

my-journey-of-healing-and-self-recovery-a-story-of-survival-...

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SPEAKERS

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. In the next episode of Jennasis Speaks The Transformative Power of Women's Stories where every woman has a story, and every story matters. And that means you, those of you who are tuning in today, and who've been our loyal listeners over the last several months, and hearing the stories of these courageous women, we're doing something a little bit different today, or I'm doing something a little bit different today. And I'm going to share part of my story, as women have been vulnerable and courageous, and opened to sharing their weaknesses, their pasts, their trauma, it gave me a deeper level of courage, and a voice that I didn't even know that I needed, wanted, or desired. I am I'm an open book with those around me. I share my pain, I share my tears, I share my joy, I share my healing. But today I'm going to share part of a story that happened to me. I have a lot of fear. In preparing today, I even tears streaming down my face, I have tears in my eyes now. I'm shaking, which means it's good. I'm pressing through that veil of fear. And on the other side is going to be a deeper level of healing that I've never known. My fear is what will my friends think? What will my family think? What my kids think. And I'm pressing through that fear, to share the story with you. I knew the story would come out someday. But I was thinking when I was doing

gray when I grandkids and different season of life. But today I'm going to share this story. So six years ago, I was on a plane going to Carolinas and in a layover that some people that were traveling to and from Cleveland. And as many of you know, I am very networked in Cleveland, I'm passionate about Cleveland, I grew up I have been here all my life. So someone who has a Cleveland connection. And asking things about my hometown is pretty exciting. So there was our else sitting there. And one of the gentlemen said that he lives in Chicago and would be coming in and out of Cleveland several times for business over the next six months. Very platonic, very just colleague sitting there. And through that we all exchanged numbers. And this person came into Cleveland several times, you know, ask recommendations for restaurants ask for recommendations for places to go things to do. And I readily given that information through via text the email several times over the next I would say eight 910 months, invited me to come a lot of times, there was no no time I never met with him. I never joined in any of the excursions that he and his colleagues were on. And one one night it did work. And I went downtown and met him at the top of the nine and had some drinks and wine and just catching up. And it was early, probably 536 o'clock in the evening. And he was heading out about a half hour later to go out with some of his colleagues and friends to dinner and, and invited me to go and I just said thanks. But no thanks. And I went to the restroom. And I left my wine on the table with this person that I trusted. And we were just colleagues sitting there talking about Cleveland and Cleveland experiences came back and I finished my line and was going to head down to the parking garage to get my car. And as I was walking to the elevator just immediately was not feeling well. And those of you who know me, yes, I love my red wine. But we're not talking about four or five, six classes. We're talking, you know, had a glass of wine and was not feeling well at all. I immediately just felt weak, felt weak in the knees. And he kindly offered Hey, why don't you go lay down in my room. I'm going to go to dinner. And whenever you wake up, you know just feel free to go down and Get your car and leave. And you're always in no shape to join him for dinner, I knew I was in no shape to drive home. So the next best decision in my head at the time was to go lay down in his room. When I woke up later, sometime in the middle of night, I don't know how long I was out, I found this man on top of me and inside of me, and I immediately felt confused, I felt angry. I felt scared. And pushed him off of me and went to the restroom, and grabbed a glass of water and got dressed and laughed. So today's topic is about date rape. Let me pause here and share some alarming statistics with you that we pulled. That comes from rain, our AI n n, it's the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. It's the US is largest anti sexual violence organization with over 430,000 women each year are raped or sexually assaulted in the US. That's over 1100 a day. And either reported cases, girls between the ages of 12 and 34, the highest risk and one out of six women have been the victim of attempted or completed rape sometime in our lifetime. There are long term effects also associated according to rain, that 94% of women deal with PTSD for up to two weeks after 30% deal with at nine months after 33% contemplate suicide. As I'm sharing this, I'm

