

Enough Episode 94: My Body Quit and My Identity Panicked with Jo Rodriguez

Mandy: What happens when your body says no more, but your identity is built on pushing through for high achievers, there's often a hidden equation running in the background. If I do more, I am more. If I achieve more, I'm worth more. But what if that strategy suddenly stops working? What if your body literally refuses to keep up with the life and sense of self that you've built?

That is exactly what happened to today's guest psychologist Joe Rodriguez. Joe was a behind the scenes expert on TV shows, a fiercely fit athlete, someone who relished being called a machine, and then one day her heart forced her to stop. It took months for Joe to get a diagnosis, and as her heart nearly doubled in size, her identity was shriveling and falling apart.

If you are a doer, whoever had a forced pause, you'll know that the instinct is to double down an effort, harder to get back to the old you the one who could do it all right? But when the body truly says no, there's a reckoning involved and it's often not pretty. You do not play a game of chicken with your own heart.

So if the answers aren't in efforting and pushing through, where are they? We go there in this conversation, into that discombobulating transition, that liminal space when the old self is no longer available, but the new one isn't quite there yet. Can you ever feel enough or happy or worthy again without your super achiever mode?

Jo shares the surprising shift after watching a YouTube video of all things that gave her a deep sense of peace and started a new chapter for her. Before we dive in, welcome. I'm your host, Dr. Mandy Leto, and in every episode of Enough the podcast, I'm in discussion with a guest whose life looks shiny and successful on the outside.

But in spite of their stellar achievements, they still never feel good enough. We dig into what's going on underneath the impressive surface, to the raw, real, humbling, and very human moments, and we often have a laugh too. So let's get into it with Joe Rodriguez.

Jo: I was somebody who thrived doing, and I. I loved it. I got a huge buzz from pushing, driving the amount of times I've been called a machine, a rocket, all of these things that I really loved pushing my babies. Twin babies, no, not twin babies, but in the twin carriage, you know, running reps around nine mile runs and people going, wow.

And you know, and. Working behind the scenes on their grill shoots and like really extreme things and pushing myself and really thriving on the fact that I could do it and other people couldn't. And you know, I had this ability to override anything and just push myself further and further. I. I would do it and I would do it with fear, and I would do it probably with a sense of not enoughness and huge imposter syndrome, but I would do it.

And I kept pushing, you know, I, I loved running and I was a marathon runner, and I would train up to 10 times a week as well as holding down a full-time job. I remember I did it at the same time as working at university and doing a diploma and training 10 times a week for a marathon, and I would get.

Niggles along the way, and I would get hints that my body wasn't happy, but I would find another way around it. So I would make an adaptation so that I could keep pushing. And I loved it. You know, it was who I was. I thought I got so much joy from it. It makes me quite emotional talking about it. 'cause I still am quite

sad about the fact that I can't do a lot of it. But it changed. Tell us what changed, what happened?

I'd say five years ago, uh, I was marathon training and I just got, ill, sorry.

I just got what I thought was a virus and um, uh, I had these weird chest pains. Um, and again, I just thought. It's just a virus. It's nothing. Keep pushing. I kept marathon training through it and I was ill for about a month and it was, it was just like a fever, but I, I didn't feel good, but I thought, you know, it, everybody's ill.

It was just coming into COVID, so it was like, um, 2019, like November time. So there were loads of people getting ill so like probably looking back now, it was with COVID, like that kind of thing. Um, but I had this awful cough for two weeks. But anyway, that was the start of me slowing down. So what happened after that was three months later I got the same again.

Six weeks later I got the same again, and every time I got it, I got more intense chest pains. Um, so I would go to the doctors and they would say, you're fine. Maybe you have anxiety. There's nothing to worry about. And I was thinking, I don't really feel like this is, I, I know what anxiety is. I know it's definitely not anxiety, but I started to feel like, I don't think this is normal, but I don't really know what it is.

And then I. It was a year into COVID. I kept getting these illnesses and I was getting more and more poorly each time, but I couldn't actually get any help because it was COVID and because I had a fever. Every time I got these awful illnesses, I couldn't get seen by anybody even though I had chest pain.

So I would see a doctor and the doctor would say, well, you can come, but we can't see you because you have a fever until you have a COVID test. And they couldn't get COVID test. But then what would happen is by the time I had the COVID test, my symptoms were gone. So then I'd go back to the GP and they'd say.

