

## Ep #017: Shattered Confidence to Saved by her Soul



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Rosie Aiello

## **Ep #017: Shattered Confidence to Saved by her Soul**

Her birth father was suspected of molesting her when she was a baby so her mother left him. Her second father was a violent drunk, but her third father showed her unconditional love from the age of 5.

Overcoming abusive relationships is a journey. Our guest today started with therapy during adolescence. Yet there was one key strategy she did that changed everything and opened her to recovery.

Hi, I'm Rosie Aiello and welcome to the Vulnerable to Valuable Podcast. We talk about moving forward after experiencing narcissistic, controlling, demeaning and abusive relationships. If you've been in one of those like me, you KNOW what I'm talking about. You are not alone. You've been through some painful stuff ... shame, blame, that inner bully inside you. My mission is to lift and inspire you ... give you the ways you can reclaim your voice and value, your confidence, and the courage to BE the new empowered you.

Today coming up in the podcast, our guest Kerri Hummingbird, gets vulnerable about her childhood and adult relationships and her road to becoming a new person more in tune with herself. What will you learn from Kerri today?

We're going to talk with Kerri Hummingbird in a moment, and first a mini masterclass ...

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In this episode, I'll be discussing Freedom Fulfillment Pillar #10, Unhealthy and Healthy Relationship characteristics.

When you're growing up, the model for your relationships will be based on those who raised you—parents, single parent, grandparents, other relatives or other circumstances like being in foster care.

Your little tiny innocent mind will be picking up cues on relationship dynamics and storing them in your memory bank. You'll pull out later from that memory as you enter adolescence, begin dating, and enter into more serious intimate partner relationships. All of that thinking will not be conscious though.

You won't know why you picked out the guy you picked out. You'll just think it's because you liked him, but that will be the least of it.

I've had clients who had great loving, kind and mutually respectful parents, and yet they ended up in a severely abusive relationship.

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So what went sideways there? She should have been able to find someone just like her mom did.

But your circumstances were different from your parents. You're a different human being, and we're not quite that simple.

What is important is how you processed the information not simply what you saw and experienced.

So if you processed the information that you have to be sweet and nice –then that's going to be the lens you'll look through.

Unknowingly you'll be setting yourself up for being taken advantage of, for not speaking up when something is bothering you, and for people-pleasing. Why? Because the lesson you took away was that being nice was the most important value.

It wasn't your fault!

There's nothing wrong with you.

We just need to get you to be aware of the thoughts you're having, and re-orient beliefs you have about yourself.

Your thoughts are what create your feelings.

And it's always our feelings that are going to be the catalyst for any action we take.

Likewise, if you grew up in a household where you were demeaned, controlled and threatened, as much as that sounds horrible and it is, your little mind may not have judged it as bad. Your little mind may have processed that as "that's just the way it is." You may have transferred their words to create a belief about yourself. I am bad. I am wrong. I am stupid. I am horrible.

This thinking and these beliefs are completely out of your consciousness.

Don't freak out. I can help you. But one step at a time.

Because those thoughts are not in your consciousness, you end up with someone who demeans, belittles and threatens you—because for some weird, bizarre reason it just seems comfortable.

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It is comfortable because your little mind knows it. The mind does not judge. It just is. And it likes what it knows. It feeds on comfort, but not comfort as you define it, comfort for the brain is something that it has experienced enough that it is a known. The brain doesn't like new things. So if you wonder why you can get or keep the guy, or why you keep repeating patterns of the guys you're with, or why you keep sabotaging good relationships. That's why.

Your brain doesn't like it when someone treats you with true kindness. You react with suspicion. You have a hard time accepting it.

I know that was my case. I didn't know what kindness felt like after I left my 25 year abusive relationship.

AND That's why changing your thoughts and beliefs can be challenging because your brain is fighting with you.

Crazy right?

But the reality is that you get mixed up, and confused. And you blame yourself. My oh my this is not going the way you wanted it to. Your brain is telling you this is normal and known, your body is screaming at you I don't like it.

It's trying to send you all kinds of messages that this is not a healthy relationship.

Okay what to do?

The first key is to realize that what healthy and unhealthy characteristics are before you get into a new relationship, or to check if the one you're in has healthy characteristics.

Be sure to go to the show notes and pick up your free copy of Healthy and Unhealthy Relationship Characteristics.

The first step is always awareness.

If you try to bandaide a problem, it doesn't make the problem go away.

What do I mean by bandaideing? Well, instead of looking deep within yourself, you look to the outside.

You blame the other person.

You get a new hairdo.

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You get a new outfit.

You change dating sites.

These poor relationships will resurface later with someone else, in coach, in technician, in a lawyer. In anyone until you've made that journey.

Looking within does not mean something is wrong with you.