literally shaking in my studio. And I know I have a champion upstairs waiting for me to embrace me, pull me into his arms, tell me that he loves me. And he's proud of me sharing my story with you today. At this point in my life when this happened, I was a single mom raising three kids with shared custody. And so I didn't tell anyone. I didn't tell anyone for years. I denied it. I kept it quiet. A hidden machine brokenness. And I'm sure it came out sideways in a lot of ways that my kids didn't understand. I'm sure there was increased yelling, I'm sure that there were things that came out sideways around my kids during this time. Increase yelling, triggers, slamming doors, cupboards drinking, just to hide it. Because remember, I didn't tell anyone. And I'm definitely not telling my kids. And so I still had to wake up. Every morning, I pack their lunches, and get them to school and be their mom. I hid this for a really long time. And the questions, accusations, the self hatred, and the unforgiveness that I had toward myself, was unbearable. so much anger, so much anger in my heart. Because I was a girl that knew better. I'm smarter than this. And I'm wiser than this. I know not to leave my drink with strangers in a place. And again, I wouldn't consider this person a stranger. But we teach our kids from a young age and we teach our college age students and we reinforce that don't ever drink at the bar. And I guess from my mind, I wasn't at a bar sitting at couches in a very comfortable scenario and situation. And as I pressed through, I now look at the point I made on this is I've done that same scenario 1000 times where I'm with family, friends, colleagues, business outings and drinks after work, happy hours with friends, or do leave my drink. And 999 times I'm okay. And one time I wasn't that's my perspective. Now on the other side of this, that was not my perspective going through it. So I kept this quiet for several years and then I went to have to dinner with my dear heart friend Kelly. And Kelly was coming back to work for me. And Kelly and I have a very unique friendship and relationship where one of us can tell the other anything and there's no judgment there is no, it's very safe. It's very kind. It's very compassionate. And so as I was sharing some of the stuff that had gone out of my life, I shared the story with her. And I don't even know why or how it came up. And she looked at me with gentle compassion, and said, you know, you were raped, right? And I immediately said, no, nope, nope, not me. That's not my story. That's not my legacy. That's not who I am. Not me complete denial. But her words rang true. And there was a piece of my heart that came to life by somebody acknowledging what had happened. I had a lot of denial. So much shame in so much fear and so much anger. Again, during this time, I'm sure it came out sideways, because this pain and trauma, trying to get out of my mind, out of my heart out of my body. I'm sure my kids saw a sad mom, a mom that was in her head a lot thinking I was there, but it wasn't there. A few months later, I had the courage to call my mom. I just said Mom, I have something to share with you. Can you come over? Those of you who know my mother, my mother is one who has deep compassion. Arms always open and always forgiving, always loving. When I share this with my mom, she was the second person I shared it with. She enveloped me, caught me up in her arms and wept with me and said, We need to call your father and I begged her, I begged her I begged her

