the workforce in such a deep way.” And that was when I started helping people with that.

So, what’s cool about my story I think is just realizing that when you follow what feels right which for me working in the government felt right for some reason or another. It didn’t feel like my forever, but I was called to do it. And on the periphery of that I found my right path. So, when you follow what feels right, even if it’s not your forever, usually there’s something for you, either right in front of you, or on the periphery of that. And that’s enough to be experimental with it and to give yourself that permission slip.

Jen: Do you feel like the right path will present itself to you or do you need to go and seek for it? Because a lot of people I feel get stuck in this idea of I need to find my purpose and then I’ll know my path. What would you say to that question?

Ashley: Yeah. I mean I think that our purpose moves in our lives. And the new mother, our purpose is being a new mother and I think that we have been in an illusion that our purpose isn’t our work. I think my belief as a career expert, having coached so many people is that your purpose moves and that the workforce is a place for you to contribute and to feel the fulfillment of contribution. Granted, we spend 90,000 hours of our life at work, that’s two-thirds of our waking time on this planet. So, I get that people want it to count. That makes sense to me.

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And so, I would say, remember you're a living, shifting being, give yourself a permission slip to be who you are, to change your mind. Hold your career lightly. Don't be afraid of change. And ask yourself, what does success actually mean to you. Because a lot of the times we can get that answer not from what we think it is but from what we feel when we're not getting that thing. So, for me if I don't get enough free time, I'm just cranky. I'm just moody if I don't have time, my human comes out.

And so, what I have learned about myself is that success is having free time. And if I don't have free time I don't feel successful. And so, when I see someone else who is working, working, working, and they're making a lot of money, but they don't have a lot of free time. I'm like, "That's not what I want to be." So, no judgment on them because that could be what success is for them. So, I think it's really important to really deeply reflect on what that means for you, and what that looks like for you, and what you truly need.

Jen: For sure. And it kind of intersects with that self-care and feeling great. And when you feel great you're going to kind of know what the right next step is. After you read your Amazon reviews you weren't feeling great. You made some shifts. It's easier to know and listen to your body when you're in alignment I feel like.

Ashley: Exactly, 100%.

Jen: So, let's say there is – think of a hypothetical listener, maybe she was a stay at home mom, or worked part-time, her kids have become high-schoolers, about to go to college. She's like, "I have 50 years left of my life, or 40, or something, second half, what on earth do I do?" Give her the first three steps.

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Ashley: I would say there's two core dynamics that I'm always looking at in someone's career. And it's important for you to know what those are with yourself. So, the first dynamic is the what. That means what is your core skillset? How do you want to be using your mind, your body, your heart? You're harnessing your energy throughout the day, how do you want to contribute? Not what is the job title but what are the responsibilities? What are the skills you want to be carrying out and offering?

The second piece of the puzzle is the how. So once you know what your skills are, the how is about what you value. Given that 50% of people leave their job because they don't like their boss, what we know to be true is that how your job looks matters just as much as what your job is, whether you're in corporate, or you're an entrepreneur and your job is being an entrepreneur. And so, what that means is what do you value?

And I tell people to come up with their top five core values. I find if you come up with more than five usually you're a bit scattered, it's hard to use them in your career. But I see core values often being misunderstood by people. In my opinion a core value is a non-negotiable ingredient and principle by which you live your life. And it's ingrained in you, people can see it and feel it on you. A mistake that people tend to make when choosing core values is they're aspirational.

I had a client who was in one of my online programs, she was an attorney and she posted in a Facebook group that we run that her core value is peace. And we'd just gotten to know her on some of the group coaching calls. So, I made a little joke in there because I knew she could take it. And I said, "I don't know if peace is your core value, you're not the most peaceful." And it was so funny for her to realize, oh well, that's just something I want and that's valuable to know but that's not a core value, that's not a filter through which I need to make my yeses or no's.

