

Therapy Chat Episode 285

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[00:00:00] **Laura Reagan:** [00:00:00] Therapy Chat podcast, episode 285.

[00:00:04] **Announcer:** [00:00:04] This is the Therapy Chat podcast with Laura Reagan LCSW-C. The information shared in this podcast is not a substitute for seeking help from a licensed mental health professional. And now here's your host. Laura Reagan LCSW-C.

[00:00:34] **Laura Reagan:** [00:00:34] Hi, welcome back to Therapy Chat. I'm your host, Laura Reagan. And today I am beyond thrilled to be bringing you a conversation with someone who I've admired for a long time, a creative and talented person who has helped many other people deepen into their creativity. My guest today is Jennifer Louden. Jennifer is a personal growth pioneer who helped launch the concept of [00:01:00] self care with her 1992 bestselling debut book, *The Woman's Comfort Book*. I wish I had had that book in 1992. She's the author of six additional books, including: *The Woman's Retreat Book*, *The Life Organizer* and her newest release, *Why Bother*, and she's appeared on a number of television and radio shows and podcasts, including *The Oprah Winfrey show* as an entrepreneur and educator, Jennifer has offered women's retreats for over 25 years, and she lives in Boulder County, Colorado.

[00:01:28] Really that bio doesn't begin to capture the amazing things that Jennifer Louden does. She's the author of, I think actually nine books now you'll hear in the episode. She's been on Oprah, and she recently started her own podcast called *Create Out Loud*. She has a membership community that I personally love called *The Oasis* where she helps people tap into their believing in themselves and get their creative juices flowing. [00:02:00] And, you know, a podcast is a creative endeavor, so I'm not an author, but I definitely appreciate creative inspiration. And Jennifer Louden is someone who's inspired me greatly over the past probably at least 10, maybe 15 years.

[00:02:16] So I'm very excited to share our conversation. Today, we were talking about creativity, but as I am preparing to birth some new projects into the world, especially at the time when we did our interview, my new podcast, *Trauma Chat* had not yet launched, it is now out as you may know, but that, and another big project that's coming this summer had me feeling very vulnerable. And so she was generous to listen to my laments and fears as we were talking, because as she pointed out, these are universal struggles when people are doing something that they [00:03:00] really care about and putting it out into the world, it's incredibly vulnerable.

[00:03:04] So I was grateful to her, her generous spirit just in our conversation, but I think there's a lot to be inspired by in Jennifer's work. And I hope you'll enjoy this interview. Let's dive right in.

[00:03:22] Hi, welcome back to Therapy Chat. I'm your host, Laura Reagan. And I am so honored today to be speaking with someone who I've admired for years. My guest today is Jen Loudon. Jen, thank you so much for being my guest on Therapy Chat today.

[00:03:39] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:03:39] Thank you for having me and making me feel like I'm a big deal or something.

[00:03:47] **Laura Reagan:** [00:03:47] Um, thank you for being so approachable and so kind to come onto my show. I've have been following your work for years. You are a coach for writers and other creatives. I just found out [00:04:00] today from looking a little more deeply into your who you are since I already knew who you were, um, that you've been for 28 years, you've been doing what you do, and you are the author of nine books.

[00:04:12] So you give so much good content out there to the world in so many ways for people to take it in before we really even talk more about that will you start off by telling our audience who you are and what you do a little more in depth than I did.

[00:04:27] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:04:27] Yeah. It's always such a vast question. And one of those questions, I really dislike at a party, you know, because I can say I'm a writer and then, you know, it's like, but I also do all these other things.

[00:04:40] So I have had a trajectory of being a creative my whole life and starting off as a, not very successful screenwriter and out of the ashes of that rose my first book, The Woman's Comfort Book in 1992, it was published and it was the first book to talk about [00:05:00] self-care in a general audience outside of uh sexual abuse recovery, uh, eating recovery. Now of course, Audrey Lord and other people named it before I did. So I did not make up those terms. And I usually, I use a lot more about self nurturing and comfort at that time. So I did that work probably for about 12 or 15 years. And really, I got bored with it. To me, The Woman's Comfort Book and everything I was talking about from a very early time was feminism.

[00:05:29] But in the eighties we had to like cloak it, it wasn't that cool to really be an out there feminist using the word patriarchy was like, what, so I was always trying to push women to the idea that self care is really this radical act, because it makes you aware of all the places that your life, your job, your family, the culture, and you're internal programming, familial trauma, all of [00:06:00] that, makes it hard for you to say, I want this. I don't want that. This would be nice. And I found it both... I got, when I want to say I got bored with it, it's because I got somewhat bored with the way that it would get trivialized. And I got a little tired and this is just my personality of encouraging women to do that work over and over again.

[00:06:24] And there was only so many ways I could figure out how to package it and talk about it. Um, so eventually I moved on, I'd always been a writer and a creator, as I said earlier, and had been writing a lot of books during that time. And so eventually in the last 15, 18 years, I moved on to focusing more on, creative to teach the same message, right?

