

# Episode 82: Strictly's Janette Manrara on Feeling Good Enough, Imposter Syndrome and the Benefits of a Wiggly Career

**Mandy:** Welcome to Enough, the podcast. I'm your host, Dr Mandy Lehto, ex-investment banker turned executive coach. This is a show for high achievers in fast paced careers whose lives look shiny and successful on the outside, but inside they're secretly tired, wired, and never feel satisfied no matter what they've achieved.

Sound familiar? You want to say enough about the burnout and the constant hustling, but you're also scared to give up your usual formula for success. Expect a mashup of coaching, psychology and a bit of nerdy research, that's me with my PhD hat on. All woven together with compassion and a healthy dose of humour.

Oh, and I always make it radically practical. Janette and I are having coffee in this conversation, so grab a mug of something. Tea, G&T, we don't judge here. I drop you right into the conversation where I'm telling Janette about my first experience with ballroom dancing many moons ago. I'm going to tell you where my love of dance came from. I grew up in the middle of nowhere in Canada, in Northern Ontario with my family. Lots of bears and raccoons. My parents had a farm and they would go to the local school to have ballroom dancing lessons in the evenings.

Somebody came in and they would do ballroom dancing and foxtrot and cha cha cha. So, one of the records that we had at home was Santa Esmeralda's "Another Cha Cha". That was a big thing in our home. My parents were Finnish immigrants so I can't think of anything that we needed more than a little 'fuego' in our lives with Santa Esmeralda.

**Janette:** Oh, Santa Esmeralda is one of the best bands ever. I love that. I grew up with them a lot, too, because my dad loved that song. He always played it. We're very similar, you know, because my parents were immigrants as well so we've got the same kind of journey.

**Mandy:** I thought we have that as a starting point. I'm on a mission to help and empower more people to remember and practise their good enough-ness because there's so many implications if we don't.

I'm thinking of the story at the end of your book with your friend Robin about not knowing our history, our good enough-ness. It's not some sort of fluffy thing, it's actually such a compass in our lives. It's like a Wizard of Oz moment. You realise oh I was here all along. I'm writing a book on this too at the moment and this whole podcast is dedicated to remembering our enough-ness, and often it has to be a practice because we forget.

We fall into comparison, we fall into all sorts of coping mechanisms that we learned - people pleasing, perfectionism, imposter syndrome - all of which make sense in hindsight, but we drag ourselves through life playing much smaller than we could be. These are the people who are listening. Their lives look shiny and successful on the outside, but inside they might be having a very different experience where they might be flagellating themselves like, oh, I'm such an idiot. I'm not good enough. I'll never be good enough. So, there's this constant push-pull tension between all of this on the outside, which looks so impressive and so compelling to other people. But the experience inside is really different. So those are the people who will be listening to our conversation.

**Janette:** Oh my gosh. Well, that sounds like the exact kind of people that should read my book.

**Mandy:** Yeah because I know self love has been a quest for you. Massively.

**Janette:** Yeah. So when you were just talking about the kind of people that we need to try and connect to in this conversation, I feel like that was where I was a couple of years back. Not that long ago, really. It wasn't until I started really doing the work on myself and during COVID times that I really feel like I came out the other side with that kind of internal glow of finally accepting all of it. It was a journey. There were many, many different points in my life where I felt that way, where I felt like I was an imposter or that I wasn't enough or that, you know, this is never going to happen for me.

I felt like giving up on a lot of things. And I think, when I started, like you said so brilliantly, to do the work and kind of implement the changes into my own behaviour towards myself, that was when I felt the magic started happening and things started shifting and changing. And I don't think that ever stops happening.

I'm still learning and developing and discovering parts of myself even now. So that kind of "work" that we do on ourselves, that journey never stops. It just becomes something you don't necessarily have to think about doing anymore once you commit to making it a daily practice.

**Mandy:** So, I invite you to think about where your career started many, many years ago. And if we think about it almost like a movie, and you have a remote control in your hand, you can pause that movie anytime. Let's go back to the beginning, and think about those times where you didn't feel enough and start playing that movie. You're verbally going to talk us through that. So, if we start letting the movie run, where would be the first place you would pause it?

**Janette:** Gosh, I mean, it started way back, way, way back when I was six years old, really, my parents put me in a ballet class.