It means that there is growth you haven't yet discovered.

You've grown to your physical height, but growing internally is a life long journey, if you're open to it. I invite you to be open to it because this is where your Freedom truly lies.

And when you discover the real you, you'll then be able to create that healthy relationship you desire.

You deserve to be treated with kindness and that starts by being kind to yourself.

I can help you. After my divorce, I was bouncing from one relationship to another not truly knowing what I wanted and deserved until I created the Freedom Fulfillment Pillars. And that was an eye-opener.

Grab my special gift for you—a checklist of healthy and unhealthy relationship characteristics. I wish I had this BEFORE I was ever married! Go to the episode 17 on VulnerabletoValuable.com to get your copy now.

Contact me if any of this lesson resonates. Make sure to listen to Episode #1 where I outline my Freedom journey to be 100% me and finding the love of my life.

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The only way to move forward and create an impact in your life is to know where you're at, where you want to go and what's holding you back. Get started by taking the Freedom Fulfillment quiz. In 4 short minutes, you'll discover where you are, where you want to be, and what you'll need to do. If you are serious about evolving into a new empowered you, who can show up as the confident woman she once was, or wants to be then start now. Your life is waiting for you.

Go to: [FreedomFulfillmentQuiz.com](https://www.FreedomFulfillmentQuiz.com)

Today we're going to meet Kerri Hummingbird Soul Guide, inspires people to lead their lives wide awake with an authenticity, passion and purpose that positively impacts others. She

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catalyzes mind-shifts that transform life challenges into gifts of wisdom with her Reinvent Yourself programs. She is an award-winning best-selling author, social activist, philanthropist and host of the podcast, Soul Nectar show. Her unique approach will take you to new heights to guide you to grow, transform and become the woman you yearn to be.

Kerri Hummingbird will be here in a moment and first ...

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Thank you for downloading the Vulnerable to Valuable Podcast produced by the Love is Kind Network. We're just starting out, Please subscribe. Every 5 star review on iTunes and every share will help our mission to impact 100 M women worldwide who have lost their voice, value and authenticity in narcissistic, controlling and abusive relationships. Will you help us achieve that goal?

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Now to Kerri Hummingbird, your Soul Guide...

Let's go from Vulnerable to Valuable with Kerri.

**Rosie Aiello:** Welcome, Kerri Hummingbird. I am so thrilled you are here.

**Kerri Hummingbird:** I'm so glad to be here, Rosie. Thank you so much for inviting me on to talk about this important topic.

**Rosie:** It is an important topic, and I want to make sure that women who are listening to this really understand that they are not alone. Maybe you can take us into a little bit of the history of your childhood, when you were growing up, and then what led to your marriage and how long you stayed in that.

**Kerri:** Yeah, absolutely. So, I had three dads between zero and five, and the third one stuck. And he was a wonderful father for me. I was very, very, very lucky to have such a great dad from five until he passed away a couple of years ago. He really taught me that love is possible. He taught me about unconditional love because the experience before that was convoluted, right?

So, I had my original father, my natural father, I was with him for the first year and a half of my life, somewhere around there. And then my mom was concerned that he would be molesting me. It's the story that she shared with me, that she was concerned that he'd had some very difficult

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things in his past with his mother and some sexual abuse and childhood abuse from his mother. And so he was sort of maybe not the best option for being a parent without having gone through all his deep healing process, which he had not at that point. So, that was pretty tumultuous.

And then she married a man who seemed really, really nice, really supportive, and it turned out to be a violent drunk once we got with him. And that was the first five years of my life. And then we moved with that person up to New England from Texas. And that's where I met my dad on the steps of our apartment building. And then my dad, shortly after that, left my mom, and my mom had been trying to figure out how to leave this guy. Then things happen.

So, I always assumed that my trauma and my psychological, emotional dysregulation and all of these things that I was getting were coming from that zero to five. And I definitely think that's true. I know that's true. But there was another component of it. It wasn't just the masculine energies, which were a significant component, right?

**Rosie:** Yes.

**Kerri:** There's violence and all this stuff happening. It was also the fact that my mom really had a very traumatic relationship with her own mother and she had some traumatic things happen early in her life that she never really quite resolved. And that led to her sharing those patterns with me unwittingly, right?

**Rosie:** Yes.

**Kerri:** We all become a mom and then we think we're going to do the best job we can possibly do. And then all of our wounds and all the things we haven't healed yet end up being the things that we infect our kids with and pass it on.

**Rosie:** Yes. That's so difficult. But I can hear in your voice the compassion that you have for your dads and your mother as you're talking, and it just shows how far you have come in your healing. And maybe somebody who's listening and say, "There's no way I can ever, Kerrie or Rosie, to have that compassion."