You're fine again. So I went through this. Sort of cycle for about a year and a half, and then in a year, a year and a half later, actually it was a friend of mine whose wife was a gp. He said, look, you really need to get this sorted out. Go and see my wife. And I went to see her and straight away she said, it sounds like you have something called.

Either pericarditis or myocarditis, which was a lining of my heart, kept getting inflamed with these viruses. Um, which was why I had such intense chest pain. And it was just, the symptoms were awful, awful, awful. And over that time, you know, I, I did try and keep pushing in between, you know, I'd get, get well, I'd push.

I'd get, ill, I'd stop, I'd get, well, I'd push and, and I just went through this pattern. Even when I had the diagnosis of pericarditis, I kept going through this pattern. I couldn't find a way to be if I wasn't pushing. And then about two years ago that, that changed.

Mandy: What happened two years ago,

Jo: I think I gave up pushing.

I felt I, I, I recognized I couldn't keep. Living in this pattern, I started to really get afraid for my health and my future. And I didn't wanna compromise my ability to be a mom. I started to think about my kids, you know, what would happen? What happens if it gets worse, what happens? I like, the worst thing, I think is thinking that I, I don't want them to grow up without a mum and, um. I realized I had to stop pushing.

Mandy: That's a really challenging place to be where it sounds like you were at a crossroads, that you had come to a place where you realized you had to take this seriously, and yet you're a con, a commitment to continue pushing because that's who you believe you are. I wanna go in that place for a moment before.

We explore what happened at that big turning point where you started to think about your kids. 'cause that can be such a profoundly lonely place. And I had my own version of that with debilitating burnout and feeling like. It's a death of sorts, like feeling like this part of me, I don't know how to get it back.

I've tried to push and my body's pushing back and I don't know if this resonates with you, but I went through almost an anger with my body and feeling like it had let me down because it wasn't ponying up. That sense of aliveness and achievement and what it was that I so desperately needed it to do for me in that moment.

It was a very different type of relationship that I had with my physical self, and I remember so profoundly, one of the first insights that I remember having, or one of the first real. I don't even know, experiences. Maybe that's the way to define it. Coming back from the gp, having been told several times, you're fine, your tests are fine.

And then I'm thinking, oh, it's just me. I'll just, you know, more cardio, more coffee, more whatever. Yeah, more pushing. Yeah. But then realizing that this is going to take more than taking a weekend off and eating some spirulina tablets and doing a couple of yoga classes, like all of a sudden. Life gets very real, and then understanding that a big shift is going to be required, that's actually going to profoundly impact who I think I am. And that feeling of anger towards my body and that feeling of resentment that ended up tipping over into a profound howl

Jo: Yeah.

Mandy: Of grief.

Jo: Yeah.

Mandy: Yeah, you are. Yeah. Tell us more.

Jo: That hugely resonates. I think I went through something really similar where I definitely went through a period where I, I did feel angry with my body.

I did feel like it had let me down. I felt so deeply upset that I couldn't be the person that I thought I was or that I thought I wanted to be, and there was huge frustration. And I remember like crying to my husband about it and just because I felt let down and I thought, you know, I've done all of these things.

Yes, I've pushed, but I've also been super healthy and I've done this and I've done this, and you know, why are you treating me like this kind of thing.

And then, yeah, all the stages of grief. And loss for, for the, for the body. I thought I had, for the person I thought I was, for the life I thought I wanted, that I wouldn't have, it's a, a huge change.

Mandy: What did that grief sound like in your head? And I'm thinking about those private thoughts that you've never said out loud.

One of the reasons I create this podcast is because I remember feeling trapped in my own body and. When I started this show, I thought for those brave individuals who are willing to come and have these conversations, if this resonates with somebody listening, that they don't have to feel alone in that way.

That's why I'm willing to go myself and to hold somebody as they're willing to share their experience. What, what were some of those private thoughts that you had when you were in the grief? Things that maybe you've never said out loud before.

Jo: I think when I was really in it, I probably, you know, sometimes it's hard to connect with those parts of yourself, isn't it? I think looking back,

I think I probably hated the body that I had before I'd gotten to a place of acceptance. I think I had those really dark thoughts of if I. If I can't live that kind of life, then do I even wanna be here? And I, I knew that I did want to be here. I couldn't think, but you know, sometimes when the pain is so deep and you feel so sad, you have those, I just don't want to experience this pain anymore.