I mean, I was very little but I can see the inklings of that kind of thing starting to dig in already. Because we didn't have a lot of money growing up, you know, at all. I shared one bedroom with my mom and my dad and my brother, one bedroom with an ensuite bathroom. That's where we lived, basically.

My parents put me in ballet just because I loved putting on shows for them and my aunts and uncles and grandparents, but we didn't have money to buy me a leotard or tights or ballet shoes. So, I remember walking into the ballet class and being in this pink and white polka dot bathing suit with these tiny baby tights and no shoes.

Every other girl in the class had a black leotard with pink tights and pink ballet shoes. And you don't realise at the time, my mom was so good, bless her and my dad trying to make it like, 'oh but you're different. This is going to be fun. You're going to stand out'. But as a child, you see, and you hear more than parents think.

I'm learning that now with my own daughter, I know that money was always an issue. I know that we weren't necessarily the same as other families in the area or where I was taking ballet class. So that was the first kind of instance in my life, which was quite early on where I felt, oh, I don't know if I'm going to be able to do it.

I think I tried to get past it. Then when I was 12, my mom put me again in this TV show called Saul Gigante, which is Giant Saturday translated. It's a big Saturday night variety TV show and that was an upper in my life because I got to be on telly and which means my TV career started when I was 12.

Again, it felt amazing because I was there and it was incredible, but I wasn't the best singer, I wasn't the best ballet dancer because kids there had been dancing since they were three and four years old. I wasn't the best singer because again, those kids have been singing since they were so little.

And I was 12 starting this kind of musical theatre journey. And I was never put at the front of any of the dances in the beginning because I just wasn't good enough to dance, I wasn't good enough to sing, I wasn't good enough to fully act. So I think that was the second point where I would hit pause again and go, I'm not the same, not as good. I didn't start when they started. I only did ballet for six months when I was six, that was it, and then I stopped and didn't do anything again until I was 12 because we just couldn't do it.

So again, at that time in my life, I felt a little bit like, oh okay, well, I'm never going to be in the front. I'm never going to be used as the lead girl for that. I was awful at turning. So, anything that involved turns I couldn't ever do. Then again, you kind of get over it and you carry on and you move forward.

Then the next pause would come in when I turned 18. Obviously I was no longer going to be able to be a part of it because it was a children's program. Only kids could be a part of it. Although I look quite young, when I was 18, I was 18, so I couldn't do it. I started at that point dancing all the time, as much as I could but I was working at a bank full time 9-5. I was studying finance at university so my schedule was really, really tight.

There were some classes that I had to take with children that were much, much younger than me because that was the level of dance that I was kind at, or it was the only class that I could actually take because of my schedule.

Or sometimes I took the super advanced class that maybe was too advanced for me, but it was the only one that worked out. So, again, at that time, it was like, parents laughing at me because I shouldn't be there. I'm too old to be taking class with these kids. Or on the other side, you know, these are the best of the best and I'm in here because it's the only hour that I can take the class so I'm obviously the worst in the class. So it was another kind of like stop in my little film.

Fast forward again to "So you think you can dance?"

I was really excited. I was working in the bank and I thought I'm never going to make it as a dancer because I didn't have a conventional upbringing in dance. I haven't been doing it since I was three, I didn't get accepted to a performing arts school during high school.

I thought this is my only chance to make it as a dancer and I got all the way to the final round of So You Think You Can Dance season four, and I got told no right at the end before getting onto the program. And that was devastating because I was older. I was much more self-aware.

That was the biggest kind of hit, I think, in my career up until that time. Because I thought I'm never going to make it. I'm never going to be a dancer. It's an impossible dream. I'm not good enough.

Again, you know, I can't compare myself to people that have been doing it since they were three years old. And again, I was competing against an 18-year old who'd been dancing since they could walk or in utero.

**Mandy:** They now have dance classes whilst mums are pregnant, right? Like you can be dancing before you're born.

**Janette:** Exactly. So that was really, really tough. But then I came back, got on the show the next year and that was beautiful. I got my mojo back and felt really good. But then I moved to LA and when I moved to LA, I started auditioning and LA is the most ruthless place. You really need to have thick skin and love yourself if you want to survive in that jungle.

