

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

## Episode 171:

# Being Devoted To Your Own Pleasure with Susan Hyatt

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J: Welcome, everyone, I'm talking with Susan Hyatt today and she's a master certified life coach who has helped thousands of women transform their bodies and lives. She's the creator of The BARE Process, The BARE Deck, The BARE Podcast, and an online community called BARE Daily. With her fiery Facebook rants, including Whoop-ass Wednesday, she reads a fresh batch of hate mail from internet trolls and gives her sassiest response, Susan has gained an international following of women who love her honesty, humor, and fearlessness. Susan's been featured in Cosmopolitan, Women's World 17 and O Magazine, and she was a finalist for the Athena award honoring her work in the field of women's empowerment. Susan, welcome to Vibrant Happy Women.

S: Thank you so much for having me, Jen, I'm excited.

J: So your podcast, the BARE Podcast, I know a lot of people always looking for a new podcast, what might a listener expect to hear there?

S: So there are 2 seasons of the BARE Podcast and the first season really walks the listener through each step of the BARE Process. And then season 2, I interview other women who are prominent in the body-positive movement and there's some wonderful conversations about diversity and inclusion, and I think people would really love some of the celebrity guests I have in season 2.

J: Cool. Well, you said something about the BARE Process so let's go right there and what is it? What's the BARE Process?

S: So the BARE Process is a process I developed over the past 11 years working with thousands of women on food and body issues. And what I noticed is a lot of women were coming to me wanting to lose weight, and I could help them lose weight, but it never seemed to be enough unless they did the heavy lifting, the inner work that's required to learn how to love the skin you're in. So I would help a woman lose weight and then all of a sudden, she would start focusing on, "Oh, well now I have loose skin and stretch marks," or, "I have cellulite," or the amount of weight she lost wasn't good enough. And so I really, as a coach, started observing and witnessing what actually helped a woman permanently get rid of her obsession about scale weight or just being problematic with food. And over the years, I started to curate homework assignments and things that happened in coaching sessions that I found to be the biggest bang for your buck, if you will, and that eventually became the BARE Process. And it's a process that really brings a woman home to herself and helps open her eyes and her mind and her

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heart and just become aware of where she got the idea that her body wasn't good enough in the first place and then what to do about it.

J: Hmm, that's awesome. Well, let's back pedal a little bit and hear more about your low story and how it led to development of the BARE Program.

S: Sure. So about 13 years ago now, I was a burnt-out, workaholic real estate agent, and my kids were really little. You know, my kids are turning 19 and 21, I can't even believe it (Laughs), but at the time, they were little and I was hustling these houses and trying to do all the mom things after school. And I started to notice that I was swinging through fast-food restaurants 3 times a day and using food in the afternoons (food and wine) as a way to buffer all the momming. And my mom was actually visiting for an Easter holiday and she made me promise before she came to visit that I wouldn't work. And so I made her that promise and I told all my real estate clients like, "Hey, I'm not going to be available for these days, my mom's coming to visit," I was so proud of myself for setting boundaries. And then I had these out-of-town clients who had come to town like 6 times, they really never showed interest in anything, they decided because they had the Easter weekend off as well that they would just pop into town unannounced. And they messaged me and said, "Hey, we want to put an offer in on that 1... you know, 123 Happy Street," and it was the biggest real estate sale of my career, and I remember being so angry that I felt so out of control that I had to go sell this house.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: And so I let my mom down, I was angry that these clients just felt like they could pop into town with no notice. I went and I sold the house on Easter and didn't feel happy about it at all, and I came home a mess. And my mom was like, "This is not my daughter. Like, I don't know what has happened to Susan, but this isn't her and you need to get your life right," in her best southern mama attitude. And she said, "How about I keep the kids for a couple days and you just do whatever you want?" And the rock bottom moment was that I couldn't think of anything that sounded good to me other than getting caught up on the laundry or going grocery shopping all by myself.

[Laughter]

S: And I was like, "This is some nonsense," I couldn't think of a hobby, I couldn't think of anybody I wanted to go do anything with, I was just burnt to a crisp.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: And I went into Barnes and Noble and I was looking for that book. You remember that oldie but goodie self-help book called 'What Color is Your Parachute'?

J: Mm-hmm.

