

resilience-in-the-face-of-life-s-transitions-one-woman-s-jou...

Wed, 3/17 4:32PM 50:10

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

life, friends, people, women, husband, piece, called, single mom, divorce, podcast, fortitude, lost, home, bmw, care, marsha, children, story, loss, early

SPEAKERS

Marsha Friedman, Jennifer Malcolm

- J** Jennifer Malcolm 00:10
Calling all women who are curious and called to be women warriors are rising in this day and age to heal and grow together. I'm your host, Jennifer Malcolm, self made entrepreneur, women advocate and life balance expert. Welcome back to the next episode of the Jennasis Speaks podcast, The Transformative Power of Women's Stories where every woman has a story and every story matters. And yes, I say this every week. That means you if you're listening, this means you. Today, I have a guest with me, Marcia Friedman. She's up in Northeast Ohio with me as well. We're in during this cold winter. And she is the first guest on this podcast that I've never met until our zoom turned on a little bit ago, and I've never had a conversation with her. I've never met her face to face. I've never had any type of interaction. And so I'm super excited because I love how this is just going to organically flow and to be able to tell your story. So welcome, Martha.
- M** Marsha Friedman 01:07
Thank you. I'm really excited to be here.
- J** Jennifer Malcolm 01:08
Good, good, good. Well, I'm gonna read a short little bio about you and then we are going

to rock and roll and get into your story. Great. All right. So Marsha crowned herself as the comeback Queen, not because she's special. But because she came back from everything life has thrown her way. She has rebuilt her credit, rekindled her spiritual life. Ray successful, independent children, reestablished her career and reclaimed love again. And again. She'd rather her life be a fairy tale that has a happy ending, and happily ever afters. But she wouldn't be the person she is today. Without these experiences. There are moments that she wishes for a boring, normal without drama life, but discovered that through every crisis along the way, there's some lessons to be learned and to be taught. The key to recovery is resilience, the ability to not only survive, but also to thrive when we're faced with change, especially uncontrolled, unexpected change. She's an author, and has authored the book surviving and thriving, despite the drama to capture lessons that she learned in her 30 year journey through bankruptcy, divorce, single parenthood, losing her best friend, and her second husband within 10 months, losing her job, and much more. So, welcome, welcome. I am really excited and joyful to have you here on this podcast today.

M

Marsha Friedman 02:37

Thank you, Jennifer. Happy to be here.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 02:40

So I love the that you've you've deemed yourself comeback queen. And I understand that you have called yourself that. And it's a phenomenal title because it's very descriptive. You know what you're what you're getting when you hear that. But I'm guessing that through life and through hurdles, and obviously through the bio, you've earned this badge you've earned this Latin life and this this courageous voice from experiences that you have endured. So let's just jump right into your story. And how did you deem yourself the combat queen?

M

Marsha Friedman 03:16

First of all, you have to know the combat Queen not only has a title, she also has a tiara and a playlist. Alright, so if you get my book, surviving and thriving, you can have a copy of my playlist. But I deem myself the combat Queen because I feel almost like the the old clown the punching bag from back when we were kids that punching bag that would every time you hit it, it would bounce back at you. And that's what I feel like in my life. Now you have to recognize I am a baby boomer. I grew up in the generation of Ozzie and Harriet and Leave it to Beaver and Walt Disney. And I grew up in an era of feeling like there were supposed to be a marriage and you had 2.5 kids and the husband worked and

the wife stayed home with the kids. And there was a silver lining to everything and every problem had an answer. That was my fairy tale view of life. But that's not the life that I have led. So when my first marriage during my first marriage, and we had to declare bankruptcy because of a real estate deal that went bad. That was the first thing and then a year later, it was time to divorce my husband and go out on my own and I had got sole custody of my two children who were three and seven. And it was me taking care of them and working full time and my life went on from there and every time something happened, I was still able to continue moving forward and that's why the title comeback Queen. Because no matter what has happened in my life, somehow, I've had the fortitude. I've had the grit, I've had the determination to continue moving forward, there was all there were always like my children, particularly when they were young. They depended on me. I didn't have anybody else to pick up the pieces, and it was always me. So I had to have that mantle. And no matter what has come my way, I have continued forward.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 05:30

