

S1:E13 - listening-to-the-wisdom-within-to-pave-a-new-path-a...

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SPEAKERS

Kim Kucinich, Jennifer Malcolm



Jennifer Malcolm 00:10

Welcome to the Jennasis Speaks podcast, The Transformative Power of Women's Stories, a platform that empowers women storytelling to promote collective vulnerability, acceptance and healing. I am your host, Jennifer Malcolm, self made entrepreneur, women advocate and life balance expert. Welcome back to the next episode of Jennasis Speaks podcast The Transformative Power of Women's Stories, where every woman has a story and every story matters. I'm your host, Jennifer Malcolm founder and president of Jennasis and Associates. And with me today is a dear heart friend, Kim Kucinich, and she's here to tell her story. And before we jump into this, I'm going to read a short bio about her and we're going to jump into the story that she is ready to share. Kim personage founder of you can stop the madness is a relatable motivational speaker and personal coach in Kim's workshop on the 11 practices to awaken the wisdom within and soon to be book, Kim helps people, especially women to awaken the wisdom within a tap into their personal power, in order to create the experience of life they say they want. Alright, so welcome Kim to the show. So excited. I have seen your face a little bit through COVID. You and I can get deep really fast. And so I've been so looking forward to this time with you. So welcome to the podcast.



Kim Kucinich 01:31

Thank you for having me excited about your new adventure, and what you're doing for the world.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 01:36

Thank you and I there are a handful of women and you know this from our friendship and story. But there's a handful of women who are those courage, people who give you courage, and you're one of those people in my life through the years that you have spoken life and courage and faith and hope and you can do it. And I know you've called me your little sister through the years, and you are part of our wedding and the wedding our wedding celebration. But you're not that much older. So definitely, the sisterhood between the two of us is so precious. And I'm very grateful for you. Oh, today we're going to start about hearing your story about your childhood and your relationship with your mom. And that's really our focus today of your ratio with your mom. So why don't you just begin with the audience of you know what it was like for you growing up? Or what was like your relationship with your mom?

K

Kim Kucinich 02:30

Yeah, so it's, um, my mom and I were really, really good friends. And I think that's could be true for a lot of women and then not so true for a lot of others. Right? So it's just depends on life, right? But my mom and I happen to have a relationship, you know, during some really challenging times that not every woman goes through. And it's almost like my mom and I went through a war together. What do you mean by that?

J

Jennifer Malcolm 02:57

I have a unique relationship with my mom. And I'm very much like my dad. So I grew up very much. I was my dad's. You know, I was the outdoorsy girl, sports girl. My sister was like my mom, my mom is involved in my business. And we've been through a lot of wars. I've put her through some words. But what does that mean for you as far as what you guys had to walk through?

K

Kim Kucinich 03:17

Yeah, so I am a child survivor of domestic violence. And so for over 15 years, my mom was in a emotional and physically abusive relationship. And so there's no other way to describe it than feeling like you've gone through a war together. And so, you know, from the age of probably eight, to maybe eight to 18. So that's about 10 years. There were treacherous and dangerous, scary. uncertainty, always on the horizon. And so trying to be

a mom and a daughter through all of that was, you know, there's no, there, there's no blueprint. There's no directions. It doesn't come with a way to grow together, or a way to learn or evolve together and have a regular mother and daughter relationship.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 04:16

So was it mostly survival? Was it playful? Was it every day was different based on the atmosphere of your house? But what was what was like a day to day for you, you and your mom?

K

Kim Kucinich 04:28

Yeah. So you just never knew where the anger was coming from. And you know, I think that it was just always uncertain. You never knew what the next day would hold. And so you would brace yourself for almost anything. And so I think what happened as you grew up in a family of uncertainty, it really, truly paved the way for my discussions and coaching on being resilient. Because when you don't know what the next move is, you just dance with life. And I can't say that it felt like dancing back then. But now, when things are much, let's say those conditions aren't present, the conditions are much easier than how they were growing up in a household where there's not a lot of love and not a lot of structure and not a lot of emotional security that you learn as you go and grow. And that's, that's a concept that, you know, it's kind of timeless, learn as you go and grow.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 05:30

Sure. So you said it was from the age of eight to 18? What happened at 18 that either changed the relationship or the dynamic of you and your mom?

K

Kim Kucinich 05:40

Yeah. So interestingly enough, I just not that anyone had really ever gone to college in my family, I'm the first person that left to go to school, and I just shared with my parents that I'm going to go away to school, and that actually gave my mom the chance to leave my father. So a new journey started at that point.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 06:00

Wow. Yes, you continue that relationship with your mom and your dad? Or were you just I'm going to go off to college and, and leave, you know that behind for a little bit? What did what was it like for you? enter that God? space?

K

Kim Kucinich 06:13

So yeah, so I went away to school. And I continued to have a relationship with my mom, and my dad was pretty hard to have a relationship with he wasn't, he wasn't well, right. Right.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 06:24

So as you are going through college and becoming your version of your adult self, and having that resilience that you're using that vocabulary now that you didn't maybe have, as a 12 13 14 year old girl, what changed in college or what what started getting birth in college as as you're entering some new stages, experiences that you didn't have growing up?