S: I was like, "I need a book like that. Where's that book? because I got to figure something else out,"

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because I was making all this money, and on the outside to everybody else, I had it all together. You know, I had this great husband, these beautiful kids, this really thriving career, but on the inside, I was melting, I was not happy, I was also feeling ungrateful for what I did have that I wasn't more appreciative and I was just a mess; hot mess. So I found a book, not 'What Color is Your Parachute', but a book called 'Finding your own North Star' by Dr. Martha Beck, which if you haven't read it, Jen, I consider it to be one of the best self-help books ever written.

J: Hmm, I have heard of it, yeah, thank you.

S: It's so good, it's so good. She ultimately, Dr. Martha Beck, ended up training me as a coach, but I initially bought her book and I would weep into the pages of this book while I took a bubble bath while my kids were like banging on the door, "Mom, what are you doing in there?" but my life started to change. I started to do the things that were in the book and my life started to get better and I ultimately, I devoured so much self-help and therapy and eventually decided to train as a coach myself. But my rock bottom was realizing there wasn't much bringing me joy and I was in the wrong life.

J: Mm-hmm. So what was your first step out? I mean, I heard you, you said you devoured self-help and then you... you know, but detail that journey a little more for someone else who's already in the rock bottom it looks formidable, you know?

S: Yeah, it does. I mean, I think the number one thing that I learned when I started reading that book and other books, it was the first time I had ever entertained the concept that you are not your thoughts, and I was like, "What do you mean? Everything I think is true," and learning that your mindset and what you're thinking is creating the result that you have in your life.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: This was mind-blowing to me because I didn't realize how powerful our minds are. And so learning, reading for the first time that like, "Hey, you can actually change the dial on this, you can learn how to tell yourself things that help you create a much different result in your life." So that was one of the number one initial things, I felt like I had won the lottery or had the keys to the kingdom for the first time, like, "Wait a minute, what?" So learning how to practice creating better-feeling thought is a foundational part of the BARE Process as well, but it's something that was new to me back then. And then also I mentioned boundaries before, but learning how to say no, learning from basic self-help books that you have the right to say no when you don't want to do something, and no can be a complete sentence, I was like, "Wait, what?" (Laughs)

J: Yes.

S: That was another major thing for me because I was saying yes to my clients all the time, I was saying yes to PTA, I was saying yes to my kids and my husband. I was basically stretching myself (like probably many of your listeners) in 1000 different directions without standing in my own power and learning how to say, "You know, actually that's not going to work for me," and that's okay, the world's going to keep

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spinning if you start saying no to things that aren't serving you.

J: Yeah. So the first time you started to say no to your husband and kids, how did they respond?

S: Oh my gosh, you know, having to retrain everyone took some time because... especially little kids, they're like, "What's she talking about?"

[Laughter]

J: Like Willis, yeah. (Laughs)

S: Like, "Wait a minute, this is different programming." So the first time... my husband actually was always very supportive, but kids and the other humans around you, they are used to you being a certain way. So anytime you start to make changes, even very positive changes for yourself, a change back attack can happen, meaning these are friends, family that love you very much, but your change triggers something within them that they're probably not even conscious of.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: So it took some time of me being like, "No, I'm just not, I'm not able to do that for you."

J: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

S: And being willing also to sit in the discomfort of someone having their feelings about it. Because people will get angry or disappointed, but recognizing that we're adults and they can have their feelings and I can be over here saying no, taking care of myself because I matter, you matter, our mental health matters. And if I'm saying yes when I don't want to to preserve a friendship, then they don't really get the opportunity to know the real you, they only know the you that's the people pleaser.

J: Mm-hmm, exactly, so true. Well, you also mentioned creating better-feeling thoughts...

S: Mm-hmm.

J: ... give us an example of the before and after of that process for you.

S: Sure. So the first step is really becoming the observer, so eavesdropping on what you're telling yourself. And so for me, I remember when I started eavesdropping on my mind, you know, and it just takes a couple seconds. But every hour on the hour, when I have a client who's new to this process I encourage, "You know, set a timer on your phone, every hour on the hour, just pause for a couple of seconds and notice what you're thinking about." And when I started doing this, Jen, I immediately was like, "Well, I have solved my exhaustion problem because I have the biggest mean girl in my mind," I couldn't believe the amount of negative terrible things I was telling my on a consistent basis.

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J: Mm-hmm.

