

S1:E11 - powered-by-hope-a-cancer-thriver-s-journey-jennifer...

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SPEAKERS

Teri Griega, 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 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. And with me today is my friend colleague, Teri Greige that we met, probably six years ago in Florida at a go for the greens women's conference, you actually spoke at that event and handed out a copy of your book at that point. And I read that book and fell in love with your story and who you are as a woman. And I'm just going to read a short bio of Teri, and we're just going to jump right in. So today we have with us Teri, an Iron Man, athlete and cancer survivor, or thriver, as she refers to it. Teri has helped to raise funds for various cancer research organizations, and is brought hope to so many cancer patients across the country. Teri, I'm so thrilled that you're with us today. And we're just going to jump in. And I want you to share with the audience you know who you are your story, your family and get going.



Teri Griega 01:30

All right. Where do you want to start the beginning or the beginning? Yeah, so. So I live in

St. Louis and I have been I've been married for 33 years, and I have two kids, my son is now 31 and my daughter's 27. My daughter just recently got engaged and really kind of a uneventful life until about 10 years ago, almost 11 years ago, I was diagnosed. Just kind of out of the blue. I just finished an Ironman competition, which is a triathlon. triathlon is three sports is swim bike run, and it's the longest distance you can go. So the swim is 2.4 miles. The bike is 112, and then a marathon 26.2 miles. And I had finished, I finished that in the end of September of 2009, and had been having some symptoms, some bleeding when I went to the bathroom, and I just was tired and different things. Long story short, I went and had a colonoscopy two weeks after I finished that race at the age of 48. And, you know, within 10 hours, I was told I had just h4 colorectal cancer. And if you don't think your life cannot change in the snap of a finger. It certainly can.

J Jennifer Malcolm 03:03

How did you react to that news and your family react? Obviously, there's a lot of concern and fear. How did you your first response to hearing I mean, that's something that you know, as a woman, whether it's breast cancer, rectal cancer, rectum cancer, any of that stuff is the word cancer. Scary.

T Teri Griege 03:23
Right?

J Jennifer Malcolm 03:23
How did you guys react to that?

T Teri Griege 03:25
Well, I had been a nurse, practicing for about 20 years, and so registered nurse. And when I had the colon asked me and the doctor came in and told me, I just figured it was not going to be that big of a deal that they would just cut out a portion of my colon and reattach it, and life would go on. But I went over and had some CAT scans done and came home. And I jumped on the internet and looked and it said, he said he called me later that evening, tell me what the results were. And so I looked into the American Cancer Society, I looked at colon cancer. And stage one, stage two, stage three. And then when it came to stage four, it's said the survival rate for five years was 6%. And I thought, Wow, well, that's not me. So you know, I'm sure we're just going to cut this out and go on. And so that evening, when I got the phone call and he said we had moved, put it in my terms, which I think is always helpful when people talk to you know where you are. He said, we've moved

from a half Iron Man to a full Iron Man, that the cancer had moved not only from my colon but to my liver. And that made it a stage four. And I just took my breath away and the first thought that came to my mind my daughter was in high school at the time was 15. And I thought to myself, I'm I'm not going to be around when my daughter gets Mary, and I just had this visualization kind of like what you see in a movie when, when a young woman is getting married, and her mother's passed, and you know, there's the friends or the sisters or somebody, they're telling my daughter, what I would want to say, which was, you know, you're, you're an amazing woman, you're beautiful on the inside now, and one day, hopefully, you know, you, you will make the best month ever. And that was that was really my first my first thought was, oh my gosh, I'm not going to be there. And you know, I always laugh because I'm like, you know, I forgot about my nephew, my son doesn't matter. But there's something about a mother and daughter on their wedding day.

J Jennifer Malcolm 05:48

And I can relate because my girls now are almost she's my youngest is 15, almost 16, my middle 17, almost 18. And my oldest is 19 years old. So that that fear of memories and moments and time that potentially can be robbed, you robbed of as well as your kids, I'm sure a lot of a lot of emotions that are you're battling during this, I'm also going to have a physical fight to go for.

T Teri Griege 06:19
Right?