to knock me down. Because those of you who know my dad, he's my hero my life. And I never wanted to put my head down and my dad came over. He met me on the floor, sobbing. I couldn't bear telling him what had happened. And as I did through tearful, anger, pain, he just helped me and told me how much he loved me. And then I'd be okay. deep compassion, deep love. deep sorrow alongside of me. That was the second step in my healing process. I then had the courage to tell a few of my closest girlfriends. And then I put it in a box, and didn't really deal with it. Through that, though, I was able to get into some counseling, and do some therapy work. Getting some healing along the way. When I met Chad, four years ago, and things were looking really well from the start, I love my husband, Oh, I love my husband. I was able to tell him from the beginning of our relationship what had happened, because I wanted him to know who I was, and what had happened to me. And I didn't know if that would be a deal breaker between him and I. Now those of you who know my husband, I know that he is again the most non judgmental kind person. But at this point, we are new in our relationship and I didn't know. And again, the compassion and the love and the it doesn't change. One ounce what I think of you the unconditional love that was demonstrated to me. So again, through this through COVID. I went and saw a counselor. And she said how much how much of this have you dealt with? And I said, I really haven't done tons of counseling. I'm just taking my journey once step at a time, forgiving myself, getting rid of self hatred and not forgiving myself. As a, I did this, it was forgiving myself for the self hatred and the trauma of what I did. But this was his fault. So I want to make sure that I'm clear when I said I forgive myself it was more from his self hatred and the spiraling in my life. When I told the counselor this, she said, You must be one tough mother. And I laughed, because I just realized that I had dealt with a lot of this pain and grief on my own. I've read books, I have journaled. As I've shared in past podcasts, I had my husband buy me a punching bag for Christmas, to allow anger to flow out in a healthy manner. But I continue to heal. And as you can see from the tears, it's still a journey for me. But the women on this podcast, are courageous, are strong and are beautiful. And their vulnerability, gave me a fire in my belly, to share my story. And to continue this healing journey that I'm on. Recently, this topic has come up, as it is a passion of my heart to discuss and bring to the light. Today, I talked to women openly. I've been alluding to the fact that this podcast would be coming out and I'd be sharing part of my story. I have not done it on Facebook yet. And I've not done it in a public manner. But now's the time, now's the time to walk into my freedom, my calling, and a sub even further into the healing that I'm on. I was recently talking with some business colleagues. And this subject came up. And I didn't start it. But I did participate in it about just sexual abuse, molestation, rape, attempted rape. And in this group alone, 75% of the women had been raped, violated or almost raped. That's an alarming statistic. As I'm finding out, again, if we go back to the rain statistics from the very beginning, 1100 a day, those are reported cases, I never reported my case. And never pursued. I never talked to an officer. That's part of my journey. And part of my shame and part of my healing. But I never reported it.

back then. I think it was avoidance. I didn't want to report it because I didn't want to make it true. I didn't want to report it because I felt guilty. I didn't want to report it. Because I didn't want to draw attention. I just wanted to hide. I wanted to dissolve into the couch. I wanted to be alone. And I didn't want to deal with it. Recently, I had the opportunity to share my story with my daughter Reagan and knowing that this podcast would be coming out and that she has participated and listen to some of them. I wanted her to know what I'd be sharing. This girl is amazing. She had so many questions. She had compassion for her mom, and I did not see judgment in her eyes. But she did ask me if I was going to ever report it. And she's actually researching what the statute of limitations is. I do know his name. I do you know the city that he did live in. I have not been in contact. I've not confronted I deleted his contact information from my phone. I haven't said a word I haven't seen him since. Part of me wants this chapter in my life to be done and another part wants to be out advocated for so many questions. So somebody questions, stepping through that wall of fear. Maybe this was a random act. Maybe he doesn't remember it the same way I do.



20:15

Maybe he's a predator. And he does it over and over again. I don't know. And these are the, the current situation of what I'm dealing with. And where I should go from here. This traumatic experience for me, changed my perspective on life. Many of you know I am a full hearted, full,



Jennifer Malcolm 20:42

fully alive woman. I love myself and I love the woman who I've become. But it did take something for me. The sentence stole something so deeply, not only for my body, my body will heal. But for my soul, my mind. I have fear. Fear, when strange men come to the door, FedEx, Amazon salon service. I don't feel comfortable being alone with men. It's very rare, very rare, that I meet one on one with a male colleague, friend, I am very aware of my circumstances, but it's altered my life. The most difficult piece of this journey was that my children would find out. And I'm choosing to share the story. I'm choosing to share that because I want them to have an understanding of the woman that I am. And I also want to model vulnerability. I am far from perfect. And I think through the podcasts, you've heard snippets of my story, my self destructive behavior at times in the past that I've healed from and walking now in light, in truth, and beauty, empower. But my fear came from sharing with my kids, what would they think when they think I was dumb? Would they reject me? Or would they hold it against me? It's new in our lives. Isn't it new information. My son, who helps me do my podcasts and does all of my editing. I gave him an out. So he does not have to do this one. And his response was, Thanks, Mom. I know