S: And so observing it is one thing, that can be very helpful, but the next step is really, I call it documenting the repeat offender, so paying attention to what are the common ones though that caused you pain? What are the types of thoughts that you're having? And it could be, you know, something as simple as, you know, "You're so lazy," or, "Look, you messed up again," or, "You know, everybody's judging you," or, "You know, if they only knew, no one would like you," like like all those stuff, "I'm not good enough," pay attention to what the repeat offenders are and then see if you can come up with a better feeling thought. So here's the thing, there are a bunch of different processes that you can use. There's one I like called self-coaching 101 which is basically replacing the thought with something that you believe to be true that makes you feel a little better. So it doesn't have to be... when you're first doing this, you're never going to go from, "You are a fat loser," to, "You're the most beautiful woman in the world," with one thought.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: That's trying to make too big of a mental leap. So it's important to come up with something that shifts your mood in some way, but that is believable to you. And so if you're thinking something like, "You're a fat slob," you can come up with a bridge thought like using the words, "I'm open to the possibility that I can discover my own beauty," or, "I'm willing to learn how to talk nicer to myself," you know, something that just pulls you out of such negativity and into a more neutral state, so then you can come up with a more positive thought. That's one that I like to use, but you can use replacement thoughts or turn-arounds, just talking back to the mean girl in your head is important, because if you leave it there and it festers, what you're thinking creates the physical vibration in your body. So if I'm thinking something like, "This is hopeless, I'm never going to amount to anything," when you think something like that, you feel hopeless, you feel depressed. And then when you're feeling hopeless and depressed, the action that you take or inaction typically leads to a result that's going to prove that thought true, where if you can disrupt the mental spin cycle and tell yourself something else, you're going to feel a little better, the action that you're going to take is going to be more proactive, and then the result that you get it's going to be closer to what you want.

J: Mm-hmm, that makes sense.

S: Yeah.

J: Okay, so how do you use this type of thinking of replacing the negative thought with something that feels better? How does that show up in your book, 'BARE'?

S: So one tool that I have in the book is something called the body scale, and it's a worksheet that helps a woman assess what's her overall mental state towards for thinking about her body. So if you imagine a scale from -10 to +10 with 0 in the middle being neutral, it's an assessment tool where when you start eavesdropping on yourself and notice the kinds of things you're telling yourself, the judgments that you have about your physical body, you can look at this scale and say, "Oh, I'm actually pretty neutral about

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my body, I don't really think about it that much and I really don't care either way," or you might be more on the negative end where the thoughts are pretty violent towards yourself like, "Oh, I got to cover this up, you can't go to the pool party. No one's going to want to look at that. You've really let yourself go." So there's a way for a woman to assess where she falls on the negative side of the scale, whether or not she's neutral, and then the body positive side of the scale where the majority of the time that you're thinking from 0 to +10, depending on where you fall on that, are pretty positive. And then what we want to do, obviously if you fall on the negative side of the scale, we want to move you to neutral first and then from that neutral place move you further and further along on the body positive side of the scale so that you're thinking positive things about yourself the majority of the time as much as possible. And so once a woman eavesdrop on herself and uses the body scale tool, then we move into teaching a woman how to create better feeling thought so she is on that positive side of the scale. So really, what I just talked about, learning how to replace and turn around thoughts about your body so that you're feeling great. And it has absolutely, your ability to think positively about your physical body has 0 to do with scale weight, dress size, cellulite or not any of the above, and it has everything to do with your dedication to learning how to reprogram your mind.

J: So you're saying we can have 10 as the top of the scale, right, it's -10 to 10?

S: Right, right.

J: I'm looking right at it. So you're saying, even if we're morbidly obese, we can love our body just through training our mind?

S: I have clients that have done it, yeah.

J: Mm-hmm, beautiful.

S: It really has absolutely nothing to do with the exterior because I've also had supermodels legit, I have coached legit cover supermodels who were at a -10.

J: Oh my gosh, yeah.

S: Yeah, it doesn't have anything to do with how your physical body is appearing.

J: So what are the benefits of having that positive body image? How does it help us?

S: There is absolutely nothing more powerful in my opinion than a woman who feels comfortable in her own skin. Because honestly, in the years and thousands of coaching sessions I've had, this is, no matter how smart, how wealthy, and how powerful a woman is, women tend to hold themselves back based on where they fall on that body scale. So they're like not having current headshots taken and refusing to show up to certain meetings and literally deleting themselves from memories and situations based on what they're telling themselves about their bodies. And so I am completely convinced that if we want to solve wage gap, we have to stop focusing on thigh gap, and...