[00:06:44] Because as women or people who identify as female or anyone who identifies as not being supported by the mainstream culture, it's very difficult to own your desire to create and to own your voice on what you want to say for a lot of us, not for all of us, and if [00:07:00] you're listening and that's not hard for you, hallelujah.

[00:07:03] But for me, it's been hard even though I have this big body of work. And so that's really where my focus is now, and it's slowly been. And that, and there will be some people that I work with on more craft of writing. Um, but in general, it's about how do you really own what you want to say and get clear about it and get it out there.

[00:07:24] **Laura Reagan:** [00:07:24] Yeah. And you're doing that in so many ways. So your two most recent books are *Why Bother: Discover The Desire For What's Next* and *Get Your Bother On: A Guided Journal to Discover What's Next*.

[00:07:39] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:07:39] And those are, those are aimed for every, everybody I should say, in the pitch that I just gave about through her, that I do that I really see my, the people that I work with in two cans with lots of overlap and some people don't think of themselves as creatives or it's an important part of their lives, but they never want to earn their [00:08:00] living at it. Right. And those people are, are in the *Why Bother* book, in *The Oasis*, my membership that you're a member of community, my membership community, you're a member of.

[00:08:11] And then the subset are people who are more like, I really want to figure out how to make this more, a part of my life. Or this is part of my life and I want to get out there more with it, professionalize it more. So that's a much smaller part of my, my work. I was just working on, people's writing this morning.

[00:08:26] It's my Friday morning, it's on my Friday morning schedule. So I'm really in the writing part.

[00:08:32] **Laura Reagan:** [00:08:32] Yeah. And I mean, you know, I've thought about going to one of your writer's retreats in Towson and saying, what would I write? I'm not writing a book, but yeah.

[00:08:46] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:08:46] To me it's the it's, that's the big question that we have to be willing to work with our brains because we know our brains don't give a crap about what's next. Our brains don't give a [00:09:00] crap about living our best lives. I just made little quote, marks. Our brains don't care about expressing our voices. They could care less. Regulate, do you got enough glucose, got enough salt, is there anything here that can eat us? Okay I'm cool. And so we have to figure out how to work around our brains first. And then we have to figure out how to work around this culture. But it's the question. I think I had a thought today, Laura, that it doesn't matter what we do. It matters how we do it.

[00:09:35] **Laura Reagan:** [00:09:35] So can you say more about that?

[00:09:37] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:09:37] Yeah, I think, I don't know. I mean, I'm sure you feel this way as a therapist. The human brain and the human mind and the human heart, are just a giant mystery. I mean, who knows what's really going on inside of me, but I'm in that phase of growth where I'm having a lot less attachment to my stories. My story is [00:10:00] about my husband. My story is about our blended family, my stories about my success, lack of success, whatever version of it is today and my like clinging really hard to identity, whatever that looks like today.

[00:10:16] And I don't know why, I don't know why it's feeling this way now. And there's nothing that I'm particularly doing differently than I'm aware of. Maybe it just depends on like, maybe I'm just giving back to nature. I'm fully vaccinated and the weather here has been beautiful.

[00:10:32] **Laura Reagan:** [00:10:32] Yes. Yes. I think about that. I think about that you being in beautiful Boulder area and you know, you, you share so much on your membership site and your blogs. And now your podcast, which I haven't fully listened to yet, but I'm going too.

[00:10:54] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:10:54] My husband's so cute. He listens to it when he runs and he's like I didn't finish the whole episode. I'm like, [00:11:00] it's okay. He's like, I'm going to go back and finish it. Like, if you want to, there's no tests.

[00:11:09] **Laura Reagan:** [00:11:09] Uh, he doesn't have to prove he loves you that much by listening to every episode all the way through.

[00:11:15] Yeah. Well, you know, it's you, and this is like my experience too, and it's weird because I'm a therapist also. But when you share about yourself, the people who take in what you create have a sense of you, that's based on what you shared.

[00:11:31] And then, so I'm talking to you and I feel like I know a lot about you and you don't know me, you know, it's like but then when I, as a therapist, I talk to people and I ask them to tell me everything about themselves. And I don't tell them much about myself and, you know, so it's that I feel like it's, it feels it's a new experience that can be very uncomfortable to have people recognize me for the podcast and say, oh yeah, I loved when you were talking about when you're [00:12:00] you know, your dog did this or whatever. And I'm like, Ooh, like I feel kind of exposed, you know, but you know, you choose what you put out there, but it's so vulnerable to create something for people to consume and you know, hard not to get tripped up in like what everybody's going to think about it for one.

[00:12:19] And that's one of the reasons why I asked you to be on is you recently started your new podcast, which is called, Create Out Loud. And you shared in your cause I'm on your email list. You shared that you were like really nervous when you interviewed a big guest, which is how I felt about talking to you today.

[00:12:40] And you, you were so vulnerable in how you shared that, I felt comfortable enough to ask you. I feel dumb now with reading what I wrote, but I was like this is my vulnerability hangover piece. It's like, hi, if you want any help promoting your new podcast, you can come on my podcast. And then I'm like, [00:13:00] oh, why didn't you say that to her?