J Jennifer Malcolm 06:20
Well, how did your husband react?

T Teri Griege 06:23
You know, he was devastated at first and then it kind of, uh, is it typical male, I would say in, there's an Iron Man clip where he is interviewed. And he said, you know, we just decided no more pity party, and we would pull up our bootstraps. And, and, and move on. And, and that's, you know, that's pretty much what we were able to do. But we what I was diagnosed on a Thursday, and on Saturday, we went to church, because it's kind of that feeling of oh my gosh, if I'm gonna die, I better clean up my side of the road, get everything in order. Right and, and there was a story told that evening, the message was a story. And the story was about a woman that had run a an ultra marathon. I don't know, the exact numbers now. But you know, like, it was it was a bad water ultra marathon like

100 miles and you get so many hours to complete it. And anyway, long story short, she she runs the race, she comes over from Europe and she has nobody to help her no sag no anything. And one gentleman volunteers and says I'll, I'll drive your sag wagon, I'll do your nutrition, I'll do your massage therapy, physical therapy, all of that. And there's a gentleman that was a marine and he he had his entire unit that said, you know, we'll back you and we'll run with you and train with you and take care of you the day of the race where the race comes and the marine gets to like mile 45 and has to drop out. And Maria de Souza is a woman's name. And it's a true story. It's actually a it's called running on the sun is the documentary, and she gets to whatever mile in the Marines have heard about her and they, they go catch up with her. And they literally lifted her up out of this van. And she has TVs now because she can't even wear running shoes. And they they scanned her up and they formed this half circle around her. And somehow some way she finishes the race and she turns around and looks at these gentlemen and she said I I couldn't have done the race without you I couldn't have finished the race without each of you. And I woke up that night and I realized that this was a way bigger race than I was ever going to be able to complete alone and that I was going to have to ask others for help. And so that's kind of wave became my, my mantra my I was gonna form an army and somehow some way you know, we would finish this race and get through it together and and i think that's that's what enabled me to not you know, sit in one spot and to be able to move forward and do attack this with everything that I had with the help of of you know, individuals in a medical team and spiritual help and in all of those



Jennifer Malcolm 09:21

Is that normally in your nature? Are you normally like Alright, we're gonna divide conquer and team or are you very much like, Hey, I'm gonna do this. I'm an I'm an individual.



Teri Griega 09:31

I wish I was more of a I'll do myself my way on my own right you know, move over the hole. Yeah. And if we say, so I I am in recovery, for addiction for alcoholism and I have 27 Yeah, 27 years of sobriety now and so I you know, I do take the 12 steps and people ask me how I was able to deal with the cancer and I utilize the 12 steps for my recovery. Also in dealing with cancer because it whatever your adversity is, it doesn't matter if it's addiction or cancer or you know, a bad relationship or whatever it might be. those principles are really outlined in a guide for livi. Right? So, so, yes, you know, I guess would be that the answer the honest answer,



Jennifer Malcolm 10:25

No, that's gonna be and I would figure that you're more of an individual one, I know your personality are very strong woman. But just because of the, the sports that you're drawn to, with being the Iron Man, and you know, you know, those are individual sports that you grab, and you do it on your own. And yes, you have family and friends and coaches and people that train with you. But you know, when you go up to that the start line, it's you. So I'm sure that that humility and ability to go outside and realize this is a team battle. And I'm going to need all sorts of facets, which you mentioned, spiritual help, physical help, you know, help with your kids at home, and all those things that, that it's a whole team initiative for that pathway to healing.

T

Teri Griege 11:13

Correct.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 11:15

So where did your love for athleticism began? Because I've run one, half marathon once. And after I finished that, I was like, I don't know if I will ever do that again. But where does this desire that I'm going to be an Iron Woman come from?