It's that kind of feeling. And also I don't, I don't know who I am. Like who? Who am I if I can't do these things? And will people still like me? Will people still want to be around me? Am I still worthwhile if I can't do all of these things that I've always thought made me me? Which is crazy when you think about it.

'cause that's what I say to all of my clients, but you just don't relate it to yourself. Until you have to experience it.

Mandy: What did you miss the most when you were in that time? Was it the admiration, the validation, the Like, what was it that felt like such a profound loss

Jo: on a surface level? I think my brain wants to say it was just the feeling of, I did actually get so much joy from the feeling of pushing myself.

It just gave this really deep sense that I would just like breathe in and it felt like I was breathing in light. It just was so, so joyous. I think in hindsight now looking at it, I think it was partly the experience of, of the doing, but also partly the, I could feel when people looked at me with that admiration and I felt like that's, that had gone.

Sometimes I still do feel like that that's gone.

Mandy: I feel you. And I think there's something about being in that period, I call it the drying out period. That's what I called it for myself of like weaning myself off of being the achiever and the doer. That, for me anyway, it was a time when some deep beliefs about myself cracked open.

Yeah. And it sounds like that was happening for you too. Yeah, about myself and about life. In general and who we are and why we're here. So when you were in that time, how would you characterize that time? Like I, I call it like a time of grief for me and it's, I don't want to use that language if it doesn't resonate, but how would you characterize that time?

What language would you use?

Jo: I would say for me, I was grieving, but I would see it more as a, it was a huge transition. It was where I felt like inner, my inner sense of self completely changed. Yeah.

Mandy: And I think it's, so for me anyway, it was like wanting to look for answers in all the familiar places. Like if I just eat well enough, if I just follow the regime well enough with my functional medicine person, like then, then I will get back to the old me.

So there was a period of time of clinging on. Thinking if I just followed the protocol with perfection, I would, the prize would be coming back. And I think there's also a place where we don't wanna look for answers. So what was the place you did not wanna look?

Jo: I didn't wanna have to stop. I didn't wanna have to change who I was or what I was doing.

I wanted to be able to keep, I wanted someone to give me something that would fix the problem so that I could keep being the person that I wanted to be. I didn't wanna have to look inwards and stop. At all.

Mandy: Yeah. There's something about the looking inwards, and I kind of knew in my heart of hearts that I had to look there.

Jo: Mm-hmm.

Mandy: But I'm gonna whistle in the dark as long as I possibly can. I'm gonna keep Googling, keep searching. There's gotta be a cure, surely. So your heart almost doubled in size and you had to face your mortality, so you had to look within. Take us there.

Jo: So I think that came, it took a long time, I think three years of these symptoms just not getting any better. And if, and if anything, over time they were getting worse, they were getting more intense, more painful, and. It was when I, it was actually when I got hospitalized. It was about, I'd say, so that I got hospital. I was hospitalized about a year and a half ago, and I think it was about six months before that that the change started to happen.

And it actually happened through the looking, still through the searching for I, instead of searching for a cure, I started to search for how to help my body. To recover. How can I, you know, because I knew that stress was an element. I wasn't, you know, silly enough to, to think that it, there wasn't an element of internal stress that was creating this problem or making it worse.

And it was through the searching of trying to release that, that I then started to go through quite big transitions and quite big changes. And I think it started when. When I started really deeply meditating and really getting into that, which is something I've always dabbled with, but not to the depths I did it.

Um, and then I think it's something that really shifted when I was in hospital and when I was in hospital thinking. I would, I, I don't wanna die and I would give anything to walk a step pain free. And if that means I never have to run again, then. I, I was like promising to whoever. I promise I'll never run again. if I could just get better.

Mandy: So what I'm hearing is there's kind of a. Surrender. Yeah. Even if it's not necessarily a candlelit path, there may have been some thrashing and some resentment. Oh yeah, lots. But it moves away from being body. I hate you and I'm angry with you to an acceptance. And I think when we hear the word acceptance, it can.

Feel like quite a sanitized, spiritual word. And that was not my experience of, of acceptance. And it doesn't sound like it was yours either. What? What did that mean for you?

Jo: It was, for me, it was acceptance that something has to change. I have to change, I have to start listening. I have to start slowing down.