K

Kim Kucinich 06:50

Yeah, so just take a step back real quick. My mom had always been very concerned about me, dating, she was so concerned about, did I get the right discernment skills to allow the right people to come into my life. She clearly, clearly at the end of all of it, realize that she didn't do the best job picking the right people to be in her life. And so she just truly, when I left for college, she loved my high school boyfriend. And she was like, I think you're making such a big mistake doing this. And I'm like, Well, I really feel the need, I feel the pull to do this for myself, and I'm going to go do it. And it just didn't work out that the two of us were going to be together. So that was that was one main thing when I left to go to college, how concerned she was about who those people were going to be in my life, because she clearly got that if you don't pick the right people, your life trajectory could end up being so different than you want it to be.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 07:51

And that is why so I mean, if I look at, you know, how my parents guided me and my sister growing up, as I'm navigating a 19 year old, almost 18 year old, almost 16 year old parent, you know, we do like that isn't a concern of mine of you know, you are who you hang around with and that influence. And I'm sure that your mom was just trying to continue to put nuggets of wisdom into your heart and your soul. And how did that work? Then as you're navigating through college, you are a solid? No party girl type of girl in college. I did. All right, right? Yeah.

K

Kim Kucinich 08:32

Nailed me. So I had a lot of fun in school, and I went to school. So yeah, so no, so she lived that was probably her biggest concern is who? Who are going to be the people in my life who might be surrounded with and who am I going to date? And so that was a big thing. And the bigger thing was the week, maybe three weeks out of college? No, no, I'm still in college. I don't college, the last few months of college. I was having a hard time getting out of bed. And I couldn't understand it. I'm like, Where is my zest? I pretty spunky most of the time. jumping out of bed in the morning is never been my thing. I'm like, let's go. Yeah. But it started wearing on me and I felt like something was not working inside of me. And I left college with that same feeling. I had that through the beginning of my first job. And I remember just going I need to talk to somebody I don't feel right. I felt like I was fighting against some current that I didn't understand. And it was an internal current. It wasn't coming anywhere from outside of me. And I thought at first I thought well, you know, it's first job jitters. It's new people. It's, you know, getting a car and getting to work on time. Like you could run into college class late with your books and sneak in the door but that isn't going to work out so well in your first job. So



Jennifer Malcolm 10:02

there wasn't a trigger that something happened that you're like, you know, I lost my desk, it was just this navigation of change, stress new stimuli around you.



Kim Kucinich 10:12

It was a slow knowing inside, it was just a something that was growing inside of me a feeling of Gosh, I just am not excited about the rest of my life. Wow.



Jennifer Malcolm 10:24

So what? Alright, so you went into counseling? That's a big I mean, that's a big statement. That's a big statement. Just 21. And I'm sure many of the audience who is listening to that this right now has felt that that has felt that question, maybe we weren't, didn't have the courage to speak it out, or write it out or address it. But say that phrase again, because it's very powerful, because I know it will resonate, and so many people. And then where did you take that? or What did you do with that?



Kim Kucinich 10:56

Yeah, it wasn't excited about the rest of my life, I was just getting out of college. And you know, your life is different thing you've been working for, you're going there. And I wasn't excited. And I didn't make sense to me, it didn't match with how I thought it like, like, the

rest of it is just about ready to go. And I wasn't right, though I am, I went to see a counselor, I literally was just like, I need to talk to somebody, the people around me like that's an interesting thing, right? The people around you, they know you as you are and you can share things Oh, you're just, you know, they'll say things like, oh, you're just nervous about your new job, or you're just nervous about this, or, you know, there's a lot going on, you're moving from being a college campus to your new first apartment. And I'd be like, Yeah, I'd listen to all that. But none of it really resonated, I knew something else was not working inside of me. I just had a lot going for me, and I just couldn't connect to it.

J Jennifer Malcolm 11:55

No, and that's true. Because as raising, you know, My son, you know, going off to college, he's taking a gap semester, this this fall. Our second one is in college and that perspective of, you know, I try to give wisdom of, you know, it's it's normal, this is adulting, this is, you know, these stresses are normal. But there's, there's a piece that I do need to be reminded of, and I appreciate you saying it of, that's still my version of this story. It's how I filter it, it's how I would have dealt or felt with it. And yes, as we, as we age, we have wisdom, we've have experiences that we can share to you know, the 1921 you know, year old, young adults, but it's still your own experience. And for you to have that awareness that thank you for yes, these could be adding to a layer of stress. But there's something deeper. So you went into counseling, and how did that help or not help you?

K Kim Kucinich 12:56

So, you know, I was fortunate to find someone that I connected with, I think that's just super important. I felt, you know, first person out of the gate to find someone that could hear you and not tell you that you should be feeling this way or this is how it should be or this is not normal or like so she did a lot of listening and really helped me listen to myself learn how to listen to myself. So that

J Jennifer Malcolm 13:28

the nine in your your soul. Was there any other awareness like Alright, this is more and maybe it's not maybe it's just that night and we have to trust our body and our spirit to speak up. But was there anything more that said, you know, this is deeper than you know, Kim just having a bad day, a bad month, the bed semester? You know, is there anything else that triggered that for you?