**Kerri:** You can.

**Rosie:** But as you do the deep work, you can. So, how has your mother treated you that made you, I don't know, have some challenges as far as how you're perceiving your life?

**Kerri:** Well, I don't know if anybody else has experienced this, but there's this thing that happens between mothers and daughters anyway sometimes where... especially, and this could

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just be my idea or projection, but I feel like in Southern culture, sometimes this might even be a little bit more prevalent. It's kind of like the inability to speak up by many women or the inability to feel powerful sort of tends to result in wanting to squash other women to not want those women to be more powerful than you or want them to shine more than you or want them to have more attention from the man in the family. There's also that weird dynamic. There's a lot of weird little dynamics between mothers and daughters that can get stirred up.

I've had lots of clients come to me with this. This kind of stuff is hard to admit. It's uncomfortable. It's strange. And yet there it is. It's like I never really felt like my mom was my cheerleader. She didn't come to my soccer games and she didn't... It almost seemed like begrudgingly acknowledge something I did that was good, right? But then more like, it just kind of expected. And then it was kind of more like, anytime I would say something, then it would be interpreted in a bad way and then I would get punished, right? So, my tone of voice or my inflection I learned early on, I had to be super mindful about how I expressed myself and the tone I used in order to express myself because it could be misinterpreted, misconstrued and lead to punishment if I wasn't careful about how I use my tone of voice in my communication.

**Rosie:** You were always on... It's like walking on the eggshells, right?

**Kerri:** Yes, absolutely. Walking on eggshells.

**Rosie:** What am I going to do so my mom doesn't come after me and put me down and punish me? There's that constant fear that you live with.

**Kerri:** And like the barbs at the back of the head where I can tell, like I got to the place where I could feel the energy coming. I knew when she was going to smack me because I could feel the whack coming. It was like the energy of the anger was preceded the hand. So, I got really good at sensing like, "Oh, I'm going to get it now," or if I... It's funny because my dad was so unconditionally loving that on the one hand, I would feel emboldened to express myself. But then on the other hand, I would get the punishment. It'd be like I would be overstepping some kind of line with my mom that was invisible, that I didn't really even know what that line existed or why it was there, and it was never predictable about what that line was exactly that would make her react that way, but she would just snap. There's a lot of yelling that would happen.

I don't remember the words that were said. It wasn't really so much about the words that were being said, but it was more about the volume of anger that would come out, like a purging stream of anger that I was very sensitive to or I could feel. I just learned how to just be present with it while holding myself on the inside because there's no way to stop this rage purge. So, there's nothing to do to stop it. It's going to happen and it runs its course and then you have to just be patient until it runs out of steam.

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**Rosie:** And of course, it has nothing to do with you.

**Kerri:** No.

**Rosie:** And that's where the disconnect is. But as a child, it's hard to understand. You just know that whatever you're doing, and part of the pattern of narcissism and abuse is that they're creating situations where you're always living in uncertainty that creates its own fear of being in uncertainty, which we are experiencing now. And it's difficult to digest and figure out what the right steps are because you don't even know that this is what abuse looks like.

**Kerri:** I didn't know. I thought it was normal. But some part of me knew it was it because I remember when I had my children. I started going to psychotherapy when I was 15 because I tried to commit suicide. It was a very half-hearted attempt. But anyway, I did make an attempt. It was a cry for help. I went to start seeing a psychiatrist because that's what you did back in the day. I'm 50, so that was a while ago. You actually had an expert talk to you instead of prescribing you a pill. They actually in-depth psychoanalyzed you with you. So, actually, my journey began with that.

I would say when I had my kids, by the time I had my kids, because of that, I'd been going to psychotherapy for so long that I was really aware that as things were arising from me with my children, I was like, whoa. I had postpartum depression. I went into a big darkness because all of that old stuff got triggered from my childhood when I had my children.

**Rosie:** Yes. It comes up in different ways when we haven't resolved it. now you're seeing through your children, you start to see it. So, they're triggering you. They may not be doing anything. They're just being children. But for you, you have a different perception, a different interpretation of that.

**Kerri:** Yeah. And my oldest son, he had a lot of crying. He cried a lot. He cried almost the entire first year without stopping. He had a few breaths in between.

**Rosie:** Let's get real with stuff. He may be colicky or whatever. But, you know?

**Kerri:** Yeah, he was very colicky. It was so painful. I look at it now. I know that he's a very highly sensitive being and he's very perceptive. He's extremely psychic. And I know that now that he's almost 21. But I look at that now and I say, "Oh, you poor thing. You came into the toxic mix of me and my ancestry that needed healing, and you burst in through me unresolved traumas. And of course, you were crying when you came out because it's painful, all the things that I experienced." And it's painful being part of this lineage of... which has beautiful gifts. I

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want to say my ancestry - beautiful gifts, hard workers, really good solid gifts. And I can embrace those gifts now because I've resolved my traumas. And that's when I really want to make the point. It's so hard at first. This is a journey to this, right? There's a journey.