T

Teri Griege 11:36

No, I always use a kid, I love sports. My, I have two sisters, I don't have any brothers. And so I think my dad, you know, exposed me and I would go to the, you know, NFL games and in hockey games and all of that. And, and then I think the endurance aspect, you know, actually wanting to push my body to the limits and see how far I could go some of that I think stems back to the addiction aspect of you know, if one is good, 12 or better, and, and so that's just kind of the way I saw the Iron Man on TV A long time ago. And then I was training for a qualified for Boston and I was on the treadmill one afternoon and in the Iron Man program came on TV, they had this hour and a half special of the World Championship and, and I was just taken by the stories, they they have these inspirational athletes that they feature, plus the pros and and I watched that and I thought, you know what, one day, I want to do an Iron Man. And that's, that's how it all started not ever realizing that my life would truly come full circle. And one day, I would be one of those inspirational athletes at the at the World Championship.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 12:56

That's awesome. So how does it feel completing an Iron Man? Like getting across that final finish line? How do you feel?



Teri Griega 13:06

So the first one that I did was in Louisville in 2008. And it was, it was amazing. I mean, the entire day, and I have to say I live every day with gratitude I did before the diagnosis. It was it's something that was instilled in me in the in the principles of ABA. And so I just to be out there to have the ability to have the strength to do that first Iron Man, I, I was I would sing the song. It's a beautiful day by YouTube in my head, it was like on replay. And that's truly how I felt. And then and I finished fifth in my age group in the fourth place woman qualified for the World Championship and I had no idea I was going to be good or you know, excel in this. And so I went back the following year not knowing that I was sick, and still, you know, finish well but didn't qualify. And then I got sick in that and I never gave up that dream of wanting to do the World Championship and eventually a two years later, I sent my story into Iron Man and was chosen to be an inspirational athlete and, and I did a TEDx talk that really circled all around that question that you ask. I I wish everybody had the opportunity to have that feeling that I felt when I crossed the finish line of the World Championship. And it's almost you know, I the day I got married in the day I had my two kids were amazing. And of course nothing will ever taught that but this this was something that I was able to. It was just on a whole nother plane and able to share with with my family with my quote I have 35 friends and family and part of my medical team. team that came with me and across your finish line into into really have this dream, like I think people don't really realize the dreams can truly happen was, I wish I wish everybody could have that opportunity basically.



Jennifer Malcolm 15:19

well, it'd be wonderful to bottle that up and sell that gift and that feeling of Yeah, joy and accomplishment. And I mean, there has to be an overwhelming feeling to have. All right, I'm here. And if cross that finish line, do you feel that you're training as an athlete helps you with the fight the mental focus with your cancer fight as well?



Teri Griega 15:42

Absolutely. Because I think when you, you know, when you train for an Ironman, it's three disciplines. And so I could easily take those three disciplines and say, Okay, what is going to get me through through the radiation one is going to get me through the chemotherapy, and one is going to get me through the surgery, right? So I was able to break that down. But then when you when you're on net last lay, when you're on that marathon is a full Iron Man, you truly for me, I had to break it down to you know, one mile at a time, you can't you can't look at the finish line, when you're at the very beginning. I mean, that will be your ultimate goal. But But you have to break it down into much smaller increments, goals that are attainable. And, you know, it's so when you're on that

final marathon, it's basically just getting from one aid station to the next which are every mile. And and that's, you know, that's really what, what, what I had to do. And I think that that's so important in helping maintain your hope of, of getting through all this. And I've always said, you know, hope there is hope that there is a cure for cancer or a cure for Ms or a cure for whatever is out there, that the ultimate hope is how can we make the most of every single day that we have here on this earth? And, and that's, you know, that's I think what's so important to living in the present in the now.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 17:09

Absolutely. So when you got diagnosed and you went to church and you realize you were really up for a fight of your life. How long was the process of radiation chemo surgery, was it fast? Was it a long period of time?