K Kim Kucinich 13:55

So, you know, this is way before my mom passed away, obviously. So this is I'm 21 22 23 somewhere in there somewhere. But truly No, it was my spirit. It was my life force. It was my lack of spirit. It was my lack of life force and I just didn't have a good explanation for the rest of my life is ahead of me. How come I'm not excited or why am I disengaging? That's just not my personality. You know, I was in sports, volleyball, basketball, softball students Senate President, I had been, you know, excited about all these things and performing and achieving. And it was slow. I was slowly like air going out of a balloon and slowly dissipating. And I just touched it. Yeah.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 14:43

So what did you learn through the counseling? What did what did the counselor help you understand or arrive to?

K

Kim Kucinich 14:52

Yeah, so it was really interesting about that time was I got really present to describing my childhood as a potential war, that was like what I had been through what I had gone through earlier in my life isn't, you know, isn't a pretty story, and I just got very good at dressing it up. And she's like you're telling your story, do you realize this, you're telling your story with a smile on your face? Wow. And I didn't know that I was doing that. So, um, you know, the description to her was? So Lynn, let me tell you a little bit my childhood.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 15:33

For those of you who are listening, Kim is modeling this big smile on her face.

K

Kim Kucinich 15:39

Yes, good. So yes, so basically, I am a child survivor of domestic violence. And I remember the first time that my father hit my mother and drugged her across the room, and I was sent to my room and was told it was none of my business. And it was just so shocking to me. And years and years and years of that type of behavior, there's nothing to smile about. And you certainly don't learn that you have any power in the situation, you feel helpless growing up in that scenario. And over what seemed to be a lifetime, within, you know, from age eight, 9-10 to 18, I had experienced everything from physical violence, emotional violence with my mom, not me personally, my mom had to fight off being shot by my dad, and he would follow her to work with a gun. Wow, he wound up getting shot, they wound up wrestling down to the ground, and because he had had too much to drink, and I'm sure he wound up getting shot versus her. And we had people come up, people,

strangers, just come in our house, my, my dad would invite strangers to drink in our house, I'd come home to perfect strangers, prescription drugs, my dad was selling his prescription drugs to people who would come off the street, wow, he would go out. And he would pick through people's garbage to get money for beer, and money for his prescription drugs. And you just never knew what each day would bring. And so as I'm sharing the story with her, I'm like, Well, you know, this is kind of what everyday life was like for many, many years. And that's why I'm here. it with a smile on your face with a smile on my face.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 17:44

So at what point do you feel like that, you know, facade, that shield? You know, was that facade there just for self protection was a denial? Was it avoidance? You know, what, what was it that the counselor was able to, you know, pull back like, you know, you talking about trauma in your childhood is not a smiling experience. But that was your way to cope with it or your body's way to cope with it. So where did that go from there?

K

Kim Kucinich 18:13

I guess I think I got present to it. I wasn't, I guess it's probably the first time I've ever told anyone the story, quite frankly, I never really talked about it till I was 21. You think about your question. So I think I'm telling the story for the first time to someone who understood and who listened. And she made me feel brave, that was really kind of cool. And that was kind of cool. I was like, unbraided didn't feel too brave. I just got present to Wow, that's a lot to go on for that many years for a young person to experience. And I think there's just an awareness that she pointed it out to me. And I thought that was really important. I couldn't have seen that myself. Some things we just can't do for ourselves. Someone has to witness it. And you've got to be open to hearing it. You can't you can I couldn't have I couldn't have done that for myself.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 19:08

And as as I've interviewed other women on this podcast and talking about childhood trauma, or childhood abnormalities, were you aware that this was not normal growing up? Or was it because it was your day in day out? Going in with your mom being unsure what your dad is, was going to be like? I mean, that was your normal, but as a child because you recognize that that wasn't a normal family setting. Or

K

Kim Kucinich 19:39

I'm sorry, go ahead.



Jennifer Malcolm 19:40

No, or or was it you know, as you got older, that you look back and like that was unhealthy. That was not a normal childhood experience.



Kim Kucinich 19:49

I think when you're a child, you don't have much to compare it to. So you don't have the same ability to discern and you don't know to look and compare. You're kind of going through life. And you're riding your bike and you get on your skates, and you come in and you're like, Oh, another day like this. So I would say that you don't know to compare. You don't think to compare? You don't. And I think when you're, you're that age, you're just in that tunnel of your own life. Right? I think it's when we get older is when we start comparing. So I think that that's what feels right to me is that you just kind of keep going that this is how life is and you don't think is this if this is how life is for other people. I don't think that that thought ever crossed my mind.



Jennifer Malcolm 20:41

So as this woman empowered you to feel brave,



Kim Kucinich 20:45

yes.



Jennifer Malcolm 20:45

And realizing, you know, I'm telling this this story with a smile on my face. How was she able to navigate you from? Hey, this is a safe space. This is someone that's listening. Someone's an advocate? What tools was she able to give you? To get you through some of the something's not right in my gut that we talked about 10 minutes ago? To the other side?