**Rosie:** Always a journey, a never-ending journey. Feeling something new, but that's okay. It's a journey.

**Kerri:** It's a cycle. And you had to go through the phases. You can't spiritually bypass it. Otherwise, you're not really healing it. So, there is a phase that's necessary to go through that's like, you're just angry with that person for doing that to you. There's just huge anger and resentment and fear and all of those things. And grief is another phase of that. Just grief, and also disbelief. Disbelief is a huge phase. It's like, "I can't believe. No, that can't be true. This person's supposed to love me. This can't be true that they would treat me this way." So, there's all of these phases, and we have to let ourselves immerse in each phase, knowing that it's a phase. That's the conscious part.

**Rosie:** And your husband, how was he in the relationship and part of maybe contributing to the--

**Kerri:** Well, I feel like I married my mom.

**Rosie:** It was familiar. At what point in your relationship did you start to put it together that this was not a healthy relationship?

**Kerri:** He wasn't like my mom in the sense that he didn't yell at me. He didn't do that. It was a more muted version. It was more just constant criticism, constant poking and nagging and derailing and undermining my confidence just at every turn. But because of my dad and that influence, that strong influence he had in my life, that unconditional love, that support, I was always willing to take risks. I was always willing to put myself out there. So, I was an entrepreneur from the time... I think I had a couple of corporate jobs and then I switched into being an entrepreneur because I was like, "I can make this happen. I can do this." So, there's a part of me that really felt capable and to get out there and try things. Usually, when you're an entrepreneur, it's really great to have a spouse that lovingly supports you and is compassionate whenever you have a failure.

**Rosie:** Yes, very nice.

**Kerri:** Because that happens a lot as an entrepreneur. You have these mini failures. You have these mini moments. There's so many moments when you're running your own business where you feel like, "I don't think I can do this," or "I'm going to fail," or whatever. You need compassion and support at home.

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**Rosie:** Yes. That's huge.

**Kerri:** And I believe in you. And I know you can do it. You're so smart. You're going to figure out the way.

**Rosie:** Absolutely. And was he that way for you?

**Kerri:** No.

**Rosie:** Okay.

**Kerri:** No. Because he had all this fear, I would question it. I'd be like, "Why is he so unsupportive and why does he always criticize?" And I think it was just because of his own fear. His own insecurity with my level of risk was really... He was a child of wounding himself. He was a child of an alcoholic. So, he didn't have a very stable ground. I mean, he used to often tell me, "I make my decisions by doing the opposite of whatever I think my parents would've done. I just do the opposite and then I end up in a good space."

**Rosie:** Whether it's good or not.

**Kerri:** Yeah.

**Rosie:** Right. So again, he hadn't found his way. So, you've learned a lot. This is really clear through just how you're expressing yourself.

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The only way to move forward and have an impact in your life is to get awareness of where you're at, and discover what's holding you back. Following the 11 Pillars I was then able to develop strategies to create my business, become an international award-winning entrepreneur, speaker, and author, find the love of my life and I use these pillars every day to create a fulfilled life. These are the same ones that I use with my clients. And now they are yours free. Go to [VulnerabletoValuable.com](https://VulnerabletoValuable.com) and subscribe.

And we're back with Kerri Hummingbird, Soul Guide.

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**Rosie:** So, there was one thing I do want to address is, what was the impact of all of this to you? You lost your confidence. You didn't feel good enough. You felt like a fraud. You were feeling like shame. These are some of the big ones that most women I find that I work with have.

**Kerri:** Yeah. It's really confidence. The biggest impact is confidence because, in order to be successful in life, you've got to have confidence on the inside and you've got to be able to accept your flaws and learn the lessons of the mistakes that you make in order to garner that wisdom that then you step in as a wise woman. The world needs wise women right now in a big way. We need the wisdom of women. But in order to get there, we've got to go through this part of facing ourselves and separating out other people's points of view and other people's influence so that inside of our own bubble, we can be knowing our truth and not needing validation from anybody out there. That's so key.

**Rosie:** It's very key. I remember even from the very beginning when my daughter and I escaped and everybody was either against us or like how come you stayed so long kind of attitude. And I just kept telling her and myself, of course, is that we know the truth. So, that was like level number one of knowing the truth and holding onto the truth no matter what anybody on the outside was saying. I said, "You and I, we lived it. Inside those four walls, we're the only ones who know it." But then you progressed to, okay, now it's about the transformation with you and really knowing that you have value.