T

Teri Griego 17:26

So it took about a year to get through I we jumped in right away because the cancer was so aggressive. So I started treatment that next week, and it took that was in, it took a year basically and I had set a goal to do a half Ironman a year from my diagnosis and almost to the date I did a half Ironman. But once I finished up the radiation and the chemo in the surgery, I was placed on maintenance chemotherapy because I still had cancer cells floating around my tumor marker levels never came down. So I remained on maintenance chemotherapy for eight years. And I had two reoccurrences one in both of my lungs. So I had bilateral lung resections. And then I had a reoccurrence in my liver where they were able to not have to do another liver resection, they were able to do a procedure and kind of burned those cancerous tumors. And about two years ago, I wanted to go so I still do extreme things a little bit more in moderation, I guess, but always with a purpose behind them. And so two years ago, I wanted to go to a bike ride out in Colorado called a triple bypass and then the next day, go climb a mountain and raise money for colorectal cancer. And so I went to went on a chemo break and that chemo break turned into three months turned into six months turned into nine months. And now two years without chemo. And we watch my scans and my tumor marker levels and everything for whatever reason has stayed stable and no further reoccurrences and, and so my story is kind of changed some because now it's I mean, there really is no they can't say why I just it's a miracle. I guess it's it's so I just you know, continue to take every day and do the best that I can but but you know now the lag. So for eight years, I was on a treatment and for the last two years I've been treatment free.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 19:41

That's incredible. How often do you have to go into get tested and get those scans.

T

Teri Griege 19:46

So once a month on my lab work and I'm up to about four to five months on my skin and even that

J

Jennifer Malcolm 19:55

I'm sure there's there's confidence that I'm going to be okay. So that positive, positive mentality, and there also has to be that emotional of, it's tiring. And it's it's very worrisome to deal with as well.

T

Teri Griege 20:11

Do they call it skin scan? xiety? You know, like, and I do, I really, I decided that I give myself like, 20. Now it's not now I'm in a routine. And it's, it's not nearly as as anxiety producing, but I just think, you know, I'm not going to ruin a week of my life, I'm going to give myself permission, you know, 24 hours before the scan to just sit in that whatever it is that time. And then, you know, fortunately, the results have come back, but I had a friend Tell me once, you know, it's easy when it's easy, right. And for me, it's easy right now. So it's hard when it's hard. And, and I try and respect because I deal a lot with other drivers and fighters out there. And that's kind of my work that that I get to do now. And I just have to remember, you know, it's easy. It's, it's easy for me right now. And you know, and I but but I can enjoy that I gave myself permission to enjoy the easy and, and, and respect where other people are.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 21:25

Oh, tell us about your autobiography, because I did get the chance to read that several years ago and powerful piece of work but tell the audience a little bit about.

T

Teri Griege 21:35

So it's called powered by hope when I was going to do the Ironman in, in, in Hawaii, I wanted everybody to have a T shirt on. And so they could identify each other out there because there's, you know, 10s of thousands of spectators. And I couldn't figure out what to put on the T shirt in one night it came to me powered by hope. And that became my my mantra. So the book is called powered by hope I had a woman asked me if she could share my story. She It actually started as she just wanted to write an article for a local

running store here. And then she had written a book her her agent said this needs to be told the story needs to be told. So stand up to cancer took it and then from there turned into this book. And you know, I don't know. I never thought my story would be worth sharing. But I call myself an accidental advocate. Colin asked, these are starting at age 54 screening colon cancer is the one cancer that is preventable if caught early, treatable and beatable if caught early. And so my sisters had not had colonoscopies two weeks after me. They both went, they were in their early 70s or 60s. They're 14 years older than me at the time. And my one sister a precancerous polyps and my other sister had stage three colon cancer. So I saved my sister's life immediately. And so the one reason I agreed, you know, to tell my story or have incentive ghostwriter because it's told in the first person, but I, I don't even know where to put a comma. So that was because, you know, if I could save a life, it would be worth it. And fortunately, you know, not only do I get to tell my story of a fighting cancer, but also my story of fighting addiction. So I think a lot of people can relate to it. And it's, you know, I'm just an ordinary person. And, but as everybody we all as you said in the in your opening, introduction and words that we all have a story. Um, everybody has a story. So I think it's very relatable in that regard.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 24:00

I love it. And were you talking about your recovery and being in a prior to your book and your cancer? Or were you able to just take to two beautiful stories and because you're very open when I heard you speak down in Florida, you were very open about you know, your a and, and then obviously, your book goes really into your story of fighting cancer. Was that always part of your story? Or were you just more comfortable? Now that you were already out there sharing?

