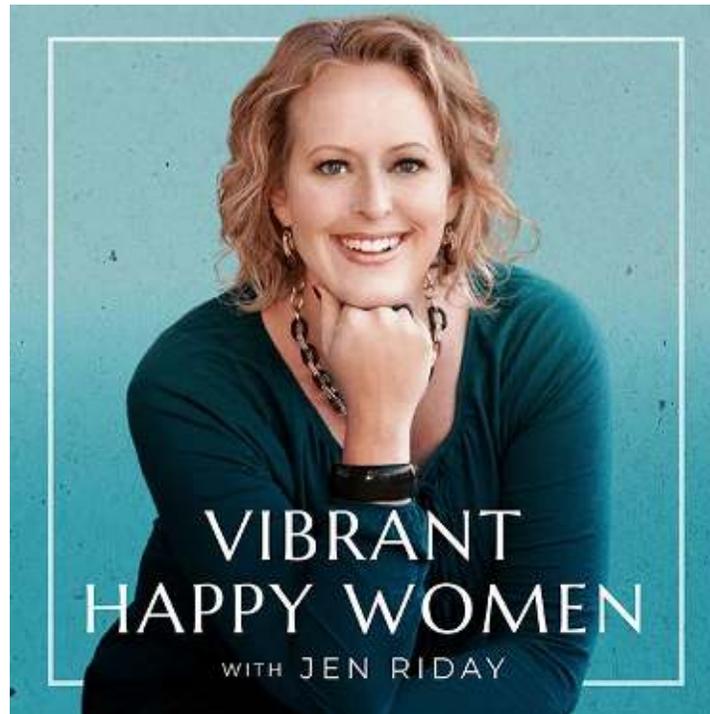


318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jen Riday

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. I'm Dr. Jen Riday and on this episode we're talking about letting go of that loneliness you may be experiencing and building friendships. The ball is in your court. 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.

Oh, yes, I'm back with a couple of fantastic guests, two guests and I love when I get to talk to multiple people. It's a fun conversation. Well, today we're talking about something oh so important which is friendship. So many people have recognized during the pandemic that they crave heart centered, deep, reciprocal connection. I have talked to so many women in the Vibrant Happy Women Club about it. I have coached women about this. And so today we have two amazing guests who will help us with this topic.

Our guests today are Jess Johnston and Amy Weatherly, both the authors of the book, I'll Be There But I'll Be Wearing Sweatpants. And we talk about how they kind of got out of their comfort zone and decided to put the ball in their own courts in terms of inviting and creating heart centered connection. So many of us feel like I'm never invited, I'm always excluded, all these other people are doing this. But that puts us in a victim mindset and doesn't help us to change anything.

Well, in this episode you'll hear how Amy and Jess put the ball in their own courts, shifted into an empowered mindset and made some amazing things happen, so much so that Jess actually moved from Montana to California, and she brought all her friends with her. We're talking three couples all

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

moved together, that's how tight their friendships became. You're going to love this one and let's go ahead and dive in.

Jen: Hey, there everyone. I am here today with two amazing women, Jess Johnston, and Amy Weatherly. They are co-authors of the book, I'll Be There But I'll Be Wearing Sweatpants. And we're going to be talking about friendship today. So, Jess and Amy, go ahead and introduce yourselves and tell us more about what led you to write this book together because you don't even live in the same state. And I think that's really cool.

Amy: Yeah. Jess and I actually met in an online writing group. And I was just – I was a big fan of her work and I, honestly, I just wanted to work with her. One, I just wanted her to know that I loved what she was doing and encouraging her. And I think we should all be hyping each other up and fangirling each other. And nobody hates a compliment, so I like to lead with those.

So, I was just a fan of Jess. I wanted to work with her. So, I slid into her DM, sent her a message and the conversation just kind of went from there. And it went from Instagram messages to phone calls. We started this group called Sister I'm With You. We realized how passionate we both were about helping women build friendships. So, we had this idea, let's just start a page called Sister I'm With You, all about friendship. Let's just see what happens. And it exploded then we met in real life, and then the book. And then just all just sort of happened very naturally.

