

[00:00:00] SHOW INTRO

[00:00:47] Barb Patterson: Hey, everyone. Welcome.

[00:00:49] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Welcome. Welcome to REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES with me, Melissa Palazzo-Hart

[00:00:54] Barb Patterson: and me, Barb Patterson. So glad you're here.

[00:00:57] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: We are. Today, we thought it might be fun to talk about the topic of comparison.

[00:01:04] Barb Patterson: Fun? Fun, Melissa?

[00:01:07] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Well, I don't know if it's fun. Right now it's fun because I'm not in the actual comparison of it.

But, um, I think that what's fun for me is to explore the topic with you—because everything's fun exploring with you, Barb, when we, when we kind of take a step back, but...

[00:01:24] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Absolutely..

[00:01:26] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: You know, I think social media is wonderful in so many ways. I love to stay connected to my friends from elementary school and my friends in Los Angeles and New York and around the world.

And so there's so many wonderful things and everyone gets to see my



daughter grow up and sometimes me, you know, put some makeup on and show up on social media. And it makes me think that I'm connected all the time on social media. Yet, why do I actually feel discounted? Every time I go on with the desire to connect. And when I go off, I feel less connected than I did before. And usually I'm kind of feeling a little badly about myself. And if I think about why that is it's because I am scrolling. And as I'm excited for people in their achievements and you know, their, their marriages and their beautiful children and their accomplishments— can't help, but start thinking about, "Oh, maybe I should be doing something differently or more with my life."

"Maybe I need to lose a couple of pounds." "Maybe I should clean my house a little bit more often." "Maybe I should color those gray hairs." "Maybe I should be further along." And the list really goes on and on. And what starts to happen is I start to think I need to be different, to do more, be better. And it's really interesting how that works.

And then most recently at night I have seen these filters and I've, have you...I don't know if you've seen them, but there's many different filters. I can have bigger lips, bigger eyes, better eyelashes, whiter teeth, a better tan. I mean, it's like walking right in to a little Melissa improvement and coming out the other end—and it was fun.

I was enjoying it—taking pictures and sending them to my friends. I'm thinking like, "Oh gosh, that's super fun." And then I thought, "Oh, this is actually quite a slippery slope of not only am I sometimes comparing myself to others on social media. Now I'm comparing myself to a beautified falsified version of myself."

And that gets pretty dangerous for me. And I, and I think for others too, because what it makes me think is I need to be different. I need to be better. And as I say that, it brings a little sadness into my body because I know it's not true. And yet, sometimes I have those thoughts and when I have those thoughts, it's really important that I don't follow them too far.

You know? It's really good for me to put the phone down and just get some sleep. And then to really connect with another person. And this sounds so obvious as I'm saying it right, but pick up the phone and call someone, don't just go to their page and like what they're saying—really connect with another person.

And the other thing I think is really important for me. And one of the reasons why we're doing this, REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES, is to share the truth of what's going on, right. To post a picture when I don't look even close to perfect or to share that I'm experimenting with something and I'm not sure what the results are going to be. To not just show my outsides, but my insides too, because I think on social media, what I've done is I've compared my insides to what I think someone's outsides look like.

And the truth is I have no idea what's going on in that beautiful person's home. And so I look at it as, I take a little bit of responsibility here to open the door to my home and to my heart and to my mind and share with others. So they can just see the human experience of what we're all going through.

[00:05:01] Barb Patterson: I love that. And I've heard someone say something along the lines of, "We end up comparing our real lives with somebody's curated social media life."; Right. And then in that comparison, of course we don't measure up or it looks like we're lacking.

And it's funny because social media, and especially over the last couple of years, I've seen it be a real source of inspiration for me around human rights and activism and, you know, movements that matter to me. Yet at the same time, like you're saying, I can get in there and all of a sudden I'm in some other feeling that is not inspiration, right? It's this sort of, "Am I doing enough?" or "Look at them." And comparison is something that happens for all of us. That's normal. And I think like you said, it's like, I can look and I get inspired

by some of what I see, not just the, you know, like, oh wow. Somebody's really stepping out in their sharing. They're doing more videos or they're getting more, they're willing to be more seen. And I get really inspired. And then that has me kind of, I'm a part of some club like, "Oh yeah, let's do that."

But yeah, like you, where it gets sketchy is when that comparison I'm measure how things are going for me against what I'm seeing others do. And that's somehow it's like the excitement of, "Oh, they're doing so great." And then the self-doubt like, "Should I be doing more of that?" Or "Why isn't it moving as fast for me?" Or "What am I doing wrong?" Or "Am I not focusing enough on this?" And "I'm not trying hard..." Like this, all these questions can come in without realizing it, like in seconds, all of a sudden I'm swimming in this sort of questioning everything. And like you, it's been really helpful to one, put it down, right? Just kind of step away and put it down.

