

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything



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**Jen Riday**

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## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. I'm Dr. Jen Riday and on this episode I'm going to tell you the story of a decision I made that changed everything in my life. 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.

Alright my friends, I want to tell you a story, a story of pre life coach Jen. She was very different than the Jen I am today, very different, shockingly different, sometimes I wake up and think, wow, I can't believe I used to be that unhappy. So let me tell you the story. Where do I start this story? Well, long ago I earned a PhD in human development and family studies. And I was great, hooray a PhD. And then I proceeded to become a stay-at-home mom, also equally great. It's important to help raise the next generation well.

Now, I tried to take everything I learned in my PhD in human development and apply it to my kids. I firmly believed I was going to be an amazing mom. And I was to some extent but sometimes too amazing. What do I mean? I tried too hard. I did too much. I planned elaborate birthday parties. I once made a Sponge Bob cake that was so well created that my kids see the picture of it now and say, "Why don't you create cakes like that anymore, mom?" I said, "That took me hours. I don't think I want to spend that much time on a cake anymore."

I did so much, I baked bread every week. Sometimes I baked six loaves of bread a week for my family. Talk about overachiever. Well, you know where this is going. I completely burned myself out. Now, that would be a story in and of itself except that I have a unique family situation in my opinion. And that is because my husband has an interesting background,

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

and it feels to me like he struggles to relate on an emotional level. He has a bit of a trauma history with how he was raised.

I suspect he's further on the autism spectrum than the rest of us. And that made for a very difficult marriage, a painful, painful marriage to much extent. So, I not only had all of this overachievement going on, but I had a tricky husband. And I chose to have six kids in the mix of all of that. Talk about a glutton for punishment. Now, that said, I love my kids, things are much different now. I'm so glad I had all of them. And I'm so grateful for so many things about my spouse. He is amazing in so many ways.

So, let's go back to that burnout point. In approximately 2010 I suffered a miscarriage, it was my sixth miscarriage. I had one in between all of my other kids. It's very interesting. And my husband and I had a huge fight on the way to the hospital. One of those knock down drag-outs that leave you feeling utterly depressed, and despairing, and exhausted. And I walked into that emergency room alone for that miscarriage. I was there about four hours. My husband eventually came in with our daughter, Jane, who was a year and a half or so at the time.

And I proceeded to get an IV and then we were on our way. But we drove back home in silence. And the whole time I drove I was thinking I refuse to spend another day feeling exhausted, lost, and miserable, putting all of my eggs into the basket of helping everyone else and no eggs were in my basket. That is the day I vowed I am going to be happy no matter what. And I started to invest in my happiness. I joined a gym. I started going to yoga. I started telling, just telling, not even discussing, telling my husband when I would not be available.

And I think we all have the right to do that, sidenote, you can do that right now too. So, I started to invest time and money in my wellbeing. That was the first step. Well, go forward a little bit, we moved, we changed houses and we had five kids. And about a year after we moved my primary source

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

of income at that time, which was an online business selling gifts for moms, everything changed in the Google algorithm, and I lost almost all of my website traffic. So, I quickly pivoted, and I thought, okay, I have five kids, I have just lost almost all of my income, what am I going to do?

And guess what I did? I haven't told this story very much, but I chose to do in-home childcare. I had a PhD in human development and family studies. The expense of putting all of my kids in childcare was so high that I knew I wasn't going to do that. And I wanted to be available for them. My fifth child, Jane at that time needed some extra attention. She had some quiet, maybe spectrum behaviors going on. And so, I slowly but surely invited four additional children into my home. So, it was Jane plus three others.

Luckily, my other kids were in school, or preschool and I started doing in-home childcare. Now, things got a little hairy in the summertimes when all of my school agers were home, plus I had these three, sometimes four additional kids. That's 10 kids sometimes. That's when things started to get really hairy again. I was doing too much. Well, we needed that income because we had bought a bigger house. My husband, I had promised him to supply a certain amount of income. So, I kept moving forward and convincing myself it was great, it was the best.

Now, there were a lot of good things that came out of that childcare time like my daughter Jane who needed social interaction. She got tons of it. It was fantastic. The best thing that could have happened for her. So, to some extent I believe it was all meant to be. But I was tired. So, I kept going, doing the childcare, I had my sixth and final child, by the way, I knew through intuitive divine experience that I was supposed to have this sixth child. I could feel her ready to come to our family. And so, I had her, Cora was born, I knew we were done.

I continued to do childcare until Cora was about 18 months old. And then I started to get this itch. What's my big girl job going to be? What do I want to

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

be when I grow up? What's my job going to be when I pull up my big girl pants and do what I'm meant to do? What is my purpose going to be? I started to ask all those questions for quite some time. I knew I didn't want to continue being around 10 to 12 kids every summer. So, I started to kind of pray, meditate, think, and journal. And then I found myself in a yoga class.