Jen: That's so cool. So, a writing group.

Jess: A writing group, yeah.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: Yeah. So, tell us where you're both from too.

Jess: I am from California, sunny California.

Amy: And I am from sometimes sunny Texas.

Jen: What city in Texas?

Amy: Midland, which is out in West Texas, we're way out there in West Texas. There is nothing. It's tumbleweeds here.

Jen: So, you're still in San Diego now then?

Jess: I'm a little bit further away. I'm in Santa Barbara.

Jen: Okay. Originally from Montana, right?

Jess: Yes. So, everybody knows I'm not a wimp with winter.

Jen: Yeah, you're not a wimp.

Jess: I mean I think I'm a wimp.

Amy: I mean, I was like, I've heard you complain about 65 degrees before.

Jess: I'm embarrassed of myself though. I know how wimpy I have become, at least I know.

Amy: That's true, you're aware.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: So, you guys decided to write a book together about friendship. Why the topic of friendship? I mean, yes, you're friends but why is this needed in our world today?

Amy: We live in the most connected society ever. We've got social media, we're very connected and yet we are unbelievably lonely. And we noticed this trend, the more we talked about it. And we wanted to talk about friendship and not the light and fluffy like, oh my gosh, okay, so friends are the best, find a good friend and then just hang out. And it's amazing. No, no, no. Let's talk about what happens when it breaks up. Let's talk about what happens when you feel uninvited, and you've realized you've kind of gotten placed on the sidelines with a friend group.

Let's talk about what it feels like, that hurt and that pain. Let's talk about the real stuff. Let's talk about loneliness. And the more that we opened up and talked about it the more women just kept coming onboard and saying, "Me too. Me too. I thought I was the only one. I didn't know anyone else felt this way." And it was this beautiful connection and natural just energy that kind of happened because everyone was sort of saying, "Wow, okay, I'm not alone with struggling with adult friendship. It is weird. It is weird. And I'm glad I'm not the only one who feels that way."

Jen: Jess, how has it worked for you with building the friendships, virtually or in person?

Jess: My story is I have four kids. And when they were pretty young, I remember I put them all to bed one night. My husband and I were watching TV and it got late. And I turned off the TV and I just started crying. And I was like, "I am so lonely. I feel so alone, and I have absolutely no idea how to create friendships, to find my friends." Because I didn't want just the friends to have surface level conversations like, "Hey, how are you? Good,

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

what other?" I wanted those deep friendships to do life with, but I didn't even know where to start.

In that moment I think it was probably, God, I just had this revelation that I just needed to start. I needed to start somewhere. I needed to start pursuing women in my life. And I was going to start doing it regularly. My husband and I decided that we're going to start having people over for dinner once a week. And we're like, "This is going to be scary. It's going to be hard. It's going to be weird but we're going to do it." And that decision completely changed my life. It was hard. It was awkward at first, but we eventually found these really close friendships.

So, I think the biggest thing for me was realizing that I held the power because I was just kind of waiting for someone to bang down my door and be like, "Hey, you're really cool, want to be my friend?" I had no idea that I had the power to give that away. It was just this really isolated feeling of thinking I just have to wait around for someone to choose me basically. No, you have the power to choose someone else. And most people also feel lonely, and also don't know where to start, and also are overwhelmed. It's not just you. So that's actually a gift when you give it away.

Jen: So, deciding I have the power to choose a friend. I can go find a friend. So, all these people came to dinner at your house. And what was it like? Did you feel like you were [crosstalk]?

Jess: Oh, my word. I wanted to – always the hour before I'm like, "This was a terrible idea. Are we getting sick? We're probably getting sick. I don't want to be puking but I hope I'm sick enough to cancel this night because I no longer want to do it?" I'm freaking out about, "Oh my gosh, I haven't cleaned my baseboards, they're going to hate it here. They're not going to

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

like me at all. Or why did I make potatoes? Potatoes were the worst idea ever.” And my husband and I both felt like that.