[00:13:02] Like, she's been on Oprah. Like ugh foot in mouth, but you were gracious enough to say, you know, I'll do it. And I mean, it makes you feel more approachable and, you know, it's, there's just so much vulnerability in it. That's, that's what I'm trying to say. And I'm in that space too, because I'm launching a second podcast this summer.

[00:13:22] And you know, just, even though I've had this podcast for awhile and like you, you had one before, too. It's it's a new thing. It's like creating something that didn't exist and it's so vulnerable.

[00:13:35] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:13:35] Yeah, I think, well, thank you. I'm glad I'm approachable and of course very happy that you reached out. And I think being able to support each other is so important and so much of what I want my work to be about is helping women support each other.

[00:13:52] And I don't think anyone is ever in the position, maybe they are, but if they are then there, they need to do some [00:14:00] therapy that they're in the position of, I don't, how dare you want to help me. And that's just, that would make me, well, maybe like, if I'm really honest, I've had those thoughts before, at times in my career.

[00:14:13] But I think it's how we ask each other how we, or how we offer to each other. I always think it's when we, it comes from that really heartfelt place and not look how great I am. Let me help you. That's the difference. Anyway, that's a little aside, but I think the vulnerability thing for me in some ways is really hard.

[00:14:30] And really easy. And the hard part is, is there's a part of me and I've been working on this for a long, long time- wants to be special. And I used to think that if I could be special enough, I would get out of suffering in life. So it's taken a lot of suffering and a lot of the fact that life happens to all of us and we lose the people we love.

[00:14:53] We lose capacity and we don't have things turn out the way we want and all the things that we all go through, some of [00:15:00] us are of course, much more tragically than others. I always call my suffering garden variety. Right. Garden variety. Mom had Alzheimer's dad died. He was 86, you know, a divorce. Children, you know, kind of garden, variety, suffering, depression, things like that.

[00:15:16] So that story of needing to be special is what I keep working on. And when I'm not working on it, that's what makes it hard to be vulnerable because then vulnerability is attached out and then it's not genuine, you know? And then I can probably go back and read things I wrote years ago, and go ew, you know, it's like I was really secretly hoping you pay attention to me and like me. And so working through that, and I think you probably know this deeply and the people you work with know this, part of creating and part of being a creator and putting our work out there in whatever way, podcast, painting books, you know, one woman show, is that we have to be doing the work and we have to be letting the creating of doing the work, the [00:16:00] creating of the work, change us.

[00:16:01] And if we're not doing that, uh, trying to the best of our ability and of course failing a lot, we're not gonna be working on the, the weaknesses, the, the pain points in ourselves, and that's going to trip us up. So that's one thing. I think the other thing, when it comes to vulnerability, hangovers is normalizing them.

[00:16:20] It's even preparing for them. Right. It's like, okay, By Friday at three, I'm pretty much done talking to people, being seen, putting myself out there. So it's time for a call my agent and some popcorn. I need the weekends, for example, to be more offline. I, so we

need to build that in, what are the things that genuinely recharge us, even if they're you know, they're not active, or spiritual, or creative, you know, I need that kind of downtime. And I also have found that one of the things that's really helped me since we moved to Colorado almost six years ago, is [00:17:00] that my friends here are not creative. Well, that's not true. One of my best friends is a writer.

[00:17:04] But my, a lot of our set of friends that we got to know here are what I call straight jobs. They own the Dairy Queens. They they're, they work in things in corporate consulting that I don't understand at all. They tried to explain to me I'm like, and so they don't give a crap what I do. I mean, my book came out, they read it, their like that was good.

[00:17:27] Oh, I liked your book, you know, but there's like not, you know, it's nothing. Oh you have a podcast? Oh, how sweet, you know? And I'm like yes.

[00:17:36] And in fact, there was this moment, one of the larger group, she's a decorator and she does some help designing some stuff for us in our backyard and stuff. And she had, she somehow Googled me and then she came over and she's like, oh my God, I had no idea who you were. And I'm like, no, stop that, stop right now. And she did. And I was like, no, I'm just me who [00:18:00] goofily can not figure out where to hang her pictures.

[00:18:05] Yeah.

[00:18:06] **Laura Reagan:** [00:18:06] That's, I love what you said about the friends who don't really get what you do and don't care, but you know, they like you for who you are, but they don't care about that. And that seems grounding is kind of what, what I'm hearing.

[00:18:21] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:18:21] Yes and there's a, there's an interview that will be out probably when people are listening to this on Create Out Loud and it's by this incredible Chipewa, YA author, her name is Angeline Boulley and her YA debut novel debuted at number one in the New York times. It has been auctioned by the Obamas. It is a Reese Witherspoon book. It is a, you know, you name it. This is like it's. She's 56. So I interviewed her about this and she tells this really great story.

