

[00:00:00] INTRO

[00:00:45] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Hello, this is Melissa.

[00:00:47] Barb Patterson: Hi, it's Barb.

[00:00:49] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Welcome to REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES. We are so happy you are here today with us.



We are going to be talking, Barb and I, about what does it look like? What does it feel like to engage in your life and your business with nothing on it? And what does that even mean?

Barb. What does that mean?

[00:01:09] Barb Patterson: Well, what it means for me is realizing and seeing that I had a habit of hesitation and that I would often get these nudges and these promptings or these kinds of exciting ideas. And then, pretty soon, I would discourage myself like a wet blanket. You know, I'd put a wet blanket over that, over that enthusiasm because I had all this reasonable, rational thinking.

[00:01:38] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Uh-huh.

[00:01:38] Barb Patterson: You know, where I needed to plan, see how that would work, and determine whether it was a good idea before I allowed myself to even try anything.

I started to talk myself out of it for various reasons, and sincerely were all reasonable. And I think that was part of the thing for me is I didn't understand that my reasonable thinking was just another form of self-doubt. And so I got really curious and I'll, I'll share what sort of became the instigation for it was, I had been wanting to do this interview series, and I had been thinking about the intention and then what it was going to lead to and how it be connected to this bigger message I was doing.

And then "Did that really make sense in my business? And who would say "yes"?"

But it was like this idea that hung out with me for a long time, and maybe it was a year, maybe longer, maybe two before I really did anything about it.

But I called up a friend who was one of the people I wanted to interview and just said, "Can we just agree we're going to do this twice? Because I have a feeling, it's going to be really bad the first time. And I just want permission to be able to do it twice if needed."

And of course, she said, yes, I knew she would. But here's what happened when we did the interview, kind of two things that were, for me at the time, revolutionary.

One, I had a blast.

It was so much more fun doing the interview than thinking about the interview! Sincerely, I was full of life. It was fun. We were laughing. I was learning. I mean, it was, it was great. I was so much more alive.

The other thing that happened was there were some things to learn. There is no way I would have learned them before doing it.

It was in the doing of it that I was informed. It was in the doing of it and the engagement of it that I was getting more information. So those two

things just really struck me because first of all, I think like all of us, we want to show up to our work and our lives, like as, as alive as we can, but also feel like what we're doing like, it's going to take us somewhere meaningful at some level.

And I saw after that, I'm like, "Wow, I know I've been buying into some idea that if I think about it long enough and strategize about it long enough, that it will guarantee a certain kind of ride. It will guarantee a certain outcome." Right? And that's when I saw the misunderstanding; I'm like, "Oh no, we can't predict that."

No amount of that guarantees a certain outcome. It just doesn't work that way. And it's in the living it, doing it that we experience more joy, fulfillment, and we learn. Like wisdom is real-time. It's in real-time. It's not in my mind predicting and planning all the future.

So I started to look at that for my own life. And I just saw, I saw that everywhere.

I saw it all over my business. All over my inspiration, all over everything. And then, of course, because I, I have the pleasure of working with a lot of entrepreneurs and business leaders, I started to see it for all of us.

And so yesterday I was on a group call with my small group, and it was just one of those calls where there was a [lot of great feeling and people we're seeing, you know, a lot of things for themselves.

And we, when we were reflecting at the bottom of it all, is exactly that. It's like the joy that comes from allowing ourselves to follow those nudges and to not be attached to where it's going to take us to not think we need to know where it's going to lead us. And then the amazing surprises that come from that. That's where momentum comes. We gotta, we gotta move for momentum to come.

But, you know, there were stories about, "Well, you know, I didn't know

why I was moving. I just knew it was the thing to do. And yesterday I was out walking, and I met this contact, and it's led to this other." You know, there was that. There was somebody else that was saying, "I know I need to take some time off, but I'm so afraid about how it will handle."

And then she talked about just doing the next step; engaging in that inner prompting has led to some new realizations. And I, you know, I could go on for hours, but that's so ordinary, you know, it's so ordinary yet so amazing when we see it.

If we can learn to follow through on those promptings, those inner nudges and not have to know why, where they're taking us, and a guarantee that it's going to be worth it.

What we discover is where we end up is often way more fun, fulfilling, interesting than we could have predicted, but also, it's way more fun. I just, I don't think I said that sentence correctly.

[00:06:36] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I'm hearing that it's more fun. That's a big thing.

[00:06:39] Barb Patterson: Yeah! More alive, more joy, more pleasure, and more surprises. And inspiration.

[00:06:45] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I mean, I'm sitting over here moving around in my seat, like a wild woman as you're sharing all this because it resonates for me so much.

I had a boyfriend many years ago, and I got interested in painting. I would take a, I would read a book on painting, and then I would take a class on painting, and I would go to a museum to see paintings.

And he said to me, "Melissa, just paint."

And I thought, "Oh, just paint?"