**Kerri:** And trusting yourself.

**Rosie:** Trust is very difficult because, oh, I married that man. How could I have been so stupid? It's another common thing - "I'm so stupid." But you weren't stupid. You didn't know. Nobody in their right mind knowingly would go into an abusive relationship or narcissistic or controlling or demeaning relationship. Nobody.

**Kerri:** Yeah. And the patterns, because I've looked at this so much like six ways to Sunday. I see that I think that the level of awareness of the person who would be labeled as a narcissist is very small. So, if you're not aware of yourself and your impact, then you can keep doing behaviors that are very hurtful to other people because you just don't have the awareness or you don't bring yourself to the awareness that you're doing it. So, that's a strategy actually. That's a strategy for avoiding taking personal responsibility is to keep your focus intentionally diminished so that you don't have to become aware of the impact that what you're doing is making in the world.

**Rosie:** True. And that comes out in real life as blaming, blaming the other person, turning it around and making you responsible. This is how it manifests and how it looks. Did you have any

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health issues? Most women I've spoken to who've been in these relationships have had major health issues in some form or another. I've had my share.

**Kerri:** Well, I mostly had a mental and emotional impact to the fact that I kept going to weekly psychotherapy sessions, and it wasn't really addressing the trauma underneath the story. And so I was still acting out and doing... Because this is the thing, it's like you get so much pressure on you that then you act out from the pressure. And then they turn around and say, "See, that's why you're to blame." So, it's like this vicious cycle of somebody's poking at all your buttons, every button, poke, poke, poke, poke, poke. Then you explode. And then they sit back and they say, "See, look how rational this person is." And then it's all on you.

**Rosie:** That's all on you. The big aha with my therapist was when she told me it's normal. You are normal to react, just like you're describing, to react that way to an abnormal situation, that's not a normal situation. So, your reaction was normal. I go, "Oh, I'm normal?"

**Kerri:** Yeah. And I would say that my behavior was understandable because my self-worth was trashed at the end of 20 years, and trashed not only by the dynamics in my marriage but by the fact that we had moved closer to my parents by then. And so the last, I would say five years, six years of our marriage was in close proximity to my mom. So, I had a double whammy, like my mom and my ex-husband both criticizing and poking and poking and poking and poking. And I was not in my strongest self at that point. I was very self-critical, very self-judgmental. And I was really adopting a persona of like the arm candy, the husband's arm candy kind of thing, even though I'm a Smith college graduate. I'm a smart person. I went to a really good school.

**Rosie:** Well, that seems to be the pattern - smart.

**Kerri:** It's like a Stepford wife.

**Rosie:** Yeah. I think it's challenging me. If they're poking holes at you all the time and putting you down, you're going to just start taking those in. And hearing those thoughts after you hear them over and over, you'd adopt whether you want to or not that belief. And of course, you're going to start to blame and self-judgment and putting yourself down. Did you have any other medical health issues, physical problems that popped out? You said it's like you're a pressure cooker and it starts to pop out.

**Kerri:** It does pop out. My soul stepped in and said, "Hey, enough is enough." And I got a very powerful message. I got this vision, like my eyes were open and I saw this ship's rope in my hand and then it popped off. And then I heard that's the end of the rope, and I was like, "Oh." And I knew exactly what it meant. It's like we're out of here. Like, we're moving into another phase of the journey and this is done. And I left.

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About eight months later, I found out that I had a cyst on my right ovary that was like the size of a Texas grapefruit. It was huge. They actually had to drain it in order to remove it. And I called it my marriage cyst. So, I knew that it was coming. I knew that it was going to come out. And so I got some Reiki done and I had the Reiki person put all of the trauma from that marriage into the cyst so that then they could just take it out. So, in the recovery room after my surgery, I was so happy. I was flying happy. The nurses were like, "Nobody is ever happy like this in the recovery room. What is wrong with you? What's going on?" And I said, "No, I want to thank you. You just took 20 years of a difficult marriage out of my body in one swoop. Thank you." They just took it out.

**Rosie:** Exactly, and like a new path to freedom.

**Kerri:** Yeah, the path to freedom. I just expelled it from my body. And that wasn't the end of it, I have to say, because that was the end of the hugely toxic part of that connection and that energy from the 20 years in the marriage. But then there has been a period of nine years now of personal healing, reflection, trying to understand the process. I wrote a book called *From We to Me* that's really in-depth, went through the whole marriage and scrutinized in this process of extricating myself from a codependent relationship with somebody that was very critical and not my best ally, and really finding my own truth. That book was 2015. And since then, there's been huge lessons. We're now in 2020.

**Rosie:** It's so good. So, share with us maybe, I don't know, one, two or three steps that were really instrumental on your path to healing, knowing that it's probably not the end, but just some key things that maybe our listener can just take away and say, "Oh, I haven't tried that," or "I never thought of it that way." You're so powerful in how you present your thoughts. I would love to hear that.

