

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

# Episode 164:

## Dance Like Nobody's Watching with Gina Villares & Mercedes Zetino

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J: You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 164. In this episode, I'm talking with my friends, Gina and Mercedes, all about choosing our feelings and letting go of blame, plus how to dance like nobody's watching; stay tuned.

Hey, my friends, welcome back to Vibrant Happy Women. I am Jen Riday, your host, and I love that you dedicate just a little bit of your time each week to listening to the podcast, especially to your own personal growth. You freaking rock; say that out loud, "You freaking rock!" I think so, I know it. Know that about yourself because you're committed to growth and you're pretty freaking amazing; so there's that. Well, thank you for being here.

We have an amazing episode today where I'm talking with 2 women at once (I love episodes with multiple people), Gina and Mercedes who I met at the Vibrant Happy Women retreat just this past February. They are light-filled women. They are on a path to radiate goodness, and you'll hear them talk about that in this episode. They were kind of acquaintances, and then a year ago, one of them listened to the podcast and then told the other one about it at work, and the rest is history. They formed a podcast discussion group, they were both at the retreat, and they are transforming their lives; it's a really beautiful story.

I'm going to tell you a little more about Gina and Mercedes, but first, I want to share our review of the week. And that is from Gretchen who wrote, "Being a mom is hard, but this podcast gives me perspective, encouragement, and support to be my best for my kids and for me," short and sweet. Thank you, Gretchen, for leaving that review, every review helps. The fact is iTunes and the podcast world is getting saturated with podcasts and it gets harder and harder for people to find new podcasts to listen to. So if all of you listening get any value at all from this interview or other interviews or the Happy Bits, please do me the kindness of leaving a review. You just go to [jenriday.com/itunes](http://jenriday.com/itunes) and type in a sentence, it's super easy and then posts; and maybe I'll read yours on the air as well. So thank you again, Gretchen.

Now, a little bit more about Mercedes and Gina. They are from Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. So where is that? It's the west coast of Canada. How do I know this? Because I am planning an upcoming trip with my daughter to the Seattle area and I acquainted myself with the geography there. Those of you from the west coast probably already knew all of this, but Seattle is full of islands, and if you go north across the border, there's Vancouver and it is full of violence. Well, you can go down south through the Canadian waters and straight across from Seattle, you'll be at Vancouver

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Island which is where Mercedes and Gina are both from.

Mercedes was born in El Salvador, Central America and came to the US when she was 7. She's a mom of 3 and she is a registered nurse who saves lives for critically ill patients who are in intensive care; wow, she's a caregiver. And then Gina, also from Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and she works at the same hospital where Mercedes works. Gina is a first generation Canadian-Filipino, she is a respiratory therapist, she is also a mom. And in her free time, she loves to cook and eat healthy meals, and she even created something called... well, she does it or created it (not sure which) walk dancing; and you're going to hear about that in this episode. These are 2 light-filled amazing women, and like I said, I met them at the Vibrant Happy Women retreat.

When they started listening to the podcast, shortly thereafter, they formed this podcast discussion group, and then Gina was the first to take the plunge and sign up for the retreat. And you'll hear in this interview that she said it was an intuitive thought, and then she started to jump up and down and scream in excitement (Laughs). And then she called Mercedes and said, "Do you want to go to this?" and Mercedes didn't think twice and took the plunge and signed up for the retreat as well. Well, I really felt excited and honored to meet them. To think that they're up there in their little neck of the woods on Vancouver Island, Canada and talking about the podcast, it's a small world, right? You're going to hear Gina and Mercedes talk a lot about the retreat because we had so much fun there. And I want to let, you know, that the retreat is still open for enrollment. We have a special low-cost payment plan that is available until May 23rd, and if you want to go, definitely grab a spot as soon as you can before May 23rd. The link to sign up, and that link is at [jenriday.com/retreat](http://jenriday.com/retreat). The retreat is happening in late January, early February of 2020. Alright, well, you want to hear Gina and Mercedes, not me, so let's go ahead and jump into this interview.

Hey, everyone, I am here with my friends, Gina Villares and Mercedes Zetino, and I met them at the Vibrant Happy Women retreat, and they have the coolest thing that they do surrounding the podcast, the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, that we're going to hear about later. But I wanted to have them on together because they are friends and it's kind of fun to hear friends talk with each other. But welcome to the show, Gina and Mercedes.

G: Thanks so much, Jen, thanks for having us. We're really...

M: Thanks so much, Jen.

G: ... happy to be here.

M: Yes, we are. We're very happy to be here, very honored and excited.

J: I'm excited. Well, let's hear your favorite quotes and then your low points. So we'll start with Mercedes.

M: Okay, so I have actually a couple of favorite quotes, is that okay if I share?

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J: Sure.

M: Okay. My first all-time favorite quote is from Paulo Coelho who is the author of 'The Alchemist', and his quote says, "One day, you will wake up and there won't be any more time to do the things that you've always wanted. Do it now." And my second quote is from Amelia Earhart, and she has a really beautiful quote that says, "Everyone has oceans to fly if they have the heart to do it. Is it reckless? Maybe, but what do dreams know of boundaries?"

J: Ooh.

G: Ah.

M: And I love those 2 quotes.

G: I love those, Mercedes.

J: Those are great.

M: I love them.

J: I've never heard either of those; nice.

M: Oh, really? Okay.

G: Those are beautiful.

J: How about you, Gina?

G: Jen, I love quotes. I screenshot them, I share them, I write them down, I read them on chalkboards in cafés; so I'll just share a few. My favorite is one that I read in a café in the bathroom. I know you know this, Mercedes, because I've shared it with you many a times, but, "What I don't have I cannot give," and I apply that especially to my children. So I say to myself quite often, "What I don't have, I can't give to my children." And I actually don't know who wrote that, it was just some random person that wrote on the truck board in the bathroom.

J: Hmm.

G: And then I also love a couple more by Lynne Twist, "What you appreciate appreciates," and, "You are responsible for the energy you create in this room."

J: Yes.

G: So those are... but I love... there's so many, like really.

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M: They're so good.

G: It's hard to just pinpoint one.

J: I think that last what is Oprah, right?

G: Yes.

J: Yeah, I thought so.

M: Yes.

J: Awesome, you guys.

M: Oprah has that on her door...

J: Oh, well, it's smart.

M: ... I believe.