And I think that's phenomenal. Because there's a lot of similarities in your story and mine, and I did, I've never gone through bankruptcy. But I married a 22, who I thought was going to be my partner for life. And we divorce right before I think I turned 33. And I found myself a single mom of a four, six and seven year old. Now I had shared custody. But there is that grit and fortitude. And I think in me there is this mama bear protective nature to provide for my children. But I don't know if I had that fortitude. I know there's a fire in me. But I think there's also in me that piece of Dear God, do I have to do this again, our dear, dear Lord, how you know like, this is really, really, really hard. And I am in awe and love that you had that drive. Do you feel like that was looking back hindsight that there was that, you know, pillar in you that had that fortitude? Or did you also have some down days love? Like, I can't even catch my breath?

M

Marsha Friedman 06:40

Well, certainly there were down days, certainly there are always down days, you know, where you can't catch your breath. But there was still something inside of me that wouldn't let me just turn given to it, I really still had to continue moving forward. And I had, I was fortunate to be with one organization for over 30 years in my career. That was one piece of stability that allowed me that enabled me to do many of the things that I did, and to provide for my children the way I wanted to, and to still continue to move my career forward. I had bosses. And you know, I know I'm very lucky with this, because I had bosses who were willing to say, okay, so if you don't come in right at eight o'clock, that's okay. Come in at 830. Because you have to get your children to school, or if you have to leave because someone's sick, go do it. Because they knew that I was the type of

employee who would give it my all. And if I took some time off, I was taking work home with me, or I was coming in early the next day that I would, there was nothing that was going to not be done, because I had these children to take care of.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 07:51

And that's beautiful, because that's how I started my first business Jennasis and Associates, our marketing firm, is that I created something as a single mom, where I wanted that flexibility. I had been a stay at home mom, I had been a high school science teacher than a stay at home mom while my kids were young. And my youngest was just about to go into kindergarten when our divorce happened. And for me, I needed that flexibility because I was I would be re entering a workforce, I did not have a boss who knew that, you know, work ethic or drive in me. And so my, my space was like, Alright, I'm gonna get my daughter on the bus at about 9am for kindergarten, and she's gonna be home at 1115 Who the hell is gonna hire, Who the hell is gonna hire me for like, two hours. And so that piece of flexibility and it is a cultural value in our organization of family first. And I don't care when you get your work done, how you get your work done, just get your work done. And I trust you to be an assertive and responsible adult to do that. And that means sometimes that, hey, I didn't expect my son to be sick, or that I had to leave to pick them up early from school, or, hey, we're quarantine for COVID, or whatever those things are, that you lived a very similar but different life. And I feel like we're on the cusp of upon marrying each other, but with different elements of our story.

M

Marsha Friedman 09:16

Yeah, absolutely. And, you know, I do feel very blessed that I had that opportunity to continue my career. There were times when I would thought I would leave the company. And I would go look at other opportunities elsewhere. But what kept me there was the people that I worked with, and the ability to continue to support my children in the way that I needed to and to not have the pressure of working a 60 or 80 Hour Workweek. I didn't do that. You know, my life came first and then my work was good.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 09:49

So bankruptcy was one part of your story. Divorce is another part of your story. Being a single mom is a third part of your story, but it didn't end there. That's there's still pieces This story with a comeback Queen that continued on. So do you want to kind of bridge that piece of I'm a single mom and being a responsible and beautiful woman afforded to provide for your kids. But that's not where your story ended.

M

Marsha Friedman 10:15

No, it's not where my story ended. So there's a piece of fairy tale in here because after being single for nine years, I was on one of the online dating sites, and I met my second husband. And it was truly truly a match made in heaven. We we met online, and we could have given each other's answers in the essay part of the questionnaire on an on the dating site. And when we met, it was truly almost love at first sight. So we met in March 15. And every year on March 15, that was our first date. And every year on March 15, we celebrate the anniversary. And we had daughters who had the same birthday, they were three years apart in age would have the same birthday. So there are many, many things that we had in common, and it worked well for us. And we were married for almost 14 years. When I lost him to a massive heart attack, we were we were at Kane Park. We were at a concert one night without with friends, because he was really good at setting up social events for us. And these were friends. We didn't see that often. And we were out that evening. And at the end of the concert. He went to use the men's room before we left and didn't come back out.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 11:40

Wow. So yeah, do you mind and you can say thank you. But no, because it's your story. What did that evening look like? Because we've had Mary Ann Stropkay on here where she became an early widow, at a very young age, very similar, where her husband, she came back from church and her husband had gone for a run and he was just on the back patio, at the door. And she she goes into detail just all of that nuances of seeing the love of her life. They're also wanting to protect children. And you were with friends. Do you mind touching into that piece of what that looked like for you guys that evening?