Every audition I went to, I made it to the final rounds because I was dancing great but I was too short, or I looked too Latina or I didn't have the right look that they wanted, or it was a typecast for a TV show. So, it was hard because I wasn't American, but I wasn't Cuban enough but then I wasn't tall enough, but then I had a bit of an accent because I grew up on the East coast with a Cuban family.

There were so many angles that I was getting hit with of why I just wasn't good enough for certain things. It was really, really hard to kind of find joy and find love for myself in the midst of so much audition after audition, after audition.

Luckily I ended up getting on Glee and that gave me some glimpse of hope because you know, there, they liked that I looked the way that I looked because they wanted diversity. They wanted short, they wanted tall, they wanted Latina. They wanted a bit of everything. So, I was excited that I got Glee but that was a really scary point in my life for a different reason because the finances started changing.

I wasn't working. I wasn't gigging. I didn't have my full-time job at the bank anymore. So, there was a different kind of nervousness. Then add on the fact that I just kept getting no for every audition that I was going to. Then Burn the Floor came along and I was able to get on Burn the Floor, which was brilliant.

Again, that didn't happen as straightforwardly as people would assume because I auditioned, but I wasn't good enough to dance straight away with the Broadway cast because the Broadway cast were all

professional born Latin champions. And I had not had any proper training in that world. I could do it, but I never competed or had the titles to dance with them.

So they said, we love you and we want to bring on the show, but we don't know how, because you're not necessarily like the rest of the cast. I was like, okay, fine and got devastated because he said we'll let you know and that was right before New Year's Eve.

That New Year's Eve, I was devastated because I thought, here we go. I'm going to have to go back to Miami and get my job at the bank back because I can't sustain a life in LA with no work. I had to pay bills and eat.

Then Burn The Floor came back because the gentleman that won So You Think You Can Dance in Australia was a contemporary dancer and as part of his prize, he got a contract on Burn the Floor. They needed somebody that can dance contemporary, but also do a bit of salsa and Latin. He was quite small. He wasn't as tall as the rest of the boys so they thought, Janette, let's bring her back. So my height was a superpower, because that's why I got the job. And the fact that I danced everything also got me the job.

Then fast forward again to my first year on Strictly Come Dancing. Again, it's the biggest TV show here in the UK when it comes to entertainment. How many ballpark millions of viewers watch this? Well, the year that I danced with Harvey, the last year that I danced as a professional, we had almost 18 million people watching the final.

It's huge. Weekly, we average about 12 million every Saturday night. It's a big TV show. But I got on Strictly and I obviously was super excited, but all these doubts and fears and feelings of not being enough started kicking back in because again, I was competing against people that had been doing Latin since they were three years old and had title after title and I'd never competed in it, you know?

**Mandy:** You are now catapulted onto the world stage. And what I'm hearing from your movie that you're sharing with us so far is there's a lot of ups and downs and ups and downs and ups and downs.

You're still in the process, in that internal tension of having to present a certain way, probably developing a thicker skin, the more we do, we get some kind of immunity from rejection when we experience it again and again. But what I'm hearing you say is there's still a lot of this – I'm presenting a certain way but I'm feeling all the feels on the inside.

Is that fair to say?

**Janette:** Exactly that. Exactly that I obviously wanted to do a good job on my first show on Strictly so I was really putting on a brave face. My husband is a champion Latin and ballroom dancer and when we joined Strictly, I didn't realize it at the time, you know, in hindsight, there were other factors.

You know, I was in the dance-off of the show for four weeks in a row. I mean, literally the first four weeks I ever did on Strictly Come Dancing, every single week, I was in the dance-off. Even more the pressure of why am I not doing well? I'm not good enough to teach, I'm not good enough to choreograph. I'm not good enough for the country, people aren't liking me. Alongside that, my husband was doing so well. He was like the new biggest star of the show. Everyone loved him and Abbey Clancy and the dances that they were doing.

It was really hard because I had to internalise so much to be supportive of him because I wanted him to have a beautiful journey. It was literally one of the toughest times of my life that first year of Strictly. I would say my skin was the thickest it has ever been. And my brave face was the bravest I had ever put on because there was so much going on inside that I just didn't know how to deal with, how to release. How to talk about it without sounding like I'm jealous or envious of my husband's journey, which was not the case. It was just a personal thing that I was going through.

