

[00:00:00] SHOW INTRO

[00:00:41] Barb Patterson: Welcome everybody. So glad that you're here with us on the REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES Podcast. This is Barb.

[00:00:49] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: This is Melissa.

[00:00:50] Barb Patterson: Yeah. So what are we going to talk about today? We're going to have the F-word conversation.

[00:00:57] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Oooh.

[00:00:58] Barb Patterson: I [couldn't help myself.

[00:01:01] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Don't we have a clean rating, Barb?

[00:01:03] Barb Patterson: I might've just raised expectations, but really what we're going to talk about is 'failure' and our relationship to failure. And I'm going to just toss it right over to you, Melissa, to kick us off.

[00:01:15] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I love to talk about the F-word.

So, there is this film that my daughter, Maya and all of her friends have been pretty obsessed with for a while.

And it's ENCANTO. It's a Disney film and there's a song called "We Don't Talk About Bruno".



[SINGING] "We don't talk about Bruno, no, no."

I hear it in my house a lot. And one day this week while singing it out loud to myself, I thought, "We don't talk about failure.";

[SINGING] "We don't talk about failure-ure-ure."

I don't talk about failure.

My client that I was talking to this week about how she could spin if you will, something that happened to make it not look like a failure, really brought this to the forefront because I've done the exact same thing—in work and personal lives, of course, but I'm going to speak specifically to work today because there is a belief that I've had that I should not fail.

[And if I fail, it's really, really bad. And what that has done for me is that has prevented me from trying certain things that feel like a reach. And I was reminded, as I was thinking about this for our podcast, some of the greatest inventors—Thomas Edison failed something like a thousand times (and I'm putting failed in quotes) before he discovered how exactly to make that light bulb.

And one that really hits home is I remember when my daughter started walking, she was about 10 months or so. And she got up and she fell.

Now that's a failure as my definition of failure. She tried and then she fell. So she failed.

Well, I'm really glad that she didn't have that definition of failure in her mind at 10-months-old because she just got up and tried again. And pretty soon she was walking beautifully.

And so there've been times in my life when I've tried to get up and walk and I've fallen. And not only did I not try again, I didn't tell

anybody about that—because there was shame for me associated with failure. And so what I have been thinking about this week, and actually is failure. Running toward failure.

What does that mean? That means I live full out! That I reach out about that opportunity that I'm so psyched about because it's perfect to fail.

I was at DDB, which is an advertising agency, for many years and the CEO had a term and it was “fail quickly.” And what that gave us was the freedom to fail.

And when we actually give ourselves, which is most important, we give ourselves the freedom to fail we get to innovate, we get to create and we get to see what's really possible for ourselves without the misperception that we are not allowed to fail.

And what this has done for me this week is I feel more excited about partnerships, clients possibilities, because there's no hesitation around not doing it. And so I wanted to talk about that because I'm sure all of us—the conditioning that we have that we brought up with is that failure is bad.

And if we look throughout history, all of the greatest creators have failed. And again, I use that word so loosely, and if they stop at the first, second, or even the third try so much of what we have today that's been created would not be in existence.

So that's what I want to offer you. Give yourself the freedom to fail because the word 'failure' is some notion that we've cooked up in our heads about what it actually is.

[00:04:57] Barb Patterson: As I'm listening to you, I'm, you know, sort of reflecting for myself and, you know, my overthinking, trying to work things out in my head, trying to find the best way is at times (whether conscious or unconscious), right. This idea that if I think about it long

enough, I'll get it "righter" , I'll get it more, right.

Or I'll at least have it be a smoother journey. And if I ask myself or if any of us ask ourselves, "Well, why does that even matter?" This kind of fixation about getting it right? Or 'righter' or better? I think it comes back to "What if I get it wrong. What does that mean? Does it mean failure? Will I feel bad about myself? Will I be embarrassed?" You know? So in a way, all of this is really about our internal relationship to those things—to failure, to getting it wrong, to having to be a beginner, having to try something you've never done.

I was talking to the producer of our podcast and a friend of ours.

[00:06:04] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Peripheral Media.

[00:06:05] Barb Patterson: Yes. Jenée Arthur. Peripheral Media.

Ooh, I almost said it right.

[00:06:10] Jenée Arthur: Actually it's Peripheral View Media, you guys. Neither one of you say it right.