[00:18:50] She moved back from DC when all of this stuff happened and there was enough money back to the upper peninsula, UP in Michigan, to, to [00:19:00] be near her parents or so I thought it was to be near my parents, but they grounded me. So on the day that my book publishes, the day is also the day it debuts number one in The New York Times.

[00:19:11] And I have dinner with my parents and then I play Yahtzee

[00:19:17] That's real life. And the rest of it is it's just fun or not, but it's not real. And I think that's what I've had to learn as I go on. And that's what I mean by what I said earlier. I think it's all just a story. Right. And it's all just like, it doesn't really matter. If I'm growing and enjoying it, and when I'm tied to the outcome or if you like me or don't like me or this makes a lot of money or grows, or man, I'm just so lost.

[00:19:49] And then the vulnerability eats me up because you're doing the thing that you were para parroting yourself doing earlier, right? Oh my God. When did you do that? Why

did I say that? Right. [00:20:00] And when it's in the game phase, you're like, oh my God, I am such a goof.

[00:20:08] **Laura Reagan:** [00:20:08] Yeah. And it's, yeah, it's good to be able to look at it that way. And you know, there's something about like, I think it's does have to do with the way our culture doesn't really, it's like our culture doesn't value, authenticity, as much as it values celebrity and like idealizing things. And so it's like if you are trying to do something like a podcast that's free, is something you're creating for a reason because you believe in the message that you're trying to share.

[00:20:40] And so you're doing that from the right place. You're not necessarily expecting to become a millionaire from it. I mean, most podcasts there's never, ever make any money from it, but there's, once your name becomes known, it's like, it gets confusing. Well, like now people know who I am now. It's, [00:21:00] you know, it's that being seen is, you know, it feels like it carries with it

[00:21:04] some now I have to watch myself a little more, you know, or something, and that's not authentic, but it's like, it's hard to conceptualize it.

[00:21:12] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:21:12] Yeah, I think it, I think, but, but, but that's important in that we have to realize that in some situations and places we do have to watch ourselves to stay protected.

[00:21:25] I mean, especially if you're women or you're gay or you're trans or you're, non-binary, you know, it's not safe in a lot of situations. So how do you take care of yourself and the idea that we can just be ourselves anywhere? I mean, that's never been true. Right. Always Jen, anyway, I mean, I'm one person I tried, I feel like I'm the same person, but I don't know.

[00:21:49] And neuroscience and philosophy, I mean, they're all still debating. Do we even have a self, even a stable self in there? You know? [00:22:00] I think we do have to be careful. And I think it's completely okay to be very strategic about what we share about ourselves. I feel more comfortable in the Oasis sharing with my process, but I'm always asking isn't this of use to you to keep showing up for yourself.

[00:22:19] You don't need to hear me Nat or not about myself. Same thing on the podcast. I, I have a producer and he had it's it. And then I go through and do another. And I'm like, oh, that was dumb. Well, it took you 17 times to say that.

[00:22:36] And I sent it back to him, like, you know, I usually kind of like 10 or 15 minutes. And then I also look for, of course the verbal tips that we all have and try to take those out for my guests. So they don't sound like no it's like that or the wrong use of literal or. The writing, uh, teacher comes out in that part.

[00:22:55] That's not the reason here.

[00:23:03] [00:23:00] Um, so I think that being intentional and protecting ourselves I think is great. And I also think there's a question of, I don't want to live my life where I am selling

myself to sell. And so I am always really aware of, am I posting something on social media or am I thinking about a blog post I might write?

[00:23:29] And is it taking me out of my life? Is there something about my emotional or some there's something crappy about that? There's something about my labor, where I'm like, I'm pimping myself for the social media outlet. And I wish use to do that. I refuse to do that, which doesn't mean I'm going to be smart about it.

[00:23:51] And if I'm in the mood and I'm like, this feels okay, I'm like, okay, great. Let's how can we be smart about it? But I refuse to be like, my life exists so you can see [00:24:00] it so I can make money that makes me want to just like never, ever do anything again.

[00:24:08] Hey everyone. It's me. Laura Reagan just wanted to make sure that you know about what I've got going on this summer. I don't think I've really talked about it much here, which is silly, but in case you didn't hear, I did start a second podcast called trauma chat. Which is really for anyone who wants to understand what trauma is and how it shows up in our lives.

[00:24:34] As you've heard me say, if you've listened to this show, I've mentioned a million times that people tend to think that trauma. Something that happens to someone else, something horrific and unthinkable unspeakable. And that is true. Trauma is that, but it's also experiences that are very commonly shared among many of us.

[00:24:58] Most of us on [00:25:00] trauma chat. Break down what trauma is in. Hopefully understandable language. That's not stigmatizing. I know I couldn't have possibly captured every thought. There is about trauma and every aspect of trauma and how it shows up, but I hope. That trauma chat will be helpful to people who really don't understand what trauma is.

[00:25:22] And maybe wondering, do I have trauma, you know, or wanting to better understand what someone they care about is going through. And most importantly, how to get help if you have experienced trauma, what to look for, how to describe your experiences or how to find the words that. What you've been through so that you can then connect with whatever type of resource support, whether it's therapy or a podcast that you'd like to listen to, to learn more about it, or an article, another website.