M

Marsha Friedman 12:22

We had actually left our friends up on the lawn that night, because I had an early meeting the next day. So we were going to leave a few minutes early before the concert was over. So we had walked towards the exit. And I was holding the lawn chairs. And my husband went into the restroom and a few minutes and I was waiting for me it took a long time. And okay, people of that age, sometimes he was in his early 60s take a little bit longer. So I didn't get too upset. And then another gentleman went to use the restroom, he comes running out and said Ma'am, are you waiting for someone? And he said, You better come with me. And I was the one who then started administering CPR to my husband until the squad got there. Now I happen to know from a previous experience, unfortunately at cane park that they also had defib units. So I sent someone to go get the defib unit to see if we could bring him back that way. And it was just it was a blur. Yeah. No, once the squad got there, and I went in the ambulance with them to University Hospitals. And then it was

calling close friends and my bit again, it was a second marriage. So it was my husband's children. Right. Who I was calling as well as close friends of ours that would I knew would come to the hospital to help me.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 13:50

I am so sorry. I didn't go. Yeah, sorry for your loss. Because thank you that type of traumatic experience doesn't define you but it stays with you for life.

M

Marsha Friedman 14:01

So indeed, it does. It does. And I have not gone back to Kane Park. It's just something I still and it's been he died in 2013. And it's now on 2021. I don't want to go there. I just that's something that's not going to happen. Yeah, for me.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 14:27

Wow.

M

Marsha Friedman 14:27

It's that uncomfortable there.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 14:30

Yeah. So going back to the theme of comeback queen. This is still not the end of your story.

M

Marsha Friedman 14:38

No, it's not because 10 months to the day before my husband passed away. My best friend succumbed to breast cancer. And she had had a very long and arduous journey. And myself and another whole group of women There were six of us that were very, very close friends. The year that our friend was originally diagnosed, she was the second of our friends to get a breast cancer diagnosis. But the type of breast breast cancer that she had was much more aggressive. She was already stage three at the time that was diagnosed. But she still had a three and a half year run after that, where she was able to survive. And we pulled around her the group of us and formed a team and we walked the breast cancer three day, because at that time, back in 2009, it was still in Cleveland. And our

team that I was Captain have raised the seventh highest amount of money. That's awesome. In the full year for the all of the Cleveland teams raised \$27,000. That's a pretty phenomenal amount. Yeah, so but but she's walked with us, right. So we had a whole group that supported her and supported the whole breast cancer research, because it was so close to our hearts. But losing her was just devastating.

J Jennifer Malcolm 16:15

And I haven't had a traumatic experience in that regard of losing a spouse that way, or a close friend, I've lost grandparents at the natural ages. And, and, and that's a big loss. But I've not experienced that intimate loss of someone that is your lover, your best friend, your partner, all that you know, between your husband and your best friend, you know, would have had that type of surrounding of life and love and beauty and secrets and experiences and intimacy. And so to lose both of those within a short period of time, is heartbreaking.

M Marsha Friedman 16:54

And then the third thing on top of that, besides losing the two of them, then after this 30 plus year career in one organization, I was asked to take early retirement, two months after my husband passed away.

J Jennifer Malcolm 17:09

Wow.

M Marsha Friedman 17:10

So I felt like a three legged stool with almost no legs. Yeah, because those were the people who were the closest to me, this was my stability. That job had taken me all the way from the time that I was newly married the first time, all the way through my second marriage, and raising my children. And here I am, having lost my best friend and my spouse, and then the opportunity to leave my job. It was more than any one person should ever have to deal with.