But then they showed up and we did it. And even if the night wasn't amazing, we felt so empowered by that. We're like, "We did it." It was like running a marathon or something. We were like, "Look at us, we are adults and we had people over for dinner and we survived it." And then we eventually – it was like dating. And we eventually found people that were like, "Okay, we really clique with you, this is easy and comfortable and you're somebody I want to spend a lot more time with."

Jen: And did you and your partner or spouse feel the same about the couples or did you sometimes one of you liked one of them but the other [crosstalk].

Jess: There were definitely times when that happened but ultimately, yeah, we found people that we both really connected with. It's very precious to find. It's hard to find.

Jen: So, for those people where you've had connection, you started to repeat your invitations?

Jess: Yes, exactly.

Jen: Are you still having dinner every week?

Jess: Yes.

Jen: Wow. Still? How many years has it been?

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jess: Gosh. Probably about 10 years. A little story I don't share very often is that actually when we moved from Montana we moved with two of those families. So, we all decided to move together because we were like, "It's cold in Montana, we should go somewhere more sunny." So, our friendships, yeah, really got deep and awesome.

Jen: That's amazing. So, you made the friends in Montana, so close that you moved together to California?

Jess: Yeah.

Jen: That's crazy. Wow. How about for you Amy, what's been your go to strategy for making new friends?

Amy: I just try to – I do like to start with a compliment. I'm a natural encourager. So really one of the best things that I have learned in friendship is to find someone who needs a friend and then go and pursue them, just like Jess said, this is a gift. You don't have to wait around to extend the invitation. You don't have to wait around for someone to throw the party, you can throw the party. You can offer the invitation. You can start the conversation. And so, I started doing that, but I started very intentionally looking for people who needed a friend.

I talk about this in the book but instead of trying to force my way into the middle of the circle, I stood back and said, "Okay, wait, who else feels like they're on the outside with me?" And I went and tried to just pursue them and love on them a little bit. And that is my biggest advice in friendship is go and love on somebody. Find somebody who needs it and give it and just give that away.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: So, you're both talking about keeping the ball in your court. I am going to go choose, and invite, and make the friend. No victim thinking here. No one wants to be with me, no one invites me. You have to become the inviter.

Jess: Which to be fair, it's because I know what it's like to operate in that. I have been the victim and it did not get me where I wanted to go. I definitely was in that place where I was like, well, no one invites me over for dinner, so I guess I'm just going to do the rest of my life alone. I have been there, yeah.

Jen: And probably when you were in that energy, no one wanted to invite you, they could feel that coming from you.

Jess: Also, to be fair we had four kids. People were probably terrified to have us all over. They're probably like, "What will we feed them?" That's a real thing.

Jen: Yeah, for sure. And Amy, you were going to say something. Was there ever a time when you ever thought, no one's inviting me, I've been excluded?

Amy: Yes, most of my life, I had most of my life. And that's what I think is so good about this. We wrote this book on friendship, not because friendship has always worked out for us but because a lot of the time it hasn't. We didn't write this book on friendship because we've always known what to do. We wrote this book on friendship because we had to learn. We've had to struggle. We've had to hurt. We have been there.

And so yes, I feel like I've spent a lot of my life just hoping someone would choose me and hoping someone would – I don't know what I was

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

expecting, someone to come and bust down my door and be like, “You’re the best person I’ve ever met. I have to know you. Please come hang out with me.” Something finally clicked with me where I think I finally got hurt. And I was like, not that I would never get hurt again.

But I was like, “Amy, stop. Stop. Go give to somebody else. Don’t live like this. Don’t live desperate for people to like you. This is a horrible way to live. Go live and love people really, really well and see what happens.” Because you should be terrified if someone busts down your door and you don’t know them and they’re like, “Hey, I want to be friends with you.” “No, I don’t, I am calling the police. I am calling the police.”

So, there was just a moment in my life where it just clicked with me where I was like, “I’m not going to live like this anymore. I don’t want to be insecure. I don’t want to just wait around and be begging for people to like me. I have something to give. And I want to give it to other people.”