G: (Laughs)

J: I need to put that up in my house, I think. (Laughs)

G: I know.

M: Oh yeah, yeah.

G: Yeah, me too, I still haven't done that.

J: Well, so Gina and Mercedes are both from Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is that right? Did I say it right?

G: It's Nanaimo.

M: Nanaimo.

J: Nanaimo.

M: But that's okay, everybody...

G: You're very close. It's so hard to say that word.

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M: It's hard to say, not everybody says it right (Laughs), unless you're from here.

J: Oh, okay, okay. So how did you guys meet? And maybe your low points lead into that, I'm not sure, you guys decide. But let's start with you, Gina.

G: So Mercedes and I work at Nanaimo General Hospital and we've met off and on probably the last 11 years. I'm a respiratory therapist there and she's a nurse, and she came into the intensive care unit as a nurse not too long ago and that's where we really connected, probably just over a year ago.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: But throughout my time at Nanaimo General, I was very blessed to be able to see Mercedes on the floors and we would take care of patients at the same time. And I knew there was something about her that I always really loved, but I guess it just wasn't our time 11 years ago to really connect. But, man, have we connected in the last year, and it feels like we've known each other forever.

M: Yeah.

G: Yeah.

M: Yeah, it really has. Just it's so amazing how life works. I think, you know, the universe brings as these people into our lives that can just linger and you know they're special, you know there's something about them, right?

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: And it's a blessing when you actually get to come together and get to know each other really well like Gina and I have over the last year; it's just been amazing.

G: Mm-hmm.

J: Let's dive in further to this, you know, friendship story before we talk about your low points. So what is it exactly that brought you guys together a year ago?

G: Do you want me to take that on, Mercedes?

M: Yeah, you start.

G: Because I can picture the moment and the day.

M: (Laughs) It's funny, I can too.

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G: So... oh like, Jen, your podcast was the first podcast I've ever listened to. And I think I shared with you at the retreat, I was just like, "I would want to listen to a podcast," a couple of friends and have shared with me like all these different podcasts they are listening to. And one day when I was in a bit of a funk, I just went on Spotify and I was just flying through all the podcasts, and I saw your beautiful face with the beautiful green colors that said Vibrant Happy Women and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I want to be that, I want to be that today."

J: (Laughs)

G: So anyways, I listened to a couple, and then it probably was a couple days later, I was working with Mercedes and I see you. And it's not often I'll just like be like, "This is what I'm doing. Do you want to do it with me?" but I did. I wrote on a piece of... was it a post-it note, Mercedes?

M: Yeah, it was, yeah.

G: Like, we were talking and I was like, "You're not going to believe what I'm listening to, and I feel so lifted." And I think I could see in your eyes that you just were... well, you are a person that is such a good listener and I always feel like when I'm talking to you that you're only listening to me, so right away, I connected with you. But when I said that to you, I could see in your eyes that you were interested, so I wrote down, Jen, your information, your podcast, and then I think that's how it sparked. And then I think a couple days later, I think, Mercedes, you texted me and you were like, "Oh my gosh, I totally love that podcast."

[Laughter]

M: Yeah, yeah.

G: And so since then, you've been like a highlight of our conversation...

M: Yes.

G: ... for the last... what, a year, almost a year.

M: It's been about a year.

G: Yeah.

M: Yeah, it's been about a year. It's true and I think I was ready for that. Like, I remember Gina coming to me that night with this podcast and, you know, just like a couple weeks prior, I had been looking for podcasts to listen to because it was something that I wasn't doing, but I knew I wanted to do it. So I wanted to listen to some good podcast, but I wasn't sure what to listen to. And I knew that I wanted something that would empower me and lift me up, and here comes Gina with her suggestions.

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[Laughter]

M: And, you know, the very first episode I listened to, Jen, and I just... I message to you about this just the other day, my favorite episode was number g1.

G: Yes.

M: And I think that's the first one I listened to.

G: Yeah.

M: And from then on...

G: Yeah.

M: ... I was just hooked on your podcast.

G: Yeah.

M: And then that's how it all started; that's how everything started.

G: Mm-hmm.

J: So g1 is the favorite for both of you?

G: Yes, so that was...

M: It is for me.

G: Yeah, I think that's the one... whenever I am going on about your podcast with new friends or people that are in my life, it's number g1 and someone I always pass on because it was the first one I listened to you as well and it's with Jill Payne.

M: Yeah.

G: And, yeah, I... it just resonated.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Because it's all about energy and...

J: Yeah.

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G: ... what you want to bring. yeah.

M: Mm-hmm.

J: For those of you who aren't sure what episode that is, that's the 'Be a freaking dime'.

[Laughter]

G: Dime, yes.

M: Yes, yes. (Laughs)

J: The Diming Lady. Everyone says...

G: Yeah, the Diming Lady.

J: ... "Oh yeah, that lady, that lady!"

M: Yes!

J: (Laughs)

M: And she's a fellow Canadian as well, isn't she?

J: I know! You Canadians...

M: I know.

J: ... are the best, I'm telling you.

M: I know, I know. (Laughs)

J: Shout out to Canada!

[Laughter]

M: That's right.

J: Well, so...

M: So, yes.

J: ... did you start talking about it? Because I know you guys started having a group that meets to discuss

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the podcast. So tell us more about how you did that because I know a lot of people, a lot of women have written to me expressing a desire for that exact same thing, so maybe you could inspire them.

G: You go ahead, Mercedes.

M: Well, I think that when... once Gina and I started sharing podcast episodes and then we both kind of spread it to other people, I know Gina, you know, we (Laughs)... I remember we went out one day and we went out for a crystal hunt, we were buying crystals because of their energy, right, good energy that brings to us. And we were talking about another friend that we work with and I thought, "Oh yeah, she would be perfect, she would love it, I'm sure." And so we passed on the information to her and then she started listening to the podcast. And I know Gina recommended it to another friend of hers, and that's how this podcast group started with the 4 of us.

G: 4 of us, yeah.

M: We said, "Okay, well, wouldn't it be a great idea we could do like a little kind of like a book club, but instead of discussing a book, we would discuss a podcast episode and get together and talk about it?" And we set up this meeting, I remember the 4 of us initially at this coffee shop that's by the hospital there. And you know what? I think... did we spent 2 hours there, Gina, just talk about it?