I have to, I have to learn to really like myself and I. Who I was, if I am not this person. I felt that,

Mandy: and there, I don't know about you, but there was a big, big gulf in between acceptance, which felt riddled with even more grief. Mm-hmm. Because that was the point where it really felt like the death of an identity. Yeah. And the death of a certain future. It's like a sliding doors moment. Closing. Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

And, uh, a feeling that this will never be what this, as in whatever I'm left with, will never be as good as what is now no longer accessible to me. So that acceptance. Did not for me anyway, feel joyous, soothing, peace inducing. It felt like a bottoming out and it was like a, as I said, a deep howl of grief.

Jo: Yeah. Does that resonate for you? Yeah, a hundred percent. A hundred percent. I didn't, I, you know, I was accepting with reluctance. I didn't wanna accept it. I wanted to have the life that I used to have.

Mandy: You said in, when you and I were talking about getting on this podcast and having this conversation, you said one of the things that helped you to start turning a corner was EFT.

Tell us a little bit about that, or anything else that started to move you out from the howl of grief that this, this life that you were left with, that there was some hope in this and some possibility?

Jo: Yeah. EFT for me was really transformative. It was just so, when I say EFT, I mean emotional freedom technique, the tapping technique, because I hadn't come across it before and I was just looking for different ways to try and release emotion or connect to, you know, connect to feelings and talking about it just wasn't enough. It wasn't really doing it for me and. Like I mentioned earlier, like meditation had had been really, really helpful, but I don't think I would've been able to do the meditation if I hadn't done the EFT tapping.

'cause the tapping really, it just released something in me. It was so strange. It was like as soon as I started practicing the EFT and tapping on the things that I felt deeply sad about, that I couldn't, that like the, the sadness that I felt the, you know, just. How I saw myself and my worth or you know, my likability and all the, and tapping with it.

It was like my body was just letting go of all of this energy and I just really quickly started to have this, like, I'm not saying it was easy, I didn't make exceptions any easier, but I just started to have this really deep sense of inner peace. That's the only way I can describe it. And I remember saying to my friend at the time, I was like, it's so strange.

I just feel that I've got this sense of inner peace, even though I've had the most awful time, even though I've, I'm so stressed. And actually this was before I went to hospital 'cause I was tapping in the hospital. I remember it and I remember tapping, thinking, please. So I still wasn't there with it, but it just helped me hugely to.

Get movement internally, maybe be able to see things differently, be able to start to shift in my way of being. And it really helped my ability to meditate. 'cause before that I did have, my mind was always so busy. And

when you have a busy mind, you know, it's really hard to meditate and. But the EFT tapping just meant that I could sit and meditate for like 40 minutes, which was just crazy.

Definitely not something that I would've ever, ever, ever been able to even contemplate in the past, and I could do it. And I found it really strange that I could do these things, and it was through tapping.

Mandy: So for somebody who doesn't understand what EFT is, could you. Could you just give somebody an example of what that, I mean, obviously you need to go and have a proper session with a practitioner, but just for somebody who's never heard of it.

Yeah. What is it?

Jo: Yeah, so emotional freedom technique, so it is tapping on certain, well, they're meridian points, but the new research around DFT is showing that it's potentially linked to the endocrine system. So it's been around for a long time. And, um, linked to more, um, meridians and Chinese medicine where you tap on certain points of the body.

So you tap on your inner eyebrow, your outer eyebrow. Under your eye, under your nose, under your lips, your collarbone, under your arm, and on top of your head. And what the research is showing is that tapping on these points whilst saying what is actually distressing to you or the emotion that you are feeling, what it does is it helps to send, it sends a message to the amygdala and calms the amygdala down, which is your emotion center.

So it kind of helps the body to release the emotion. So. Release the emotion attached with the difficult feeling. So for me, I would, you know, the first time I did it, I think I just tapped on the fact that I felt really upset in my body. I think I found a YouTube video on it and I was like, I'll try whatever.

And I tried it and I was like, well that was weird. 'cause I definitely feel different. I thought, is it my imagination? Like, have I just like placebo myself? But I, you know, I kept doing it and things started to really shift. It was like it was releasing the layers. I am so sorry. Tapping. EFT. Tapping is tap.

You tap on the side of your hand and you do what's called a setup statement where you're saying to your brain, this is the thing. So I dunno, even though I feel really anxious in my body right now, 'cause I'm doing a podcast with Mandy, I accept myself. And you do that three times and then you tap on and you say out loud the emotions.

So this anxiety, this anxiety, and you do several rounds and then you shift through. The states that you're feeling and you don't. It's not about positive reinforcement. You say the difficult feelings, but eventually you get to a place where you notice you feel differently, and then you tap on the fact that you notice a shift.