Jen: I love that. So, thinking about friends, I think we all have a type of person we like. And it’d be fun if we could each talk about what that type of person is for us. But before we do that, I once heard a stat in marketing that really resonated for me. And I realized it could translate to friendship which is good marketers repel 90% of the people so that they can attract the right 10%. And I started to tell people about this in terms of dating and friendship. I don’t care if 90% of people hate me.

I’m looking for the 10% where for me they’re authentic, they’re real, they’re active and they laugh. That’s what I’m looking for. I don’t want a diva, I don’t want whatever. I’m looking for the 10%. So, what is your 10% for each of you, the people that are your people?

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Amy: That's hard. I really like people so I would say it's hard for me to not like you. I really like people. And I think it's so cool that people are different. The one thing that genuinely I just – I cannot do drama. I cannot do unnecessary drama. If you are mad at everybody and there's always just – I need peace. I need peace so bad. I've got three kids and two dogs and I just, I can't. Someone who I would call, maybe they create storms, a storm creator. That is something where like no.

If I have to tiptoe when I'm around you because I'm not sure when you're going to get mad and when you're not. I have to be out. I can love you but there's going to have to be a six feet sort of thing going on there.

Jen: So healthy boundaries and some level of emotional intelligence is a great foundation.

Amy: Absolutely. Boundaries are essential and yes, knowing what you want in friendship and that is huge, knowing what you are actually looking for. And it's not about just friends who are fun. I had to get over that too because I thought, well, this person is super fun. I just want to be around them all the time. Fun friends are amazing, but it also has to be, will they go deep? Can they handle my sweatpants? Can they handle me in my ugly truth or are they going to run the second it's not fun anymore?

Because I need someone, if I'm going to go deep with someone, I'm going to spend a lot of time with someone they're getting all of it. You're getting all of it, the good, the bad, the sweatpants and the once a year when I wear a dress, you're going to get that too. But I need to know you can handle all of it.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: Yeah. So, your book is titled I'll Be There But I'll Be Wearing Sweatpants. Tell us more about what that means to be a sweatpants friend?

Jess: Oh gosh, it just means not performing, not pretending, not trying to be someone that people will like. But being able to be your complete self, in all your mess, in all your glory. Just one of my favorite things to do with friends is run errands together. Or just sit on the floor while our kids run around like crazy. And just do life together. I think that's really what it means is doing life together. And not trying to squeeze into tiny jeans. And put on a fake whatever and pretend to be someone you're not.

Jen: Absolutely. So, for you, what is your 10%, what are your ideal friends like?

Jess: One thing that, okay, so this might sound really funny but one thing that just came to mind was that they have to like me. I have, because I do really like connecting with people. I really love connecting with people and I enjoy all kinds of different people. But I have been in situations before where it was clear that the other person wanted to change me or didn't enjoy who I was and wanted me to be someone else. And that's just, that's never going to be a sweatpants friend.

Being around somebody that's uncomfortable with your real, or uncomfortable with your truth, or uncomfortable with who you are, and thinks you need to improve all the time. That's never going to be a safe friendship. Not that my friends don't challenge me, that's important too. But I have realized that if someone does not like me, they're not my people, I'm not their people. And that's totally okay. I don't need to spend any more time trying to impress them or trying to be who they want me to be.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

I need people in my life who – I mean I'm weird. I'm quirky. I am not everybody's cup of tea. I need people in my life that like this.

Jen: Yeah, which is beautiful, yeah. So, I love that, being able to be your real self is essential. Now, on the other side of that I think we've all had friends that suck the life out of you. Amy mentioned drama. Friends that don't have that emotional intelligence or they're really in a bad place. Where is the line for that for being sweatpants friends versus the person who you can tell is going to suck too much of the energy and too much of that realness? Maybe they're in the pit of despair in their life. How do you have the boundary there?

Jess: One thing is, is that sometimes it's really easy to give to the loudest person in your life and to give to the person who has the most needs. But it's really important to take a step back and be intentional about the friendships that you're sowing into. And if it doesn't go both ways it's not a friendship. It's something else. And it's important to love the people in our life. And there might be someone in your life that you're just loving on. But that's not a friendship if it doesn't go two ways.