G: Oh, 2 hours. And if I didn't have a soccer game to go to to go cheer on my daughter, I swear I probably would have stayed another hour. We didn't want to say goodbye, Jen. Like, we just kept talking about like just like minded topics all from this episode 91 that you and Jill Payne brought to us, and it was just such a beautiful high-energy conversation. And from that day, on the spot, we'd plan like the next day. And we all do shift work so it's sometimes difficult to find a day, but we seem to make it work.

J: Hmm.

M: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

J: Yeah, if you guys as nurses can do it, or shift workers, then yeah, anyone can do it, I'm sure. So I remember I got an email from you guys with a picture, I don't remember who sent it (was it you, Gina, or you, Mercedes?), but it was a picture that said, "We're coming to the retreat!" And (Laughs) I was like...

M: (Laughs)

J: ... "Oh wow! This is so exciting! Who are these people?" Then I got to meet you, I 'm so glad I did. But do you remember who...

G: Oh my gosh.

J: ... sent me that email?

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G: I can't remember. I don't know if I did. Was it with us dance walking?

J: Yes! Yes.

G: And then I remember you replying going...

M: Ah.

G: ... "Which one is you?"

M: So that... that was you...

G: That was me.

M: ... Gina.

G: Yeah, that was me.

M: Yeah.

J: So wait a minute, so...

G: I know.

J: (Laughs) I didn't realize dance walking was your thing. Okay, everyone out there, let me backup. So at the retreat...

G: (Laughs)

J: ... we had 4 groups and Gina and Mercedes were in a group with Sara Bates, who was also a guest on this podcast...

G: Right.

J: ... earlier. And at the retreat...

M: Mm-hmm.

J: ... Sara said she was going dance walking. Did she learn that from you guys or did you...?

M: Yeah.

J: Really?

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M: Or Gina.

G: Yeah, yeah.

M: She invented it. (Laughs)

G: And Sara... Sara was awesome. She just gave it her all around the beautiful grounds of Club Med.

[Laughter]

G: It was super-hot, we were a little... like it was 1:00 PM, we should have been in the water, but no, we were dance walking.

J: Oh.

M: (Laughs)

G: But yeah, it was really fun, it was fun. And I have this beautiful picture of Sara dance walking and I should send that one to you too, Jen, because it's a really neat one.

J: Yeah, do.

M: (Laughs)

J: And so for those listening, what is dance walking?

G: It's walking and dancing to your own music, so with your own device, with your own headphones, and yeah you... if try it, it's kind of hard to dance and walk and gain kilometers or mileage because typically, when we dance, right, we dance in one spot, so you couldn't have to dance forward.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: And Mercedes and I had our first dance walk on Mother's Day last year with 2 very dear friends.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: I sent a huge email out to all the beautiful women in my life and 4 women showed up at my doorstep and we danced walked around the seawall at 8 PM after we could celebrate Mother's Day with our own families and then we took this time for ourselves. And I think we danced walked until about 10:15 at night, 10:30.

J: (Gasps) Wow!

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G: Like, it was dark when I came back.

M: (Laughs)

J: That's so fun! (Laughs)

G: And so we all came with our playlists and there wasn't much talking. So like all of us are on Skype right now with our phones on, but we wouldn't be connected, right? Like, we'd all be listening to our music, our own music. And so if you, Jen...

M: An not...

G: ... were walking towards us, you wouldn't hear music, you would just see 4 women...

M: Dance.

G: ... dance walking in silence.

[Laughter]

G: But we have...

[Laughter]

M: And... and we weren't... we weren't just dance walking, we were... some of us were singing out loud.

G: Oh wait!

[Laughter]

M: I have a video of Gina singing.

G: Oh my gosh, yeah.

M: It was like... it was so much fun. It was probably one of the most fun activities I've done. And you know why? Because it was so liberating...

J: Yes.

M: ... to go out there...

J: Yes.

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M: ... and, you know, not really caring about how other people saw us. I'm sure some of them thought we were crazy...

J: (Laughs)

M: ... crazy ladies.

G: But we brought so many... we brought so many smiles to people's faces, whether they were...

M: That's true.

G: ... smiling because they thought we were crazy or...

[Laughter]

G: ... I mean, I don't know, they're probably like, "These women are going through mid-late crisis in their lives."

[Laughter]

G: But we just had a blast. And our dear friend that passed away just this month, she was the one that... her name is Tina, if I could mention her name.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Mercedes, she was someone that brought so much energy. Because when you try to start dance walking in public in daylight, you don't really want to move your limbs too much because you're kind of worried about what people are doing. But Tina, she did not care, not one bit, and she was moving like she was in a dance bar at 1:00 AM.

J: (Laughs)

M: Aww.

G: And so she just brought us all to that level, and she's such a beautiful person, gave us so many gifts. And that night, she gave me a huge gift because it was like... what's that saying that people say, "Dance like nobody is watching"?

J: (Gasps) Yes.

M: Yeah.

G: She was dancing like nobody was watching. And then I got out of my comfort zone, out of my dis-

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comfort zone, and I was able to move way more freely. But in the beginning, you should try it, Jen, like you're very... like you're almost like a soldier trying to dance because you're not totally embracing every movement. And then hey, Mercedes, we just kept...

M: Yeah.

G: ... we just... I don't know, it was... it was nut.

M: Well, and I think the great thing about it too is that all of us were dancing our own style. Like, for example our friend, Andrea, she was like dancing to Latin music, like she was salsa-ing all the way down the...

[Laughter]

M: ... the way there. And, you know, some of us were listening to Rock music or to Hip-Hop.

G: Oh yeah.

M: We were all dancing our own style...

G: Yeah.

M: ... and it was just so much fun, so liberating, it was just coming together and just having a good time, you know?

J: Oh, that's beautiful.

M: And being empowered, we were... we felt... I felt empowered...

J: Yeah.

M: ... you know, doing that. So it was just a wonderful experience.

G: And we're going to do it every Mother's Day at 8 PM. I think we're going to choose 8 PM because everybody can enjoy their Mother's Day with their families. So maybe it could be some big movement through the Vibrant Happy Women...

M: Yes.

G: ... podcast! (Laughs)

J: Well, okay, I'll surprise you now. Gina and Mercedes, I've been thinking about this since I heard about it from the retreat, but don't you think it should be a retreat tradition that you lead?

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G: Yes!

M: Yes!