J Jennifer Malcolm 17:46

Well, in that piece, too. You're talking about three different spaces of security, of love, of creation, of partnership with your job with your friend, like all of it. And so to have those stripped from you one by one, that's a dramatic amount of loss in a very short period of

time of all those safe spaces for you, or places that were familiar with you or places that you found love and purpose and joy and, and connection that those were all taken from you, outside of your control outside well outside of your want. And to have to deal with that type of loss. I'm really sorry. So there's, there's a reason why you're a comeback queen. Because in our two seasons of this podcast, I've interviewed numerous women that have dealt with colorectal cancer, breast cancer in early and like I said, Ariane with being a comment early widow, I'm a divorce a single mom, but you have this umbrella that you've dealt with each bankruptcy, that you've dealt with each of these life altering circumstances, and you're surviving, and you're thriving, and you're smiling. And you're now talking about it, and you've wrote a book about it. And so how did you make that transition? Because I know you used the word fortitude early on. But how did you find this bridge of taking this leap of faith or taking just maybe simple steps maybe wasn't a leap? Maybe they're just baby steps that got you to where you are today?

M

Marsha Friedman 19:26

Well, I think part of it is, you know, I had friends that when my kids were younger would say, Marsha, how do you do it? How do you keep going? You know, how have you raised your children on your own? And what I used to say to them, and this was kind of a flip answer. I just put one foot in front of the other and I keep moving forward. And you know this, Jennifer, I'm sure you've had this experience. If you stop to think about what's on your plate, what you need to get done. You're going to be frozen in fear. So if you keep moving forward, and having faith, everything's gonna work out. Somehow it does. Now, as I've looked back, and I really didn't take the time to look back until when I started writing this book. And as I look back on my life, that flip answer is not really the truth. So the truth is that I was fortunate enough to know, or be willing, I will say, Be willing, first of all, be willing to ask for help. I was always willing to ask for help. And the fortunate part is that I had family or friends, and mostly friends that were willing to step in where I needed. And I didn't take no for an answer. And so if this person said, No, I would go ask someone else, I would find the help that I needed. That's really, what when we talked about the bankruptcy. And I had gone through the bankruptcy and then divorced A year later, I was stuck with a house. And this is going back a lot of years, where the interest rate on my home was in the double digits, totally unheard of today. So here I am with a house that has double digit interest rate. And I went through bankruptcy, what am I going to do, because I'm now taking care of this home on my own. And fortunately, I was working again, working full time, which made a difference. But I got help from again, asking for help found people who knew bankers, they could refer me to who were willing to listen to my story. And I was able to refinance at a much lower rate, and keep my home. So I had that stability for my children.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 21:52

And I think that's a piece of vulnerability. So through this podcast, we talk that through vulnerability through sharing stories, through sharing experiences, it connects people in a way that is unexpected. It validates that, hey, the fear that's in my heart is true. Yet I see someone that has a testimony or who has done it before. And they they overcame that. So how they let their their chin rise again and hope and to ask for help. And through the podcast with sexual trauma as a child or date rape or loss of a spouse, all these things that happened to us, or that maybe we made a bad choice in it, I chose to do something that was harmful to to who I am as a person. But it's still that piece of when you ask for help. When you're vulnerable, when you're willing to be open is where unexpected breath of fresh air, wind in your sails happens to keep us moving on to the next day. And I can tell that that was important to you, whether it was just for, hey, you know, I'm going to raise these kids and they're going to thrive, they're going to be safe, they're going to be okay. And selfishly or self caringly, to say I'm going to I'm going to survive this too, and I will be okay. And I think that is beautiful. And the word that I know as we were prepping, that seems to be a thematic piece of yours is resilience, and that you've allowed yourself through that to have resilience from losses and your setbacks. And my question on that is, do you think that resilience is innate? Or do you think that resilience is something that you practice and you grow as a muscle?

M

Marsha Friedman 23:46

Absolutely, that was the answer I was going to give you that resilience is definitely a muscle that you have to nurture it. It is not something that is innate. And I think the more challenges that you face, and don't step back from that you step into as someone who just loved their book, Adam Grant and Sheryl Sandberg wrote a book called option B. And they have a quote in there that they talk about resilience, coming from gratitude about what's good in our lives, but also embracing the suck.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 24:28

Good.