T

Teri Grieger 24:29

Well, I would if somebody asked me I would absolutely be open about it. But I didn't, you know, didn't necessarily offer it up but But times have changed one of the principles of EA is attraction rather than promotion. And so, but you know, and nothing at the level of press radio and TV is one of the originals but I think his time has gone on now. I think the public is you know, we are more open books and So I, I think it's important and I share it. I have no I have a stage to really share it with but but I don't I don't wear a sign or, or anything sometimes I don't even mention it it is dictated by field, you know, drawn to share that or what was it? I don't know what the circumstances are, I hope God weeks. And I think that they happen, you know, if you just follow your intuition and kind of meeting you as a guide, we get that, you know, at that particular convention, so, yes, you know,



Jennifer Malcolm 25:36

sure, no, and that makes sense. Because there's parts of my story that I openly share, there's parts of my story that I share, when I feel safe, there's parts of my story that I share, when I know to resonate. We're, there's, there's compassion. And the beautiful part about this podcast is that each of us are stories, you know, you you have many facets within your story of it in a cloud. And it's going to touch someone, so even if someone listens to this and, and is a daughter of a mom who passed and she's getting married, and she can just not dealing with cancer, she's not dealing with a but she can relate of how you were feeling in that moment that your first thought was not going to be there when my daughter gets married. The whole part of telling stories is that human connection, and compassion, and when we are compassionate with one another, and we're really genuine listening with our ears and our hearts open, that vulnerability comes to the forefront and healing comes to the forefront and courage comes to the forefront. And that's the whole essence of capturing this stories of women on this podcast. So that's awesome. But I totally get that.



Teri Griege 26:49

Have you ever heard the the comment when the when the students ready? The teacher appears?



Jennifer Malcolm 26:54

Yes. I love that. No. And that's, that's beautiful. Because you just said with a say, and you can repeat it cuz I'm going to say it poorly about it's not about promotion. It's about attraction, attraction. So when when people are ready, you're going to attract what you need, and having an open mind and heart and spirit. So What kept you going with your diagnosis? Obviously, you You looked up the medical, and it's that, you know, 5% and realizing, you know, the fragility of life, realizing my kids, but what really pushed it was at your kids? Was it your faith? Was it just your stubbornness and determination that I'm going to beat this? What was it within you that really pushed you through and kept you going after diagnosis?



Teri Griege 27:47

Well, I think it was really a combination of all those things that you mentioned. And no, honestly, I never, I never hit such a low point that I wanted to give up. I think that there was a point post surgery where there was a chance that I wasn't going to make it I became really, really ill. But you know, it was just, it was just really, I had a world to live, I

had a reason to live, I think my faith was probably the number one thing that became very crucial. And that led me through that. And then having the goal of wanting to that long term golden of knowing that I was chosen to be this inspirational athlete. And then when I did that, my story was seen by millions around the world. To them, my purpose became to share my story to inspire others to save lives. And, and I, I had this kind of theory going in that. No, in order to keep something you have to give it away. And so me sharing my hope me sharing my story and me sharing my life gives me so much more hope gives me so much more life that it's it seems odd, but it's, it's, it works.

J Jennifer Malcolm 29:22

No, that's awesome. What inspires you, so you as you're giving out hope and I know you're saying it comes back to you as well. But what do you do to fill your soul, your spirit your your countenance that keeps you going for inspiration for determination, that that you have it in you to now be a real advocate and a voice piece for those battling and, and and going through cancer, but also, you know, just being an athlete that you're an inspirational athlete, but what what do you do to fill your tank?

T Teri Griego 29:58

So I you know it A really good question because I think, right now everybody's tank is a little empty. Yeah, right. And we're still, in all honesty, I would, I would have to say that I'm struggling a little bit. Because the way I normally fill my tank, I can't, I can't go out and serve others. Normally, I raised a lot of money for cancer research through a bike ride. So I get, you know, a huge team, I don't feel comfortable asking people, you know, we can't get together now, I don't feel comfortable asking people to donate to something that I want to do, because lots of people are without work right now. And all these So, so I'm, you know, it's interesting, I'm, I'm kind of in my own space, a little bit struggling and night. I just, I have to pray. And, you know, like, just being able to do this podcast today, if those those me, gives me reminds me, you know, grounds me What, what my mission is, but on a daily basis, I have to say it's, it's, you know, it's a little bit like treading water right now. And to see where the world goes in day to ask God to use me as fast as as, as he can. And what show me what, what, what will be next. But I, I don't know about you, Jennifer. But in a sense, you know, I kind of feel like I'm treading right now. And we'll see what what, you know, the ripples are still are still happening, but I'm not sure where I'm supposed to swim at this point.