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The thing about people in their career is if they don't like their job it's usually a what issue or a how issue. It's either they're using the wrong skillset and so they're being someone they're not all day. Or their values are being violated in some way. So, let's say your core skillset is words. And in my book, I think it's chapter 2, I have a list of core skillsets. And I find that most people fall into this list. So, it's really which one are you? So, let's say words which is one of them is your core skillset. And the way you're harnessing that is you are a salesperson.

And another piece of this puzzle that I write about in the book is around being an introvert or an extrovert. And I know that there's a lot of research about being an ambivert, but I truly believe people tend to lead with one or the other and it's important to know. So, a words person who is an extrovert is going to be more external with how they use their words, like a speaker, a business development professional, an agent. A words person who's more internal is going to be more of a writer, more of an introvert with how they express and channel their skill. So that's the what.

But what's interesting about the how is let's say you've got an extroverted words person and they've got a sales job. And they are totally aligned with their skills. But they're selling something for the company that they don't really believe in. And a core value of theirs is integrity, then even though the what of their career is lining up, it's a how issue. Their job is infringing upon their being, upon their values. So, most of the time either your skillsets are not being used properly or at all, or your core values are being violated. And that is usually the formula for being viscerally really unhappy.

So, if you want to reverse engineer it I would say ask people, because people notoriously don't tend to know what their best skills are. But if you ask the people in your life, colleagues you've had, friends, professors, whoever, "When have you seen me at my best? Or when have you seen me at my best professionally?"

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Usually, people are going to start answering this question with feedback on where you are gifted, where they do see you shine. And that's the thing you want to extract and up the volume on in your career if you really want to build your career around your gifts, which is ultimately the hack. Because the thing is, people don't know themselves.

We've got 71% of the workforce job hunting at any given time. And what I truly believe about that portion of the population is they're not job hunting, they're clarity hunting, that whatever job they were in wasn't working for them and they're hoping the next one scratches the itch. So, most people who are looking for something new, they're hoping it feels better. And so, in that case I think it's really important to be able to say, "Who am I? What are my skills?" And when you know that, what job titles are asking me to use those skills?

Who could I network with? Who do I know that's using those skills? And what can I learn about what's out there for me? And I have a lot of courses around this for this reason. And it's so powerful to be able to help people match those titles. For example, my Career Clarity Lab course, we've got this tutorial on LinkedIn. And I came up with this years ago. If you know how to use the advanced search on LinkedIn, and you know what your skills are, which we have a tutorial in the program that you could play around with it if you don't have interest in a program or something like that.

And what was so cool about it is when you put the right keywords in you see profiles of people doing jobs out there that you probably never thought about. And you can have a symbiotic relationship with LinkedIn where you can put new keywords in and start to discover other people who are out there using the same skills you have.

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And so, when people start to know this is my skill, and this is the options that are out there, and here's my values, so here's some questions I'm going to ask this employer to make sure. Or here's some questions I'm going to ask myself to make sure I run a business that's aligned. Here's some questions I'm going to ask the person I'm hiring to make sure that they align with the core values of my company. These values become a filter for what's a yes and what's a no when it comes to where you're going to put your energy, where you're going to give your skills.

Jen: That's really cool. And that's in your, how to do [crosstalk]?

Ashley: Yeah. So, I have my online program, my flagship program is the Career Clarity Lab. And it's an affordable course. But people who may be want to read the book, I would say about 40-50% of my course is in my book. My program is a lot more tactical, giving you job titles, whereas the book is a lot more self-reflective, giving you some inspiration. But it's been so fun watching people all over the world go through it and kind of come out with job titles or business ideas. It means so much to see that.

Jen: That's neat. And share the name of the book one more time.

Ashley: It's You Turn, it's Y-O-U Turn, two words, Get Unstuck, Discover Your Direction, and Design Your Dream Career.

Jen: That's really cool. Okay, so I'll give you a little case study which is me.

Ashley: Let's do it.

Jen: It's so funny, we're slow to talk about what we think are our strengths. But I happen to be a really good listener. I also happen to be a coach and a podcaster, go figure. I feel pretty aligned in my career. Sometimes the main

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struggle is work life balance. Do you address how to shift within a career you've already chosen and you're happy with, and finding more of the balance? Or is that just always a dance we do forever?