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J: Ooh, (Laughs) that is good.

S: It's so... it is so true. And I think like, you know, when you look at all the gender pay studies, what would happen as we collectively as women were unable to obsess about our weight? We would be funneling all that energy into our talent and our desires. And when we do that, right, we are unstoppable. So this is a very feminist approach to food and body.

J: Mm-hmm, ooh, I love it. So the body love scale, I will have a link to that on the show notes page at [jenriday.com/171](http://jenriday.com/171). So, everyone, you'll want to grab that and see where you fall on the scale. I thought I had a really solid body image, but according to your skill, I still have a little bit of work to do, so thank you, Susan.

S: Mm, where do you fall, Jen?

J: Here, let me look at it again. I'm probably in the body appreciation range.

S: Mm-hmm.

J: But when I read your description of body love, I think I have... I'm not quite there yet. I mean...

S: Yeah.

J: ... that's got the energy of just passion about your body. (Laughs)

S: Yeah, yeah, it is. And listen, here's the other thing, Jen, is that this could change depending on the day, right, like that you could be thinking something tomorrow that you're like, "Hot damn! I'm at a +10!" and then next week see yourself at a 0. So I just want to make sure everyone understands like the goal isn't perfection and don't get too tripped up like, "Oh, I'm not doing it right, I had a negative thought today," that's how the human mind works, but if we're just consciously being aware, it can be very helpful.

J: Mm-hmm. So when you work with clients, how are you helping them move up that scale?

S: So if I'm working with them in a one-on-one session, I mean, we're doing thought work in sessions and I'm challenging them with homework assignments to bring up the work that's left to be done. So I am a kind of a sneaky coach in that I will assign homework that seems very light and easy, but then when they start doing it, they're like, "Oh my god."

[Laughter]

S: "She got me!" And so I am a coach that really challenges you in session, but also in between sessions, so I send them off to do things. And it could be stuff like, oh, one of the top questions I ask is, "When you quote-unquote 'lose the weight' or have the body you think you want, what are the top 3 things you'll do?" And women tend to answer like this, "Number 1, buy cute clothes."

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J: Mm.

S: "Number 2, pictures taken. Number 3, wear a bikini."

J: Mm-hmm.

S: Hands down, I mean this is like over thousands of clients.

J: (Laughs)

S: And so I'm like, "Oh, guess what you're going to do?"

J: (Gasps) No.

S: Yeah.

J: (Laughs)

S: Oh yeah, "Guess what you're going to do right now, boo?" And so I'm like, "Your body deserves to be adorned right now. You know, like stop this nonsense of covering up and, 'I'm only going to buy it when I reach my goal weight,' no you want adorn yourself right now." And so it could be something like you have to go shopping, which can be terrifying for someone who doesn't want to look at themselves in the mirror. But by doing that, it's like exposure therapy, it's kind of forcing them to do the thought work that they're learning and learn to appreciate the skin they're in, and it's like, "Oh, okay, I wore sleeveless today for the first time in 20 years and the world didn't end."

J: Mm-hmm.

S: You know, or, "I did go on the boat and I did wear an actual swimsuit and I was okay."

J: Mm-hmm.

S: You know, so it's that kind of work.

J: Oh, that's amazing. So do you find that once people get comfortable in their own skin that the weight and the health issues start to shift, or not always?

S: Yeah, I mean, what's interesting is, almost always, what tends to happen is that women... one of my mantras is that, "I am a woman who takes exceptional care of herself," and for each woman, that may be... may look very different what it looks like to take exceptional care of yourself. But typically because my work is so pleasure focused and self-care focused, in deep nourishing ways, not fake self-care where it's like, you know, "I'm going to go get a mani-pedi," not that that can't be pleasurable, right, but it's like, "No, we're going to do things that feel deeply nourishing to you," what tends to happen is that

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they're getting more sleep, they're working less, they are eating, actually tasting their food and deciding, "Ugh, I thought these frozen burritos were my jam, but turns out they're not."

J: Mm-hmm.

S: Right? So it's lots of health issues solved, getting to their body's natural weight...

J: Mm-hmm.

S: ... absolutely happens; and sometimes that looks like they gain weight. I have plenty of clients who come to me that their natural weight is heavier than where they start, and that's because they were doing crazy diets and depriving themselves.