J Jennifer Malcolm 31:39

No, and that's fair, because through through COVID. And, you know, when, when

everything started really shutting down, and you know, mid to late March. And, you know, it's that what do I do now? You know, it's one of those you know, I have a marketing firm, who's doing well, I have three teenagers. They're doing well. I got remarried two summers ago, that's going well, but there is that piece of purpose or lostness? That is there and uncertainty. I always say like, if I only know that if I don't know the rules, even if I don't like the rules, if I know the rules, at least I know how to play the game. But there's no rules right now. And every time that there's a set of rules, then they get pulled back or changed and, and shifted. And so I I can relate with, you know, what you're saying, because what COVID did give me was a gift of time. Because work cut down some and I finished my MBA, so I wasn't studying on weekends. And so the dream in my heart with this podcast to empower women and to give women's voice and story and platform really came to the surface. And so it's, it's beautiful, because I got the gift of time. But there is a sense of, Okay, what's what's next and I can't see, I can't predict I don't know, there's so many unknown variables, that there's uncertainty. So treading water is a necessary law, but at least you're not drowning.

T Teri Griege 33:06
No exactly

J Jennifer Malcolm 33:09
You will not be going very far where your head above water so. So talk to the audience about your foundation, and how your book and your work turned into. And you've alluded to a few things that you were doing with raising money, but talk to the audience about powered by Hope Foundation.

T Teri Griege 33:28
So I started, uh, I always said I wasn't going to, you know, people are like, Oh, you got to share your story, you need to start a charity. But I'm like, No, no, no, I, I believe that, you know, you you have a pie and the more smaller pieces, you cut it into that the less powerful it can be. But, um, but anyway, long story short, I wanted, it kind of came to me that one way that I could share my hope with others was through a metal and the metal marks the greatest race of a life. So I started this foundation powered by hope. And we have three pillars. One is to inspire others. And that's through giving Medals of hope to individuals that are in the fight running the greatest race of their life and coins of courage, which the coins come from the 12 steps used to be, when you celebrated an anniversary of one year to year you get a coin and you carry that coin with you. And it's a reminder that you're, you know, you're amongst others. So we have a coin of courage that we give and

that reminds people that they're not fighting alone. Our second pillar is recognition. So I started the powered by hope champion award for healthcare workers to specialize in the oncology population. And so anybody can nominate somebody that is, it's here in St. Louis. It's local at the different oncology centers. So we give those out About four or five times a year at all the different centers, so people are awarded those for championing hope helping others going above and beyond. And then our third pillar is community. And that's just basically serving others in any way. Kind of imaginable whether it's going out to lunch with a group of women, we serve dinner down at hope watch, which is through the American Cancer Society. And then the our biggest thing is, we have a local bike right here in St. Louis called pedal the cause. And I always put a team out for that call powered by hope. And as a team, we've probably raised close to \$2 million for cancer research here locally. So So that's, we're just kind of like this little sub community that that moves and does a lot that way. So that's really what what my little organization does. And I decided in the beginning, once I started getting active, and I had, I had my platform that I would give locally, to one organization and I would serve on a national organization. So luckily, I serve on the board for powered by hope. I mean, for cuddled the claws, which raises the money and then I also have a board seat for national organization fight colorectal cancer. So I do I do serve on other boards, but but as far as cancer goes, in, most of my time is spent in energy is spent on those two boards,

J

Jennifer Malcolm 36:30

or is your family involved in either of those the foundation? Are they involved? Or is this really mom's thing?