J: Yes! I know, okay.

G: That would be so great. Because we got... and that was so awesome about the retreat is that we were dancing and moving our bodies...

M: Yes.

G: ... all the time. And it is not comfortable for many of us to do that amongst strangers; it's not. But by the end of it, it was like, "Let's give her... let's just do this."

J: (Laughs)

G: And, oh, I think that'd be awesome, Jen. Hey, Mercedes, that'd be so fun.

M: Yeah, it would, it would be.

G: (Laughs)

M: And I think it goes right along with your workshops, Jen, because you made us dance and get up and move our bodies.

J: (Laughs)

M: So that is so fitting. I think that would be a perfect activity to incorporate into the retreat...

J: Alright, you're on

M: ... for sure.

J: You're on, it's official.

[Laughter]

G: Oh, so great.

J: Well, let's... let's dive into your low points. Let's start with you, Mercedes.

M: Okay, my low point. So, you know, I think I've had a few years of soul-searching, obviously my last... this last year has been the biggest one. And when I reflect back, I think I've had various low points, but I

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think the one low point that really brought me down to my knees happened probably about 3 or 4 years ago with my daughter, Haley. She was 10 years old back then and in grade five. And, you know, Haley's always been a very happy, bright spirited child, but all of a sudden, she started having or going through some really bad anxiety and, you know, she was no longer herself. I noticed the change, she would be sad, she'd be scared, unmotivated, so bad to the point where she didn't want to go to school anymore.

J: Mm.

M: And some of her anxiety, I think, was a lot of social aspects with her friends, some bullying as well. And so anyways, it got so bad that one day, one of her teachers called me and asked me to meet her in school and talk about Haley. So I went, this teacher was somebody that Haley trusted, you know, she'd had her since kindergarten, she knew her since kindergarten, and I went to meet with her. And she sat down with me and she showed me a letter that Haley had written where she expressed everything that she was going through, and she also expressed on this letter that she was so sad that she wanted to end her life.

J: Wow!

M: And she was thinking of doing that because she was suffering so much and she didn't want to suffer, she didn't want to make anybody else suffer.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And, you know, when I read those words, I... my heart just sank, it sank. And it was so heavy and dark and I remember just crying and the teacher crying with me because we both... you know, she loves Haley and she was just so saddened for her, and... but that moment I think was the lowest, not only because my child was so sad, but because I felt like I had failed as a parent. You know, I felt I failed at loving my child, at protecting this most precious child of mine. And so then I realized also that I didn't know what to do to help her. I didn't have the tools in my toolbox to help my little girl. And so that was the lowest point, and I think that was my... well, I know that that was my catalyst for my unraveling and my transformation because I realized that I had to help her, I had to help my child, but how do I help her if I hadn't helped myself first?

J: Mm-hmm.

M: So I needed to look for the light, not just for her, but for me as well. And so I think that was my lowest point because it brought me to that realization that I needed to make a change. If I was going to help my children, you know, be compassionate and love themselves, it needed to start with me, and so that's how it happened.

J: Beautiful. Well, so many people listening have children with anxiety, so can you tell us more about the journey out of that dark place for her and for you?

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M: Yes. You know, at first, because like I said, I didn't know what to do, I was lucky that I had a lot of help from her teacher who she herself had gone through a lot of anxiety, so she had a lot of tools. She is involved in doing a lot of self-love, self-compassion work, she actually has taken courses from Kristin Neff, which I know she's been one of your guests...

J: Mm-hmm.

M: ... in the past. But she helped her through a lot of that, but I also... you know, we got her into counseling, we got Hailey into counseling, and that helped us a lot through those periods. Eventually... and I did a lot of work myself like, you know, I read a lot of books and I of course listened to a lot of podcast and just a lot of learning myself as to how to... how to get through this with your child.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And eventually, I think a lot of it involved dialogue, just sitting with her, just talking about the feelings that she was having, not shying away from those feelings or those emotions, but working through them...

J: Mm-hmm.

M: ... acknowledging them. And by doing that, I... like I learned myself as well like I was going through her suffering to learn as well from her. So she learned, I learned, and we kind of grew together. And Haley's... she's an empath.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: So of course, you know, everything is just so much more magnified, her feelings, her emotions, and so I had to learn with her. Basically, yeah, we grew together, mother and daughter, we kind of grew together.

J: Yeah.

M: And I think with all the learning that I did, all the reading, you know, now when she comes to me, because she does still, of course anxiety I don't think effort goes away. And so she is much better, she's doing much better now, but every now and then, you know, she will get down and she'll get sad. And I now feel more capable of helping her because I do have more tools now. So we do still go through those low periods, but not as bad as it was back then and...

J: Way to go, that's great.

M: Yeah.

J: That's great.

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M: Yeah.

J: Well done.

M: It's improved, definitely.

J: Yeah, good.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: Thank you.

J: And let's slide over to Gina. What was your low point so far? No, I'm kidding, there's not going to be more of those!

G: Yeah, no...

J: (Laughs)

G: Yeah, I don't have! Yeah, right, no.

J: (Laughs)

G: Just like everyone, you know, we all have our good days and bad days, but I had a significant low point in 2003 and it took probably... to be quite honest, probably a few years to get completely out of it, if I could say that. I mean...

J: Mm-hmm.

G: ... because at the beginning of 2003, it was super low, that feeling of rejection, not being good enough, feeling and not feeling genuinely loved hit me super hard. I was 7 weeks pregnant and my partner at the time, I was dealing with his alcoholism as well as him being unfaithful to me at 7 weeks, and I just felt so abandoned and so alone. And even though I was surrounded by lots of love and support with my family and friends and my career and my family unit at work, nobody could say anything to get me out of that. Like, it was, you know, waking up in the morning and just not wanting to get out of the bed...

J: Mm-hmm.

G: ... deciding whether or not to have this beautiful child. I had one moment really, really low where I was in the car 7 months pregnant and I was picturing myself going down a very quiet street at 100 km/h and I just wanted to ram into the grocery store, like that's how low I was.

J: Mm-hmm.