J: Mm-hmm, oh, that's amazing. And what else could we expect to find in BARE? Tell us the whole title of BARE because I can't get that off my tongue, but I bet you can.

[Laughter]

S: So BARE is a 7-week program to transform your body, get more energy, feel amazing, and become the bravest most unstoppable version of you.

J: Mm.

S: So I talked about it, "This is not a weight-loss program, this is a life-gain program."

J: Mm, that's cool. So you're not just helping body image, but all areas of life with the program.

S: Yeah, what ends up happening is the body is the portal, but a lot of the concepts in the book, it's really for... I've had so many women write me and say, "You know, I wanted to check out your book, I don't feel like I have any food or body issues, ha-ha-ha. But primarily what ended up happening was that I learned how to set boundaries, I learned how to prioritize myself, I learned how to become devoted to my own pleasure. I'm a better wife, I'm a better mom, I'm a better employee, I'm a better business owner," so this really is for any woman who wants to up-level her life.

J: And I love that you mentioned becoming devoted to our own pleasure. I don't know exactly what you mean by this, but I've noticed that when we don't have enough fun and love and connection and all the juicy things in our lives, what's left? Food, you know?

S: Right.

J: So is that kind of what you mean by it?

S: Yeah. So what's interesting is that, absolutely, I was the prime example of this. I was getting 90% of fun

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and pleasure out of food, and I think a lot of women do this because it's easy, it's there, it's available. I can remember thinking like, "Oh, I'm treating myself." And absolutely, food is meant to be delicious and have the dessert and all those things, but if that's your primary source of pleasure, it's problematic for you, hands down. And so some of the stuff I talk about in the book as it relates to pleasure is there is scientifically proven something called the pleasure principle, and the body is wired for pleasure. We tend to deny ourselves pleasure for a variety of reasons, but like, "Oh, well, I can do that after I get my work done," or just a lack of understanding that there are different forms of pleasure that a woman needs. Because when I say pleasure, people tend to think I'm talking about sex, which that is one form of pleasure, intimacy and physical touch, yes, but there are other forms of pleasure that we tend to deny like spirituality or comfort or beauty or movement. And with these different categories, women can take a look and be like, "Oh, right, like, I'm not allowing myself to experience pleasure in any of these areas, and so of course I'm trying to get it from a Wheel of Brie and some wine."

[Laughter]

S: Because...

J: A wheel, yes.

S: Right, that was me every afternoon, a Wheel of Brie, y'all.

J: (Laughs)

S: And so a woman's pleasure is critical and we tend to poo-poo that and say, "Oh, that's nice and fluffy," it's actually not, it's super practical. Because when your body is experiencing pleasure on a consistent basis, it does everything women want a diet to do. It speeds up our metabolism, it levels out our hormones, we get flooded with feel-good oxytocin and all those feel-good hormones. So it's a super practical approach, even though people tend to roll their eyes at it.

J: Mm-hmm, makes sense. I host a retreat and my best friend went with me and she said, "Jen, it's the weirdest thing, while I was at the retreat, I didn't crave any chocolate, and then I got home and it was back. What do you think caused that?" And I think it lines up with it exactly what you're saying now. She was having fun and connecting all the oxytocin of friendship and everything we were doing, and who needs chocolate then, right?

S: Exactly. I remember my first coach that coached me on food and body issues, she was asking me what my favorite food was, which is still hands down French fries, and she said, "Okay, if you have a whole plate of French fries, if Oprah Winfrey walked in, I guarantee your fries would get cold, yes or no?" and I'm like, "Well, yeah, I'd rather talk to Oprah than eat these fries," and it's such an example of what you just said. And that happens on my retreats too; women report losing weight in Italy.

[Laughter]

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S: And that's because there's all this connection and joy and pleasure happening. And, yes, we eat pasta and drink Prosecco, but that's not the primary source of pleasure.

J: Oh, I love that, that's so important. Well, this has been amazing. Everyone, makes sure to get your hands on BARE. And I want to come back after our break and talk a little bit about time management and intuition and some of your favorite things. So we'll be right back.

So welcome back. Susan, tell us, you're busy obviously with the business and kids, well, how old are your kids now?

S: They are 18 and 20, they have...

J: Oh my gosh.

S: ... birthdays in September. I know, it's hard to believe, I'm about to be an empty-nester!