**Kerri:** Well, I think that one thing that I did that there was a purpose to it. I was very self-loathing near the last few years of my marriage. I got out there in the world and other people saw me as beautiful and as having worth.

Getting into community outside of the relationship that supports you in some way and really putting your foot down about it. Like, if you feel the call to be part of a spiritual group or a church or a group of women, even a book club, like any other group of people that has some sense about them that you can become a part of that group as an anchor point for you to feel like somebody values me. So, to give yourself that so that then you can be more brave with building up your confidence again and then making a bigger move to claim for yourself a transformation. And so I saw the end of the rope. I knew that was a mattress for my soul. I had not been working

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full time for years, right? But I said, "I honor that." I know that I need to do that. In my heart, I knew I was not going to survive if I stayed. I would take my own life.

So, I left and I trusted. I did the groundwork. I took half of the money out the day before. I just took that action, "That's mine. And I'm taking that." And then I moved out. It was a shock to him, but the way that I did it kept me safe. And that was the most important thing.

**Rosie:** It is very important to keep yourself safe. A common strategy with narcissist abusers is that it's isolating. They isolate you in many ways when they put you down, so you just start to self-isolate. And then they make it difficult for you to see your friends and your families. So, as you were explaining the whole idea to get into a community, because they start to reframe your reality, right? They reframe your reality, so you just start to believe that's what reality is. That's what it is.

But then you start to go out and talk to people, which they sometimes have a challenge. And maybe now we're in such a good way of having this online world, you can't physically go to be able to go online to a Facebook group - I have a Facebook group. You have one - to go into those communities and express yourself because what I found to be true is, once you express yourself, you're so afraid, there are people there just pouring into you the kindness and love to support you. And then you're going to go, "Oh wow. I'm not crazy."

**Kerri:** Yeah. That's exactly what happened for me is that, as I started to interact with... As soon as I left that relationship and I started signing up for spiritual programs and yoga and things like that and then training, I started lifting myself into higher and higher levels of love.

**Rosie:** Yes.

**Kerri:** And I learned from my teachers and I kept seeking new teachers and new experiences. And I think that's key too, is to keep expanding your experiences. Keep going outside the box of what you normally would have gone for. Because with this pattern, it's fear-based, right? Everything is about contraction. It's all about contracting in to avoid risk. And in order to heal this in yourself, you must expand out to open to new possibilities. You must expand out to open your brain back out of the little tunnel that it got you in, that you're no good and dah, dah, dah, out into a whole new way of perceiving.

When you first do that, you're pretty negative because you just spent all this time in a negative relationship. There's a lot of negative energy. You've created it and soaked it up and being a co-creator of that with your partner. And so you just need to realize that at first, you need a really compassionate community that can see you for the light that you are and allow you to slough off

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all the layers of negativity that you've soaked into your energy field so that you can come out the other side and expand the love back.

**Rosie:** That's so beautifully said. Maybe some of them are not quite at the level of your energy field, but I get that because I felt like I was in a pinball just bouncing around. As I was getting spun around and you'd never get out the other end. So, it was just constant confusion, but at the same time trying everything. But it's not clear when you first get out. But after this journey, you've done your significant amount of journey. I've done a significant amount of journey, and what a beautiful life it can be, what an amazing life you can have when you know your own truth. You know who you are. You know your own value. Even though maybe you don't know it every single day because it's normal to doubt yourself, but you know you're not being put down by anybody else. You put yourself down, hopefully, a little bit less hate.

**Kerri:** Yeah. And you were talking about people who maybe have a hard time accessing the information about energy. Another way to tell is about the... are you trying to tell the story with all the details just in order exactly the way it happened? Because that pattern right there is exactly this. It's because you're being attacked and you're trying to make sense and keep your sanity by keeping track of all the little details. And then this happened and then that happened and then this happened and then that happened. I know this is how it happened because this is how it happened. That's trauma behavior. That's PTSD. So, that's your trauma that you're witnessing. Because when you get to this place on the other side of all that where I'm standing, I don't need all that story anymore because I'm safe, because I made myself a safe world.

**Rosie:** You created a safe world. And that's when you start to see your journey of healing. The trauma will always be there, but the trigger that would have set it off, whatever it was, is now less and less. Maybe the first time, you just spun out and cried on your bed for a week. And then now, it's like you take a breath, you look at it, turn your head and it's okay. That shows how you've healed over time. And our listener can get there if they're not there now. And they can find kind love if they're not there now. There are good men out there.