[00:25:54] This is my hope in creating trauma chat. And the second part of [00:26:00] that is the news. Trauma therapist, network, community that I'm creating. It's unbelievable to say this because I've been laboring behind the scenes to bring this to you for a long time. Starting in around 2018 is when I first had the idea.

[00:26:17] And then the process of getting from there to here has been slow and with many twists and turns, but I'm creating a community for. People who have experienced trauma to find help for trauma therapists, to find other trauma therapists to network with and refer to, and gather and collaborate and share ideas and hopefully come together in person in, in gatherings that I don't know if there'll be able to happen in 2021, but maybe by 2022, we can have in-person gathering.

[00:26:52] Of trauma therapists to provide support to one another and combat the isolation of trauma work. [00:27:00] Even if you work in a large agency or group practice, trauma work is so isolating. It's just part of the nature of it and connecting with other people who. It's so valuable. The participants in my trauma therapists, consult groups share how useful they find them to be because we're in our offices doing our work, and then we go home and it can be really hard to receive the same kind of support that you give to your clients.

[00:27:27] So I hope that trauma therapists network will be a useful resource for you, whether you are. Trying to find more information about trauma, or if you are a trauma therapist, yourself to learn more, please go to trauma therapist, network.com. The website is not live yet as of June 28th when I'm recording this, but it will be live by August 1st, if all goes well.

[00:27:54] And hopefully there may be even a soft launch before. A beta version. [00:28:00] So please go to trauma therapists, network.com, where you can find a free download and sign up to be notified. As soon as it officially goes live, whether you are a therapist or just someone who wants to learn more about trauma, there's a download there for you.

[00:28:16] Different ones for each group. And I hope that this resource that I've really created from the heart will bring healing to more people. I really want people who have experienced trauma to be able to find the right kind of support. And that's why I created the trauma therapist network. I hope you will join me there.

[00:28:37] Like I said, you can get more information by going to [www dot trauma therapist, network.com](http://www.traumatherapistnetwork.com) where you can. To be notified as soon as the official website goes live, which will be in August of 2021. If you're hearing this after August, 2021, go there and hopefully you will find the site and you'll see everything that it has to offer.

[00:28:59] I [00:29:00] cannot wait. This is such a labor of love, something that I've really poured my heart into. And I'm just so excited for you to see it. Thank you so much for your support.

[00:29:14] Yeah. So that's an exact, I mean, that's a perfect example of sort of what I'm thinking is tricky for us who are creating things. It's I don't really identify myself as a creative, but I'm trying to start identifying that way. Um, it's important to name it because there's power. And there's power in lineage.

[00:29:36] Can you say more about the lineage part shoulders? Do you stand on? There's a concept that came out of my mouth on the Oasis, I think. And it was toxic originality and toxic originality. Is this really a, probably it's just American. I don't know if it's in other cultures, maybe it is, but it's this idea that everything that comes out of you to like be so original and spring fully formed from your brain, [00:30:00] that's not.

[00:30:01] How creativity works. It's always come. You're always combining things. I can't say that word, but combining there's another, there's another version of that word. I think you say synthesizing, combining. I think of myself, my eye for years and years and years, I want it to be this towering intellectual, you know, I wanted to be Susan's on Todd meets Tina bay.

[00:30:25] I am neither. These things. I am not particularly funny, I'm goofy, but that's different than bunny. And I am not very smart, especially not in an intellectual way, but what I am really good at is being a magpie. And for those of you don't know, it's, uh, it's in the Crow, family and magpies. I live in the west.

[00:30:42] They're this beautiful blue and black and white birds. And they're great at change. And gathering them and putting them in their nest. So I gather all these different things and then I combined them in some new way, you know, so I might read something and I'm like, oh, this is like a perfect prompt for the Oasis or a perfect like little [00:31:00] exercise meditation.

[00:31:00] Great. And I used to poo poo that because it wasn't original enough, but that's toxic originality. Right. It's gotta be so new and so formed. So linear just saying whose shoulders do I stand? Whose work do I want to take in there's a podcast episode. I think it's number three, it's a lore and conifer and she's a sort of a neuroscience, geeky prototype, mindful productivity person, super science-based, which I like.

[00:31:33] And she talks about. Idea sex. I don't think she makes it up. She's somebody who totally doesn't do originality. She's all about sort of reporting and combining, and, um, very much like Maria [Inaudible]

[00:31:46] **Laura Reagan:** [00:31:46] I don't know that name.

[00:31:47] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:31:47] She is, um, made a huge name for herself by gathering and combining and reporting a [Inaudible]

[00:31:56] **Laura Reagan:** [00:31:56] oh, yes, I do. I subscribe to that, the [00:32:00] name.

[00:32:01] **Jennifer Louden:** [00:32:01] So those are great examples of us. And then they're just really smart at taking in a lot of information, making it clear, giving you cool pictures, you know, pull interviews, things like that. There's a tremendous value in that and idea sex is, whose whose books? Whose thinkings? Whose, you know, bodies of work are you combining?