Ashley: Yeah. I mean I think that there's two lanes we're always navigating, it's the now and it's our future self. So, you can pivot on success. There's always a way to take the thread of your past, your skills and carry it into your future. And so, a lot of people have beliefs about starting over, or losing time, or a waste of time. But I don't believe in any of that. I truly believe that your career is about how you talk about your career when it comes to job interviews, or it comes to your business and how you present your business.

It's your job to make sense of who you've been with who you are now. So, I think that pivots are very doable. I mean it's not like I came out of counterterrorism and was a natural fit for career coaching. But being able to explain to you that the way I got a really high level job was through job hunting. And that's that skill that carried me through. It makes sense I have a business around it now. So, it's really your job to think about your elevator pitch.

That's something that I talk about a lot in my programs because the number one most asked question both in networking conversations and interviews is, "Tell me about yourself." And it's so strikingly obvious that people don't think about the answer. And as a result, they botch it. So, I would say if you are making a pivot you just want to ask yourself, "What is the through line here? What is the skill that I have from the past that I'm turning the volume up on in the future with what I want to do next? And how do I tell that story?"

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And then as far as work life balance goes, I don't believe that people who say there's no such thing anymore. I think that you can have boundaries, you can have balance. But just like success means something different to everyone, so does balance. For me, balance means I'm working my butt off for two months and then I take three months off. For other people balance means nine to five, and they have their lunch break, and they go to the gym during it. It's everybody is so different.

And it is so painful to me to see very much so, especially in the corporate world, how the structure has been favoring number one, in extroverts, the workforce is built in favor of extroverts. But we're seeing the data that it's almost 50/50. So, introverts are kind of going against the grain in a workforce where they're almost the majority too. Secondly, we're seeing the calendar and just the concept of time in the workforce being built around men, I would say.

The reason I would say that is I mean first of all, women, we menstruate and so there's a certain amount of the month where our hormones are different. We're in pain, we can't focus in the same way, our body is regulating different throughout the day. So, a 9:00am meeting is going to land for some of us differently than a 4:00pm meeting. Who knew that being a morning person is actually genetically proven? So, it's not like you can just join the 5:00am club. I mean you can but you're probably going against your biology.

At the core of my work, I've looked a lot at instinct, meaning that's what your body does. So, you breathe without thinking about it. And I think being a morning person, kind of like your body's rhythm, are you a morning person or not? Intuition, obviously your wisdom, and your intellect. And I think our workforce has really prioritized intellect beyond all else, the mind.

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And the problem with that is that our instinct is smarter than our intellect because our body is going to breathe, and our cells are going to do what they're going to do as long as we're alive. And our intellect has no power over that. Our intellect can't intellectualize it and change it. And so, I think there's some fundamentals around how the workforce has been built that has put a lot of people out of their natural instinct and what their body needs. And they are robbing their bodies of what's so important for it. And that's why we're seeing a change right now.

With the pandemic there is some decades have to take place to get to a week of progress. And then in some weeks decades happen, and I think that's what this pandemic has been. And so, we are going to continue to see more employers giving sabbaticals, flexing on hours. And understanding that we are whole humans and that we need that in order to work efficiently.

Jen: For sure. So, the great resignation is a big topic during the pandemic. And I guess it would kind of be an extension of what you just said, but speak to that just a little bit and what you've noticed about that.

Ashley: Well, we have more than 38 million workers who have quit their jobs in 2021. And I think that this trend is going to continue as workers seek flexibility, and benefits, and better wages. And the pandemic really shifted the mindset of working Americans. The stay at home order showed so many workers that they can work remotely, they can be just as efficient. And there's also some other factors at play in the great resignation that I think no one's talking about.

First of all, when gyms closed people started going outside, walking in the park, getting in nature. And so, this sort of corporate campus that had inside workout facilities, it was attracting a lot of stressed out workers. And

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now research is showing a lot of people are turning to nature to boost their spirits. The pandemic also forced family time. And that was make it or break it for a lot of relationships.