**Mandy:** It's complicated, right? There are so many layers to this because of course, you're supportive, but you're on your journey. Then there's probably layers of inner self talk heaped on top of that. I'm curious, what was it like if we went into the interior of Janette at that time? What would we be seeing and what would we be hearing from your inner critic? In that year, in that first year of Strictly.

**Janette:** I'm quite pragmatic in nature. So, I think all I kept telling myself is, okay, you're not coming back next year. You need to start looking at other work. Like if this is not going to happen again, maybe figure out plans to leave. I thought, this is not going to happen again, they're never going to bring me back, I'm not good enough for the show. Nobody likes me in the UK. I wasn't voted through one week at all. I was making plans to leave, that was the turmoil going within me. Then the heartbreak of that, because obviously Aljaz and I were dating and I wanted to stay here in the UK and be with him, but I was really compartmentalising my emotions and just trying to think pragmatically, what do I need to do? Then all over my social media and my Instagram and everything, obviously telling everybody how happy I was, because who am I to be upset when I've got the best job in the world that a dancer could ask for?

So the guilt of not enjoying it also was a whole other bandwagon of turmoil. It's another mask, right?

**Mandy:** Then there's the guilt and guilt usually rides sidecar with the shame of like, I should be more grateful. I should be happier. You're holding a lot here in this moment.

**Janette:** A lot, a lot. And then Aljaz left to do the Strictly Live tour which happens across January, February, and I wasn't asked to be on it. So, he went off to do it and I stayed on my own in the new country with no friends really. And with all this emotional turmoil going on at the time.

I think the only way that I was able to get out of it at the time was my family. I talked to them daily through FaceTime or zoomed or whatever it was back then.

Then Aljaz and I both went back to do Burn The Floor that summer and I think going back to a space that I knew and I recognized and I felt good in started bringing back that little bit of confidence of I am good enough.

**Mandy:** If you could go back now and say something to all those younger versions of you, what would you want them to know?

**Janette:** I think I would say don't overthink it. It's all going to work out. Just trust the universe, trust the process and remind myself that all those things that I thought were not good enough ended up becoming my superpowers, ended up becoming the things that I loved the most about who I am and what makes me Janette. Not to hide from them, not run from them, because they're me.

**Mandy:** I saw this Instagram clip of Lenny Kravitz being interviewed recently, and it really got me thinking, because Lenny Kravitz has sold something like 40 million albums worldwide, and he's got this list of achievements that's beyond impressive. And he still admits to having moments of wondering what he's doing. Is it enough?

He says that he can still feel like that 16-year old kid who's trying so hard to get a record deal. So, there is no arrival point after which those inner gremlins go away. Not for Janette, not for you, not even for Lenny. It's about recognising those voices when they show up and knowing that they're real, but they're not necessarily true.

Janette mentioned this cognitive strategy that she used during that time of profound uncertainty. Maybe you recognize it. Defensive pessimism. I'm not going to get through, so I better find another plan for my life. It can be a way of managing anxiety and trying to feel in control.

Totally understandable. And I'm curious how pre-deciding that we're not getting something we really want spills over into how we perform in the meantime. This is where it can be so darn helpful to regroup and refocus, whether you're in a dance off, or doing a presentation, or writing a book, or anything else that you deeply care about.

Janette's strategy was threefold. Number one, she sought out support from her family and friends. So, find your tribe in those moments. Let them love on you in those challenging times. Having support like this can remind you of the bigger picture that you are loved and valued, whether you win or not.

Number two, go back to basics when you're feeling shaken. This is a favourite for Janette and there's a reason because it works. What are some of the things that you feel really confident about? It's like going

back into that safety bubble of your comfort zone temporarily when being outside of your comfort zone can feel a little too much.

Number three, trust the process. Day to day, week by week, we're collecting dots and it often takes time to connect those dots. Think of a time when a big disappointment back in the day opened the way for something different, maybe something even better. Remind yourself when you're in the middle of that uncomfortable dot collecting.

Let's drop back into the conversation where Janette's telling us about the two times that come to mind when I asked her when she really felt imposter syndrome.