Kim Kucinich 21:14

Yeah, so I think my personality, again, was someone who is hungry to learn and curious. And, you know, I was already doing my own reading and digging, like, she gave me stuff. And I'm, like, come in with like, a book thing. pile of books, like and, you know, me, I'm, I'm always a highlighter. And I'm like, people get a book after me. I'm like, well, you don't really have to read the whole thing. I've already did the cliff notes for you. So I was just I

became a student of myself. And I think she was intrigued with me. Because I was just hungry to learn and hungry to get to, why do I feel so sad? I just wanted to know. And so I think our relationship was so symbiotic from the very beginning, because of my quest to get to the bottom of why don't I feel happy? And why am I sad? So really just became, I almost felt like an understudy from the very beginning of working with her. So we really got to quickly a lot of things because I was ready, I was hungry, I wanted to know, and I wanted to really get on with the rest of my life. So it really just became, I don't want to say it was easy, but it was hard, and then refreshing, and then hard, and then refreshing. And then sad and scary, and a whole range of really raw human emotions. And my mom was alive at the time. So at that point, I was able to tell her about all of this work and felt like then I was able to kind of help my mom come along a bit.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 22:55

Yeah, that's awesome. And for those of you who are listening, I also win a prize, because I am on our journeys, of healing. We're all different places of awareness, willingness, and desire to change. And the whole I know, this is my heart, I know it becomes hard, like wherever you're at, in that journey, to have a drop of hope for activation, you had a drop of hope to pick up the the phone to call a counselor to see there's so many tools, resources, women around you. And it sounds like Kim was extremely right, you were extremely right, going into this. We're all we've all gone in, I know I've gotten into counseling sessions where my heart is so locked down, and my arms are crossed, my body language is so defensive and shut down. And other times through seasons where I'm like Leaning, leaning in and you know, activating my heart and soul to heal. And so I want to encourage the listeners today with it, where wherever you are at on that journey. Just continue to take a baby step forward, every little, you know, yes, in your heart is when a position you down the road in ways that you won't see so. So as you went through this, how did your relationship it sounds like your relationship with your mom, you know, continued to deepen and grow, you're able to bring back tools. So now going into your adult self. How did that work in because I know your mom was so concerned about relationships. How is your relationship with her? And then where did that that journey go?

K

Kim Kucinich 24:27

Yeah, I think at first she was really excited about the work I was doing. And then I think she probably grew a little tired of me, because I just became this cheerleader. I don't know you see those movies where there's regular cheerleaders and they're doing their thing and then there's this hyper overactive you know, blowing the whistle in their ear. You can do it right. I think she was just like, down girl. So I could see where I got a little note. I was annoying at some point and But that's kind of how my mother and daughter relationship,

you know, through my 20s. It was beautiful it was it felt like we were weren't able to really have that early on. And it's not like my mom didn't do all these amazing things while she was in the face of such turmoil, like, I will tell you. It's just so amazing. When I look back, like, I think part of one of the things we were talking about is, I could tell my mom anything today, right? I would say, I would say this. Thank you, Mom, I feel deeply loved by you. I wish you would have known how to love and care for yourself as much as you did me and you were smarter and stronger and braver than you ever gave yourself credit for. And I brag all the time about all of your efforts to sell the most Girl Scout cookies for me. And I believe you were the top salesman for every candy bar sales that we did to pay for our volleyball, basketball and softball uniforms. I used to think you dump them out in the garbage came back for a refill, because you used to sell them so fast. But the ladies after you passed away, I was able to meet with the ladies you worked with in your office. And they told me that there was not a day that you weren't standing and walking around the office, like he had a paper route selling candy bars to them. So this woman to her spirit was still under the condition she was living in. It still always showed up for us. So in the face of tremendous personal challenges. Thank you for seeing sports as a path and a training ground for me to learn how to focus, learn about commitment, learn about personal confidence. And the concept of team I just love even to this day, being a part of something bigger than myself and being a team and my mom helped me get that. To this day. I love the feeling of being on a good team. And thank you for helping me with my campaign to become the student senate president. My mom was serious. And she had given a son up for adoption before me. So David, the son that she gave her up, I would tell her, David, the son, you gave up for adoption, he found me five years ago. And I made sure he knew how much you thought about him. And I gave him all the letters you wrote to make sure that he knew how much love you had for him. And I've learned so much being your daughter. And I know you had so many regrets. And I'm making my days here and life count in service of others in your name.



Jennifer Malcolm 27:45

Wow. Wow, that is powerful. Like thank you for sharing that. That's beautiful.



Kim Kucinich 27:55

So we got to just have this amazing friendship blossom in my 20s. Had I not really got to the bottom of why I felt so sad. That would not have been possible, I would have just I'm not even sure what the what what I would have ended up being like, but I wouldn't have evolved and I wouldn't have become who I am today had I not paid attention to how I was feeling inside. And it didn't match the outside.