T

Teri Griege 36:37

That's pretty much mom's thing, I make them come and ride on on on pedal Sunday, you know, but, but beyond that, they're they're supportive of what I do. Because I have to share my time with lots of other people. But But no, it's, it's, you know, they have their own loves and interest and passion, too.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 36:59

I get that because I've had, we're going on the 10th anniversary of Jennasis and Associates, and choose to school years ago, my youngest, she was 13 at the time said, Mom, you know, they're doing career day and come and talk about your job. And I was like, she was, like, I gave my you know, what we do as a marketing firm? And she was like, wow, is that what you do? like I did, I never knew like, that's what you did. And I was like, I've been doing this for eight years. But it's, it's amazing how they can be supportive.

They're my kids are listening to the podcast, my son is helping with the editing and, and setting up and my husband built a studio for me in our home and, and they're so supportive yet it's also my thing. And they're giving me the space and time to do it super supportive. But it is it's my passion. It's my my dream, but doesn't mean that it's there. So just curious how your family is or isn't with your foundation as well. How active or involved, you know, with the foundation, with your speaking with training, still, you know, how much of that does takes up your time on a week to week basis? Are you just treading water?

T

Teri Griege 38:13

Yeah, well speaking, you know, not a lot of traveling happening right now. So it's kind of a nice, you know, just to be able to go out and I love to ride my bike, I kind of have a little card or a little COVID pod. So we have four or five of us that really, that really hang so I, you know, I say is as busy as I want to be, let's just say that. So, for a while I got too busy. And I lost focus of what you know, a balance number one and focus of, you know what, what I really wanted to be able to do. So it for me, this time has really been a reset, to

J

Jennifer Malcolm 38:57

Very much so and we, in our family and in the community that I'm here in with in Cleveland, we call our COVID keeps so the things that we really want to keep that were a blessing to us that you know, more family time, more game time, more more conversations around the table and realizing as my kids pending Ohio, are going you know, back to school that that time is limited. And you know, my my middle ones supposed to be leaving Sunday for her freshman year of college and, you know, who knows if that gets turned around in the next week, but realizing those chapters and gifts of time that I got so much time with her the last five months, so right just laughter and and they were home all day doing you know finishing up her senior year of high school and and what a gift that is and it does put things in perspective and you know, we live a life of busy and doing and going and going hard and when we get to the reset and the pause it reminds us of what's really important. Well, what's a dream in Teri's heart To that you haven't done yet that you're like someday, I would like to maybe it's another book. Maybe you want to be on Broadway, maybe you want to write in Europe, I don't know, what's something in your heart, that was a dream in your heart?

T

Teri Griege 40:15

Well, I said, when I sent my email into Iron Man, date to see if they would consider me as an inspirational athlete, I listed three things, three goals, re things I wanted to accomplish. One was to celebrate 25 years of marriage, which were 33 years now, the other was to be

chosen to do the World Championship Iron Man, which I got to do, and finish cross your finish line. And the third was to live long enough to see my daughter and son get married, if that's what they chose to do. And my daughter just got engaged in May. So we haven't, they haven't set a date yet, with kind of this whole unknown of COVID, and gatherings and that but so so that, that will be a huge day of celebration and, and another dream come true.

J Jennifer Malcolm 41:21

And that's beautiful. Because going back to the beginning of the podcast, when you said that was your first thought of not going to have that with my daughter. And then coming to the final few miles of that race of, you know, here we are a decade later, she's now found someone that she wants to spend her life with, and that coming to fruition as well. That brings tears to my eyes. So that's powerful. What are some things that you want to leave with our listeners? Obviously, I've, I've heard you speak, I've read your book. We've been in in and around each other's lives for the last seven or eight years. I'm always awed by the work that you do the woman who you are, your vulnerability and sharing your physical struggles, your marriage struggles, you were Canada and some of that with the book, being a woman that is pushed through, you know, in a lot of ways, but what are some things that you would love our audience to hear?