M

Marsha Friedman 24:30

I love that. So embracing the suck is what we do when we're building our resilience muscle. Because bad things happen that we don't control. And you're right. Sometimes there are things that were in our control that we're responsible for as well. But what can you take from this? What can you learn? How can you grow? And I think it's also listening

to the things like your podcast, it's finding people who have lived the same experience before, and being willing and open to listen to them and learn from them. I'll never forget shortly after my husband passed away, another woman in our community, someone who I'm not really close friends with, but have known for a long time, called me and said, Marsha, I want to take you to dinner. And the reason she took me to dinner is because she had also been widowed very suddenly. And she was just the most vibrant, happiest, warmest person you ever want to know. And when when this happened to her, it was devastating. She had a wonderful marriage, but again, also lost her husband very suddenly. And she wanted to sit with me and share the sorrow that we both lived that shared experience. And through that dinner, which I will never forget, her reaching out to me was just so warm and caring, and wonderful, that it made such a difference in my own healing, to have people like that, reaching out.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 26:07

Absolutely. Now you're speaking my entire language. I love that because it is through that place of connection. And it's that place of just meeting you your friend met your your colleague or your acquaintance met you exactly where you were at unselfishly without desire to sounds like without desire for anything in it for her except to embrace you to validate you to share your emotions, your sorrow. And it is an iconic story in your life that like you said, you're never going to forget. And ladies, as you're listening to this, that's what this is about is connecting with someone. It doesn't have to be about traumatic experience. Maybe it's just about being an entrepreneur, maybe it's about you know, self image issues, maybe it's self worth or unforgiveness, there's something that's going to connect you with someone around you that have that iconic conversation, I encourage you to have that kind of conversation, in order to bring down walls of shame, bring down walls of hurt, bring down walls of fear, and that through that community and that connection. That's where we heal. And now Marsha has a legacy. And I hope that you don't have to do this anytime soon. But you have a legacy and a seed in you that you are able to give that to someone else who faces widowhood, or bankruptcy, or being a single mom in ways that those are seeds in you that you can now have compassion and connection with other women along your journey as well.

M

Marsha Friedman 27:41

And truly, that was why I wrote my book. It's good, because I recognized as the combat Queen, having been through all these experiences, there are certain things that you you have to do every single time. And the one that I talk about, first, the most important thing that all of us need to do when we go through a kind of traumatic experience is self care. How are we taking care of ourselves, we cannot take care of anybody else until we take

care of ourselves. And I think that's a critical component that is often overlooked. We we go off and start taking care of other people, we go off and do this and that because women are natural nurturers, especially mothers, we want to nurture everybody else. Many times, I've seen this in clients, I've seen this in friends, we do a lousy job nurturing ourselves. And if we just would put a little bit of time and effort into feeding ourselves, right, or one of the things that I did, after my husband passed away, was I took a timeout, I was engaged in a lot of different organizations in leadership positions, things I had been involved with for years, and I love doing. But I recognized that I needed to give myself time and space T and so I resigned from four different organizations in one evening.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 29:07

Wow. That's awesome. Yeah. And I think that's what I'm learning to is and I and I'm gonna look in the mirror at myself is that we often nurture or we often keep caretaking. Because it puts a wall around my heart that I don't have to feel I don't have to experience. I am not denying that something bad happened to me. But I don't have to deal with the emotions or I don't and that was my that was my space for a lot. I don't have time to deal with my loss. I don't have time to deal mourn the passing of my marriage with divorce with my divorce. I don't have time to grieve my date rape. I don't have time to do this because I just have to keep going. And it is such a disservice to us. When we when we don't do that self care, because it continues to pop up. But things are the emotions. is going to pop up when you least expect it or when you don't want it. Versus taking the time to self care, self love, pause, breathe, rest heal. That women I feel like we're horrible at a lot of women are horrible. I am preaching to myself here because we just want to keep going. And we do love when we love to caretaking for other people. And we don't take the time to care take ourselves often.