J: Well, so what does that feel like? I want to ask someone who's freshly sliding right into that empty nesting.

[Laughter]

S: It feels amazing because, I don't know, Jen, have you ever seen the movie 'Ferris Bueller's Day Off'?

J: Yeah.

S: So I've raised Ferris Bueller.

J: (Laughs)

S: My son, Ryan, the shenanigans are non-stop. So when he went away to college we took a deep sigh of relief, although he is home for the summer. And my daughter, Cora, just graduated from high school a couple weeks ago and she's going off to the University of Portland, which I'm... it's bittersweet honestly, but I definitely, when women say, "Oh, what are you going to do?" I'm like, "What are you talking about? I am going to love life and keep on doing what I've been doing which is write books, travel, speak, do all the things." The only thing now is I'm not going to have to worry about like what's happening at home or, you know, my husband can go along on these adventures now, whereas he's been the one to stay home with the kids while I travel. So I am fully embracing full-on living outside of the nest.

J: Mm-hmm, I love it. So you get to fly the nest, you don't have to be there with the babies.

[Laughter]

S: I do, and can go visit them when I want and leave.

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J: Mm-hmm.

S: It's a beautiful thing, it's a great new phase of life, we're both really excited.

J: That's great. So what does your morning routine look like?

S: So I'm big on morning routines. And I started this when my kids were really little and I kept it up just because I liked it so much. So everyone's probably going to be like, "What?" but I get up at 4:45 in the morning.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: And I used to do that because I wanted to get my workout and my morning rituals in before the little ones' feet hit the floor, because then it was like over. So I get up at 4:45, I typically go for a run with my best friend, and then I work out with my trainer 3 times a week, not every morning. But I have coffee, I sit down with my planner, I write down what my top intentions are for the day, I look at my schedule for the day, get my mind right and then I get ready. And I'm typically on coaching calls or teaching classes by 8:00 AM.

J: Mm, perfect.

S: Yeah.

J: You know, I've noticed that consistently, most of the guests on Vibrant Happy Women who tend to be highly productive amazing people have that workout early in the morning.

S: Mm-hmm.

J: How important do you feel that has been for your success?

S: So I really think movement is everything. In addition to the work I do with BARE, I also coach female business owners. And whether they're coming to me for food and body stuff or not, I talk a lot about movement with them because I think, number 1, it helps process emotion, it helps with the mind-body connection, and it's honestly one of the best business tools a woman could use is consistent sweat. So for me, it's important to get it done in the morning just to get my day started off right. I don't feel quite the same when I'm not able to do that if I'm traveling or something. But I am currently also obsessed with the Peloton spin bike. I don't know if you've heard...

J: Mm-hmm.

S: ... of this, Jen.

J: Yeah.



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S: Okay. I am obsessed. And I do the Peloton, however, at the end of my day; if I'm going to do it. And that's only because I don't want to preempt my time with my best friend in the early morning, so I'm like, "Well, if I'm going to do the bike, I'm going to have to do it at a separate time of the day." And I was always someone who was like, "Oh, I can't exercise in the afternoon, forget that."

J: Mm-hmm.

S: But I've proven that wrong, so... I do prefer morning though.

J: So you're running and lifting and biking, and so would you say...

S: Not every day.

J: Not every day.

S: Not all those things every single day, no.

J: Gotcha, gotcha. So for those listening who don't know what the Peloton spin bike is, just describe it so they can picture it.

S: So it's a stationary spin bike, but it has a big monitor on the handlebars where you can join a live spin class. Their studio is in New York so you can join a live class, they have classes all day, or you can watch a replay, which I'm typically watching a replay; it feels like you're in a live class anyway. But it is this interesting integration of movement and social media because you can see who else is in the class with you, you can high-5 each other.

J: (Laughs)

S: It like tracks your metrics. What I love most about it is I spend all day coaching other people, and I feel like those Peloton spin instructors, many of them have life coach certifications, I feel like they're my coaches.

J: Mm.

S: So I get on that bike and they're like, you know, "Don't give up now! Live your best life!" and I'm like, "That's right!"

[Laughter]

S: And so it's sort of like my... I get coached when I'm on that bike.

J: Oh my gosh, that's amazing, I'm going to have to get one. I've got to get rid of my treadmill though to make space; I know, I know.

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S: (Laughs)

J: But that's so cool.