So, taking a step back and not just giving to the loudest person in your life I think is important.

Amy: Yeah. And I think it's hard because I think something that you do have to look, like if you're long term friends with someone, each of you will be in the pit at some time. There will be death. There will be grief. There will be sickness. There will be depression. There will be anxiety, loneliness. There will be a time where everybody's in the pit. So, I think you just kind of have to decide, is this a sometimes thing or is this the way it always is?

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

But one thing for me that I have noticed in women, and I think it's become a real problem is sometimes we expect our friend to be our therapist and that is not healthy. Your friend should not be your therapist. Do not downplay what a therapist does, a therapist, a counselor, a trained professional. They have been trained, they have gone to school for a bazillion years in order to help you in that way. Your friend can't give to you in that same way, and you can't expect them to do that.

A friend can sit with you in the mess, but they can't save you from the mess all the time. And sometimes that's what we expect, our friends to be our savior. And our friends were never made for that. That is too much to expect of a person.

Jen: Yeah, that's a great boundary too. And plus, a therapist is paid to listen to you. It's like saying, [crosstalk], I'm giving you money, take this. Yes. Then you don't have to do it with your friends. Very good.

Amy: Yes, exactly.

Jen: So, your book, for those who haven't read it yet, what can they expect when they read your book? What will they learn?

Jess: We wrote this book to just feel like sitting together on the couch next to a giant laundry pile and just hashing it out. Let's talk about the real, the nitty gritty. Let's talk about how awkward it is to make new friends. Let's talk about loneliness. And I think one of the biggest things that we find in our online community and in our lives is that we all need to know that we're not the only one. It can be so isolating when we believe, there's something wrong with me that is not wrong with anyone else.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Everyone got a class that I didn't get, somehow I missed it and it's something wrong with me. But just by exposing the reality that, no, it's uncomfortable and awkward when you're beginning a new friendship. It takes a while to get comfortable. Just talking about those realities, we hope empowers women to know that they're not alone, that we're in this together and we can do it together.

Jen: That's great. So, I can just imagine you guys sitting side by side folding your laundry, even though you're from different states, hashing out this book. And you're both hilarious. So, I can imagine your book's hilarious too, yeah.

Amy: Yeah, that was important, so that was important to us.

Jess: That was very important to us.

Amy: That was very important.

Jess: We were like, "That's really cool if you cried. Did you also laugh?"

Amy: Did you laugh out loud?

Jess: We would really like you to know if you laugh.

Amy: I kept waiting for Jess's when she was talking about her friend needing, needing her friend to like you. I kept waiting for her to say, "I need her to think I'm funny."

Jess: Yeah, that's actually kind of true.

Amy: It's a little true.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: That's so cool. Well, I was just talking with someone the other day and she was feeling lonely. And she had tried for a while to get her husband to change and to meet her needs. But he's working a lot. He happens to work for a vaccine company so a bit busy during the pandemic. So, she realized, okay, I've got to go make some friends. And not just surface level friends where you volunteer side-by-side but where there's some heart centered connection.

And she said, "But I don't want to be the only one inviting. How do I get them to reciprocate?" And what would be the answer to that question?

Amy: My answer would be that sometimes you're going to have to give without expectations because people aren't going to respond how you want them to. They aren't going to do things the way you would do them. I mean that's one of the things we talk about in the book. Other people aren't you. The earlier you figure that out the better, that you just figure out, okay, they're going to respond different than I would. The way that they're going to show love is different than the way I would show love.

So, something I've tried really hard to do lately is to give with no expectation, to give because I want to, because it does something good for me to pour into somebody else. And to sort of let that expectation go because if you've continued to invite, the truth is that person just may be used to you inviting them. They might not even know. But if they're showing up, that's something. If they're saying yes, that is a form of love all in itself. So, I think if you are close enough with that person then I think you can have that conversation.