M

Marsha Friedman 30:29

Absolutely, absolutely agree with that. So I think the other piece, besides self care, is embracing your emotions. You talked about that a little bit. But those emotions that are coming at us, we have to open ourselves up to them. as uncomfortable as they may make us feel as difficult as they are to deal with. We have to open ourselves up to if we don't like you said they pop back up. And worse, I think the worst is if you keep stuffing them back down, at some point, they're going to explode. And who do we explode at those people we love the most. So we're ruining relationships, we're we're not taking good care of ourselves. The other thing that we do when we're not dealing with our emotions is self medicate. It whatever your drug of choice is. And it could be alcohol, it could be food, it could be risk taking, there are so many different parts to that. But oftentimes, we self medicate. So I can tell a story on myself. When my husband died again, I hated to sit at

the dining room table, I just couldn't do it, I couldn't have a meal at the dining room table. So I put up a TV tray in the family room. And my dinner companions were the newscasters or the TV shows the actors and actresses on the TV shows that I was watching. And a couple months later, so that was a bad thing. I'm sitting in front of TV eating all the time. And then a couple months later, my next door neighbor lost her husband suddenly. So we were of similar ages, we both were in second marriages that we were very happy with and our spouses both died suddenly. So she started coming over and we started drinking together. No, we would have a bottle of you know, glass or two of wine, and then it became a bottle of wine, and then sometimes a little bit more. And then I found myself drinking alone. Now not to the point of being an alcoholic, but certainly drinking on my own. And that's when I said I'm done. Timeout, it is time to put this away, and really start taking care of myself properly. Because I was self medicating.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 32:55

And, and I like that you touched on it, it can be different. I like that you said risk taking, it could be just watching TV, it could be exercising, it could be binge, or it could be any of these things that we do to numb and that feel. And it doesn't have to be the traditional drugs and alcohol. But it can be just things that we blockade our soul spirits, minds, hearts to feel. And that self recognition of, you know, those baby steps that you're like, Alright, I'm gonna, I'm going to spend time with my neighbor. And then it's going to be a glass of wine, and that's gonna be a couple glasses of wine, that's gonna be a bottle, then it's, and you can see like, it wasn't, it wasn't that you went from watching TV to drinking alone and having a bottle of wine. It was for you know, as a progressive slow steps that over time that you found yourself there and the self awareness to be able to pull yourself out of that which a lot of women and I want you to hear like Marsha is a strong woman. And there might be a lot of you listening, that may say I don't have the strength to pull myself out of a pit. And that's what this community is for is that there are women out on this podcast in our group in our in our Facebook group that are willing just to connect and to be and if you don't feel like you have the tools or resources or even self desire or will to pull yourself out of the pit or destructive behavior, that there's a community around here. And that's the whole point is that we love you exactly where you are. and identify that we've all been there and your story might look a little different. But we're all on this journey of life. And the goal is to heal and and to grow together. And Marsha, you're just a very powerful and strong woman.

M

Marsha Friedman 34:37

Thank you, thank you. But the reason why I wrote my book is because I really wanted to share these lessons with other women. And the second part of that is, besides sharing the

lessons with other women is also creating a coaching practice to help people deal with these life transitions because none of them are easy. Absolutely. None of them are easy.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 34:58

Why do you think that A lot of people are getting men or women don't take the time to grieve, or don't take the time to learn the muscle of resilience or practice the muscle of resilience and and to grow that muscle. Why do you think that we either don't take time for self care, or that we don't take time to utilize or build tools. And it helps in our life to overcome or at least take some steps toward healing.