So I feel calmer right now where I notice my heart rate slowing down and that kind of reinforces to the body, or we're safe now. We don't need to worry about these things. So I'm curious

Mandy: what shifted for you when. You were in this process of realizing you're never going back. 'cause that's, I think the real, there's probably a few false surrenders and then there's like a real, which sounds like what happened for you when you were in the hospital, that this is now real and I'm doing a real surrender and I'm experimenting with some of these interventions like meditation and EFT, and.

I'm seeing some sort of relief. Something is possible. I'm not in the howl of that grief anymore. So what shifted emotionally, somatically, and spiritually, maybe when you stopped trying to get back to who you were?

Jo: I think what shifted was that I started. I think that's really when the feeling of enoughness started to actually come in. Do you know, I think that was the moment when letting go is like, get, dropping this resistance, dropping this fight, and then actually the fear of who will I be if I'm not? This person doesn't really have a place and you realize, oh, actually maybe I'm okay without all of these things. Maybe I am likable just for being me. You know, I don't have to do these things.

I don't have to do anything outstanding. I can just be me, and that's enough. And I think that really came actually through fear, if I'm honest. There was a lot of fear involved, like I was really afraid. That I wasn't gonna make it, even though nobody told me that I wasn't gonna make it. Nobody also told me that I was.

Everybody was just saying, we don't know what's wrong. We don't know why you are not getting better. We don't know why your heart is so big. You know? And I had so many blood tests and CT scans and X-rays and everyone was just going, yeah, you're really poorly, but we dunno why. You know? So I think. I don't think I was close to death when I look back at it, but I think I felt really scared that I might be, and I think in that you have to let go of all of those things that you think you are, because what happens if this is it?

Mandy: You told me once that you used to be really afraid of death, and then you said something shifted in this experience that was linked to your enoughness.

Jo: I mean, don't get me wrong, of course I still have fear around death and dying, but not in the same way that I used to. Not in the same, it just used to create so much anxiety for me.

Like, what, what happens if I, I think when you go through something like this, when you go through an experience where your sense of self completely changes. It does something to it. It just changes you completely and maybe getting to a place where you think, God, this is so awful. I don't, I dunno how much longer I can go on like, this makes you feel Not less afraid.

It's less afraid. I don't, it's a, it's a really hard thing to describe. It's really hard to, to put it into words, you know, I, I was. Doing lots of spiritual things. You know, I was so curious about spirituality when I was in the hospital and I was listening to podcasts after podcast about, and I found that really comforting for me as, 'cause I'm not a religious person, I don't have a religion, but I just found it really comforting to have to be actually thinking about death and dying more, rather than trying to avoid it and be afraid of it, but to really look at it head on and think well.

What is it? You know, it's gonna happen, it's inevitable, and I can either live my life being afraid of it or I can get curious with it. And I think with that, actually there was a shift in sense of enoughness because you know, what you learn is that doesn't matter what you do, we're actually all the same, you know, we're all part of the same thread.

So what I achieve doesn't make me who I am. I'm no better, no worse than anyone else, no matter what I'm doing.

Mandy: Yeah, and I think there's something about the shift, this softening or whatever we wanna call it that. At the beginning, you were holding on so tightly, and I feel you because I've been there too, that my worth, my identity, my sense of self, my importance in the world, my trajectory, my future, everything is determined by holding on to my ability to do and push and achieve impressive things.

And if we fast forward a little bit to where you are now, how do you define. Enoughness for you now in this body, in this life.

Jo: Oh, it's probably gonna sound really corny, isn't it? I think it's just we love music.

Mandy: Give it to us, baby. Give it to us.

Jo: For me, I think it's just being kind, it's just compassion.

You know? It's, I think I, I actually did this meditation once and it was really. It was really strange. I did this meditation and I felt like the tears were just streaming down my face, and I just had this really deep sense of enoughness, and I wasn't even meditating on it. I think it was just a, it was a body, it was a body scan or it was something really simple that I was doing, but I just had this glowing sense of enoughness, and I think what it was was just the recognition that just being is enough. Like just. Don't be an asshole. It's enough. It's all the things that I say to my clients all the time, just giving someone five minutes of your day just having patience with your kids. It's just being able to appreciate the sky, those moments that that's enough. And it's so hard to believe when you're accustomed to chasing peak states.