**Janette:** The first one was actually when I did So You Think You Can Dance? because in order to compete on So You Think You Can Dance? you have to have a specialty dance that you do. You either do contemporary, or you do hip hop, or you do ballet, or you do jazz, or you do tap. I remember when I went to audition at the time, I had just been taking ALL dance classes, because I thought the more I know the better really, because I started so late that I thought I can't, I specialise in any of them because I don't know any of them really properly.

So, I was literally taking hip hop, jazz, ballet, flamenco, Latin so when I got onto So You Think You Can Dance and they asked me, what is your speciality? I didn't know what to say because I thought, can I put Jack of All Trades as my answer?

So I just went to my roots and I thought, well, the style that I've been doing the most is salsa because I've been doing that since I was a child with my family. I'm not an expert salsa dancer either because I have seen expert salsa dancers and I know what they're capable of and the things they can do but in that instance, I had to give an answer so I said, I'm a salsa dancer. The whole time I was thinking, oh my God, all these expert salsa dancers are going to come out and say she doesn't dance salsa, she doesn't even know what the two count is and I was so nervous because again, I thought I was going to be found out. But it was also so kind of liberating because I wasn't an expert in contemporary hip hop, jazz, ballet but whenever all those other styles came, all those choreographers were like, you can really do this.

And I thought, I can because I've studied it. I've learned it. And then salsa never ended up being a dance I had to do on So You Think You Can Dance?. But I mean, at the time, I wasn't in my head an expert, but I have been doing it traditionally with my family at every party anyway, but I didn't see that.

I was just thinking, I'm gonna be found out. Every salsa dancer in the whole country is gonna come chasing me saying she's lying, she's lying, she's not an expert. So that was the first one and then I don't think I ever really got over that. I think now I probably am over it, but that fear of what people would assume was there for a long time of me saying that I was a salsa dancer

Then fast forward to my first year on Strictly.

I mean I think, because it was so public, I was so public. Strictly Come Dancing is a whole other level here in the UK. It was all eyes on you and everybody's watching and everybody judges, not just the four judges being sat behind the desk, I thought, my God, and everybody knew, that was the weird thing.

Everybody knew I wasn't born a Latin dancer. There was a really funny moment. I can laugh about it now, but at the time, I remember thinking, oh my gosh, they had all the female pros at the time lined up and the celebrities would come out. And Tess would say, so Julian, is your partner going to be three times Latin American champion from Australia, Natalie Lowe, or is going to be five time European champion, Christina Renoff, naming all these titles.

Then it got to me. And it was, international superstar of stage and television and I just thought, oh god. It wasn't a secret that I didn't have these titles but for some reason because I was the only one that didn't have them, I felt this huge sense of imposter syndrome because I thought, how am I here? I don't belong here. No-one's going to believe me when I teach a cha cha. No one's going to believe me when I do a waltz. They're all going to look at me and laugh and think, who is she? Why is she on this show?

**Mandy:** And in some ways you revert to the six year old in the swimming costume again.

**Janette:** Yeah. Oh, and then, you know, add that other layer of it's the biggest TV show on telly. You can't show you're not happy because you need to be grateful to be on that show. Then the other layer of my husband doing so well, and I wanted him to do well, and we choreographed everything together, all of his routines with Abby and all of my routines with Julian. It was a team effort. We did it together. So, him doing well, in a way, it was both of us doing well, but me not doing well was just me not doing well, you know, it was just my own thing. And it was really hard. Those were the two biggest moments that I had huge imposter syndrome.

**Mandy:** What came up for me as you were talking, it reminds me of the work of Adam Grant, who has written this fabulous book called Hidden Potential and there's something that he calls the overblown implications effect. That when we fail at something, we're not perceived in a certain way, there's this overblown effect. 'So and so is the Triple champion' and then they come to you, and I mean that title is still very impressive and it's unique, but we overlook the things that are our unique gifts by side-eyeing everywhere like, what is the majority and I don't fit in.

This is a favourite coaching question. What are you listening for? When we're in imposter syndrome, we're often listening for confirmation that we don't fit in, that we are not enough. And you know what, Janette, we'll always find it. We will. Yeah. I did. You did. It's learning how to actually start to turn that around, which is where I want to go now. What I'm hearing you say is you have built emotional capacity to be on that roller coaster of emotions. And you talk about it in the book, you beautifully outline how you were on a quest to love yourself. And you were "looking for love in all the wrong places", right? External validation, trying to fit in.

