

## 319: Unclutter Your Soul (with Trina McNeilly)



### Full Episode Transcript

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**Jen Riday**

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You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. I'm Dr. Jen Riday and on this episode you'll learn how to unclutter your soul. 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 there, my friends, I am Dr. Jen Riday and I'm so excited for this latest episode of the Vibrant Happy Women podcast. We're going to be talking about letting go of emotional baggage. We're going to learn about uncluttering your soul. I know life can really be heavy sometimes. Divorce, and death, and addiction, and kids, and being stressed, and busy, and overwhelmed, we all have things in life that can start to weigh us down in our hearts, in our minds, even physically sometimes. It can feel like our shoulders are pressing downward.

Well, there is a way to free ourselves from that emotional baggage, that clutter. And this method is called uncluttering your soul. My guest today is Trina McNeilly. And she's going to teach us how this is done. I'm super excited because we all deserve to feel lighter, freer, and more like our vibrant and happy selves, our most vibrant and happy selves. So that's the end result of this episode to get to figure that out for ourselves. I encourage you to have a glass of water, a journal, maybe you'll take some notes while we talk, and you'll learn how this applies for you. Let's get started.

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**Jen:** Hey, there everyone. I am here with my guest today, Trina McNeilly. And she's the author and founder of La La Lovely where she's been writing and building community online for 13 years sharing matters of the heart and design related finds. Trina has this amazing eye for beauty. I'm so

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excited to have her on today to also talk about uncluttering our souls. Doesn't that just sound like what we all want, uncluttering our souls? So, Trina lives in Nashville, Tennessee with her husband and her four kids. Welcome to the show, Trina.

**Trina:** Thank you having me, Jen. I'm so happy to be here.

**Jen:** So, your kids are off today, and you have construction going on in the area so I said, "Well, we'll just record, it's okay, everyone can handle real life." So, I'm so glad you're here, yeah.

**Trina:** Yes, thank you. Yeah, real life, there's no escaping it, even when we plan and try to make things perfect, life just doesn't let it be that way but that's okay. It's a good thing.

**Jen:** Yeah, for sure. For sure. So, what does it mean to you to unclutter the soul?

**Trina:** Yes. So, I love to define what I mean by soul because I think we use that word a lot. Sometimes we use it interchangeably with heart or spirit. But when I'm talking about the soul what I'm referring to is your mind, your will, and your emotions. So, uncluttering your soul is really kind of going through everything on the inside, that inner life, that narrative that you have running. I kind of call it the white noise in your mind. It's going through all of that and seeing what's in there and maybe what's causing issues or problems for you, holding you back in ways and begin to sort through it.

So, I look at everything through the lens of home. I love home. I love design and décor. So, I talk about us being a living home. And then of course we have our lived in home. So just as you want to unclutter, declutter the home that you live in so that it's livable. We need to kind of have some maintenance and unclutter our souls so that our living home is livable.

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**Jen:** So, what are some types of clutter that can kind of dirty up our souls? Maybe I used the wrong word, dirty up sounds evil, but clutter us, yeah.

**Trina:** Yeah, take up space. We all want to create space in our lives. And I think that that's also on the inside as well. And we want to create space for the things that we long for like peace and joy. So, soul clutter for me, I can just give you some examples of some of my own soul clutter and that's what I do in the book. Other people may have other forms that's unique to them. And that's why the process that I share is a process everybody can go through but it's going to be unique to you, kind of like a build out of a custom closet.

So, some of my soul clutter of course has been that narrative, what white noisy stories, or these lines that I've been telling myself for a long time. And if you begin to pay attention you might notice that there are ones that have been there since childhood. Other forms of clutter for me have been emotional pain. I was a little too close to it to really understand what it was. Stress, some of these things can be there's everyday stress. And then there's chronic stress, anxiety, depression. Sometimes it can go into bad beliefs that we have or coping mechanisms, behavioral patterns.

When we don't deal with these things they can go into an inordinate amount of soul clutter into things like addiction and things that we certainly can't sort through on our own and we need help.

**Jen:** Wow, well said. I mean I think I'm listening and I'm thinking everyone listening would want to declutter all of those things you're talking about. So, what is the process? How do we know what we need to declutter? And what are the steps to help us do it?

**Trina:** Yeah. Well, I have many, many steps in the book. But there's three overarching ones that really simplify the process. And the neat thing is I'm finding in my life as I've gone through this in very long form. Writing a book

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is an interesting thing, you kind of have to live it out first. So, you're going through this for a long time. But now that I've done that, I'm kind of doing it in short form. So, there's three overarching steps, three sections of the book.