**Kerri:** Yeah. And it's my eventual goal. This is what I've been working for. I didn't know anything about energy healing either. But then when I had my own spiritual healing, I was different after. I thought, "Wow, that's cool." So, I decided I will learn how to do that. So, that's what I've been doing the last nine years. I have been any place I find trigger, like with my ex-husband or my mom or somebody like that, I would just do work on it. I will do either get a session with somebody or do my own personal ritual or work around it to get neutral because to me, the greatest power that I can have as a person is that the people that trigger me the most can be doing exactly what they're doing and I can be witnessing them with compassion and not be affected by it. And they can be who they are and I can just be, "Well, I'm watching you do what

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you're doing," but not be affected by it, be okay inside of me. That is the greatest power. That's what I'm going for.

**Rosie:** Yeah, to be able to not take that emotional energy and not take on their emotions.

**Kerri:** Not take it personally.

**Rosie:** Not take it personally. So, not take on their emotions, not take on their beliefs, not take on their thoughts. They are who they are. You're not here to change them. You can't change anybody but yourself, your thoughts, your beliefs, your feelings, and let them be who they are. You can choose to see them or not see them. But as you were saying, the more you can get with nontoxic people, get people who are supportive, who can give you some ideas, and we both have, and I hear it through your story, how much you got support from the outside. This is not work that can be done by yourselves unless you do a little bit because you've learned some skills, but even then--

**Kerri:** No, you need community. You need a mentor and community to do this work. It is profoundly confusing because of the gaslighting. Because of gaslighting and not knowing what the truth is anymore, because this competing reality comes in is telling you and forcing you into this one point of view and you're like, "I don't think that's right." And that's why people do the little story trail where they're like, "But then this happened. And then this happened. And then I know that this happened." It's because the gaslighting comes in and tries to erase that whole thing and say it's not true.

**Rosie:** Right. Where they twist your words, they twist the reality.

**Kerri:** Yeah.

**Rosie:** You didn't say that. No, that's not how it was. And you're thinking, what?

**Kerri:** Pretty sure I experienced that. And then you start to doubt your own sanity like--

**Rosie:** Right. You'll be wearing a red shirt and they'll tell you it's blue. You're looking at your shirt and you're saying, "Well, it's really red." And they're going, "No, it's blue." And by the end, you think it's blue. I mean, that's an example of gaslighting. You feel crazy.

**Kerri:** Yeah. Quite simple. And then when you have a diagnosis on top of that, that's what I had. And that gets really challenging. But the way through that for me was to embrace it. So, my mom told me at one point, "You're making this all up."

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**Rosie:** Yes. That's--

**Kerri:** I looked at her--

**Rosie:** That's classic.

**Kerri:** "You're making this all up." I used to get so offended by that and really angry. And then finally one day, this light bulb went off. I looked at her and I said, "You're right. I'm making it all up because I'm a conscious co-creator and I'm the creator of my reality and I can make up whatever reality is suitable for me. So, you're right. I am making it all up and it's getting me some pretty good results. My life is good. My husband is wonderful. I attracted a beautiful partner to the law of attraction. I've got a wonderful business. I'm helpful to people. I have Soul Guide. I have these books and number one international bestseller. Yeah, I am making it all up and it's working out really well."

**Rosie:** Reframe in reality.

**Kerri:** Yeah. Talk about how you use your skill and reframe it for myself.

**Rosie:** But it's so important really to get back to who you are and knowing who you are and all the journey that it took to get there.

**Kerri:** And honoring yourself rather than beating yourself up like--

**Rosie:** And I think this is a challenge for women. Like you said, "I'm smart. I went to..." What was it? Smith?

**Kerri:** I went to Smith. Yeah.

**Rosie:** Yeah. You went to Smith College. I went to Berkeley. I think women who've gone to these universities and think "smart", it's like, "How could I have gotten myself into this mess?" That phrase. And then there's all this shame and the self-blame and everything else. And even if they got out of it, it's still in their heads that they were the cause of it because the abuser, the narcissist makes sure, he makes you think you're the cause of it.

**Kerri:** Yeah. It's an unfortunate thing. I think that confidence thing, getting back to confidence, it undermines your confidence and it is a bit narcissistic in itself because I was raised by somebody who had difficult things in childhood, some trauma, difficult relationship with her own mother, pass those patterns onto me, right?

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**Rosie:** Right.

**Kerri:** I had to dismantle those patterns because they also are inside me. So, that was the really rude awakening.

I try to avoid so many conflicts because I didn't want to deal with it and I was afraid of conflict. And so then I had to face that in myself too and go, "No. Okay." Then if I don't want to receive that pattern that I have to not have that pattern, which means I need to be honest, and if there's something that arises I'm uncomfortable with, to not be afraid of punishment but because I'm safe to go and face that thing and confront it and speak my truth.

**Rosie:** Absolutely. And exactly on that last word - speak my truth - because then, that's only when you can step into being your true authentic self. Because if you're not your authentic self, you've gotten back into playing small.