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G: And I cried a lot, people cried with me, and it wasn't until my mom 8 months into the pregnancy just gave me a bit of hard love and just said, "You got to think of your baby. And with the village you have through our family and close friends and work, you got to make a shift." And, I mean, she didn't say it that gently, it was a bit... it's... it was much harder than that, I can't remember the exact words.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: But it was enough for me to be like, "Okay, I gotta figure this out and stop feeling so sorry for myself," because I certainly did through that entire pregnancy. But as soon as Benjamin was born, just seeing his beautiful face, things started to shift. But of course, with sleep deprivation with having a baby and feeling alone as a single parent and the, you know, feeling judged and being a single parent, like all the things that come about being a single parent, I just was having a lot of little moments in the first 2 years of Benjamin's life. And, again, it wasn't until I started running after maybe he was 8 months old, things started to get a little bit brighter.

J: Mm.

G: But it definitely was a long process and I certainly got out of it, but you know what? I'm going to read a quote because I saw it this morning and it totally reflects kind of what I've gone through and what a lot of people go through with their low points. But, "Obstacles are detours in the right direction," by Gabrielle Bernstein, and it was a huge obstacle, but man, it brought me to such great direction in my life. And then... yeah, and then a year ago, I felt similar feelings (definitely not as intense) with a friendship that ended with a girlfriend where I felt rejection and not being good enough. And it was a little bit of a toxic relationship with a girlfriend of 10 years, so a newer friendship; I can say that because I have a lot of older friendships. But I knew that it was probably coming to an end, and unfortunately, I didn't take the most graceful path; I became a little toxic myself. And so when it ended, I felt really low for like a period of a month. And, again, even though I had my beautiful family and a huge support system and everybody telling me that everything was going to be okay, their words, I mean, they were loving and helpful, but it was up to me, Jen, to get out of it again. And, you know, it only lasted for a short period of time, but it definitely harbored the same feelings. And so this past year, I've reflected a lot on me and what was it about me that brought me to these lows points because it takes 2, and I'm responsible for my reaction to all these situations that are happening in my life. I can't blame other people, but man, did I love to blame other people. (Laughs)

J: Yeah.

G: And, you know, it just makes you feel better when you can just lash out and blame on all these horrible things that have happened. And, I mean, it wasn't that horrible because I got the blessings of this beautiful, gorgeous baby boy that is now almost like 15 and a half years old. So... and then a friendship that ended, I have created... and all these beautiful new friendships have come into my life because that one ended. Like, I...

J: Mm-hmm.

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G: Yeah, so those were my probably... well, the one in 2003, that was like a huge low point. And it almost feels like it never really happened because it seems so long ago.

J: Yeah, you've healed.

G: Mm-hmm.

J: Oh, that's beautiful.

G: But I've healed. Yeah.

J: Yeah. Well, I love what you said, "It was up to me to get out of it again."

G: Mm-hmm.

J: And I want to talk about that a little more in depth after we have a quick word from our sponsor. Okay, welcome back. So Gina, in your story, you mentioned thinking, "It was up to me to get out of it again," and that you were done blaming. How have you been trying to stay in that line of thinking, and how do you see the benefits of that in other people's lives, people who do it, people who don't do it, what do you see is the differences when people make that decision to choose to stop blaming and choose to feel how we want to feel essentially?

G: Mm-hmm. That's a hard question to answer; I'll do my best to try to answer that. But I feel being in the present moment and really taking the time to slow down and take time for thought versus reacting, like I used to react pretty quickly to a lot of things, not just 7 when I was mad or pissed off, but even like reacting to such a happy thing like, "Oh, I'm so excited go to that concert!" and I would just react, right?

J: Mm-hmm.

G: And... or, "Ugh, that person was just so rude in the car next to me. Like, how could he be like that?" I would react like just whether I said something or whether it went into my brain and, you know, would change my vibration, I would react. Nowadays, I don't feel like I react as much. Even the kids and my husband at home, I feel that they're not reacting as much. And...

J: Mm.

G: ... I think because I'm working, like that's one of the biggest things I'm trying to create is like peace and my mindset. So now, Jen, and I've talked about this with Mercedes, when I'm around any little bit of toxicity, I just... I feel all yucky. (Laughs)

J: Mm-hmm.

G: You know what I mean? Like, I need to find a way to deliver, like if I should speak up in the yuckiness

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or I should just remove myself. And we all have bad days, and of course with people that are very dear to my heart, if they're having a hard time, like that's not toxicity, I'm talking about like, you know, people that are lashing out or complaining way too much. Like, I feel like I need to drift away from that, but again, trying not to judge their reaction; because that's their reaction, I have to just take care of my own reaction.

J: Yeah, yeah.

G: So did that answer your question?

J: Yes, and that's perfect.

G: Yeah, okay.

J: How about you, Mercedes? Your thoughts. (Laughs)

M: Okay. So, for me, the big realization through all of this transformation that I've been going through is that I'm responsible for my own happiness and that nobody else is responsible for it, and I'm not responsible for anybody else's happiness. So I think that what I did before, I think that, like Gina, I was very quick to react to anything. And I was always blaming other people for my emotions. Like, if I was feeling sad or hurt, I was always blaming other people for it. And I realize now that my happiness belongs to me and nobody else.

J: Mm.

M: So if I want to change my life, if I want to be a better person, not just towards myself but my kids and my husband and everybody around me, well, it's got to start with me and my attitude. So...

G: Mm-hmm.

M: ... I cannot depend on anybody else to provide that for me. So that's been... actually at your retreat, Jen, that was my biggest aha moment was I could not depend on anybody else for my happiness.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And I had to stop blaming other people. So I think that's how I view things now, so if I'm going through some funky emotions, I will ask myself of, "Why? Why... why am I feeling this way?"

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: You know, "What's causing me to feel this way? And it's not anybody else's fault, it's me. Why am I

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doing these emotions?" right? "What is in me that's causing this?" So to take ownership of your life and your feelings, it's huge.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: I think a lot of us don't do that and so that's why we suffer.

G: Yeah.

J: Yeah, yeah, exactly.

G: Mm-hmm.

J: Would you say, Mercedes, that you believe you can feel however you want to feel?

M: Yes, yes, I totally do. I think that it's taking me a lot of learning. I'm going to be 45 this year and it's taken me 45 years to learn this, you know?

G: Mm-hmm.

M: I wish I knew this when I was younger, it would have saved me so much grief.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: Yes, I think we are responsible for how we feel. Like that saying goes, "Nobody can make you feel inferior without your permission," right?

G: Exactly, yeah.

J: Right.