broad strokes. But I don't need to know the details. I want to sharing this with you is that I know, I know, to the core of my being there are so many of you out there just like me that something happened and you were violated. Some guy took something from you and you are violated. You are raped, or molested or abused or hit. And I don't want you to feel alone any longer. I don't want you to feel alone any longer. My desire through this is connect with you and someone else who's had a similar experience. To break off the lies, the shame, the anger, the denial, so that we can with full heart and move forward the purposes and calling of our lives to step through that veil. And the other side is healing and joy. And I know you can hear it in my voice. I'm still on this journey. But I know that me sharing this is only going to bring me deeper healing. And I'll bring healing to others. My encouragement to you is to share your story. Find a friend, someone like Kelly who's in my life. My body, my soul, my mind. My heart was screaming to let the secret out screaming it out. And every time it almost came out, I push that beast back down. Say Not today. I don't have time to deal with this day. And I have time to deal with my emotions. And I have time to deal with my pain. I'm not going to be that victim. And I'm not going to be another statistic. But I know what needed to come out. And I know my body wanted the trauma out my soul needed the trauma out. So when I shared my story with Kelly, I knew, I knew she was going to what she was going to say. And yet when the words came across her lips, you know, you were raped, right. And I still denied, still wanted to push that beast back down, I did not want to be that I did not want to have that label over my life. But when you share, and when you open up and you just start talking about the trauma, you heal, you get a little bit more courageous, and a little bit more courageous to share it one more time to heal a little deeper. So I had my Kelly, I had my mom, and I had my father. I had my April, I had my Kim, and then I had my chatter. And then I had my children. And now I have all of you. This is just a step in my journey. This is just one experience in the life of a woman who is committed to healing, committed to vulnerability, committed to collective vulnerability, and committed to go to the dark places, and uncover and to gather women stories. So that we can heal and grow and become lawyers together. So if you're hearing this story today, and you feel that beast rising up, and your responses, not today, not today, I can't deal with it today. I'm saying you can. Some of the most powerful words spoken to me by those around me is that I believe you. So if you have the courage in your heart, to share, to join this healing, to join into this healing. I want to say, I believe you. I believe you. You are a survivor. I'm a survivor. And this is not our life. It is something that happened to us. And we were overcomers and a survivor. And I believe you. I also want to make sure that I address that I know this happens to men too. I know this is a women's movement, and a women's podcast series of women's empowerment series. But I know men are listening to this. I have many male friends who have listened to the podcast. And I want you to know that I know this happens to men too. And you're a survivor. And I believe you. We will be giving out information of how to contact us. We'll be putting together resources. You know that we have a rape crisis center here in Cleveland.

It's not your label. It's something that happened to you. That's not who you are. And if you have the courage to join me, hold my hand, heal alongside cried tears together and come out stronger on the other side. What a gift. What a gift to your family. What a gift to your friends. What a gift to your children. But ultimately, what a gift to yourself. You deserve to get the trauma out until live a full life. So find a safe space. And if you don't know, you don't have a safe space. please reach out to us and we will find and point you in under our interactions. We are not counselors. We are not therapists. But we do have trusted resources around us that we can steer your way and open up to you. The bottom line is this is a journey we're all on. It's happened. It's not happened to you. It's likely happened to one of your sisters one of your roommates, one of your aunts, one of your cousins. someone around you and it's time that we have rice with courage and voice and purpose to heal together. I love you guys so much. And I'm honored that you lean in each week to hear a woman's story. And today this is part of my story. Oh, much love, love. For those of you who are looking for some resources in the rain national hotline is one 800 656 hope. Again, it's one 800 656 hope. For those of you who are in the Cleveland area with me, we do have the Cleveland rape crisis center. Their numbers 216-619-6192 and they've 24 seven hotline service to 166196192 Thank you for listening to the Jennasis Speaks podcast. If you love the show, one of the best things you can do is to share it with a friend. Tell them what you like about it, how it inspires you and invite them to listen. Subscribe to the Jennasis movement to empower women's voices and reclaim the power over your own narrative.