And so I did, and I loved it. I loved the doing the messiness, the creativity of it. It was incredible. And as you're talking about life being, and let me see if I get this right, cause I love alliterations— more fun, more fulfilling, and more fresh living the way we're talking about.

[00:07:26] Barb Patterson: Nice.

[00:07:26] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I like that too. I feel like I want to write that down somewhere.

The way I did it in the past, Barb, was I was a perfectionist. And here's what perfectionism did for me. I'm actually pointing with a pencil-like. This is how poignant and how hard this hit home for me.

[00:07:42] Barb Patterson: I'm paying attention.

[00:07:43] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I mean, please, I have a pointed pencil in my hand for perfectionism that leads to procrastination, which leads to paralysis.

Paralysis. That's a lot of Ps, but that is the truth.

For so much of my life, I lived from the outside, looking at the, from the outside in on the people doing. Doing. People doing "doing." And I studied doing, and I got really good at talking about doing as opposed to just doing and then just jumping.

And so couple things come to my mind.

The first one involves jumping in a pool. Very simple, but it's important. So I'm not a swimmer. I don't know if I've told you this, Barb. I'm not a swimmer. I grew up in Queens. We didn't have pools. We didn't really go to the beach. We were pretty poor. So, I never knew how to swim.

We have a pool at our home now, which we love, and my daughter is

an amazing swimmer. So it was my husband, and they really wanted me to jump off the diving board into the pool.

I had a lot of thinking. I mean, I'm talking way too much for a two-second act.

And so my daughter was just like, "Mom, just jump." And then, on a dare, I did it, and I loved it. It was incredible. It was fresh. It was fun.

And I got to lie on my back and just trust the water, and I'm talking, you know, I'm over 21. Let's just say that. And up until now, I've never jumped off a diving board into a pool because I had too much thinking about it. And now I jumped off all the time. I have some thinking before I go. Let's be clear. But it's so much fun.

And the other things that came up or in this past year, you know, as I'm growing my business, I have worked with a chief creative officer, brilliant woman, and she has spoken about going off on her own, leaving the agency world and doing her own thing.

And we've had a couple of conversations about it.

And I just felt in my bones that she was so clear that she wanted to do this, but, you know, she wanted a plan. She wanted, shall we say, a little bit of a guarantee? And I couldn't give her a guarantee because we never know what the results are going to be.

But here's what we do know. We know what we know, and she knew she wanted to go off on her own. And she has, and she's never been more joyful.

She's never felt more fulfilled; yes, she's learning, of course, like you're talking about what you learned. She's learning about business and things of whatnot, but she's also brilliant, and she knows to ask for support when she needs it. And so I'm thrilled for her. So thrilled.

And then in my own life, in the past year or so, there've been people that have popped into my head, or I've seen on a Ted talk or whatnot.

And I really just wanted to talk to them without really knowing why, frankly, but I just kind of knew. One of them is Lorna Davis. Brilliant woman in the B Corp space (B-Lab). She does incredible things in Africa with the rhinos. She is a Ted talker. And so I just reached out to her and, you know, I didn't know what was going to happen.

But months ago, we did a woman's retreat for very, very incredible women. And it was so much fun. And we joked with each other. We said, if no one comes to our retreat, we'll just have fun hanging out. Which we did. And people came, and it was incredible.

Another one is Mara Olsen. And you know,, Mara has written a book, which I just love.

She works with Rebel for Peace in Chicago. And again, it was just connecting with her. And now, you know, we're working together on organizations and businesses that want to create change. Oh my God. It could not be more fun. Couldn't be more fun. But each time I thought about these things, just like the Chief Creative Officer, I kind of wanted to see the path.

Better yet, I wanted to see a graph of the path.

So I knew what was coming so I could prepare for it. Right. Because my thinking about having to do it right. Having to do it perfect. I really am pointing with this pencil a lot. I'm going to put it down. I just so passionate on the difference in my life between these two ways that you're talking about.

They are radically different.

I had a very successful life. I am having a very successful life. The difference is now. It's a lot more fun, and I don't know about you, but

fun is high on my priority list. Very, very high.

And here's the other thing when people are having fun together, the collective intelligence bursts open. Teams collaborate more than ever.

They really get in the zone when they're having fun together. So I have a ton of respect for fun in very serious business. And I didn't put those two together before.

When I've been going into companies now for a team development, or there is maybe, how do I say, a little dysfunction in the system? Right?

Because we've all been on Zooms. We've all been through really hard times. You know, one of the first things I check for is, "Are these teams having any fun together?" Because when we have fun together, we let our guards down. We don't have as much attachment to it. We're not covering our backs, not trying to one-up each other.

We're in the game of life. And that's a lot more fun.

[00:12:35] Barb Patterson: Well, and I think that's it, it's that idea that momentum, creativity, responsiveness is happening in the moment. And so, by giving ourselves permission to engage, to step into those rooms, those ideas, those unknown spaces—the inspiration, then we realize how equipped we are.