I literally, I told one of my best friends the other day, I was like, "Hey, I always call you. I need you to call me more." And just in a very casual, and we're close enough, we have built that relationship. We have that

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

foundation. She started laughing, she's like, "You know what? Okay, that's fair." And you know what? She called me the next day. So sometimes you just have to straight up tell people. You have to have a good foundation first but then yeah, that's what you want and so you can tell them the truth, "Hey, could you do the inviting maybe?"

Just kind of do it in your own way but it's okay to have those, because again, a good solid friendship is going to be able to handle the truth. It's going to be able to handle that. It's going to be able to handle that. And so that's a pretty good like, okay, if they couldn't handle that truth then you know what? It's not my people and that's okay. That's okay.

Jen: Yeah, for sure. Have either of you, I'll ask you this, Jess, have either of you ever had friends where you're friends for a while, it was solid but then you came to a place where you knew it was time to let that one go?

Jess: Absolutely.

Jen: Really?

Jess: I think that's hard to – it's a hard truth to swallow but some friendships are for seasons and some friendships are for life. And that can be hard and painful to move on, but I try and stay openhanded with it. And that I'm like, "Okay, this is a beautiful thing for that season and it's okay that we're growing apart. Who knows who's going to come into my life next?"

Jen: So, what I kind of hear from both of you is a belief system is in place. Maybe an identity piece about yourselves that friendship is abundant. You've come to believe that, and you might not have always believed that but that there are always going to be people you can love on, people you

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

can invite to dinner. And there's no scarcity there. Is that true? Have you noticed that shift in yourselves?

Jess: Yes, absolutely, yeah.

Amy: The truth is most women are lonely. Most women want good friendships. Most women are waiting for someone to knock down that door and invite them somewhere, not all women, but most women are waiting for it. We live in a very, very, very lonely society. I mean and that's just the truth. So, the bad part of that is a lot of people are lonely. The good part of that is the harvest is plentiful. There is plenty of fruit out there to pick. People are waiting. You just have to go out there and begin the work.

But there's seven billion people on this planet, there is a lot of them who are going to like you. And there are a lot of them that you're going to like.

Jen: Yeah, totally. Would you both say that you're a good friend, do you believe that about yourselves?

Jess: Yes. I haven't always been. And I definitely make mistakes. And I have good friends in my life who tell me when I made a mistake which is good. Definitely not a perfect friend by any means. But I think what makes a good friend is by prioritizing it, where none of us are perfect, we're all learning. But if it matters to you, you will keep growing and doing better. And I think that's really what makes a good friend.

Amy: Me too, that's exactly what I was going to say, Jess, is that I care about being a good friend, so I put a lot into it. And that's the same thing, no matter what you're doing. If you care a lot about it and you put a lot into it, you're probably going to be pretty good at it.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jess: And you also care.

Amy: And you care.

Jess: And care when your good friend is like, “Hey, when you said that, that really hurt my feelings or that was painful.” You care because you care about those relationships.

Amy: Yeah, I think two essential parts of friendship, do you care and do you try. Those are two of the things that I’m genuinely looking for, do you care and are you going to give it effort. And that, I think that makes you a good friend if you can do those two things.

Jen: I love that because what you didn’t say was you have to invest 20 hours a week.

Amy: Nobody has that, yeah, nobody has that.

Jen: How much time do you need to be a friend.

Jess: I think it’s something that Amy and I really talk about a lot is just doing what you can do. Even if it’s baby steps. We like things to happen overnight in our culture and that friendship’s not going to happen overnight. But consistency is really, really important. So, if you can take an hour a week, or maybe you’re crazy busy and you can only give an hour every two weeks of we’re going to do this coffee hour. Amy has a regular coffee hour with her friends. Or I’m going to invite people over for dinner once a week.

Choose something that you can do and then keep doing it consistently. I think that’s the key. It’s not about having an abundance of time. It’s about setting aside what time you can and then continuing to do it.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: Yeah, I like that. And you mentioned, Jess, I think it was you, running errands with your friends, you like to do.

Jess: Yes. Especially when my kids were little, yeah.