But then also to remember, "Wait a minute, my greatest resource for how I'm doing, how it's going is not using anyone else's journey as my point of reference. Nobody else's images to your point. Nobody else's business. You know, I can listen and get inspired and maybe an idea will come through for me, but then how do I just keep coming back and know that all of our journeys are our own.] What's meant for us is what's happening for us in that moment. So if I'm using comparison to make decisions about my business, or if I'm using comparison to decide how I'm doing in life, it's just a faulty premise all around. And disheartening and discouraging. And I have like, you it's like, I've really sat in those moments where I, it feels like crap because I've somehow am all of a sudden in this idea that I'm not doing good enough. I need to be doing better or I'm missing out or something. Something.

[00:08:08] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: You're making me want to start a movement, Barb. You're making me want to put a little bit of a challenge to myself, maybe to you, if you're interested

[00:08:18] Barb Patterson: Go for it. I like it.

[00:08:19] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: To you folks that are listening, offer the challenge of the next time that you are on social media and you're thinking about posting—maybe post what you would post if no one was watching. Do you know that saying? "How do you dance when..." I don't know the quote, but it's "Dance as if no one's watching. Love as if, if you're not afraid of getting hurt."

So post as if no one's looking, if no one's liking, if no one is commenting. Share your truth and tag it, #REALWOMENREALLIVES. And that's what I'm gonna do when I get off, I am going to start posting with that in mind.

[00:08:53] Barb Patterson: I love that..

[00:08:54] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I think the movement can start with us. And the more that we share, just the truth, right?

The messy and the magical, the more we're less alone. And the less I have to think that everyone else has it together and that I don't.

[00:09:09] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:09:10] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Because the truth is all of it's welcome.

[00:09:12] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:09:12] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: There are good things and things that are not as wonderful. So that is something that I am offering to us as we start our movement.

[00:09:22] Barb Patterson: I love it. I love it. #RealWomenRealLives and showing all of it and showing by the way, I liked that you said 'messy and magical' because I do know that both are inspirational. We want to cheer each other on and we want to support each other. And,

you know, women supporting women, women supporting men, all—men supporting women—all of it.

Yeah. The question we're really playing here is, "If I'm not comparing myself to someone else's journey, what am I inspired to share? If I'm not comparing my business, my leadership, my parenting, my dating status, my weight, my hair to someone else? What wants to come through me? Where am I in this moment? What am I seeing? What's my journey? What's my path? Where am I being nudged? Who am I?"

[00:10:18] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. That's what really allows for inspiration and intuition to come forward. It's very unique. And so, yeah, I like what you're, I like what you're saying there.

[00:10:29] Barb Patterson: You know, we're in a way we are in this together and we get to see all the incredible things that people are up to.

And I think every single one of us has those moments of real, just genuine excitement and enthusiasm for what people are creating and doing in their lives. And the homes they're creating. What they're bringing to their work, all of it across the board. And so I think what we're also just highlighting here is that also that enthusiasm can quickly turn without us even being aware of it into a place where all we see and feel is gap or lack inside of us.

[00:11:11] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: That just made me think of something. When I am in a good place myself, when I am centered and I am clear, I am thrilled for other people.

[00:11:24] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:11:25] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: For everything and all of it—truly thrilled. And I find myself] actually, and this is really the root of it, isn't this, Barb? I don't actually feel that way when I go on social media, I'm not comparing, I'm celebrating.

[00:11:37] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Right, right.

[00:11:38] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Because I'm in a place in myself where I am in a good feeling and I'm in that inspired place. And so I'm celebrating others.

It's when I have a busy mind. It is when I am doing probably too many things at once. Haven't taken some time to slow down. I'm really doing things quickly and I'm, and I have a full mind, if you will. I'm not as maybe celebratory of others. And I have a lot of me on my mind. "How am I doing?" "What am I up to?" Right. I'm constantly asking myself how I'm doing in comparison to some meter stick, some external source. And from that place, if I go to social media or Trader Joe's or the grocery store, I'm going to be comparing myself to other people.

[00:12:31] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Yeah, no, that's so good. I love that. Of course, if we're in a low mood and we know we are, if we're already sort of feeling a level of discouragement, not sure we want to go into those spaces. Right? Like social media may not even be a good thing, but it's also your example's great for me, because when I was in last year, just really kind of propelled to stop producing, like, you know, all the content.

There was a point at which I was questioning myself around it. And also a little, like anytime I tried to create, there was nothing. So it's not like I was, you know, avoiding these creative impulses. No, there was nothing. And when I would get really great emails or video content from other people, I noticed there would be this moment of tightness.