**Kerri:** Or playing in somebody else's reality, which--

**Rosie:** Someone else's reality. It's like their needs, their wishes, their whatever are more important than yours. And so then you just kind of get buried behind everybody else's requests. It's like, "Well, where did I go? My values are not as equally important."

**Kerri:** And that's important. I have to really, with my new partner, I have to look and go, "Okay, am I being mindful of him? Am I listening? Am I being supportive? Or am I being kind of just all wrapped up in myself and not concerned?" These are things I still face to this day because I know that my brain has been domesticated by these patterns and I have to be vigilant to be sure that if he raises something with me, that I'm receiving it with love and that I'm not reacting or pushing it away or gaslighting or any of that stuff. It's like an ongoing thing for me. I've got to keep looking at my own consciousness, make sure I'm not doing it.

**Rosie:** And I think that's absolutely the right way. We have to behave, asking yourself those questions because we're constantly evolving. For you to not do that, we'll just like to say that the relationship is not even important. Not even forget about whatever your past was. For a healthy relationship, do we want to go into complacency or we want to try to make this a better and healthier and happier and more joyful relationship? And the only way to do that is exactly what you've said. It's to keep challenging yourself. How am I in this relationship? Am I my authentic self so that we don't turn around and be really resentful because they didn't do what we wanted them to do because we never said what we wanted them to do?

**Kerri:** Yeah. That communication thing is so important, and my husband and I both work on that now because he'll share something with me and I'll say, "I have to speak this because before

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my other relationship I never spoke about these things." And then I would get resentful. And then the dynamic would go back. So, this is normal. So many people have these issues. They're so afraid to bring stuff up. So, the thing is to be kind to yourself.

If you've experienced traumas like this. But I would just say be kind to yourself. Just be kind. You inherited patterns. You had trauma. You didn't get the right tools to sort it out in time. You passed it along. It happens. And you know what? In any moment, you can turn around and go back and say, "I'm sorry." In any moment, you can make a new choice and take new actions and show up differently in the world. Every moment you can do that. Every moment is a sunrise. There are no lost causes. Nothing's the end of the road. We're conscious beings and we can transform. And that's what we're here to do, right, Rosie?

**Rosie:** How can our listener find out more about you and the work that you do?

**Kerri:** Well, I've written a few books. The *From We to Me* book is interesting because I talked a lot about these patterns I explored in my relationship, which really were mind-boggling to me at the time. And *Awakening to Me* is my first book. That's about my spiritual journey. Those first few years of setting out and really clearing the way and honoring myself and then having behaviors that weren't honoring me and all kinds of things. It's a very transparent book and a little bit triggering for some people. Just FYI. And then my latest book is *The Second Wave*, which is the number one international bestseller and it's been on the charts for nine months.

**Rosie:** Oh, right. Good going.

**Kerri:** Yeah.

**Rosie:** What's your website if they want to get access to you?

**Kerri:** My website is [www.kerrihummingbird.com](http://www.kerrihummingbird.com). And I have a free gift for the audience. It's called the Love Mastery Game. So, it's an Oracle game and it's just designed to help you to understand why the challenge is happening in your life.

So, that's free and you can download it, print it, get yourself a little eight-sided die because it's fun. You can play like roll the dice, which is like life. And that said,

[www.kerrihummingbird.com/play](http://www.kerrihummingbird.com/play).

**Rosie:** Sounds wonderful. Finally, Kerri, what does love is kind mean to you?

**Kerri:** Love is kind. It doesn't always feel kind. Love is kind because love helps us understand ourselves. Love helps us understand ourselves through a lot of experiences. And I'm saying love,

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like the big love, like God's sort of creator love, the energy of everything. It helps us to understand ourselves to very vulnerable, intimate experiences that open our hearts and remind us of who we really are. So, it's kind because it's eventually always leading us back to ourselves to more love and it's never leading us to just more separation and punishment. It always leads us back home to ourselves.

**Rosie:** Nice. Really nice. When you had written to me, you said, "Using love to abuse another person is not being loving."

**Kerri:** Using love to abuse another person is going to get you some more lifetimes on earth... with some more karma.

**Rosie:** Oh, Kerri, it's just been so much fun, and you're just a powerhouse to help everybody the way you have been. So, continue the great work and keep shining your light and your bright smile. For those who can't see it, you can hear her smile.

**Kerri:** Well, I'm so impressed by your journey, Rosie. You've really walked the walk, not only for yourself but for your daughter, and you are a shining example of what every woman could do for herself. And I'm so glad that you decided to step out there and share your voice and have this podcast and have these conversations. You're so brave and courageous and I really honor you.

**Rosie:** Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

**Kerri:** You're welcome.

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