It had been about a year of thinking about this question, talking about it with my friends. Interestingly, so many women, once they hit their 40s or once their kids begin to enter school started asking the same questions. What am I going to do with my time? What would I enjoy doing? Do I want a job? Do I want to volunteer? What's my purpose? What am I going to do now that my kids don't need me as much? So, if you've asked those same questions keep listening because I found an answer.

In that yoga class after a year of asking those questions I was at the end of the yoga class, I had two friends there with me and Kit. Kit is still my best friend. Well, I was lying in Shavasana pose, also known as corpse pose where you lie flat on your back with your arms out to the sides and you relax. And in that relaxing pose after an hour of sweating and moving you feel amazing. If you've ever done yoga before you know what Shavasana feels like. And as I was lying there I asked that question again. What am I meant to be doing now that I've had my last child? What's next for me?

And this time, I don't know if it's because I was so relaxed, or if it was quiet, or if I didn't have the distraction of kids around. But on this time after asking the question I had a little thought pop into my head that wasn't on my own, and that thought was you need to become a life coach. I was like, "Intriguing." Now, I'd always thought it would be fun to be a therapist. I had always been a great listener. People liked to ask my advice. I had majored in psychology as an undergrad and then of course I had done my PhD in human development and family studies.

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

Clearly I like to help other people. But the thought of going back to school to earn a marriage and family therapy license while I had six kids and I was busy seemed a bit overwhelming. Now I had this thought in my mind to become a life coach. And I went home, and I started to Google life coaching programs, life coach certifications. I was surprised to see that they took anywhere between three and 12 months. I could do that. And all it required was a few hours of class a week. I could totally do that.

So, I went on through and found the program that would work in my schedule, and I booked myself in. I was going to become a coach. I still had an in-home childcare. So, I hired a helper to watch the in-home childcare kids plus my daughter, Cora, while I was doing this class about five to eight hours a week. And it was great. Now, when I signed up I thought what are these other people going to be like? I'm sure they are professionals, they're amazing. They don't have six kids plus an in-home childcare, how embarrassing is it to have an in-home childcare.

I mean I had negative opinions about myself doing that. Well, I signed up and I didn't tell them about the childcare. They did know I have six kids. And they did find out that I had kind of a rocky ish relationship with my husband. And I'll be honest, I didn't feel as qualified or good enough like the other students. But I did it, I took the leap. It was something scary, but I thought, okay, I'm going to do this. I deserve to do something I love. And I'm certainly not going to do childcare for the rest of my life. Some people might love childcare, but it wasn't for me.

So, I went to class. I did my peer coaching. I learned, I read, I studied, and I realized by the end of the several months together that I was good at coaching. I was one of the best in the class. I wasn't the best, but I was one of the best. And I thought, maybe I can do this. So, after the class ended I went ahead and started a website for myself. And then I launched the Vibrant Happy Women podcast which you're still listening to today, over 500 episodes with the happy bits that I created in the middle and here I am.

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

I've launched the Vibrant Happy Women Club, and I learned, and learned, and learned. I've read hundreds of books and I'm a completely different person. Now, let's back up. Where are you on this journey of figuring out what you want to do next? Who do you want to be? How do you want to serve? How do you want to make a difference in the world? Because I can promise you, you're not meant to be stuck in a job that drains you. Life, and time, and happiness are too precious to spend a minute doing something that drains you.

Now, you might have to out of necessity like I did with my in-home childcare. But I can promise you, if you plant the seed of asking the question, what is next for me? What is my big girl job? How can I pull up my big girl panties and do something I actually love? What do I need to do next? What is my purpose and calling in life? If you continue to ask those questions and create quiet environments where you can meditate and receive intuitive thoughts and feelings you will know your next best step. It might not be your life purpose, but it will be your next best step.

And if you continually follow a path of going to the next best step you're going to have a fulfilling life. And when you radiate joy and happiness from within because you're doing something you're meant to be doing, you're fulfilling a calling, or a passion, or a purpose, you will be an entirely different person. And I want to share how that worked for me. Now, you may or may not choose to become a coach but whatever you choose make sure it lights you up because you can completely change everything.

So here is how my decision to become a coach and to take a leap into something that scared me, taking a leap into something where I was sure I wasn't good enough, taking a leap into a space where I thought everyone would be better than me, it worked out. Here I am with a podcast. I get to interact with the most heart-centered amazing women who are guests on this podcast, people who attend the Vibrant Happy Women retreat, people who join the Vibrant Happy Women Club.

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

And ultimately, my all-time favorite people are those who join and enroll in the Vibrant Happy Women coach certification which I created about two years ago. I love it. These women who take leaps whether it's the leap to attend a retreat, or join a membership, or join a coach certification, they want to grow.