And it was really coming from, as you're saying, it was just really coming from because I was kind of in a place of self-doubt. So I stopped looking at those things, not as avoidance, I mean, on social media, I would see people's videos, but, you know, I just knew there were places that I could just not, you know, even like for the emails I didn't have to look at. everyone's amazing content during that time

when I was just a little more sensitive, as you're saying.

But the other piece is that when I was wanting to write my blog and I was doing that more consistently, I didn't read anybody else's for awhile because it was on my mind when I was writing and even subtly in the back of my mind was this, like comparison kind of thing, or, yeah, I just felt like I wanted to listen to me.

[00:14:18] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah.

[00:14:19] Barb Patterson: I wanted to let, what was inside of me come through in a free way, as you're saying. And so I knew at that time it occurred to me "Just don't read anyone else's right now." And that was helpful to me.

[00:14:31] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. That is really helpful. And as you're saying that it's reminding me a little bit of a metaphor. You know, I think some people can go in the sun and easily tan, so it's not dangerous for them. They just walk out and they go into the sun.

[00:14:45] Barb Patterson: That is not me.

[00:14:45] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Some people...

[00:14:48] Barb Patterson: Go on. Yes.

[00:14:49] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: It is me. I do love that sun. My husband is that person. Right? So I'll just walk in the sun, very little sunblock at all, and I'll get a golden glow.

My husband needs to really build it up. And so he comes out when he's protected and safe, right? So when I'm in a place of insecure thinking and doubt, I should not be going and looking and comparing myself to other people. It's not the best place for me. Right. My skin is going to get burned, if you will. But when I have that nice golden brown tan...

[00:15:19] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:15:20] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Right. It's safe for me to go in the sun. So when I'm in a little bit more clarity, a little bit more aligned with wherever I am, I can go out into the sun. And that's what I'm hearing about what you're saying. Knowing when to maybe venture out and look at other stuff and not to go from the place of comparison. But if it's not feeling like inspiration, you, we can take a break for a little bit.

[00:15:44] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Yeah. That's a great analogy. I think that's perfect. And it really is. It's like just accepting our humanness. Right. And allowing all of it to be there. And I think in a, you know, with more perspective, to your point, that our journey is uniquely our own. We get that. Of course that's true. Of course. That's true.

So it's interesting because I don't think I talked to anybody that doesn't in some way, resonate with that feeling of wanting to just be more of their true self, not, you know, the exhaustion of trying to live up to some image that they have inside of who they think they should be. And, you know, this is where it's like to do that, ultimately, what we're cultivating is our ability to listen from within, for our path, our way, our journey. So when we look at it in that respect, it's like comparison makes no sense, but yet it's something we all do at different times.

[00:16:47] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. Oh, that's really clear. I don't know about you, but I want to be my authentic self more than anything.

I just want to show up as me and know that that's all that's required. Right. In my marriage, as a mom, at the PTA, in a client meeting. And that is all that's required. That's actually what we're saying right now. And whenever that doesn't feel like it's enough, it's probably for me, I'll speak for myself, a moment to slow down. A moment to pause. A moment to see what thoughts I'm telling myself about myself.

[00:17:22] Barb Patterson: Yeah. I love that. Yeah. And that's it. The good news is our own authenticity sits inside of us and it just may be at different times there's a lot of noise. There's the noise of pressure or a longing we feel that we don't feel we're there yet.

[00:17:38] So sometimes that creates an angst, right? Or there's this life is busy and full and you know, so it really is this place again is, "Oh yeah, this is my path, my journey, what's meant for me, I will find and discover in my way. You know, with all my bumps and, uh, smooth rides." And your journey is uniquely yours. Mine is uniquely mine. And so the great news about that is—where do we go to discover that? Within ourselves. And that's it. Simple. Not always easy. Right?

[00:18:17] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Simple. Not always easy. Right. The answer is within. And so I just want to go back to sharing that—let's start the movement. Let's REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES, hashtag it and share what's true for you. What's your heart's desire? What's your authentic nature, true nature, sharing with you right now.

[00:18:34] Barb Patterson: Yeah. What wants to come through you in your way and your timing, by the way? What if nothing's wrong with the timing and the pace in the way that things are happening right now?

[00:18:46] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Ooh, that might have to be another episode.

[00:18:50] Barb Patterson: Oh yeah. We can do that.

[00:18:52] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Cause I like that one a lot.

[00:18:54] Barb Patterson: Yeah, me too. It's been helpful.

Well, thank you everyone. We hope today's conversation as always has been helpful. And we'd love to hear your reflections, what you're

seeing for yourself around comparison.

[00:19:09] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Absolutely. Wonderful to spend time with you and we'll see you next week. Take care.

[00:19:13] Barb Patterson: Bye-bye.

[00:19:13] SHOW OUTRO