M: So inferior or sad or mad or whatever, whatever word you want to stick there, nobody can do it without your permission.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: So really, it is up to you.

G: Exactly.

J: Yeah.

G: But it's okay. Hey, Mercedes, like how we always talk about, it's okay to have bad days and sit in the

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funk, like...

M: Oh yeah, we will...

G: ... sit in it.

M: We will have those bad days.

G: ... but just how do we... how do we react to those feelings...

M: Yes.

G: ... right? Yeah.

M: Yes.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And knowing that if you perceive, you know, other people treating you badly or hurting you, you have to realize (and that's what I try and teach my children) that it's not about you, it's...

G: Mm-hmm.

M: When you receive something negative like that, it's usually about that other person...

J: Yes, yes.

M: ... and not about you; it's got nothing to do with you.

J: Right.

G: Yeah.

M: And that's what I... how I try to sort of live my life now and it's made a big difference, for sure.

J: That's so beautiful. Well, I'm going to surprise you guys. I have a new question for my podcast.

G: Oh no!

M: Ooh!

[Laughter]

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J: I'm springing it on you.

[Laughter]

J: I've been thinking a lot about heart energy and intuitive energy and, you know, those times when we have wisdom from beyond ourselves, and I'm curious if either of you have had a time when you decided something based on intuition and it didn't really make sense rationally and then it... it turned out because you went with your heart?

M: Well, it's funny but it does go back to the retreat and when Gina called me and she told me she had registered for your retreat and she said, "Come on, do you want to go with me?" and I was like, I didn't even think about it to tell you the truth, Jen, I didn't even think about it and I signed up right away.

J: Ah.

M: And as soon as I signed up, I thought, "Oh my goodness, so that means I have to, you know, get flights." But I didn't worry about the cost or how I was going to get there, I just knew that I was going to make it there somehow.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And really I just went with my gut because it felt like that was something that I needed to do; in me, I felt like that's something that I needed to do. And, you know, being at the retreat, it proved it. It was life-changing, it really was because, like I said, I had aha moments, the biggest one I've already, you know, talked about. And that's, I think, one of the times where I did follow my intuition.

J: Mm.

M: I didn't think about the consequences or anything, I just thought, "This is something I need to do," and I went for it.

J: Well, I am so glad you did because (Laughs) I felt this way at the first retreat in 2018, but imagine my surprise when we almost 10xed the size and I met you guys...

G: Oh yeah.

J: ... but I felt the same way. What is it about everyone who's so amazing coming together? And I just get to be a part of it. This isn't a brag in anyway, but I do feel like there's, you know, some help from God/The Universe bringing...

M: Yes.

J: Oh my gosh, you guys are amazing.

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M: Oh yes.

J: I wish I lived near you. (Laughs)

G: Oh.

M: Aww.

G: Well, we're just so thankful. And, you know, Mercedes, how you answered that question, I was going to answer it exactly the same way. Because when I emailed you, Jen, you probably get thousands of email, but I was like, "I love your podcast, I want to meet you. Do you have a retreat?" And then right away, you had emailed me back, which I was like stunned because I'm like, "Oh my goodness, she's taking time for me and just like responding right away to my..." you know, if you have any retreats. Then you sent me the details of Florida and I was thinking, "Yeah, I'd fly to Wisconsin, I'd go there, that's close.

J: (Laughs)

G: "I don't need to go anywhere hot."

[Laughter]

G: And then when I saw Florida, I was like, "Oh, that's so far away," but I knew I wanted to go. And my intuition was so strong and I hit the like... after talking about it with Dwayne who is just like, "Giver, go for it,"...

J: (Laughs)

G: ... you know, I hit the register button and thinking, "Oh my gosh, I'm going to go all by myself and I don't know how much it's going to cost," again trying to just let it flow. And then that's when I... I think I must have picked up the phone and reacted very crazily, "Hey, Mercedes," and I was like jumping up and down.

[Laughter]

M: Yes.

G: That... that, I cannot control, my reaction; I'm a little nutty.

[Laughter]

G: And then we went from there. So I just love that that was the answer that you were thinking of, Mercedes, because that is exactly what I had in my head and that my intuition was very strong to just say, "Go for it."

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J: Wow.

G: Yeah, yeah.

J: That is amazing. I can't believe you both picked the same one. (Laughs)

G: Yeah.

M: I know.

G: That's nutty, that's nutty.

J: Yeah, yeah.

M: That's crazy, but it just goes to show, Jen, just how much that retreat affected us. And I think, not just speaking for myself in Gina, but I think all of the women that were there.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: We... you know, the ones that we were closest to, we've made such a wonderful connection with them.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: You know, there's a group of women, the group of women that were in our small groups, you know, I feel like I've known these women forever. They are my friends now, they're in my growth circle, we communicate with them on a daily, if not weekly basis, you know?

G: Yeah, exactly.

M: It's just...

G: Mm-hmm.

M: It's been... these friendships that we've gained are just invaluable, really.

J: Mm.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: And it was all due to us being there for that common purpose of, you know, wanting to empower ourselves, wanting to become better, right?

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J: Yeah.

M: You know, opening our hearts.

J: And are you guys going again in 2020?

M: Yeah!

G: Oh yeah!

[Laughter]

J: Yay! I already knew the answer but...

G: Without hesitation.

J: I wanted to make... (Laughs)

G: Without hesitation.

[Laughter]

G: Again, our intuition was strong to hit the click button, like, "Alright, registered!"

[Laughter]

G: "Don't worry about the cost, it's going to blow."

M: That's right.

J: Ah, beautiful.

G: "What appreciates appreciates, it's all going to come," so yeah.

M: Yeah. (Laughs)

J: Yeah, yeah. Well, let's talk about some of your favorite things, and each of you start with a book; first you, Gina.

G: Oh, I love reading lately! I've made time for reading. I was such a go-go-go person, like physically going that I wouldn't allow myself to kind of be quiet and read. So I could say a list of books, but my top ones are and 'The Book of Joy' by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu, that was profound for me. And I currently just finished 'A New Earth', Eckhart Tolle.

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J: Mm.

G: And then a fiction book of mine that I would love to read again is 'A Fine Balance' by Rohinton Mistry (I hope I'm pronouncing that right), and that's a good, fun fictional read. But lately, I've been really enjoying nonfiction and a lot of empowering self-care books, as well as Mercedes has been sharing some memoirs too that I hope to get into.