And the first one is to observe. And I think we can't start with that observing but I want people to pay attention to the soundtrack of their own soul. So many times, we're on social media, we're mirroring what other people are saying or feeling. But we have to really tune in and see what's going on in the inside of us. And for some people that comes more naturally. I'm one of those people because I'm a writer so I like to observe and pay attention. But I had to start to dig a little bit deeper.

To me it wasn't just, this is what I'm feeling, and I write about it in my journal. I had to pay attention and find out, I'm having physical symptoms in my body. And I'm just thinking, what is this? Of course, it's something majorly is wrong. I kind of write about a whole story, we're not to get into it now in the book, ending up in the ER, having a panic attack and being a little bit like, what do you mean? This is just anxiety. But my anxiety was trying to tell me something. And then what it was, is I was dealing with chronic stress in my life.

So, we kind of have to – it's like a delayering process, observing, really pay attention. Because when we pay attention to what's going on in our lives on the inside of us, paying attention precedes change. Some of us want to get ahead into the action and some of us like me, want to just keep observing and have a hard time taking action. So, each chapter is actually an action step because what I found was after paying attention I had to go on and take some action steps because action really activates change in our life. So, paying attention is that first step that you want to take.

**Jen:** Just seeing what's happening in there. So, you're saying those emotions are trying to tell us something like your anxiety was?

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**Trina:** Yes. They really are. And sometimes we're a little too close to it. We're so used to it. I write a lot about that in the book that sometimes we're really a little too comfortable with our soul clutter, just as you might be in actual physical clutter because it's familiar. And even though some of the things that we're dealing with are painful or difficult, they're familiar to us. And as you begin to unclutter your soul, or start a healing journey, or walk towards freedom in your life, it can be kind of scary.

Because even though that's what we want, we want this wide open space, we want freedom. When it's unknown to us it's just different. It doesn't mean that it's bad or scary, it's just different. So sometimes we have to invite other people in to help us observe. I say that a lot of people have help to clutter your soul up over the years. Some intentionally, some unintentional, but people are just part of our journeys.

So, there's going to be people that are going to be part of your journey to unclutter your soul as well. Whether that's maybe a good friend that's telling you the truth and sometimes that's hard to hear. Or you say, "Oh, no, no, no." But those words are really frain and later when you're ready to sit down and observe, and process, and pay attention to what they're telling you, that can really begin to open the door to change.

So, friends, counsellors, therapists, maybe even doctors when you're dealing with anxiety or depression. We have to invite other people in to help us begin to unclutter our souls.

**Jen:** Well said, and coaches often for some of that work, yes.

**Trina:** Yes, absolutely, yes.

**Jen:** Yes. So, what is your story that led you to this? I find that most of us, we all go through struggles. And I've found it's really powerful when

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someone struggles, lead them to want to help others. Well, you're obviously doing that so I'm guessing there's some kind of a struggle that you've been through that helped you take that next step, to take what you've learned and help others. So, what is that story for you?

**Trina:** Yeah. So, for me I think I was managing in life. I have a little quiz on my website now that will help people discover how well they manage stress and overwhelm. But for a season, I was managing. I had little children, four to be exact, a newborn and then one that was 18 months and then two that were a little bit older. My husband was starting a business. So, there's a lot of ups and downs with that when you're starting a business financially. And I was managing.

And then in the midst of that my parents announced that they were going to get a divorce after almost 40 years of marriage. And at the time I was living with my little family in my childhood home. And it kind of came out of left field for me. And it just really kind of turned my world upside down. And suddenly the floodgates of coping with mild depression, that would bother me once a month, or anxiety. It just turned chronic and something that was just completely out of my control.

So also, it just seemed to open up Pandora's box. My dear grandparents began dying. I ended up having to leave that childhood home. There was addiction in the family. All kinds of things that were all attached to a great sense of loss. Just layers and layers of loss and grieving. So that is a really bite sized short clip of how everything really was extremely cluttered for me. And it was really about a 10 year process of from then till now. And probably for about the past five years I really began to do this uncluttering of the soul, pay attention.

And it was my grandma who kind of helped me start this process. She pointed out. "You have a lot of emotional pain." She would send me books, I called them soul care packages. And I picked up the book and I was like,

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“This isn’t for me.” But I put it on the shelf. And it planted a little seed in my heart. And one day, random day, I was probably struggling to face the day, got my kids to school. I was really good about managing all of the have to’s. But then after that I didn’t function very well.

I picked up that book and I began to see, yeah, there is so much going on in the inside. And it’s so much deeper. Everything that’s happening is triggering deeper pains and wounds that I haven’t dealt with. So that’s a quick synopsis. I write in more detail about that in that book, in my first book, La La Lovely as well.