Jennifer Malcolm 28:27

Wow, that was powerful. So how old were you? You know, your mom has passed? What were you when that?



Kim Kucinich 28:34

I was 32. And I'm 52.



Jennifer Malcolm 28:37

Okay, so 20 years ago, you'll discover things about your mom after she passed that that were treasures to your heart or just small gifts that you didn't know.



Kim Kucinich 28:50

Yeah, so during those 20s when I was being the cheerleader, and I'm trying to help her resolve things in her heart of how things turned out, and the choices that she made and the life experiences. I probably was hard on her. And I'm you just don't know what it's like to be someone else. And it's easy to read a book and put all the summary points out and PowerPoint them for your mother and your 20s and hope that she is you know, works through it. We all work thing. We all work through things differently and at different times. And we're sometimes we're ready for those conversations. Sometimes we're not so what I learned is what I learned later on, is that no matter how much you want to get to the bottom of something that it's really easy to get in your own way. It's really easy to get in your own way.



Jennifer Malcolm 30:00

And I look at my, you know, relationship with my mom. And then I can mirror that and look at the relationships with my children. And I'll use my girls in this because we're talking about mother daughter relationships. And there are times when I have shared things with my mother, that I've never felt such tender compassion, and understanding and non judgement of her arms around me whether it was physically, emotionally, spiritually, and there are times that she knows this, I know this, my feeling is like we butt heads. We are like, we butt heads, and I'm stubborn, she's stubborn. And it's hard. And there's things that you know, the relationship aspect comes in. But when I have shared things about trauma in my life, that she did not know, the well of compassion, though well, of understanding the well of your my daughter, period. And that gives me such depth as a woman as a friend, but you never know what people are going through in their life and their

experiences. And when we read a book, and whether it's even the most pronounced, cuz I know, but you and I are both avid readers and podcast listeners, and we love to encourage our own hearts and spirits. But we often then take out, you know, from our perspective to others, and put on them what we've learned versus allowing them to learn for themselves and allow them to evolve in their own journey, because we're also different, uniquely different. And that when I look at my two amazing daughters, it's the, the lessons I've learned through my kids is powerful and hard. And there are days that I want to, you know, turn in my hand like this, you know, I'm done, I am done. And that I, you know, I would, I would do it 100 times over. But how you put you put that of, you know, what we learned and how we then present it to other people, you know, is can be hard and arrogant or self centric, and allowing them just to, you know, evolve on their own.

K

Kim Kucinich 32:22

And that's what's challenging, like, you know, for you finished, I apologize, sir. Good. I just, I think, what's that, I'm not a mom. But I can imagine, like, just with all the learning that I have i all the reading and I'm just so curious to dig deep into things and want to share it, then you want to share it, you want to give it away. And you're like I, I want to give you the easy button, like, here are the cliff notes, I literally can give these to you right now. And you don't have to go through all that. And here they are, like, I've color coded them all for you. I'm going to make your pain easier because I went before you and I can make it better and easier for you. So please let me and I'm not everyone's ready for that Jenn, just like you said, so I think that that would be really tough with children not to be able, I mean, I know that's what my mom tried to do with me. And I, I guess that honoring our own path. And it's hard to even do that, like, in relationship with Kevin or, you know, anybody you're, you know, with Chad, and you go, No, you got to let people have their own journey. And it's gonna play out the way it needs to for them. And it's hard to keep your hands off of it and your mouth closed and just your ears open. so that people can go through it so that they get what they're supposed to get out of it.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 33:53

And they it's so powerful because last week I was listening to I was going through the second time untainted by glenlyn oil. And and era's I was listening to it on Audible this time. And we were it was the chapter and we want to protect we want to give our kids the easy button we want we want to give them you know, five, I think was like I'm gonna give you every type of cream cheese and every type of bagel in this story. And you know, you giving them only two choices. You know, it doesn't, it's not inclusive to everyone else and making sure everyone gets participation awards and make sure everyone you know, and what it does teach, you know, is, is there's no creativity, there's no there's no pain points,

there's no struggle, and witnessed when when we struggle, we learn when we struggle, we get creative when we struggle, we evolve resilient, yes, and we can be resilient. And so that's that piece of you know, we do want to give our wisdom back to the child, our children and there it is good that there is you know the fathers to the sons and Mothers to the daughters, the things that we can learn and glean, that is important. But really allowing that discovery that struggle to evolve, because that's where your muscles are formed and creativity. And, you know, I remember she was talking about boredom, like, we're so afraid for kids to be bored. And from boredom, you go outside and you shoot hoops from boredom, you sit down and write poetry, from boredom, you know, you create, you draw, you dance, you sing, you do something. And that just triggered that. So I love it.

K

Kim Kucinich 35:33

Thank you for sharing. I love that. That part of her book as well.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 35:38

So when you I heard in the prep that and I didn't know this part about you that you discovered when your mom passed a draft of a book? And what was it like reading words, you know, from your mom, that you had never seen? Maybe maybe knew a lot of the story or you didn't? But how was it just, you know, kind of poring over the the words that she put pen to paper?