They have kind of put a stake in the sand so to speak, drawn a line in the sand, put a stake in the ground saying, "I want something to be different. I want to feel different every day. I want to feel different in my marriage, with my kids, with my significant other. I want to have healthier boundaries. I want to make a difference. I want to live my purpose." And you absolutely can. It all comes down to a decision, making that decision to leap.

So how have things changed for me? Prior to becoming a coach and growing all the way into actually creating my own coach certification program which dozens of women have been through now, I used to be a lower vibe person. What do I mean by that? We all experience emotion in our bodies and it has a vibration. Emotion or feelings are vibrations in our body. And that makes sense because all energy moves in waves. Low vibration or low vibe emotions move slowly. Low vibe emotions include shame, sadness, anxiety for example.

Higher vibe emotions move in faster, quicker waves. There's more energy moving and just like the pitch of a violin string changes as you move higher or lower on the string, well, our energy, our feelings can be higher or lower vibe. Higher vibe emotions include love, joy, and peace. Well, we all have a baseline emotional space, an emotional home. My friend Amber was just telling me the other day that her emotional home is kind of overwhelm, stress and anxiety, that's where she dwells on the emotion scale from low vibe to higher vibe.

And prior to becoming a coach I would say my emotional baseline, or my emotional home was definitely sadness. This seemed to be something I

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday



## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

learned from my mom, who learned it from her mom, probably who learned it from her mom, a generational pattern, maybe some genetics involved. But definitely so much learning and exposure to patterns of thinking, being and feeling our way through life. So, after becoming a coach I learned all about emotions. And this is something I teach in the Vibrant Happy Women coach certification.

But we have emotions that range from low vibe to high vibe. And there are some emotions like shame, overwhelm, stress, worry, for example, that are called dream stealers. Dream stealing emotions are pointless, all they accomplish is to keep us stuck in a state of inaction. Now, when I was a stay-at-home mom when I felt hopeless, shameful, not good enough, what did I do? I would often curl up with some ice-cream and watch some TV, or Netflix if that was available back then. I can't even remember. I didn't do anything very productive.

When I felt low vibe, how did I show up with my kids? I was more snappy, more reactive, more frustrated, more angry. And I remember a day when I sent them out the door to the school bus. And rather than saying, "I love you," I said because we'd had such a frustrating morning, losing homework and shoes, I just shouted, "Run, you're going to be late." And I slammed the door behind them without even an I love you. And that day I shut the door and I thought, I am not being the mom or the person I want to be. I am so miserable.

Can you relate? Those moments of losing your patience with your kids, your spouse, feeling like you have no energy to accomplish what you want to, that you're showing up as a grumpy lower vibe version of yourself that you could be, that you're ignoring your potential. That was me. Well, long story short I have practiced every day using tools that I have created, tools like thought tables, the feel it to heal it method, creating healthy boundaries, the be her morning ritual, bold meditation.

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

All these tools train our nervous systems to raise our vibration, our emotional vibe to a higher place so that your emotional baseline can be somewhere like happy, or peaceful, or curious, or fascinated, maybe even joyful if you keep working at it long enough. Becoming a coach enabled me to focus on the things that would help me to heal and to change how I was showing up in the world. So, I raised my baseline emotional home to something much happier, much higher vibe. And that feels amazing.

Am I done? Heck no, I have so much more I want to accomplish. I want to move my baseline up to joy. Now, this isn't to say that we don't have moments of despair because life is 50/50. We have 50% dark, 50% light, 50% hard, 50% easy. But when those hard times comes like when I had two very rebellious teenagers, we need tools like feel it to heal it or thought tables, tools in our back pocket that we can pull out and use to help raise our vibe back up to what we want it to be. It's like shining a light.

You can shine a light in the dark, red, or purple range, not very bright. Or you can turn it up to a brighter light and we can do that with our emotions as well. That's one thing. Now, thoughts about myself. I used to kind of have a lot of self-loathing before I became a coach, before taking that leap, making the decision to do something really scary. Somehow that decision to leap and become a coach, and ultimately to create a coach certification with what I've learned, changed how I think about myself. I no longer loathe myself.

I have done scary things. I know I'm worthy. I've done the work. I actually and truly love myself. Now, that doesn't mean I don't have work to do. I'm still working on eliminating a thought that I've had for a long time, that my friends might not think I'm cool, or my parents might not approve. We all have these things, these emotional baggage types of thoughts that we're letting go. But again, when you have those tools in your back pocket, tools like thought tables and feel it to heal it, you can up-level and heal your thinking and your nervous system so much faster.

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

So higher vibe emotions, more self-love, let me talk about my relationships with my kids and my spouse. I mentioned at the beginning that my spouse is a tricky person for me at least. He learned some patterns from his mom who was probably on the autism spectrum, probably also bipolar. And for those of you who have any knowledge of what it's like to be raised by someone who's bipolar, it's traumatic, it essentially creates a trauma history.