J: Mm, ooh, cool. How about you, Mercedes?

M: Okay. Well, my favorite book is 'The Gifts of Imperfection' by Brené Brown.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: It is my favorite.

G: Mm-hmm, I like that one too.

M: Yes. It just sort of the way she talks about being authentic. And, you know, it's not just her point of view, it's her findings from her qualitative research. You know, she talks about using courage and compassion and self-love to get to that authenticity that we are all yearning for.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: I love that book. I have to say that I just recently read Cheryl Strayed's 'Wild' memoir and I absolutely love that book, I recommend it.

J: Mm.

M: You know, it's another great story about finding yourself, going through struggles.

J: Mm.

M: She, you know, going through a lot of struggles and finding yourself in the end and what it takes to get there. So it's just a beautiful story, I love it, yeah.

J: Well, I want to recommend one for you guys. I don't know, I've never done this before, but you triggered in my head a book that I love. Have either of you read 'The Year of Yes' by Shonda Rhimes?

M: No.

G: No, I'm going to write that down.

J: Ooh! Yeah, read that.

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M: 'The Year of the Yes'.

G: 'The Year of...?'

J: 'The Year...' I think it's...

G: 'The Year of the Yes', oh.

J: ...'A year of Yes'...

M: Shonda...

J: Shonda Rhimes. She's the...

M: Shonda Rhimes, okay.

J: ... writer for 'Grey's Anatomy', yeah.

G: Oh wow!

M: Oh, okay!

J: Yeah.

M: Yes. She sounded familiar, that name, okay.

G: Okay. Thank you for sharing that.

M: Yes, thank you.

G: I just wrote that down, that's on my list.

J: Okay. (Laughs)

G: Awesome.

M: Yay, thank you!

J: I never get to recommend books on my podcast, how fun is that?

G: No.

[Laughter]

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G: I love it, love it.

M: I'm going to have to read that.

J: And a quick run-through of each of your morning routines; you first, Mercedes.

M: So I have to tell you, Jen, I was never... before this, I was never really a morning person, I always like to sleep in. But I have changed my ways and I've become a morning person now.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: My favorite thing to do... well, I usually get up around 6:00 in the morning, 5:30 to 6:00 in the morning, and I like to have an hour of just to myself, just before everybody gets up, I like to have that hour I'm just quiet and stillness. The first thing I do is I get up and I put my tea kettle on and I make my coffee and I sit and I meditate; I meditate for about 20 minutes or so.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: And then I just enjoy my coffee and I either read my books or I'll listen to a podcast. That's usually my morning routine. It gets broken up because I have to usually drive my kids to school.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: But after that, I make it a point to move my body. So I either go to the gym or go for a run or go for a walk with the dog, just anything that gets me out.

J: Great, great.

M: Yeah, mm-hmm.

J: And how about you, Gina?

G: I love early mornings. Dwayne and I love to get up early, but I tend to be getting up earlier than him at times to do my self-care. And I love gratitude journaling, setting daily intentions with a nice hot cup of coffee, with a candle lit. I like to read a few passages from my books, whatever is at the bedside. And, again, just like Mercedes, I love moving my body, it definitely refuels and recharges me, and of course, it's at different levels depending on my energy of that day. But even when I'm the most exhausted, if I just do a little bit, I always feel so much better. And because of shift work, because not all the time... you know, sometimes, I'll get home at quarter to 8:00 in the morning. So I will do my morning routine when I wake up from sleeping. And...

J: Mm, that's nice.

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G: So then... but I may not go for a walk or go for a run, but I get in my gratitude journaling and reading or listening to a podcast most days.

J: I love that you're both flexible about it, that's the beautiful thing. A lot of us try a morning routine, and if it's not perfect for a week, we quit.

G: Mm-hmm.

J: But I think it's just doing a little here, a little there and picking from the jar about possibilities, kind of like what you both do.

M: Mm-hmm.

J: Some days more, some days less.

M: Yeah, yeah, that's right.

G: Yes, yeah.

J: And do each of you have a favorite life hack, it's something that helps your life be a little easier?

M: You go first, Gina.

G: My favorite life... I'm a list maker. I like paper and pens, I will do that in addition to doing reminders on my phone; so that's a big life hack for me. And even if the alarm goes for me to do that thing on my list, even if I don't get it done, it actually just feels good that the alarm's gone off and it's, "Oh yeah, I got to do that, but yeah, I'll get that done."

J: Mm-hmm.

G: So just the reminders and just not putting so much pressure expectation that I have to get everything done. Obviously I like prioritize, but I feel more organized and more grounded when I have less, just because as moms, as you both know, like there's lots going on, and yeah, that would be a good life hack. And maybe just, you know, cutting out the things that are not always so necessary, right? Like our little dog, Bella, who we adore, sheds all over the place and, yeah, in my previous life, I would... or my previous years, I would have to vacuum like consistently, that's one thing I let go and I say thank you to those beautiful hairs because she brings us so much joy. So I try not... you know, letting go of some other things, that would be another life hack of mine.

[Laughter]

J: Letting go, that's good.

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G: Letting go.

J: Yeah.

M: Letting go of the hair. (Laughs)

G: Letting go of the hair.

[Laughter]

J: That's our quote for your episode, "Let go of the hair!"

G: Oh my god.

[Laughter]

J: They will say, "What! What are you talking about?"

[Laughter]

J: Okay, Mercedes, yours; your life hack.

M: I think my life hack (not really sure if you can call it a life hack, but I use it as a life hack), it's music. So I'm the kind of person that I'm always listening to music, Jen. So if I'm at home, I'm listening to music, if I'm doing chores, I listen to music, if I go for a walk, I listen to music. So I use music as my... I guess it's kind of like my tool to make things seem better.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: For example, if I'm cleaning around the house, I just put my music on, it just...

G: Mm.

M: And it's not always music sometimes, it's podcasts, right?

G: Yeah.

M: Or it could be like a TED talk or it's anything that helps me focus my mind on something other than just the chore that I'm doing. But it...

J: Yeah.

M: ... most of the time, it's music. And my kids know that when I put the record on, it's because it's clean-

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ing time, you know? (Laughs)

G: Yeah.

J: Yeah.

M: They know that.

[Laughter]

J: "Quick, run away! Mom wants us to clean." (Laughs)

M: Exactly, they know that. So yeah, that's kind of... that's what I use as my life hack, for sure.