Actually, when we try to fit in, we never belong. And it sounds like freedom came for you when you were building your emotional range and building that capacity to hold yourself steady through the roller coaster and the public scrutiny. Also through this being in the work and there's a phrase, wiggly career.

I love this. It says so much about having tried a little of this and a little bit of that and a little bit of this. I have had a wiggly career too. I also worked in finance, I worked in banking after being a super creative kid, and then did PhD in history, and then ending up working for an investment bank.

Then I just thought, I don't belong here. There's a journalist who writes about this. He's just written a book called Range. David Epstein. He talks about how it can be such an advantage.

They did a study at Harvard called the dark horse. The dark horse looked at all of these individuals who had been incredibly successful, then they ended up saying, oh, well, don't tell people to do what I did, because I started and did a little of this and then I pivoted a year and I did that and then I pivoted. Actually the Eureka moment in there is that so much of what ultimately ended up making those 'dark horses' successful was the fact that they had had a wiggly career and that they had a little bit of experience from so many places.

They had feasted at the buffet of life. A little of this, a little of that, a little of this, a little of that brings such a unique perspective. So when you're talking about oh you are actually good at contemporary, oh you can choreograph this and that - you have feasted at the dance buffet of life.

There's something actually really powerful about understanding that you're not this multi-platinum salsa dancer or ballroom or what have you. You're something totally unique.

**Janette:** Yeah, the lemons and bananas chapter is my favourite chapter. It's exactly what you're saying. I've heard of the term skill stacking and I've fallen in love with it because it's exactly that. It's this wiggly career mentality that people assume that you need to be put into one box and just do the one thing but I have found when I look back and thought - okay, so I've taken religious analysis, I've studied psychology, I've studied business calculus, I've done business managing, I've done marketing, I've done flamenco, I've done point, I've done acting and singing.

In what universe or how does all of that come together? Now in hindsight, with I think a better knowledge of me, I realised all those things equivalent to Janette and why now I dance, I choreograph, I present, I host, I write books because the combination of those things create this, like you said, wiggly career that I'm super proud of.

I'm happy that every day is a new adventure. I like doing different things and I don't think we do it enough as adults. When we're children, we wiggly play. One day we're here, one day we're there, and the other day we're on this planet, and then tomorrow we're in a jungle but we lose that as adults.

I feel like if we can channel that childlike curiosity into adulthood, I think that people would be a lot more fulfilled just by dabbling in things just because it makes them feel a certain way. I think eventually, things that you do for the love of it end up being fruitful because of the magic of the universe. I feel if you put things out there and do things with your heart and with your soul in the right place with the right intention, there is no way that the universe is not going to give back to you to some extent for doing that.

**Mandy:** I was listening to a podcast episode with author and psychotherapist Emma Reed Terrell who was talking about the three reasons that someone's imposter syndrome might get inflamed. Number one, you're more visible. So thinking of Janette, that is a big check mark. She's suddenly on the world stage with millions of people watching.

Number two, there's novelty. You're doing something new and unfamiliar. Definitely another check mark for Janette. First season of Strictly, yep, that counts.

Number three, you're in a minority. So, Janette being announced as "international superstar of stage and television" with no dazzling dance credentials like her peers had, that's another tick mark.

Visibility, novelty, minority. That explains a lot about the imposter syndrome she was feeling. I did a whole episode on imposter syndrome, which is number 64 on the show. And I refer to the work of Dr. Gerald Weinstein, who says that all self-limiting behaviours, like imposter syndrome, are there to protect us from what he calls the crusher.

A core belief that we have about ourselves, like, I don't belong here, or I'm not good enough. And these crushers are lies, by the way. So, refill your mug, and let's get back to Janette and find out how she made peace with her imposter syndrome.

**Janette:** Well, I would say for me, it's so simple, but just taking a moment to just stop and breathe because I think our thoughts can spiral. And if you immediately start going, oh no, I shouldn't be here, I'm not good enough, they're all going to notice. It starts growing and growing and growing and growing and growing on the inside so stopping and taking a breath for a moment and literally telling your mind to stop. I'm not gonna sit. I'm not talking anymore I'm just gonna breathe and focus on my breathing. It stops those thoughts from spiralling out of control very quickly, which I have experienced firsthand many times in my life.