My husband brought that, and he was a person who didn't want to trust. He would take care of number one and that's it, no emotional connection necessary, detached attachment style. Well, I came into the marriage with a needy attachment style. I was seeking approval. I was seeking love, and connection, and I wanted my spouse to validate what I thought and felt. I wasn't doing it for myself.

Well, you know, detachment plus needy is a bad pattern. It often leads to pursuit and withdrawal. My husband would withdraw, I would pursue. It's a nasty marriage pattern as tons of psychotherapists have kind of written about over the years. Well, when I became a coach I quickly realized at the heart level, not just the mind level that I'm responsible to validate myself. I am responsible 100% for my happiness.

And you can learn that in a book but there is something special that comes with learning it in coaching situations where you're partnered up with another person, whether that's in class or outside of class for peer coaching. Where you're learning not only to hold space for them but to have someone hold space for you.

When someone holds space it's like creating a sacred container where you can pick up the pieces of your thoughts, your emotions, your background, your baggage and examine them and decide what you want to keep and what you want to toss. So that you can become a new person in how you think and in how you feel. When you feel higher vibe you will take more of

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

the actions that you want to take, actions that make a difference in the world, actions that are productive, actions that make the world better, actions that make your home life, oh, so much more fulfilling.

And that's what happened for me when I stopped demanding that my spouse, his name is Heathcliff by the way, stopped demanding that he validate me, and emphasized with me, and meet my needs for love, and all of these things I wanted and started doing that for myself. This pursuit withdrawal pattern ended completely. I stopped pursuing. He didn't need to withdraw any more. And he started to come toward me because he could sense I had become more of a whole healed emotionally healthy person. All this through becoming a life coach.

So how did that work with my kids? Same thing. My kids have learned so much about holding space for their own emotions, identifying what's going on emotionally in their bodies, how to raise a low vibe emotion to a higher vibe emotion, how to identify how their thoughts impact their behaviors and their results. And it's fantastic. Rather than needing to constantly try to send my kids to therapy when they had a problem they suddenly had the tools to solve a lot of these things themselves. And often I could use the same tools with them at home that they might get with a therapist.

So, I've loved it. It has healed so much, my thoughts toward myself, how I feel in my body, my emotions, how I interact with my spouse and my kids. Now, that's all great, so much healing comes when you decide to become a coach. But then there is this whole other side of it if you so choose to have a career where you get to do this for other people. I can't even tell you the women, the people I have connected with because of taking this leap, making this decision to do something that scared me but that I thought was the right thing for me.

I have brushed elbows on this podcast with the most amazing women. I have met the most fantastic women at the Vibrant Happy Women retreat

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

who I love and adore, who fuel and fill my soul. And I think that's because we're all women who want to grow, and develop, and live vibrantly, living in alignment, making a difference. When you find those people, your tribe so to speak, it feels amazing. And you can find that tribe no matter what leap you take. Maybe your leap is to become a ballerina. Maybe your leap is to take guitar lessons.

Whatever it is, you're going to find new people that have also taken a leap and that will be your people. Well, so many more amazing things. I no longer do childcare. I get to have my own job that is flexible, that allows me to go see my kids perform at school or pick them up early when needed. I have a great income that truly makes me feel valued for what I'm adding to the world. And I get to be my own boss which I love. So that decision to take a leap that scared the pants off of me to become a life coach and then to keep taking the next best step after that changed everything in my life.

So, I want you to think about for you, what is your next best step? Who are you born to be? What difference are you here to make? Which lives are you meant to touch? You do not have to live in a place of burnout, and overwhelm, and exhaustion. Now, granted I have those moments still but they're way less. You can take a leap, go find out what's on the other side of fear and start creating an entirely new way of showing up in the world. I'm evidence that it works.

Well, my friends I love you so much, sending my love and encouragement. What is the decision you need to make right now? Decisions aren't always easy. Let me tell you this, the decision that scares you the most, that requires a little more of an investment of your time, or your income, or your energy is the right decision. I have seen this over and over again. The thing that scares you the most is the exact place you need to go to experience the most growth, the most healing, the most amazing connection, and the biggest opportunity to make a difference.

## 316: The Decision That Changed Everything

I know this is true for you, for me, for all of us. Do you have the courage to take that leap and find out what's on the other side of fear? That is the decision and that is the ball that I'm leaving in your court. What are you going to do? And what will you find on the other side of fear?

Thank you so much for listening to me today. I will see you again next time. Oh, by the way, the Vibrant Happy Women coach certification has another round starting soon, if coaching feels like the type of healing and the type of difference you want to make, you are more than welcome to join us. We would love to have you. You have everything you need to be a coach. And you can do that at [jenriday.com/coaching](http://jenriday.com/coaching). I love you my friends. I will see you again soon. 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).