[00:06:17] Barb Patterson: And we were talking about the willingness to go all in to being a student at this point in our life. And as we try new things in our career. It's like at what age did we decide that somehow we were supposed to know it, you know, yet if we're learning a new hobby, we'll kind of all get behind the idea, "I'm taking language classes. "I'm taking, you know, um, gardening or painting."

But there's something about work and life that somehow we don't hold it in a learner "I'm a beginner and it's totally okay if I stand up and walk a few steps fall and get back up again.: And I do, I think it all comes back to the thought we have, the relationship we have about not getting it right. Failing.

Who said failure was bad? Who's said failure... you should feel shame

when you know you don't get it right.

I know it's human. Believe me. You know, I don't want to look like a fool for sure. That fear will keep me, as you said, keep me from moving forward. And that's just another way of failure, right? That somehow looking like a fool means I failed.

[00:07:33] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: I love how deep you are. Just bringing us inside. The inside-out understanding. It's so helpful for me. That helps me to remember a time when I quote/unquote “failed” And the fear that I had about failure before the event. And you know, this story...

I ran a very large agency in Hollywood, very successful, award-winning all those great things. Wonderful, incredible creative people.

And the agency was closed.

Our parent company had made a decision to go in another direction. And this thing that I feared, frankly, my whole adult career life happened. And it could be termed a failure.

And what happened for me was I felt the failure, the fear. And then I asked myself, "What if I can enjoy this? What if I could learn from this";

So this event that I feared had actually happened and what I realized was, it wasn't what I imagined because that fear of failure was in my head. And in the moment what I was called to do. You know this, cause we've talked about this a lot... was to serve the people that needed to find new employment. And I got such joy out of that—of serving, of representing them, of being their steward, you know, and most, if not all, went off to do wonderful things.

And so this thing that I thought was a “failure”, actually created an opportunity for expansion of my heart, of what was possible for these

people, incredible relationships. And so I went from fear of failure to freedom, frankly, in a moment. In a thought. Which goes back to what you're talking about, about that inside out.

So thanks for reminding me of that. And that's really what it is. This fear of failure is a fear of something that's happening in the future. Not this moment. And as we know "there ain't nothin' but this moment";, so how do we want to live it?

[00:09:33] Barb Patterson: Yeah. You know, I was reading something. I can't remember where I saw it—or listening.

And it was this conversation around how we call it "losing a job"; or the "end of a marriage", or, you know, something not working out. Like, "Oh, it failed. My marriage failed."

Or you're dating and you're in a relationship for a while and then it doesn't work out. "Yeah. That one didn't work out." And somehow there's like this idea that the only measure of success is forever.

Do you know what I mean? Or the only measure of success is never stumbling,. You know. The only measure of successes that we don't keep learning more or—you know, and it's ridiculous because I know people in my life and I know even the last relationship I was in...it didn't work out, but it was amazing. Do you know what I mean?

And I'm not saying I felt amazing about it all the time.

[00:10:29] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Right. Right.

[00:10:30] Barb Patterson: Like just to be clear and it ended, right? But this notion that somehow, because it ends it's a failure. Or that business, that story, you just told that somehow, because the doors shut and people had to find new work, that that was a failure. And yet I know because we, as you said, we talked about it— some of those next steps for people were way more life-giving and aligned.

And I know for me, there have been times when something didn't go the way I had hoped. And only in hindsight was I able to say, "Thank you. Oh my God, I'm so glad.";

What looked like failure, what looked like a loss. What looked like a bad thing was just my mind defining it that way. It wasn't a truth.

[00:11:14] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: And as you share about your last relationship, I think it's really important for me to be clear, too. Feelings are part of that process. Really important for me to say that because I don't want anyone listening to think that I'm went immediately from the event to joy and service. In between was a lot of thinking and a lot of feelings.

And what I've learned and I'm learning is, and we talked about this on one of our previous episodes, the feelings for me, they're not facts. They don't point as evidence to anything. They're just feelings that need to be felt and released. And clarity for me actually came after having those feelings. Fully allowing myself to have those feelings.

And that's the case with the agency and in relationships that didn't work out. Anytime I think I can magically think my way without the feelings, they usually pop out. So I am just being really clear because I've talked to someone recently who thought that they just had just switched their thinking and that they shouldn't be having the feelings.

And I'm not saying that at all. And I know you're not either. So that's part of the process. Right. We get to feel, we get to heal and we get to choose a path forward.