I saw a lot of research that half of relationships were worse off. And there was a small percent that broke up in the pandemic. But a lot of families also came together. And so, it was kind of like either part ways or come closer and prioritize family even more. And also, Pure Research did a study saying that 26% of Americans felt that their daily lives improved in the pandemic, stating that they had time to do things around the house, try new hobbies or simply relax and be humans.

What's interesting, I think that a lot of people are thinking about is, is a recession coming? And that's a question that I get a lot and we have to first take a look at the great resignation. Most of the quits that are happening in the great resignation are proven to be low wage earners. We are seeing that the higher wage earners are almost not affected by the great resignation except in the sense of they're probably trying to hire lower wage earners on their team, if anything.

We are seeing consistently that the service based industries, hospitality were hit much harder by the great resignation. So, there is a whole chunk of the workforce that's not feeling the impact of this whatsoever. I know a lot of entrepreneurs are struggling to find affordable talent and they're feeling that. But when it comes to the recession or a possible recession, it's hard to predict. We're seeing a recovery in the unemployment rates. It was 3.9% in the United States in December 2021. But we're also seeing that alongside some of the highest inflation in history, 6.8% in November of 2021.

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So, experts from the National Association of Real Estate, they talk about appreciation and expecting it to drop 6% annually. There is a lot of supply chain issues that we're seeing jammed. I just had a client tell me, she works in cosmetics and vendors are placing \$1 million orders and only getting 20% of their order because of shipping backups. And a lot of people are leaving their jobs because the employees are on the front line of these issues with clients and client relations, so they're not happy in their job.

So, I think that also, Generation Z who is going to have incredible buying power in the next 10 years if they don't already, they are very much so valuing in person connection, their careers, innovation. And they are ready to show up in their careers but they're also very entrepreneurial, more than half of them are skewing towards entrepreneurship. So, we are going to see a shift in the workforce and power from contractors and employees, and back and forth, on how companies are hiring.

Jen: Yeah, it's going to be crazy. So, you don't know if a recession is coming in other words but there's a lot of elements at play.

Ashley: I mean I think it's a very valid thing to be concerned about for sure.

Jen: Fantastic. Wow. So much food for thought. Well, I loved this so much. I appreciate it. If our listeners want to follow you, where should they go?

Ashley: Thank you for asking. I'm so grateful to be here with you. This has been so fun. I mean my book is everywhere books are sold. So, if you want to really figure out what you're meant to do next in your career or your business, it's a great read, it's called *You Turn: Get Unstuck, Discover Your Direction, and Design Your Dream Career*. And it's everywhere books are sold, bright yellow, you can't miss it.

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And then my podcast is one of my favorite places to hang out, the You Turn podcast, also Y-O-U Turn. And every single week we've got guests on mindset work, and love. And I do solo episodes with Mind Shifts, for you to come back close at home with yourself.

Jen: Cool. Thank you. I love this. Ashley, you're amazing.

Ashley: Thank you.

Jen: Now, secretly I'm guessing you're really still a spy, am I right?

Ashley: No. This whole career coaching thing is a joke. I have no programs. There is nothing going on.

Jen: Yeah, I knew it. Well, thank you, this has been so fun. I appreciate you being on the show.

Ashley: Thank you.

So, I hope you're thinking now. I told you, Ashley is a smart cookie, yes. And if you want more of this go find her viral TED Talks. They are amazing just as she is amazing. Now, I hope this also planted a seed that you can find you again, no matter what path you've been on, journaling, thought tables, feel it to heal it, all of the tools we talk about on this podcast and in the Vibrant Happy Women Club help.

You can learn to take care of yourself and be the highest version of you. And from that place it's easy to know what you like, to know where your skills lie, and to step into more fulfilling roles for yourself. It doesn't have to

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be a career, but I do believe we're all wired to want to contribute and to make a difference. And the world needs you, there are people out there who need something that you have to offer, whether it's an experience you had, a gift or talent you can share, knowledge you've gained, people need you. You are important and I hope you know that.

My friends, I am grateful that you listened today. I will see you again soon. 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 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.