**Jen:** I don’t think anyone perfectly allows all emotions to pass through, even the most skilled therapists, and psychiatrists, and whatever. But we all kind of pick up some clutter in our souls, like you said, all these things. You mentioned addiction. You mentioned divorce. Other people might experience death. And well, you had that too. And then prison is one I’ve heard people carry a lot of shame for. There’s all these things that happen where we think we’re alone.

And I love that you’re talking so openly about this because we all have life. Life is 50% easy, 50% hard. And there are tools to help us unclutter, declutter our souls, so to speak. So, I’m so glad you’re doing this. So, if someone listening wanted to kind of get started, what would be the first three steps, really clear steps they could do today to start this process? Before your book arrives from Amazon or wherever.

**Trina:** Yeah. So, we talked about observing. And like I said, sometimes we need help. If you order the book there is a great tool in there to help you inventory your clutter. The second step that I didn’t mention yet is to own. So, once I began to observe all that was happening, I had to do the hard work of owning. And so, everybody’s story’s different. A lot of my story, it was stuff going on around me. I was kind of in the wake of other people’s



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story. So, I went through a long season of, well, this isn't fair. And I didn't cause this to happen.

And I'm having to deal with all this. And it's causing extreme hurt and pain in me. And kind of could go off into that victim mindset. But I had to take ownership where I could. I still have to do that, every day own, I feel this, I see this, but why am I feeling this way? So, I was dealing with chronic stress. I had to begin to own how I was maybe complicit in that, was I staying up late or eating tons of junk food? Yes, I was. So, we take ownership.

And then that third step is overcome. And that was a really loaded one for me to use because it seems like it puts a bow on it. If you do this then you're going to overcome, and everything will be better, and you'll move on. Well, as I started to study overcome I began to look at it in a couple of different ways. And one is, it's still a process. We never fully overcome everything in this life. It's something that we can practice, it's overcoming. It's something that we do.

And the second one and probably most important for me is that as a believer we are called overcomers. So, it's not something that I have to really try to achieve. Again, I look at it like a practice. But it's who I am as a person because of Christ living in me. So, it takes the pressure off. A lot of times when we're doing this deep soul work, you do, you want to get to the other side. But it's a process and sometimes you feel like you're going in circles. And that's okay because you can circle up the mountain.

In fact, that's what hikers do, they're called switchbacks, you don't just go straight up when it's a steep incline. You circle your way to the top. So, I just want to, I love to encourage people with that. And what I also love to tell them is, when you're in the process of it, there is peace and joy, and you can experience that. You don't have to wait till you're on the other side

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of hardship, or problems, it's available to you today. In fact, it's going to help you do that journey and practicing overcoming.

**Jen:** I love that. I love that switchback analogy. We just hiked last summer and there was a point where we were going down for a long time. And then to my shock we were actually at the top. I don't know how that happened, but it felt like a down.

**Trina:** Yeah, yeah, that's cool.

**Jen:** So, we do have the ups and downs and we can still get to the destination, so yes. Well, Trina, where can people find you if they want to follow your blog, La La Lovely or learn more, get access to your book? Tell us all of the things.

**Trina:** Yeah. So, the book, Unclutter Your Soul is found wherever books are sold. You can get it on Amazon, Barnes & Noble. And you can find everything about me on my website which is [trinamcneilly.com](http://trinamcneilly.com). M-C-N-E-I-L-L-Y. Or you can just go to [trinamcneilly.com/unclutteryoursoul](http://trinamcneilly.com/unclutteryoursoul). And all the goodies are there. It will tell you more about the book. You can take that fun little quiz to see where you might be at, how well you're managing stress and overwhelm, and what the next step for you might be.

**Jen:** Okay. Thank you so much for being here. We appreciate it.

**Trina:** Thanks, Jen, it was a really fun time.

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So, there you have it, uncluttering your soul is possible. I know for me some of my favorite ways to do this are to do my Be Her morning ritual where I take some steps that help me to fill up my soul and to look inward

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so I can see what's going on there, making that a habit. I know some of you probably meditate, or pray, or journal, all of these are fantastic tools for looking inward. I also love to do the Feel It To Heal It method. I love EFT tapping.

What's amazing is there are brilliant powerful fantastic tools out there that can help us clean out our souls. So, I loved getting to talk about this with Trina today. Well, my friends, I love you, you deserve to have a light, vibrant, happy soul because when you do that everyone around you benefits. When you're shining out the brightest version of yourself, no pressure that you have to do it for others, but when you feel amazing, others get to have the gift of being in proximity to you.

And because of mirror neurons in our brains, they will pick up on that and feel amazing too. Mood, happiness, really are contagious and that's what this podcast is all about. So, my friends, I love you, you've got this, and I will see you again next time. Until then make it a vibrant and happy week. Take care.

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