M

Marsha Friedman 35:32

I think sometimes we become, especially, you know, we were talking earlier about women who are nurturers, and if you're a nurturer, or even a gentleman who has this problem, we live on a merry go round. And the merry go on looks like this. We wake up in the morning, we take our shower, we get ready for work, we might get the kids off to school, we go to work, and we come home, and we kind of reverse everything. So we make dinner, we eat dinner, you know, we get the kids to bed, we might watch TV for a little while, relax for a few minutes, we go to bed, and we started all over the next day. And it's really easy to stay on that merry go round, and not take care of ourselves. And what happens if you stay on that merry go round, we become bitter, we become someone that I call a BMW. Now I'm not talking about the car here. I assume that? No, I'm talking about a pitcher, a motor or a wiener. Right now, you may not be a BMW, but you may have other people in your life, or BMWs. Think about the people who bring you down, you spend 20 minutes or a half an hour, or whatever amount of time with them on the phone, or in a zoom call or face to face like we used to do. And you come home exhausted even thinking about being with that person just brings the hackles up on the back of your neck. So I think it's really important to either a not become a BMW, and be if there are BMWs in your life. Let's get rid of them find a way to do that. So I have a worksheet that I'm going to offer to your audience I found called the detox your toxic relationships worksheet. And it's at [consultmbf.com/slash/detox](https://mbf.com/slash/detox), you can get a copy of it. And it will take you through the process of looking at the people who are in your immediate surroundings and then talk you through how do you reduce your screen time with those people? Or how do you change the subject or whatever you need to do to protect yourself because it's really important to find that space to protect ourselves. Now, trust me, I had a really close friend who was a BMW identified it very early on. And it was while she was in a difficult marriage. And when she divorced her husband, I let her back into my life. Because that was not something that we were talking about anymore. In fact, unfortunately, I've now lost that friend to cancer this past year. And I was the one who was the closest to her at the time that she passed and

helped her children who came in from out of town.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 38:43

Wow. And I think my question on the BMW is, isn't there a part of all of us, that's a little bit of a bitch or moan or in a whiner. So I want you to distinguish because there's times you might be tired, maybe cranky, you may not be feeling well, that all humans are gonna bitch whine or moan. But you're not saying that as a, hey, it's an infrequent behavior, talking about toxic people or toxicity in people where that is their normal where they're continually being a BMW.

M

Marsha Friedman 39:15

Yes, I'm talking about the people who are continually being a BMW which you can turn yourself into by overdoing and not dealing with your emotions. But we can also if we're someone who's in recovery, have people in our lives that bring in that negativity, I call them the negative Nellys or the downer Dan's take your choice. But we know we have people like these in our lives. So that's what I'm talking about in terms of BMWs. For ourselves, we Yes, all of us have a moment or two. But it's recognizing when we're doing that, and not having that continual negativity that we're sharing with you Hold on one or two or a whole group of people.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 40:03

And I also like what you said, because I want to reiterate this with the audience. You know, your friend was a BMW. And it sounds like it was exasperated by the environment that she was in, and removing people from certain situations that may be toxic to them, changes that behavior changes that negativity within them. And so that peace of discernment of Are they really a Debbie Downer? Or are they really going through something traumatic, and that's kind of their way to de stress or get through, and it's not healthy. And I'm not advocating for that behavior. But there's there It sounds like your friend walked through that and through removing herself from a toxic situation, her whole demeanor changed as well.

M

Marsha Friedman 40:50

Right. But the years that she was in that toxic marriage, and she would call me and that's all she would talk to me about, I recognize that it wasn't a conversation I wanted to be part of anymore. So I pulled away from her as a close friend.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 41:05

And I think that's beautiful, because that's a piece of boundaries that women often don't put up. And it's a healthy boundary, like Matt and my time, not on my watch. And I'm not saying that I don't love you, or that you're not important. But I just can't let that energy saturate My heart, my soul, zap my energy that steals away from my family, my self care, etc. And I love like that boundary around of it is self love. And it's self protection. And it's saving the best for your family and friends that deserve the best of you versus what you said before, negative emotions popping out and lashing out at the ones that you love. Good. So as we wrap up, there are some statements that that were on my prep sheet here that really spoke there. And obviously, we got this from you or your interview, or maybe it's from your book. But those are some of the key messages. And I wanted to kind of close with saying the messages and then allowing you the opportunity to give some feedback. So the first one is restoring your strength. Recovery starts with you. Your health and physical energy are what get you through releasing your emotions, which I know we talked about this one, every change that we go through puts us on an emotional roller coaster, the key to recovery is opening yourself up to feel all the emotions coming at you see, rebuilding your connections by being willing to ask for help and acceptance. And that's what you said you did through becoming a single mom is asking for help the fourth one reclaiming your place, when in a crisis, we tend to withdraw from the world. re engaging in life is another form of self care. And then the last one is rekindling your spirit reaching our higher power when we feel when no one else is listening is a challenge. I thought those were powerful. And when I read this going into this interview, it just it has an umbrella of resilience and it has an umbrella of fortitude and the words that we've been using about your legacy and the life that in your life work that you're now doing. How would you respond to those five statements? Or one of them?