Then the second thing is, for me personally, something that is vital in the world that we live in right now. It's this Ebbinghaus illusion where we have very bad reference points of comparison for ourselves. So, take a real serious look at who you are actually comparing yourself to. Why is that person better or more deserving or enough in comparison to you? Because I love Jennifer Lopez. She's one of my icons, but Jennifer Lopez's life - she has seven houses, five cars, you know, travels, and there's no way I could ever try and be her and emulate her. If you try and do that, you're going to live a life of, oh my gosh, I'm going to be called out, I'm not JLo. Of course I'm not JLo. I'm Janette. So I think paying real close attention to what your reference points are for that specific imposter feeling or feeling of not enough.

I think thirdly I would say go back to the basics, go back to the things that do make you feel good. The things that you do that you absolutely feel confident in, not necessarily just love to do, but that you feel confident in doing.

And that could be as simple as, I know I can clean this house like nobody else can clean this house. Just go back to doing simple things that make you feel confident about who you are and in a space of safety. From there you start stemming slowly further out and slowly further out and then you start realising it doesn't

matter what so and so is doing and it doesn't matter what so and so thinks because ultimately you're happy in your space and you're good enough in your own space

So, I mean those three for me would be the most important three to do easily and practically. I still do those daily, you know, if I feel all of a sudden that something's making me feel a certain way, I really stop and take a breath and reflect on what is it about that? And then I go, yeah, but I'm good at this.

**Mandy:** One thing that I'll throw one thing in the mix, one thing that I've been practising is thinking about what's the one habit that's getting in the way of me being really present and me being really grounded right now.

Often, it's over thinking or ruminating or comparing. You start to see patterns when you hold yourself with compassionate questioning and curiosity. So, going back to that question I asked earlier, what am I listening for? When I'm comparing myself, what am I listening for? Well, I'm actually listening for evidence to make me feel worse.

I'm now at a choice point. Is that serving me in this moment? Get outside, move your butt, get some fresh air, or sit on the meditation cushion, make yourself a cup of tea or force yourself to open your gratitude journal. There's so much evidence for this stuff. And I love that you write about gratitude. It can feel a bit old hat, the old whole idea of gratitude.

**Janette:** Yeah I said that in the book. It gets thrown around so easily these days, but there is so much truth to it. In gratitude. I just think when you are in that really intense kind of imposter feeling, not good enough feeling, gratitude can be so tough to grasp because all you're doing is negative, negative, negative, negative.

Having gratitude even just for, you know, I don't know, the cup of coffee that I'm drinking right now. We take it for granted the roof we have over our heads. Thank God I have this house. I have this chair that I can sit in and I can have a chat with you. It really starts by nailing you back down to the ground and making you feel ever more excited about the life that you are already leading. It's just tough. I think sometimes for all of us, when we are that deep down in the rabbit hole of negative self-talk that you know, sometimes it can get lost, but it is one of the most powerful tools we have.

I call it the great multiplier. The name of the chapter is the great multiplier because the more that I found that I practise gratitude in my life and mindfulness, not just gratitude, both together I felt the more I started getting back. The more things I found to be grateful for, the more I started enjoying things in a different way because I was in the moment, present, just enjoying the shower in the morning and feeling the water on my back.

You know, little things like waking up and opening the blinds. And even if it's raining, I don't care. It's beautiful. We get to have this day.

**Mandy:** We get to have this day. Yeah, we forget that. I think what it's doing, even at a narrow neuroscience level, I'm reading a lot about this at the moment is we're hardwired for negativity.

This is how we have learned to survive and why our ancestors didn't become some crunchy protein snack back in the day. We are hardwired for negativity. We're constantly scanning for threats. By doing a gratitude practice, as old hat and trite as it may sound and people might roll their eyes, but it's actually training the brain to think about what I'm going to write about in my journal today.

We're gathering data points like, oh, that's such a beautiful piece of cake that I had with my coffee, oh that's going in my gratitude journal tonight. So, we're training ourselves to not just be wired to look for negatives. I love that point about gratitude. Let's finish two more things.

What do you hope that people will get out of devouring this book?