K

Kim Kucinich 36:00

Yeah, so what's interesting, she died unexpectedly. She wasn't sick. She was 61. Yeah, that's think, yes, that just was it. So she lives 61 years. And that's a whole lifetime, her lifetime. And I know that we went through this really challenging life together, because our home life. But what was sad. And again, when you're going through something, you're not as present to things and you get into your 20s. And you things are learned, looking back and reflecting. And I just got overwhelmed with a sense that she never knew love for herself deeply. She'd never felt real. And she didn't know peace. And it was a giant awakening for me. I was truly unaware. I mean, I was unaware of those feelings for myself as well. So I was just reading this story about her upbringing and growing up and I was stunned she she had been raped by a family member. And her parents didn't believe her. And so they just used to keep sending her over and every few weeks. And so just listening to the deep sadness, and just put me in a big place of reflection. I know her dying, and her dying actually got me to slow down long enough to reflect on the life that we had together. Because what I did was I had resigned from my job at the time. I was just, you know, I went to my employer, like, I'm really no good to you right now. I, I need to take

some time off. And so I was really glad that I did that. So I literally went through her stuff, but her dying, got me to slow down long enough to reflect on her life on our life together as mother and daughter and my life. And I was like I said 32. And so reading these words, I was busy building my career by I was I was working, I was working really hard. And I was married at the time. And I wasn't married to the right person. So I did not marry a good fit for me. And my ex husband, I both realized we weren't good for each other. So we actually had a mutual split. But reading that book, it almost was, you know, you go out I should have gotten this two years ago. Like if you went to read it earlier, you would have had that wisdom and you could have lived into it. But it's like you just went through with Glennon Doyle's untamed it's like, No, you were supposed to go through that you won't get your lessons. Unless you go through it, you can't go over it, you can't go around it, you can't go under it. You got to go through it to get what you are supposed to get in this lifetime. So reading her stuff was hard, and it was sad. And it was eye opening. I had a very big deep awakening at 32. And I changed the trajectory of my life. And, you know, it's up until that point, and even though I felt like I was progressing well in corporate America, and a lot of the things that stop us personally are the things that also stopped us in our career. You know, wherever you go there you are, right, you take your personal self to you to your professional life. And so I think the biggest thing I got from watching He wrote was I had learned how to give my power away. without even really knowing that I was giving it away was so subtle. And I learned that in giving my power away examples of that were that I would look outside of myself for my answers. Again, when you're looking out there, you're not going to find yourself. I was ignoring my boundaries, I would let people cross my boundaries all the time. And I would always wonder, like, how did how did I get here? Like, how did this happen? And looking back, you're going on? Your boundary was here? You said no. And you caved in and you sold out on yourself, Kim. That's why you're where you're at not close to where you want to be. You sold out on yourself, Kim. Another way that I would give my power away, is I would ignore that inner voice. So that inner voice when I was 21, that was telling me, gosh, I'm really not excited about my future. I feel so sad. And this doesn't make sense. I can't seem to connect with my lifeforce, like I used to what is going on with me. I shut that off. And I stopped listening to that inner voice. So when you give your power away, so you fell out on yourself, you let people cross over your boundaries, and you listen more to the people outside of you than you do to that inner voice inside of you. And you've wandered down a road in a street that you're like, how did I get here, this is nowhere close to where I said I wanted to go. And you suddenly look around, and you find yourself in unfamiliar territory. And you know, we've talked about this before, Jim, your negotiables and your non negotiables. Like, in any situation, you have a choice. And I started handing over that to people. Easily I got Oh, you know, I'm just really busy. Just you you make the decision? Well, when you do that, you clearly have to live with any. You have to live with the consequences of that, because you handed it over to someone else. Oh, you just make up that decision. And you figure that out. And I

live with whatever. Well, when that whatever comes back to you, you're then going to wait a minute, how did we get here? Well, you allowed it. So those are the nuggets that I yeah, those are the nuggets, I excavated from what my mom left behind.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 42:46

And that's beautiful. Because Had you ever come across that book 15 years prior, you probably would not have gleaned any of those things. You mean you but you probably would have learned things about your mom that you didn't know. But the nuggets that now has become a foundation for your your life, your values, your choices, your career, your resilience. He's got a big sign behind her. It says you can stop the madness, you can stop the madness. It's your choice. And as simple of an example, because as you're speaking, there's so many things where I will say to you by Yeah, just just decide on something. And then when they decide I'm mad, or I'm sad, or I'm angry, or I put up a wall or defensive yet I gave him my power. And so when I use my voice and say, You know what, I think it's this way, can you say it this way, it creates dialogue, it creates conversation, it creates compromise, that we can come to something that you know, or maybe I or enlightenment, maybe I see something I didn't see from your perspective, or vice versa. But when you give away your power and your voice, that then you end up somewhere that you don't want to be and you're the only one to blame. And I lived that in my young adulthood and made choices around that, that are harmful. And that put me in bad positions and and that the way you laid it out was brilliant. So well done.