[00:32:19] Are you, are you loving health sets together to make something new? And that to me is so basic, but so important to take in deeper. So whose lineage do I want? And then conversely, whose lineage? Because there is a lot of crap out there and there is a lot of crap that I in a younger age with led into my life and.

[00:32:40] This is popular. Well, maybe I can now I'm like get the, to the back of the room, get the out of my space. And I've actually even gotten better when I'm on a podcast interview like today as a guest. And someone says something that, you know, I don't agree with. Just very gently saying, well, that's not how I see it.

[00:33:00] [00:33:00] Right. I'm very science-based or someone asked me recently, no intuition did it. I'm like, well, intuition is really your, some of your experience that is in your unconscious and not your working memory. And so intuition can come up when we give it time. So that we're actually asking ourselves, what do I know about this?

[00:33:20] But it's not. Yeah, it's, it's real, but there's a there's. It can help us with and save us time and missteps and loss of self-trust, but is often framed in the popular culture as some kind of whoop, you know, my intuition said, you know, like, yeah, it's not infallible either. True about intuition. I always remind myself that our trauma threat response system can tell us, yes, this is inherently dangerous.

[00:33:54] It could be a MIS misinterpretation by our brain based on having a past experience of [00:34:00] trauma. And we can go, no, my gut says this isn't safe. And it's like, is that your gut? Or is that a fear response? It's based on almost like a misfiring. You know, something that, you know, because of past negative experiences, it's just trying to protect you, but that's not your intuition.

[00:34:15] That is so important. I think you should write a book about this, about what intuition really is. I mean, Malcolm Gladwell swerved it in blink, but I think it could be written for, you know, women who and men who. I can't say that we're set, make it a fetish. Yeah. And what is it really? And how do we really work with it from a trauma informed place?

[00:34:41] Maybe anyway, there's an idea for you put that in the memory bank? Well, I like it. You're kind of you've you've made me see something that I hadn't really thought of before about like women's wisdom and our. Our [00:35:00] voices, as I struggled to say that it's not, I don't know why I'm not really thinking about this clearly or wasn't, it's not just an inner, like flaw or, oh, you know, oh, I'm shy.

[00:35:14] I'm afraid to speak up or I don't trust myself. I'm not confident. It's also an effect of patriarchal culture and yeah, I mean, and I know that, but I. Because it's hard to see it. We could use the very hackneyed, an analogy that I always love, which is where like a fish in the water. And we don't realize what kind of water we're in and also our culture, especially in the last, I don't know, 30, 40 years, maybe longer than that, maybe it's just posts.

[00:35:46] Freudian is all about what our responsibility. And that's great because we do have to take responsibility because in the end, if we don't, that was going to change. But if we think it's all about us and we pathologize this and I'm sure you [00:36:00] see this in your, in your office every day, then we, we don't realize that part of the action we need to be taken is to change the institutions.

[00:36:08] And of course, in the last years, The rise of awareness about patriarchy, about racism, about how capitalism is killing the planet. More and more people are seeing that. Right. And that's fantastic and so important. So there's always this place that I'm trying to straddle in my own work and in my home psyche, which is okay, what is, what is that is coming into me?

[00:36:34] What is that has sort of been embedded in. And what is, what can I do about it today? And then what is my own, you know, trauma and self doubt and personality pattern then. And in some ways we can just go and go down the rabbit hole, trying to figure it out, or we can just say yes, probably some of all, what do I want to do now?

[00:36:52] Take it. So personally, I think that really right, because I think, you know, Talking about that sense of [00:37:00] vulnerability and how these, you know, imposter syndrome bots and inner critic voices come up that can shut you down.

[00:37:12] They're not real. I mean, I think that's where many years of meditation training has slowly helped me, which is it's not real. Those interactions. I can dialogue with them. I can bring them to consciousness. I can tell them, get, get the same behind me. As one of my clients used to say from the south, um, I can make fun of them.

[00:37:35] I can name them. I can dial up with them. I give writers and exercise sometimes creatives where write down all the things, your inner critic, once you to learn, like turn it into an ally. Like, what is your inner critic? Really worried? And I also think we, we, we, it's a practice and the more we're creating and the more we're putting it out there as a way to grow [00:38:00] as humans, not to perform like mold because the culture wants us to perform.

[00:38:07] Right. The culture wants us to have a 2 million Instagram followers and then suddenly we're worth more. So it's how do we keep some verdicts of birding that message in ourselves? I don't, I'm not, I'm not here and I'm not saying don't make a living. I mean, I have to make living, I have to pay my bills to pay my mortgage, but that's really different than performing for you.

[00:38:27] And the more and more, yeah. That way. I'm not saying it doesn't creep back in. I'm not saying there's not days. And I'm like,

[00:38:37] but the more that I'm like, that's not me and that's not why I'm here. I'm sure to like, I'm sure for that moment earlier, I planned. These adorable little flower though, inside my door of my office. And they're all like little scary pansies and things. I don't even know the name of it. I just love it so much.