S: I highly recommend it. I was not a spin person so I kind of bought it on a whim and had buyer's remorse when I saw it all set up, I was like, "What have you done?"

J: (Laughs)

S: "You're not going to ride that." And I did one class and was hooked.

J: Ooh, that's so good; awesome. Well, let's shift and talk about intuition.

S: Okay.

J: Have there been times in your life when you knew intuitively to do something, even though logically it might not have made sense?

S: Every day. (Laughs)

J: Oh, okay, so tell us more.

S: Every day. So intuition, I think that paying attention to, I call it your body compass, your gut, we tend to identify in our society so heavily with the mind. And, yes, you need the mind of course to do things, but it's really that bodily wisdom that I think is our higher self. So I'm sure you've had an occasion, Jen, when your intuition told you not to do something that sounded great on paper...

J: Mm-hmm, yes.

S: ... or you met someone that everybody loved and you, for some reason, got that twinge like, "I don't know," and then you ignored it and then you kicked yourself like, "Dang it, I knew it! I knew better." I think all of us have had that experience, and I've really tried my best to pay super close attention to my intuition or my body compass because I think that the answers really are there. There have been plenty of things with my business where it didn't make any sense on paper to do it, but I wanted to do it so badly, and everybody was like, "Don't do it, like, you know, that's never going to work," and it totally worked. And I've had the opposite where it looked fantastic on paper, of course I'm going to do this, but I kind of felt like, "Ugh, I don't really... I don't know, I'm not super excited about this," and then it flopped, and it's like, "I knew it, I should have listened to my intuition."

J: Oh, that's so funny.

S: So it's all the time.

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J: Yeah. So an example is sometimes, there's something that I know it sounds good on paper, but I just don't have the energy to do it, and sometimes I think, "Oh, I need to push through." Do you feel like that can even be your body being wise when you just don't feel motivated or are there times when we need to just push through and get motivated?

S: Well, I think this is a skill to really hone because that is a great question, "Is this hesitation of the mind or is it of the body?" And there's a nuanced difference when your mind is scaring you or you're like upper-limiting and your mind is like, "You don't have to, don't do it," and you're hiding, versus getting a true body compass reading that's like, "This is not the right path for you." And I think the way to understand the difference is to get quiet and eavesdrop on yourself. Guidance, in my experience, like true guidance, is simple, and the ego or the mind trying to talk you in or out if something speaks in paragraphs.

J: Mm-hmm, I agree, I agree.

S: So it's like, right, if your mind is like, "Brr!", you know, like...

J: (Laughs)

S: ... on and on and on and on, it's like, "Okay, slow down because that's your mind like messing with you." But if it's just a deeply simple... you may not like the answer, but if it's a simple like, "Uh-uh," or, "Rest," or, "Slow down, maybe next time," you know, listen to that wisdom.

J: Wow, you just gave me something I hadn't ever considered, but I feel like I'm a pretty intuitive person, but I never connected that the phrases are simple. But now I'm running them through my head...

S: Mm-hmm.

J: ... over and over again, every time, they were simple. And I'll just share a few of the phrases that I received so others can understand, "Become a life coach," so simple, I got that on my yoga mat.

S: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J: "Eat very little sugar. Do less..."

S: (Laughs)

J: Yeah, yeah, "Do less," got that one many, many times.

S: Mm-hmm.

J: Just tiny phrases where you're almost like your mind will say, "Pah, that's too simple," you know what I mean?

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S: Right!

J: Yeah.

S: Absolutely. The mind wants to convince us of all kinds of crazytown stuff, so...

J: Yeah. Well, thank you so much, that's a great, great point there. Well, what's your favorite book, Susan?

S: So 'Finding your own North Star' is my favorite, favorite book. I also really like 'Trainwreck' by Sadie Doyle, if you've not read that. It's a fascinating study of prominent women throughout history and current time...

J: Mm-hmm.

S: ... where our society has this tendency to build women up and then knock them off their pedestal. And it's just, as a woman, as a female business owner like you are, it's really eye-opening to understand the pattern that society has for only having so much tolerance for a woman having power. I love that book so much.

J: Wow, and it's true. I mean (Laughs)... I'm running my mind through all the women who... well, I just haven't seen Oprah fall yet, I hope it never happens. (Laughs)

S: Boy, but they've tried, you know, they really have tried. But I agree, like it's... you know, the author takes examples like Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan and Miley Cyrus, and it actually is fascinating to understand the full story of these women, but what's portrayed via the media. I think you'd really enjoy it.