M

Marsha Friedman 43:26

Well, we've covered I think we've covered most of them, we did okay, I think it's the last two that we really didn't delve into. So let me give you a little more around those last two. So the one had to do with reconnecting because when we're going through crisis, we tend to withdraw, we tend to limit what we're doing in the world. And you may be able to relate to this one, Jennifer, as someone who went through divorce, when you're in couple relationship, other couples invite you to do things when you're suddenly single. Nobody calls you anymore. So I think it's really important to reclaim your position. So either it's calling friends, it's either calling women friends, or it's calling couple friends and it's still engaging in the same social life you had before it's coming back out, or it's finding new things that you can do. So if you love hiking, find a hiking group if you love biking, find a biking group. So it's where can you find that social life in a different way. And I think that's really important because then you then you have gifts to share with the world. And I think

it's really important to get out there and share. It's good. It's really and the second one had to do with faith rekindling faith. And I struggled very strongly after losing my husband. That really was a difficult time for me with my own personal faith and a Year after he passed away, I would attend a synagogue on a regular basis. And all I could do there was cry, because I felt very, very close to my husband in that space. And I was having trouble finding my footing, if you will, finding my comfort zone, knowing when that would end. And there was a book that I found. And this book just really spoke to me because it was written by a rabbi, but the title of the book was finding your faith, but it was about struggling with God, after death, it was trying to find a way back to God. And the title of the book really spoke to me, and I immediately downloaded it on Kindle, read it, and it was exactly what I was looking for, to be able to find that my way back.

J Jennifer Malcolm 45:59

And I love that you are using different avenues. It's not just self care through a club or community, it's not just through faith, it's not just through self care, there's all sorts of spokes in this wheel, that give us time and attention to step outside and heal. And it may be for a while that it is faith, or maybe it's reading, or maybe it's drawing, or maybe it's dancing, or maybe whatever that is that maybe it's just meditating or journaling, laughing, cooking with friends. So there's so many different elements that we can tap into. And it seems like these five key messages are the spokes in your wheel, that have allowed you to go through so many traumatic experiences, so much loss, so much pain, but come out the other side, with a crown on your head, a smile in your face, a voice and an advocate for other women to help navigate their stories and their journeys to overcome as well. Powerful. Thank you. Thank you. So as we wrap up, what would be a closing word of encouragement of hope, as women are hearing this, and maybe they're like, Wow, she is just one strong woman. And there's no way that she's just built that way, what's a word of hope, or some parting words of encouragement that you can give to our listeners,

M Marsha Friedman 47:33

there is nothing special about me. Nothing. I think that the best message that I can give to the audience is one about self compassion. Because I think that we need to find ways to be kind and caring to ourselves, to treat ourselves with the same love and tenderness and consideration that we give to our close friends and our family members. And we often don't do that, especially in this year, in this time, where we don't have the physical connections and the the space, the proximity with our close friends and family, it's even more important to be kind to ourselves.



Jennifer Malcolm 48:23

I that's wonderful. And I love ending this way because self care, self kindness, self acceptance, self forgiveness, self worth, are those things that we have to take care of our soul and our engines. Because when we are whole, we started the podcast earlier on, when we are whole and healthy or on a path of healing, we have so much more to give and to impart to those around us. We're a better mom, we're a better partner. We're a better worker, we're a better neighbor, we're a better daughter. And those things when it's coming out of a, an abundance mentality and the flow of, of life source coming through us versus withdrawing and being dehydrated, and in a desert in that space. It's huge. And I love it. Those are your words of encouragement to the audience. Thank you. Well, thank you so much. It's so it's such an honor to meet you today. And to have you on the podcast. We will put your resources out on our website and share news on your your links and you'll be able to find how to get ahold of Marsha. Some of the downloads that she's mentioned. We'll put links to the books that she's recommended. And that's helped her along this way as well. So thanks, everyone for tuning in. today. We are honored to have you on this journey called life and we look forward to living laughing and loving together. Alright ladies, have a good day. Bye bye. 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 him what you like about it. How it inspired You and invite them to listen. Subscribe to the Jennasis movement to empower women's voices and reclaim the power over your own narrative.