T Teri Griege 42:16

Well, you know, you, you mentioned something about boy, wouldn't it be cool if we could get wrapped that in hand it I don't remember what that was that we talked about at that point, but then I was like,

J Jennifer Malcolm 42:29

What was he and it was crossing the finish line when you

T Teri Griege 42:31

Oh, yeah. So, um, I, what I would love a gift that I would love to give to others is is to be able to put in a little box and say somehow, someday, everything will be okay. Somehow, someday, everything will be okay. And, and, and so that, you know, in fact, that would be the gift that I would love to be able to give to others and, and I, I, I would be lying if I said that I felt that type of calm, and fulfillment and completeness all the time. Because I don't I mean, it's, you know, it's there. And then and then I think I get in there and I scramble it all up. And, but, but for the most part, I'm getting better with it. And I know that I'm a

better person, when I have that belief. When I trusting God, and you know, when I keep my priorities safe in, in, in mine, so

J

Jennifer Malcolm 43:36

And then and that's beautiful, because that ability to be a mouthpiece and you know, your your messaging is all about hope. And this podcast is about hope it's about finding women right where they are. And whether it's, we, I talked about it on a recent podcast, the anchor of shame that we put on ourselves whether something happened to us, or something we chose to do that we carry shame and and when we hear something, your story, my story, in that drop of hope touches our heart and our drop of hope goes into a barren soul. And you feel that little bit of a heartbeat or you feel a little bit of refreshment in your in your mind and your heart and your soul that it is going to be okay and doesn't mean that it's going to be an overnight success doesn't mean that it's going to not have struggles or pain. But if you surround yourself with a community that sees you believes in you, and you breathe hope into so many people in your community and obviously in the cancer community on a larger circle, but I think that's really really powerful. So I appreciate that gift. I'll take it for myself. It's gonna be very good.

T

Teri Griege 44:51

You bring up an interesting point in in I know want to wrap this up but you talked about the anchor of shame a That idea of having that gift of somehow, someday, everything will be okay. I think a lot of that goes back to to is forgiving oneself, that everybody else, you know, can forgive us and God forgives us. But why are we so hard? And why can we not forgive ourselves for, for many of the mistakes that we've made. So I think that's a really important point. And lesson two, to remember too.

J

Jennifer Malcolm 45:28

I agree, I think the podcast in and of itself, of the self forgiveness issue of how we are so easy to accept other people's faults, or to forgive. But we are so hard, so hard on ourselves, and all we see is our past and, and this piece is so essential to say, my past is my past, my past doesn't determine my future, right? I can be a new person, I can make good choices I am. And speaking in the I am, I am whole, I am enough that I am healed. And letting that progression of healing and confidence and self forgiveness. I know I still deal with it. I mean, being candid, I still deal with issues of choices that I made, that if one of my girlfriends did it, I would be like, just it's good. You're good. You're okay, you're human. But for myself there was that, that barrier of I know better I and what arrogance, like there, that's such arrogance, right, right at deal with that crap of my own heart, when I

can gift it to an hypocrisy when I can gift it to other people. Right. And so I think that's a huge piece. And I'm glad that you shared that because you know that that self forgiveness piece, that bondage of I'm gonna just carry this till my grave. You know, we're not we're not meant to be.

T Teri Griege 46:50

What's the to pay off and carrying that too. I mean, you talk, you know, you chuck those other things. But then I always have to ask myself, why don't you want to give it up? what's what's that payoff? What are you what how

J Jennifer Malcolm 47:02

does it serve you? Right? Why is it serving something? It's serving something? And I think that that's a piece that, you know, candidly that I do struggle with at times. And I have to remind, so thank you for that reminder. It's always it's always the path.

T Teri Griege 47:16

Oh, yep. Always. So long as we keep moving forward. It's all good.

J Jennifer Malcolm 47:26

Oh, well, thank you so much for your time today. I know we had a little bit of technical problems at the beginning. And thank you for your patience. And it's so great to see you. from Cleveland to St. Louis. It's been a few years and see you and I had a chance to talk. And I love that this podcast brought our lives back together and honored to call you my friend and honored to capture your story. And we'll also have your information and information about your foundation and your book and where people can order it as well. But I appreciate you and honor your journey.

T Teri Griege 48:00

Back at you. Thank you.

J Jennifer Malcolm 48:02

You're so welcome. Have a good one. Subscribe to the Jennasis Movement to empower women's voices and reclaim the power over your own narrative.