J: That's good.

G: That's awesome.

J: And, Gina, what does it mean for you to be a vibrant happy woman?

G: It means everything to me. We're so fortunate to have that opportunity to make those shifts to become a vibrant happy woman. I think there's no other way to live, to be quite honest; and thank you for that, Jen. But the formula that I would do to create that for myself is movement, connectivity with all people, living animals, nature, connectivity basically with everything around us.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: And nurturing and nourishing our relationships as well as nourishing our bodies with good food and water and rest, and appreciating what's in front of us now, and limiting electronics as much as you can. I feel like my home life flows better when we're all connected without electronics, so...

J: Mm-hmm. And you're generally not on social media, right, Gina?

G: Yeah, I'm not. I do Marco Polo with my... our small groups from the Vibrant Happy Women retreat, so I'm on Marco Polo, which I just learned about, you know, a couple months ago.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: But no. I was on a year ago and then I just, yeah, I wanted to come off. And even in the summer, ask Mercedes, I disconnected from my phone for 2 months and...

J: Wow, well done.

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G: ... would call from the landline. And I don't think it made... you know, it was maybe difficult for some people to get a hold of us or the kids, but I just... it was really nice to not have my phone present for 2 months, it was...

J: Mm.

G: I loved it. And I don't know, I might do that again this summer.

J: Hmm. Well, I might join you; I'll think about it.

G: (Laughs)

J: Ask me before you start and I might do it; I don't know, it's a little tricky.

G: Okay. Well, if you have a landline, you can connect that way. I gave myself permission to check my emails like...

J: Yeah.

G: ... once a day. So people knew... like Mercedes would email me.

[Laughter]

J: So... okay, okay. So that's true.

M: "Gina, answer your phone!" (Laughs)

J: Yeah.

G: Yeah, like, "Pick up your phone, the landline's going to ring soon."

[Laughter]

G: But yeah, I would check my email once a day to see if I've missed anything, especially for the kids... especially our youngest, Gray, who's 10 with the play dates. Because that's really how a lot of parents, we all connect when you've got 5 or 6 friends over, right? And I remember some of my... Gray's friends' moms would be like, "Oh my gosh, we can't get ahold of them," like... and I'd just be like, "I'll pick them up at 3:00," or whatever like to kind of just pre-plan it.

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Yeah.

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J: Awesome. How about you, Mercedes? What does it mean for you to be a vibrant happy woman?

M: For me, being vibrant and happy means to be as positive and as present as possible as you can be with yourself and with those around you. So, you know, giving yourself a lot of love, a lot of gentleness, knowing that you are the number one priority, that by looking after yourself, you are going to be serving this world in the best way possible.

J: Mm-hmm.

M: Because your radiance will transcend onto others, right?

J: Mm-hmm.

M: So, you know, you give out... you get what you give out, right? So...

J: Mm-hmm.

G: Mm-hmm.

M: ... that's what it means to me is to just keep that in mind, keep it as a focus, you know?

J: Yeah.

M: Be vibrant and send those vibes out.

J: Yes.

M: Right?

G: Mm-hmm. And then you get them back.

J: Right.

M: Yes.

J: Ripple effect.

M: Yes.

G: Yeah, ripple effect.

J: Well, this has been amazing and I could talk all day, but I hear my kids coming...

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G: Oh, I know.

J: ... coming from the bus. So I would love to close with each of you leaving our listeners a challenge.

G: You go ahead, Mercedes.

M: Okay. Well, my challenge to your listeners would be to take a moment each and every day to be present. And by that, I mean even if it means, you know, just focusing on your breath for 2 minutes, focusing on quieting your mind for 2 minutes. So take every opportunity that you can, even if you're stopped at a red light, you know, take that minute to just breathe and focus on your breathing and just be present.

J: Mm.

M: And if you can do that every day, you might not see the difference right away, but it will come to you, you know, it will. So that's my challenge.

J: Beautiful. And yours, Gina.

G: I would love, if I could in late memory of my beautiful friend, Tina, who I missed very dearly, I would love everyone to challenge themselves by either doing by yourself or finding a partner or getting your group together, download your favorite playlists, put on your headphones and dance walk because it will really help you just be creative, be silly, and laugh at yourself and laugh at each other with love.

J: Mm.

G: And so try it, see what you think and just bust out. (Laughs)

J: Yeah! Oh, so fun, I'm totally doing that.

G: Oh, I can't wait.

J: Well, thank you, thank you both so, so much for being here; I can't wait to see you both again. It was such an honor you would do the interview, thank you.

M: Thank you, Jen.

G: Thank you, Jen, for thinking of us.

M: Yes, thank you.

G: You are amazing, we love you dearly.

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J: (Laughs)

M: Yes, very much.

J: Back at you, I love you both too. Take care.

G: Okay, take care. Bye, Jen!

M: Thank you, Jen.

J: Bye.

G: Bye, Mercedes!

M: Bye, Gina!

[Laughter]

M: Alright.

G: Okay, bye.

J: Alright, who's moving to Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada with me (Laughs)? Okay, I love Madison, Wisconsin, but I want to be near Gina and Mercedes, how about you? Well, I am super excited to see them again at the Vibrant Happy Women retreat. And I want to let you know that we have created a special low price payment plan for the retreat. So if you want to be there but you feel like money holds you back a little bit, definitely sign up before May 23rd when that payment plan ends. There will still be a payment plan but we'll be reducing the number of months available as it leads up closer and closer to the retreat. So the 9-month payment plan ends on May 23rd, so that will give you your lowest monthly payment. You can sign up if you want to be there with Gina and Mercedes and Sara Bates and everyone else and myself at the retreat in 2020, sign up at [jenriday.com/retreat](http://jenriday.com/retreat).

Now, my friends, I am so grateful you listen, I want to send you my love, I want to send you strength and positivity and light, and I want to challenge you to be that light for everyone else around you, to listen to your heart, to trust your intuition, to trust good things are coming your way, and to allow that positivity to radiate outward just like Gina and Mercedes talked about in this episode. They are beautiful examples of what is possible when we let go of blaming and choose to own our happiness. Thank you so much for listening, I will see you later this week for a Happy Bit. I will see you again soon, until then, go do something you love, go do some dance walking, and I'll see you soon. Take care.

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