J: Yes, I'm going to check that out. What is your favorite easy meal, Susan?

S: Oh my god, hands down, so I have an Instapot that I'm obsessed with.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: If you don't have one of those, get one. But there's a chicken and rice recipe I throw in there, it's ready in like 10 minutes and it's super simple and it's delicious. It's basically chicken and rice and chicken broth and some salt.

J: Simple, yeah.

S: Yeah.

J: In 10 minutes, you just throw in a chicken breast?

S: Yep, yep.

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J: That's good, that's good, okay. I have mine sitting on the counter, that's what I'm doing today.

S: Awesome.

J: Your favorite life hack.

S: Oh my god, what is my favorite life hack? It would have to be thought work, hands down, thought work.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: That is the life hack of all life hacks.

J: Perfect. And my favorite question, what's your formula for being a vibrant happy woman if you had to narrow it down to a few steps, a few pieces?

S: Devotion to my own pleasure.

J: Mm. You know, I'm curious, how does your husband react to this mentality of devotion to your own pleasure? Does he do the same now that he's watched you?

S: He totally does.

J: (Laughs)

S: In fact, he uses it against me. Like, I created all these little things like Fun Friday, I typically, unless I'm traveling, I don't work on Fridays.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: And I've started to notice he'll like come in at 11:00 AM on a Friday, I'm like, "Why are you home?" he's like, "It's Fun Friday."

J: (Laughs)

S: I'm just like, "It's my Fun Friday!"

J: (Laughs)

S: Yeah, he restored a race car and is now in vintage car races, like he's really embraced it.

J: Aww, that's cool, I love that.

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S: Yes.

J: I love that.

S: Really cool.

J: Well, this is awesome, I have so much to think about, so I appreciate it. But one final thing from you to our listener is a challenge.

S: Oh my gosh, okay, here's my challenge to you. My challenge to everyone is to make a list of everything that you think you have to do over the next couple of days, and look at this list and I challenge you to say no to all the stuff you don't want to do, so bag it, what are the things on this list that other people can do that you can barter away? Put those kids to work, put your spouse or partner to work, whatever, and then whatever's left, how can you better it for yourself? So women tend to take on way too much, and I want to get as much off of your plate as possible so that you can create the time to take exceptional care of yourself.

J: Okay, so let's say laundry's on there, "Ugh, I don't want to do laundry."

S: Yes, that's my favorite example!

J: Okay, tell us how to do it.

S: Okay. So I hate laundry and laundry is one of those things that when it's on your list, you can choose not to do it, but you probably value clean clothes.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: So someone's got to do it, it doesn't necessarily have to be you though. So who in your house could do it? Let's say you live alone, you're like, "I'm not married, I don't... or I don't have a partner, I don't have any kids, there's no one to do it but me," then my question is, "Is there expendable income to take it to the Fluff and Fold or have someone come into your home and do it?" And if the answer is still no, it's like, "You know, I value clean clothes, I don't have the money to outsource it, I don't have anyone who lives here to help me," then you move into, "Okay, well then how can you better it for yourself? Can you put on music? Can you light a candle? Can you reward yourself, right?" We tend to look at stuff that we have to do like, "Oh, this is drudgery," when we can actually make it better than it was.

J: Mm-hmm.

S: And laundry, that was true for me in the laundry department.

J: And now, what's your reward or change?

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S: So when I started earning enough money, that was the first thing I stopped doing. Like, I had my kids helping me, but they were little and I would find my underwear in like the cat bowl.

[Laughter]

S: And so that... you know, I know how moms are like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, get the kids to do it." But so then when I started earning enough money that I had somebody come over and do my laundry and she actually was with me for 12 years and she just got engaged and moved away, so I'm like I have a new washer/dryer, I am kind of rocking my own laundry right now, and it's not quite so bad now that there's not little kids stopping up the place.

J: Yeah, that's true, that's true.

S: Yeah.

J: Podcast time or get a massage when you're done, there you go.

S: Right, right.

J: Cool. Well, Susan, I appreciate it so much. And, everyone, make sure to grab Susan's amazing book, 'BARE', B A R E, and check out the BARE Body Love Scale, which we'll have on our show notes page as well. Thank you so much for being on Vibrant Happy Women, Susan.

S: Thanks, Jen.



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