[00:38:55] I'm here for that. I'm here to look in your eyes and go out and crumble than it get [00:39:00] to me, you know, and here for my puppy, I'm here for, you know, when my daughter, you know, You know, get to connect and that's really what matters. It's really what brings me joy and creating I'm here for the creamy I'm here for, for the work.

[00:39:18] And the result is just, I do my best and I do my best to promote it and to talk about it. But every time I get caught up and if I can just get it. If I can just get higher out whatever this many books, this many people on the Oasis, you know, blah, blah, blah. Then I'm just, that's when everything falls apart for me.

[00:39:39] Yeah. So I'm hearing you say creating for the sake of creating. It, it feeds something in you and yeah, I think I would just maybe parse that a little bit farther, uh, make that a little bit finer, which is creating for the sake of growing. I think creating, visiting, upgrading is great and I will do what I do with [00:40:00] my art stuff.

[00:40:00] But creating for the sake of growing feels a little edgier to me, and it feels like I need both. And then creating for the sake of growing also means putting my workout. It also

means finishing it doesn't mean hiding it. I see this so much and I think this is going to be my next project. I see this so much.

[00:40:18] And I'm so wanting to do something about it, where people create, whether it's courses or books or. And then they don't, they just leave it and then they go make something else and they, they don't know how to put it out there in a way that feels effective or safe. So I'm thinking about what that would look like and what support around that would look like.

[00:40:37] I don't know. Yeah. Oh, thank you. I think that's so needed because I think subconsciously we can do that. We think to us, we're really putting ourselves out there so uncomfortable uncomfortably. We're not doing it in a way where people can actually find it. And then it reinforces for us that no one likes it because no one knew about it.

[00:40:58] Totally. But you [00:41:00] know, when you can, even, you can even like den me for doing it because here you're in my world. And you're like, I didn't know you did all these. Now there also is that some point you're just like, you just don't see dragging your, you know, your past behind you because you're evolving and changing and you're allowed to evolve and change.

[00:41:15] I hope you are evolving and changing as a creator. It will piss people off. I've been doing the same email newsletter. I've been doing a weekly email newsletter some time off for 21 years and I'm ready for it. And so in Oregon, it do a new format in a few weeks, maybe. Yeah. Like six weeks. And I know it's going to piss some people and we'll lose some people and I'm like, I got to keep growing.

[00:41:40] I don't keep growing. Then my business doesn't keep growing because I'm bored. And we know as a creative, that being bored. I mean, it's something we have to master because there is boredom involved, especially in putting our work out. Yeah. We allow ourselves to grow. Yes. Yes. I, I love that perspective about it, looking [00:42:00] at it as creating to grow, because it does make you grow.

[00:42:05] I mean, that makes me bro, if you don't value that part of it, if you value the results more than you can overlook the growing part, man, when I always tell them the creators I work with is you, the secret is that even if you don't get the result you want, you don't get the deal or you don't. Buy in, or you don't get the grant or you don't get the sales that you want.

[00:42:28] That's not, but you've already gotten the real prize which you showed up and you grew by doing it, but you don't take that in and see that, you know, that our brain just discounts it right. Is our brain is not going to look, isn't benefiting glucose. Do I have enough glucose? Do I have enough salt? Do I have enough?

[00:42:46] So Jim, that's all our, you know, so we have to build in those reflections. And say, okay. Yeah, I right. I did. What I started would do look how much I've grown look. And that was one of the things before the why bother book. I spent four [00:43:00] years writing a memoir or years and 500 pages. It sucked, it never came together.

[00:43:06] As a, as a narrative arc, there was lots of good pieces in it. Lots of good writing, but I can, I, I got lost over and over again. Adjust. I just don't think the story was there. The narrative arc was there. I took that. No problem done. Moving on immediately wrote another book proposal, sent it to my agent, my agent and her entire agency turned it down.

[00:43:28] No problem. And I did the next book. It became why bother. And people were like, well, how did you do that? How are you so resilient? I'm like, because I'd already gotten the benefit. I had paid attention. I thought in the benefit of doing this four years of writing, I had become a completely different person.

[00:43:45] I'm so much happier. I'm so much more whole that if nothing ever came of all that writing. And no message came out of that I could share or make money off of or help people with. Oh, well, wow. Yeah. I mean, it really was totally genuine and believe [00:44:00] me, there was a part of me that was just a gap. I was like, really?

[00:44:03] You're really this. Okay. I mean, when I got the news from, uh, my friend, Jenny Nash, she's a great book coach. She has a great book coaching program. For to, to train both coaches. And I had hired her to read the manuscript of the memoir and I was on a plane and I read the notes that she's like, no, this doesn't work.

[00:44:22] You just don't need it. Doesn't work. It's not gonna work. I cried a little bit. And then I was like, okay on we go. But there was this observe. I was observing myself like really? Are you, are you just like in denial here? But I, it never, I don't think I ever was. So I think if we're really like, yes, I'm growing.