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Kim Kucinich 44:23

Well, and I just would like to add one more thing to that is that what happens then is you've, you've silently agreed. So you've made these on communicated agreements, and now you're living with the consequences of that and it becomes the foundation for the next move. So here you are with this something that you never wanted to begin with. And then the next decision gets layered on top of that, and then then another one gets layered on top of that. Another one gets layered on top of that, and before you know it, your life doesn't look anything like your own. Because you're building it on something that you really didn't fully, powerfully choose.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 45:20

So how would you give advice as someone that may recognize that now, so I recognize I give my power away, I'm in a place where I don't want to be. And maybe I have layered decisions, jobs, relationships, whatever that is on to it. What's an encouragement to someone that may recognize that, like, how do you break out of that? How do you say,

You know what? I have to have change? But where do you go with that?

K

Kim Kucinich 45:46

Yeah, I love that. Thank you. So it's kind of like what happened. My mom kind of gave me that time to reflect she was no longer around to talk to. So I really had to get some clarity. And that only can come from inside of me. So I started going, you know, what do I want my life to look like? And started doing some inventory work? Like what's really important to me? What really matters to me right now? Now, I can answer that question today, on September 3, like, this is what matters to me in September. And then life can come at me and will maybe shift my priorities in October, sure. But if you don't hold a vision, and I'm not saying you need to put a whole vision board together, but you know, each month, you have to put something down that you're shooting for. And if you find yourself, which we all have, you know, what I love doing is help people take the mystery out of what you just described, how did I get here, and so we kind of unravel it. And we excavate how you got where you're at. And it's as simple as taking a piece of paper and getting honest with yourself about what is important, you know, what's working, and what's not working, it's important to see both of those without judging yourself, for how you got there, right, let's just get clarity, mental clarity on what's working, what's not working, and start there. That's the best place to start and then start making the next right step in 24 hour increments, 24 hour increments, otherwise, it is going to become so heavy, and it will feel impossible to get out of the circumstances or the situation you're in. And I will say like, so you know, a job, that's a big decision, a marriage is a big decision a relationship, right? So it didn't happen all of a sudden that things weren't working. And it was gradual. And it happened over a time, it happened, a decision by decision by decision by decision all layered on top of one another. And so it takes, you've got to do some inner work to start unraveling your own brain around it first, how did you get in that situation? getting really honest with yourself and tuning into you. And I'm sure you can go ask other people in your life. But that's more of the same. Right? That's the mess we got into the beginning with we started looking outside of ourselves and didn't feel that competence to hold our vision and hold what we wanted for ourselves. And we caved in and sold out on ourselves. So don't look outside of yourself, hold true. Keep looking and spend time with yourself. That would be the best first place to start. Because even before you go to talk to a coach or a counselor somebody and that's where they're going to have you go like I get excited about helping people self coach themselves. Right? Let's give you the tools, you take the tools and you get to work on you first. Right? So going to those places and having hard conversations with yourself is the best place to start.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 49:13

What anything that I just had this conversation last week with someone important in my life, and they're struggling and and the response was, well, if I just don't do anything, I'm not sure what I'm going to do. So I won't do anything. What's wrong with that? And how I explained it was it it's like being in the ocean, and you're swimming and you're swimming and you're you know you're going along the coastline and you're going and you you stop and you start just treading water and you're like I'm gonna sit here and talk to camera and tread water. And then you know, 10 minutes goes by and you realize that you are 100 yards down the beach from where you are treading water because the power of the water, the currents of the water drift and you drift and stuff I love that you're saying that little activations in 24 hour increments that make change happen. And it doesn't have to be, I have to swim. You know, I don't have to go a mile today. But the activation of my heart My spirit awareness is step one, and having simple yeses, simple activation to continue to push you forward in a positive way making choices than I did yesterday. Yes, that's powerful. Oh,

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Kim Kucinich 50:32

wow. What a great example. And I think the fascinating thing about this, you know, I say we're all a work in progress. We're all evolving, we're all becoming. And it's a, it's an iterative process, you can't become who you are meant to be without trying different things on. That's how you learn. That's how you grow and evolve. And I think one of the most interesting things I say, interesting, and then I say, hard, and then it's interesting. And then it's hard. Because I don't want to pretend that this self inquiry and the self work is easy. It's not. But it could be exciting. And it sure makes life more full and less regrets. And so what I was, I digress. But what I wanted to say was, as we're doing our personal work, and spending time with ourselves, and the people around us are going to be some of the people around us, like some of us don't have the support systems. Some people do, some people don't. I've had both, and I'm fortunate to have it now. And this is people in our lives are sometimes the people that don't want us to change. They like us bright, where we're at. And they like us right where we're at, because it's working for them. So they're not really excited about our internal. Let me go in and how did I get here today, I'm not exactly happy here. And that's like a big, you're not happy, like, then they take it personal. And your work then becomes having to make them feel good about the inner work and the books you're reading, and you're trying to figure some stuff out for yourself, which is a perfectly normal, healthy thing to do. And so I think that just being aware that sometimes the people in your own life are not excited about you going off and doing your work. Because that means their life is going to change. And that's inevitable. And that's good, you're wrong. You're gonna ruffle feathers, you're gonna ruffle feathers, you're gonna upset some people, you're going to show up for holiday in a different personality, a different attitude, a different approach to life, a different way of being, and they're going

to look at you like, Who are you. And they might even say something like, Jennifer is having a midlife crisis. And Jennifer is going to have to say when Well, I hate to disappoint you. But I'm actually melting into who I always was and who I always wanted to be. And I've been so busy worrying about what people think about me, and raising kids and doing things for everybody else, that I finally made time to reflect and find my way back to me.