A hundred percent. A hundred percent. And I know that former me would've been like, oh, listening to me now. A hundred percent. I know. I, I had conversations with my husband and I was like, oh God, you know, this colleague said this about compassion. And it was so cringe, like, honestly, and, and I'm like, wow, I really didn't get it.

You know? I really didn't get it. They were just. Mentally further ahead than I was. I think, whereas now I'm like, I am that, if not more, because it's, it's not cringe when you really think about it. When you, when you really experience it and when you've really gone through it, you realize that actually those things, the ability to just have compassion for yourself, other people, that's enough.

Mandy: Okay. I wanna you spill the T on something because, oh, nice. I suspect that the high achiever is, it's a bit like a cold sore virus. It's still in your system somewhere. Oh, yes. Yeah. Yes. So. When you feel yourself returning to that place of slipping back into the old way, the pushing, the proving, the hustling.

How do you stop yourself from tipping over? If you do, and sometimes you probably still do. Tip over.

Jo: Yeah. Sometimes I get it right. Keep it right, keep it right for us. Yeah. Sometimes I get it right. Sometimes I all up. You know, I, I had a relapse, um, I think not long after I spoke to you last and I was like, I haven't relapsed for nine months.

I'm doing so amazing. And then what I found myself doing was staying up late. I. Working, you know, working on some, writing my brain, I couldn't switch off. My sleep was affected and then I crashed. I had a. I've done it again. You know, I've just, when will you learn brain, but, but I do actually also recognize more often than I used to.

And for me it's, I, I notice that I just, I'm, my, my brain is switched on more. I can't switch my brain off. I'm sleeping too much. I'm, I'm chasing, I'm fine. I'm chasing again, I'm, I'm sort of thrill seeking. I'm doing things to get. That high feeling that like buzz. 'cause it is still a nice feeling, right? It's not like, yeah, it's not like it's a, it's a horrible feeling.

It's like a, it, it's addictive in a way. It's like the, the better I get the, the more I slip back. But I do notice more often, I do crash less often and I do get far more joy from doing less so. I'd say, what do I notice if I'm slipping, if I'm. Falling. It's that I'm chasing, I'm chasing something. I'm chasing a buzz.

I'm chasing productivity. I'm chasing an outcome.

Mandy: So for someone who's listening and they feel like they're losing themselves, maybe it's an autoimmune situation. Whatever it might be. What would you say to them on rebuilding a new identity that's not based on performance or being impressive?

Jo: It's a tough one, isn't it? Sometimes you can't say something to anyone.

They have to just go through it. They have to almost get to that place where. The change happens and it's an internal shift. I think if anyone had said it to me, I dunno if I would've got there until I actually was in a place of readiness. But I think I would say at some point it is possible to change.

It is possible to get to that place and when you're there, I hope there's someone there to support you through it. Because actually when you're on the other side, life feels so much. Better in a different way. It's not that it's, it's not that don't miss the old life, but it's so much calmer. There's so much, there is so much joy to be had in nothing when you slow down enough to see it.

Mandy: What's something you've recently said enough to and been better for it?

Jo: Saying no to plans that I don't wanna do, saying no. To people if I don't wanna do something and it's something that I still find quite hard to do, but I found that A, I have to, and B, when I do, I feel so much better for it. Right?

Recognizing that actually I don't like doing stuff all the time. I like, I like just chilling at home on the weekends. I don't have to be doing something to feel good. That's actually probably quite a big one, saying no.

Mandy: What if doing less isn't failing? What if it's finally catching up with yourself? Jo's story is a wake up call. When your body says enough, it's not just about rest, it's about reckoning. Who are you without the gold stars? The packed calendar, the proving. I love the simplicity of what we all kind of know in our heart of hearts.

I would think it's about kindness and compassion, especially to ourselves. And here's a truth we don't hear often enough. You don't need to hit rock bottom to change. You can listen to the whispers before they turn into sirens. You're allowed to pivot before life wraps your arm around your back, and you have to say, uncle, so this episode stirred something in you.

Share it with those friends who are holding on by their fingernails. And before you go back to your day, please hit the follow button because I've got some great episodes in the hopper in the coming weeks and months. All of Joe Rodriguez's details are in the show notes. You can also find her and her hilarious page on Instagram under straightforward psychology.

If this episode was a fortune cookie, here is what the little note inside reads. You don't need to earn your worth. You just need to stop outsourcing it. See you next time.