[00:12:28] Barb Patterson: Yeah. In all of this, hopefully, what people hear and take away throughout all of our conversations, I think is that we have compassion and grace for our humanity, for our vulnerabilities, our places that feel more fragile. The feelings.

We have more grace, we don't try and deny them, push it down.

In addition to that, we also have a knowing of something greater. Everyone can define that in whatever way they want, but that we also have within us, this essential nature, this well-of-being that has served us throughout our life, that helps us find home base in the midst of a storm, that helps us navigate when we have to rise to the occasion when the jobs are lost and the marriages do end and life throws us the unexpected.

That we have within us, that place that helps us literally find our way, you know, so it's the both/and that allows us to have a different relationship to all of our ideas and our thoughts.

And so, as we pick these topics to explore, you know, the hope is that it begins to just loosen something up and wake people up to more of the potential, to more freedom as you said..

To more of the truth of who we are, because I think when I know that part of what helps me be more free and less overthinking—at times. Not all the time. Is that I trust more and more that I can put my confidence and certainty in that I'll be okay no matter what.

Anytime I want to put my confidence and certainty and that it'll work out the way I hope—it's hit or miss, you know? The place that really gives me the courage to be vulnerable, to, you know, look like a fool potentially, but do it because something inside of me wants to move in that direction. Right.

The thing that helps me is knowing at my core I'm okay no matter what.

Knowing that that place inside of me will help me find my stability again. And that while we'll all have momentary experiences that may not be pleasant—just to put it one way, right. That underneath that momentary experience is this deeper truth and potential, and that it's

not the end of the story like that one stumble isn't the end of the story. The end of that relationship isn't the end of the story. The failed quote job/company isn't the end of the story.

And it's not the definition of who we are.

[00:15:12] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: As you're sharing that, I'm thinking about an operating system for humans, right? I heard you describe it and my analytical mind thinks, "Yes, we humans have an operating system and we are plugged in to power, to Source." Just as my laptop is plugged in and it can depend on it—when it's plugged in, it's going to go on.

So we, as humans are plugged in to a source. And however, it works for you individually to know that and to feel that—that's where to go. We have all the other applications that are running— feelings, thoughts, but we're always plugged into Source. And that 'knowing,' like you just mentioned Barb, that knowing has helped me get through some pretty gnarly stuff and also has helped me to trust in that power, that Source and do pretty awesome stuff.

[00:16:05] Barb Patterson: Yeah, and I think that's it. It's like things will not go the way we plan. Things will not always turn out the way we hope. In our journey as humans and as we expand our awareness and we learn more and we get more open to life and being in our life versus thinking about our lives, that means that there'll be bumps and bruises potentially.

Right. But, I think all of us crave the aliveness of it more than the caution.

I get cautious, don't get me wrong. But that aliveness really comes when I follow those places inside of me that want to be expressed, or I make those really tough choices to leave something because it's no longer aligned.

[00:16:53] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: You're talking about a juicy life.

[00:16:55] Barb Patterson: Yeah. I love it. Yeah, exactly. Exactly. So, yeah, I guess the point we're making here today is “fail”, fail forward. Fail any way. Step into what life is calling to you and know that your momentary experience is momentary. And underneath it, as we evolve into ourselves more fully into expression and to something new, we find our way.

[00:17:21] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: The freedom to fail actually allows us to have that juicy life that you're talking about.

So give yourself the freedom to fail. Talk about it with others, help them to see that they have the freedom to fail.

[00:17:35] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:17:35] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: And let us know about your juicy life.

[00:17:37] Barb Patterson: Yeah.

[00:17:38] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: We want to hear about.

[00:17:42] Barb Patterson: Yeah. Thank you everybody so much. Yes. Let's go fail and experience the juice of life. I love it.

[00:17:50] Melissa Palazzo-Hart: Thanks, everyone. Lots of love.

[00:17:56] OUTRO: Thank you so much for listening to **REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES** with your hosts Barb Patterson and Melissa Palazzoo-Hart. We hope you enjoyed this week's episode. And if you did go to Apple Podcasts or Spotify and follow, give us a rating and leave a review.

If you know anyone that would benefit from our conversation today,

we'd love for you to share it with them.

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Want to see the show notes or read a transcript of this show? You can find it on **melissapalazzohart.com** or **barbarapatterson.com**.

Thank you so much for listening to REAL WOMEN REAL LIVES

A special shout out and thanks to our producer, Jenée Arthur of Peripheral View Media.

Until next time, remember, take the mask off. No filters, just possibilities.