Jen: Yeah. And I think that, what you like to do with your friends will be different for everyone. That sounds like my worst nightmare because I'm [crosstalk], I'm efficient. But I really love listening. I have a really good listening talent. Well, you might not think so because I'm talking a lot right now. But I love listening. That's a gift I can give in friendship. So, what about for you, Amy, what are you particularly good at bringing to your friendships?

Amy: Honestly, I'm good at showing up. I'm going to be there. I think all of my friends would say that they would feel really good calling me and knowing I would answer. They would feel good knowing that if it is possible for me I am absolutely going to make time for them. I think that's probably what my best is, is that I will show up. I will show up for you. I will be there. I will prioritize that relationship however I can. Obviously there are sometimes where I simply can't.

But most of the time if I can I'm showing up. I'm calling you. I'm texting. You invite me. I'm going to come. I'm going to come.

Jen: That's so cool. And you both have such empowering beliefs about friendship. It's clear you think you're good at it. And that's important, if you don't think you're good at it, why would you try? You value it, you want it, you know what you want, you just put it more in the center of your life instead of on the periphery, so that's really cool.

Jess: Yes, exactly.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Amy: Yeah, it is a very genuine passion of ours. Our friendship, Jess and I were even talking about that the other day that, obviously writing a book, and promoting a book is busy. There is a lot of time that goes into that. And I was telling Jess how proud I am of both of us that we have both kept our friendships intact. We have not sacrificed our real life friendships to do this. And I am proud of us that we're not writing about friendship, we live that out. And I'm very proud of that for both of us because yeah.

Jen: That's cool. So, you guys have a big online following and you're funny. Where should people go if they want to follow you online?

Jess: Our page together on Facebook and Instagram is Sister I Am With You. And then we also have our own pages, Amy Weatherly has a Facebook page, and Insta page, and I am Jess Johnston. We love the space, Sister I Am With You, come join us there, it's really fun, and real, and just a good place.

Amy: It is encouraging too. We so rarely get negative comments. And for a page that – we're almost at a million. That's almost unheard of but it is an uplifting, kind, good place.

Jen: So great, very good. Well, give us one last takeaway and then we'll say goodbye.

Jess: I would just say if you are lonely, if you are struggling in your friendships, just please, please know that you are not alone. There is no place for perfectionism here. I think we expect so much from ourselves to suddenly look like this perfect, amazing, social friend. And just if you can, set that aside. We're all just doing our best, just do tiny baby steps forward towards your relationships and know that you are not the only one and you are not alone.

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

Jen: Amy, anything to add?

Amy: Let grace just flow through you, let it flow through. Give it to yourself. Give it to the girl in the mirror. These are hard, weird, crazy times. I mean even if we didn't have the pandemic going on. Life in general, it's wild, it's wild. Give yourself an abundance of grace but let that grace flow through you onto others because you're not expected to be perfect. But don't expect that from other people either. Life is better when we are gracious.

Jen: Beautiful. Well, thank you both for being on the show. I love your energy. We all need more of that. And I appreciate you being here.

Jess: Thank you so much for having us, so nice to meet you.

Amy: Thank you so much, Jen.

I want to invite you to set an intention to go out and invite regularly and create those friendships like Jess and Amy taught us. It is so important. It is so fulfilling. If you've been feeling meh, or blah, or uh, really clear words I'm using here, but you know what I'm talking about. If you feel like there's some unmet need, it's likely related to having deeper heart centered connection, in person connection is great but there is also the option of virtual connection. Some of my very best friends do not live here in Verona, Wisconsin with me.

I have some in person friends that I love but I have some amazing virtual friends that I love as well. Thank goodness for Zoom is all I can say. Now, if you want help with this, of course, join us in the Vibrant Happy Women Club where you can easily find heart centered connection with safe,

[Vibrant Happy Women](#) with Jen Riday

318: Building Heart-Centered Friendships (with Amy Weatherly and Jess Johnston)

likeminded women who are on a journey of personal growth just like you are. I know you are because you're listening to this podcast.

My friends, I love you, you're doing so well. I can't wait to hear how this goes. If you'd like to tell me about your friendship wins, send me an email at support@jenriday.com. I would love to hear your results. I will 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 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.