We don't know how equipped we are until we're in it. It's like your diving board is a great example. Like you had to have the experience of that first jump to know like, "Oh, I got this."

You know, you can't learn to ride a bike by reading about it. Right. At some point, you gotta get on it.

[00:13:12] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Gotta ride.

[00:13:12] Barb Patterson: You gotta learn what it feels like to keep

your balance and to steer like that's all a bodily experience. And yet, somehow in business, we think, you know, the intellect is gold then, and we don't realize that no, in relationships and in business and in connecting that it's a bodily thing, you know? So getting in the game, getting in the water, and then we realize, "Oh, we're made for this."

Coming back to kind of the simple understanding that when I know, I can find my bearings, no matter what; when I know, I can rely on the fact that I'll get helpful thinking in the moment when I realize I'm more resilient than I think I am. I can handle a low mood, I can handle a moment of awkward... you know, I don't like it, but do I want to avoid the experience because of a potential feeling? No.

Now, I can say that now more clearly. I can still see times when I avoid things because I don't want to feel a certain way, but when I'm in a more conscious, aware kind of place, I understand that a feeling is a temporary experience moving through. And underneath that, behind that, like we are made to rise to the occasion.

So those things that we're trying to, "How will I handle this?" We don't know. We don't know until we're in it how we'll handle it. And then you begin to realize like you can, I can handle this.

And again, we're in our life; we're in the creation of whatever we want to do, we're writing the thing, we're painting the thing, we're speaking the thing, whatever it might be.

We're just in it—in the game. you start to realize and have a bodily experiential knowing of where to go next. Where to pass the ball. What idea will help you in this moment?

[00:15:07] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. And I just keep thinking about that pool as you're speaking, Barb, because again, not a good swimmer. And when I jumped in, I tried to swim, of course, because you're in a deep end, and then I realized, "Oh, I can actually just float."

So it was actually when I stopped trying and just allowed that I gently floated over to the side where I could stand. Isn't that interesting? That's the metaphor right there of diving into life and allowing life to hold us.

[00:15:43] Barb Patterson: That's beautiful. It's like, again, I realized at some level there was an opportunity for me to deepen my trust in myself, but that's a concept until I'm in the deep end and, you know, see, like I'm able to figure this out. You know, it's like often people will ask, "Well, how do I know it's a good idea. How do I know I can trust this one?"

You don't. But what we want to cultivate is our trust in ourselves to try the thing, to do the thing, to lean into our hearts desire, to lean into those nudges. And then we realize that we can trust ourselves along the way. If we want a guarantee of a certain outcome, we're in trouble, right?

I can't put my trust and faith in a certainty that things will work out the way I want them to. We just can't. But I can put my faith, my trust in my ability to figure it out along the way, you know, to bounce back, to find my bearings because that is available and that's a constant that's inside of us.

So that's with me all the time, regardless of where my head is.

[00:16:53] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. As you're saying that, I'm just picturing a sporting event and, you know, being on the sidelines. We don't want to live on the sidelines. We want to be playing. And yet there's something for me that in the past has felt safe about being on the sidelines, but frankly, not as fun.

[00:17:08] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:17:09] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: So there's something about being in the unknown and that unknown place that is a little bit, I'll use the

word scary, but there's a term that my friend Stephanie's _____ Joyer— it's terror and joy at the same time. And I love that because a lot of the times when I'm in the unknown, I am feeling afraid, but I'm also feeling really excited.

[00:17:29] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Yeah. Fear doesn't have to be a deal-breaker.

So we encourage all of you this week to follow those inner nudges. To give yourself permission, to lean into them, to move into them, to enjoy, to jump in the pool, discover what you're going to discover, and see where that momentum wants to take you. What it has to show you.

[00:17:51] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Yeah. Thank you so much for being with us. We so appreciate you. If this is something that you think can help someone, you know, please share it and please go to Spotify or Apple iTunes and give us a rating and a review. We'd love to hear from you. If there's anything that you'd like us to share experiences on, have a wonderful week.

[00:18:09] Barb Patterson: Thanks, everyone.

OUTRO: Thank you so much for listening to REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES with your hosts, Barb Patterson and Melissa Palazzo-Hart. We hope you enjoyed this week's episode. And if you did go to Apple Podcasts or Spotify and follow, give us a rating and leave a review. If you know anyone that would benefit from our conversation today, we'd love for you to share it with them.

What topics do you want to hear about in future episodes? We'd love to hear from you. You can email us at **realwomenreallivespodcast@gmail.com**.

Want to see the show notes or read a transcript of this show? You can find it on **melissapalazzohart.com** or **barbarapatterson.com**.

Thank you so much for listening to REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES.

A special shout-out and thanks to our producer, Jenée Arthur of Peripheral View Media.

Until next time remember, take the mask off.

No filters, just possibilities.