**Janette:** The biggest takeaway for me that I hope people get from the book is literally what you talk about in this podcast is that every single one of us is enough exactly as we are. Of course, there's things you want to work on and you want to develop or you want to explore about yourself but that inner light that we

all have is so powerful and it just gets dimmed with everyday nonsense and this negative self-talk and the outer validation that we're constantly seeking.

It just gets dimmed down, but it's still in there. It's still in there and it's not too late to try and bring that light out. I keep comparing it to, you know, like peeling layers of an onion, you know, you just peel one bit of yourself more and more and more and then you start discovering, wow, you are phenomenal.

You're wondrous. It's inside. You just didn't let yourself see it.

**Mandy:** So that's why there's so many tears involved. It's peeling the onion. I get it now.

**Janette:** Yeah exactly. I've got a theory, you know, it might be childlike, but I think it's good to channel childlike thoughts. I think if you want to change the world, it starts by changing yourself.

Because if you can change who you are and make yourself a better person, that is going to slowly start extending to the people around you. Because then the way you behave towards other people changes as well. You become a kinder person, more forgiving, more accepting, more understanding.

You learn to listen more and lead less with fear and more with an open heart. And then hopefully, little by little, one by one, we can maybe someday create a world that's just a little bit nicer to live in.

**Mandy:** A key finding in my work is that enough-ness is a practice like yoga or meditation or even piano. You practise it again and again and again. Of course, we're already whole and marvellous, but we forget. So hence the conscious repetitive practice. Think of it like doing scales. When Janette has those really human moments, a practice she turns to is to stop. That always slows down those negative thought spirals. Another practice, she pays attention to who the reference points are when she's comparing herself. Are those reference points fair or accurate? Are they serving her? Practice number three, she gets back to simple basic things that she's good at, which build her confidence.

See, that's like doing scales, right? Go back to basics. Even if that's as simple as cleaning your house. Another one, this thing that I'm dwelling on is a fault or a flaw or a shortcoming. How can I not only accept this but maybe start to celebrate it. This, after all, is part of what makes me, me. There's a short poem by Alex Klingberg that I love - fall in love with the contradictions of yourself.

I ask every guest to leave a brick of wisdom, a parting gift that they wanna leave just for you. And here's what Janette said.

**Janette:** I think it's one of my favourite quotes ever. And I would say, to err is human, but to forgive is divine. And forgiveness for the self is crucial. In that journey of feeling like you are enough, feeling like your love for yourself can be stronger, can be better. Remind yourself that the ability to forgive is a divine thing and if you are able to forgive yourself, that divinity of your soul can be hugely lit.

**Mandy:** Thank you. Is there anything that you wish I would have asked you but didn't? This has been amazing. This was so much fun. I was channelling my Santa Esmeralda, so, thank you.

**Janette:** No, thank you

**Mandy:** All of Janette's info, including her Instagram handle and her book details are in the show notes. I think you're going to love *Tiny Dancer Big World*. It's one of those books that you can open at any random page and read for five minutes and get an insight. So, who came to mind as you were listening to our conversation today?

This podcast has grown to be a top 2 percent show by the generous shares of amazing human beings like you and I'm so darn grateful. So, thank you so much in advance for sharing this with someone who needs it. As a little extra bonus for those of you who are still listening, I don't want it to be over either, here is a final insight from Jannette. I will see you in two weeks.

**Janette:** For me, dance is like the flow state. I enter a complete flow state when I'm dancing. The world literally stops. I'm not Janette. I'm not anything. I'm the music. I'm that moment. I'm that step. I'm that breath.

I'm that extension of my arm. I'm so lost in it. And I almost feel like when I finish dancing, I come back to earth. It sounds a bit bizarre to some people that hear me say that, but that is genuinely the feeling that I get when I'm dancing. When I talk about my own inner light, I find personally that when I'm dancing, that is when it is shining the brightest because I am so consumed with my feeling, my heart, my soul, my own little light that nothing else in the world exists but that light.

It's the most wonderful feeling in the world. And I do think, I genuinely do think for me it's dance but I do think that every single person can get to that. There is something that you can do and you just need to put the time and effort in to try and find what that is. But every single one of us has something that we can do in our life that gets us to that flow state, to that feeling of complete euphoria and disconnection from the world.