[00:44:40] It's not that it doesn't sting or her, it's not that we might not crawl in bed. A week, but it was just so much more resilient. Yeah. I guess, you know, there's so much fear of failure and fear of rejection that prevents us from even putting anything out, but actually receiving that it doesn't [00:45:00] land the way you want it to, you don't get the outcome that you were hoping for and going through that and, and being able to somehow learn and grow in that thing that you wanted so badly to avoid.

[00:45:11] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I've had tons of big disappointments in my career. Tons of embarrassments and yeah, when I can grow from them and not be like, this says something about who I am as a person, or it does not determine your future because when you believe it determines your future, that's when you fall into the grubby draining kind of why bother, right?

[00:45:34] This is it I'm done with, and that's what stops so many. But it doesn't say anything about who you are. And in fact, just to bring back, create out loud. Again, my podcast, there's a great interview with two screenwriters. One of whom was nominated for an academy award for inside out, and they will file. And she says, I asked her like, you know, when you have a thing about screenwriting, one of the reasons I left that industry, Please pick me, please [00:46:00] buy me, please develop me.

[00:46:01] Please produce me. And how do you deal with that? She's like, oh, I don't think about it that way. I think this story came to me and if I don't do it justice, then it's never

going to get out there and that's my responsibility. So if they're not getting it, I got to figure out a better way for them to get it.

[00:46:16] And I got it. Lauren that just like, wow, I can't stop thinking about it. I can't stop thinking about that. Like, okay, so here's this idea or here's this body of work? What do I need to learn as a craft person or as a, as a promoting person, a marketing person or a networking person to, to do a job. It has a life of its own and I have a responsibility to it.

[00:46:38] That's so different. Right. Then I was news about Mary. Nobody likes me.

[00:46:47] That's so helpful. And you know, just if something succeeds doesn't mean you have to change your thing. Right. It's just like Angelina, Angela, and bullies saying, yeah, I [00:47:00] played Yahtzee with smoker. Right. Nothing's changed, you know? Yeah. It's like, great. It's amazing. She's like this, this is life-changing money.

[00:47:08] I can pay for my children and my nieces and nephews to go to college. Um, which I just thought was so beautiful. And so indigenous native, right. To think about that. Extended family and so different than a lot of white people might think about it. Um, myself included, I would think about my children, but maybe no, and yeah, you know, we're still a success or failure and who are we being?

[00:47:33] And where is our, where's our liveliness and where is our integrity and where is our growth? And that's. What I'm sticking with today. We'll see if a, feel like that. The next time I get kicked in the stomach.

[00:47:50] Well, thank you. Thank you so much for sharing your insights. I mean, gosh, this is something I'm going to be reflecting back on after, you know, we finished. [00:48:00] To like, reflect what I want to learn. Even from this conversation, it's been so useful. And I know that many people who are listening will feel the same way.

[00:48:08] So Jen, where can people find everything? You do everything I do always professional. Yes for everything I do. You just show them that, want to see all those art messes in the basement. I really don't. There's two in the bathroom, the restaurant, and just, you don't need to see those. I, Jennifer louden.com and you can get a free chapter of the book and you can there's.

[00:48:33] If you can find out about create out loud, you can also go to anywhere you get your podcasts. Spotify, apple, et cetera. And the Oasis there's information about the Oasis and jennifer.com. We opened a new members from time to time. Yes, I've, I've used, I've been a member off and on of the Oasis since, I don't know, maybe when you started it, I don't know how long it's been going, but it's been a long time.

[00:48:56] This iteration has been five years. Yeah, I think you [00:49:00] had it before. And I did it then, and it was a live version for a while. And then I was like, wow, this is really hard. If I'm someplace without connectivity, we were in, um, we were in Moab getting ready to do a half marathon and I was trying to do it. And the kind of, you know, Bandwidth.

[00:49:19] I'm like, okay. I got to figure it out. Well, it's wonderful. I, I recommend it to anybody who wants to get more of a connection within, you know, it's about that. I feel like I'm the, I'm the gentle, encouraging. I fire a new juror every week that says, Hey, come back to yourself. Hey, what's getting, what's getting noisy in there.

[00:49:40] Hey, what do you really want to do in the next week? That's my goal with the Oasis. What's really going to keep you true to yourself. And in that spot where you're like, yeah, if I up for bid dropped dead tomorrow, I'd be like, I was doing more and being more. And that's really my, I mean, that's my goal in [00:50:00] life.

[00:50:00] I mean, I'm old enough now that I friend she's just a few months older than I was very suddenly. Okay. Right. It's not it's time. Right. I'm in, I'm interested. I've entered the end game and it could be 20 years from now. It could be tomorrow. It could be 40 years from now. That would be really cool. But, um, yeah.

[00:50:20] So what do you want it to be? We're always in the end game. Well, I just want to thank you again for being my guest on therapy chat today. My pleasure. Thank you for listening to therapy. Chat with your host, Laura Reagan LCS, WC. For more information, please visit therapy_chat_podcast.com.