J Jennifer Malcolm 53:42

That's powerful, that is powerful. Because at the end of the day, there is only one Kim and a day there's only one Jennifer and if we give pieces of our heart or personality or wants away, we're left with a fragmented portion of who we are. And when we can stay true to ourself and we're not going to do it perfectly. But as we continue to practice and grow that muscle of being true to yourself in a very self loving way self worthiness way how powerful and how true and how I use the word resilience, because I know that's your that's your word that we can become and and stop saying yes to all those people around us who want a piece of us.

K Kim Kucinich 54:30

Yeah, you stop abandoning yourself, return to yourself. And of course we can't have a conversation without doing an Oprah quote, right. So I know for sure. You cannot keep giving what you do not have. If you allow yourself to be depleted to the point where your emotional and spiritual tank are running on fumes of habit and everybody loses especially you

J Jennifer Malcolm 55:01

What is a closing word of encouragement or hope that you would like to gift the listeners today?

K Kim Kucinich 55:11

As you know, I've been kind of working on my book and all kinds of stuff and creating this conversation about you can stop the madness. You know, there's this the number one practice is be a yes to what's possible and be a yes to what's possible. You know, you were born, and you're given a name. When you were born, you were given a religion. And when you were born, you were given a nationality. And when you were born, you were given a race. And when you were born, you were given a gender. And then you spend the rest of your life defending that identity. But none of those were choices. They were all given to you and not one did you choose. So be a yes to what is possible and start making your

own choices.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 56:10

It's powerful. And I love that because I know you've been listening to the podcast over the last several months. But that is the foundational piece of every woman where they're at. Capturing hope, spreading the joy, giving out courage, healing wounds, breaking shame, breaking unworthiness, saying I am enough, I am enough, I am enough. And that distinction of your the words, you just said there are a lot of things that are that were given to us that were not our choice. And we still have the power to choose me to make choices to press in, press on. And that's powerful. So would you say you're powerful, thank you, thank you. I would like to encourage the audience because the the piece, and Kim and I have years of history together. But the piece of activation, I would love for you to encourage the audience to do is to write that letter to your mom or jot down some words that you would say to your mom, whether she's passed or not. Or if she's here, and maybe that's something that it's just for you. You can share it with your mom or not, but words that you know if you could say anything to your mom, what would they be because the things that you wrote down, that were treasures in your heart that you that you gifted her, even though she's not here, but you also gifted yourself in that healing journey. So I would encourage women today, pull out a pen pal journal, jot some notes down, maybe it's a Thanksgiving thing, maybe it's something you give at Christmas or next Mother's Day. Maybe it's something you save, and it's just for you, but to really just use that activation in your heart of gratitude and, and things that you want to say to your mom, so. And for those of you who ever get to meet Kim, I would take her out going karaoking karaoking is that a word to go out to karaoke, or get on a call with her and do as a sing jam. She loves to sing. She loves to spread the joy of voice and dance and if you ever are in the proximity to be around her and gifted with that, that

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Kim Kucinich 58:32

one of my favorite stories about Jennifer is we were out having dinner one night and this really quaint, slinky, wonderful, classy restaurant, downtown Cleveland. And we met the most wonderful woman. She was Jenn was she, 80? Yeah, she's 80. And she's dancing to the piano man. She's singing she's dancing with Jennifer and I. And I'm telling you she was not moving like an eight year old. I mean, Jennifer and I were going She's got some moves. And she was her high energy, right high energy. And Jennifer, it started engaging a conversation with our and we're like, Where is this spunk coming from? Like, how do you do this? It's 10 o'clock at night. And she's like, Listen, ladies, I'm 20 year old 20 years old on this side of my body. And I'm 20 year old on the other side, and there is a lot of me in here at 80 years old. Let's hope we all live with that spunk and that spirit and just that warm

thought of her. It's just amazing.



Jennifer Malcolm 59:38

I know it was such a gift that that is pulled the pictures often and a gift of that moment to share that with you so well. Thank you so much for being here today. I am so honored to call you my friend, my colleague, my sister, my someone that has been a mentor coach to me, advocates I am really honored to call you my friend. And I am excited that you are here unable to give some of your time and your wisdom to those that are listening. So it really appreciate it.



Kim Kucinich 1:00:08

Thank you for the opportunity to give away everything I've learned. You are in the right space, Jennifer, you're amazing and inspiring and keep changing the world one person at a time.



Jennifer Malcolm 1:00:19

So thank you for tuning in today. And don't forget that every woman has a story and every story matters and that means you so have a good day. Bye bye. Subscribe to the Jennasis Movement to empower women's voices and reclaim the power over your own narrative.