**Overcoming working mom burnout**

**Episode 4: Valuing our mastery and stepping into our power to support other women with branding expert Juju Hook**

**My son’s principal challenged me to go do something that terrified me and I'm forever grateful for his appeal**. I was very involved in Christian's life and I think the more dissatisfied and really bored that I became with my own career, the more involved I got with him and I had created a life for myself inside my agency where I didn't have to work a whole lot. The principal said: At this point you're guide rails, right? He doesn't really need you to be involved. So I decided to write a book. I set out on a journey to write a book and ended up on stage speaking and did the things that terrified me in it. And it led me in an entirely new direction.

**My son going to college has been one of the hardest periods as a parent that I've had yet**. I think the level of worry that you have about your kids once they leave, it's just a different kind of worry. And knowing that he needs to individualize it and knowing that he needs his time away from us and that, he has to make choices and he has to be allowed to fail right. Or not. And not reach out is really hard. In fact, I was just telling someone the other day, it's trying not to call your ex you're just constantly want to dial the phone. And I know I shouldn't do this cause it's not going to go well. It's not going to be good for me. And I'm going to be sorry I did it, but it's really hard not to.

**Burnout for women that I work with often manifests itself through resentment**. I know that resentment really results from one of two things, which is an inability to set boundaries or a lack of self-care. And without those two things, it's just really easy to feel pressured and over committed. During the stress we're handling it, we're in it, we're plugging away. And then you get this moment of respite and I just crashed. And I did what I think a lot of women do at first, which is that I stopped doing what I said I was going to do, or I stopped doing the things that I had committed to at full force, but I didn't claim it. And so then in there's always a bit of self-sabotage right. Or guilt or whatever it is, I have all these things on my plate and I just need a break. And that created real conflict for me. The not claiming it, I felt guilty. So here I wanted to relax and I couldn't relax.

**The belief that my productivity level was somehow tied to my worth as a human**. I grew up in a house with six boys. My dad was not really interested in me when I was a young girl and I always really strived to be taken as seriously as they were. And I think the productivity and the thought of doing something worthwhile and wanting people to see me and respect me and, for me to have my seat at the table that really drove me.

**There are all different kinds of interim ways on a spectrum that women deal with burnout**. I'm really privileged to be able to claim to be in a situation where I can say at this point in my life, hey, I'm going to pull back. There becomes this resistance to experience because all of the experiences require something of me and I don't have anything left to give. Not everyone is in that position.

**I think burnout can come in midlife because we are suddenly presented with a set of transitions all at once**. We have all these physical changes and emotional changes around hormones. And then body shape changes. So a lot of women start to feel self-conscious around that or to feel invisible. Then kids leave home and parents die. There's just this massive amount of transition and the transition often feels like loss, and we're all taught when we're young women that I'm gonna grow up and I'm gonna go to college and this is going to be my job and I'm going to start a family, and this is what my life's going to look like. Whatever these dreams that we have and the plans generally about 50 years long, but nobody talks about the fact that you're going to hit 50 and need to do it again.

**Women don't really want to begin again they want to experience life in a different way.** They want to be turned on again and lit up again and in control of how they expend their energy. if you can stay in your mastery, but deliver it in a new way, often times the burnout will shift. And my perspective and my goal with all the women I work with is not to see it as a problem, but to see it as an opportunity and as a place to pause and decide, okay, what's my 40 year plan. By the time you're a midlife, you've mastered all kinds of things. It doesn't matter what kind of career you've had or whether or not you've had children. Just, by virtue of the fact that you've walked, four or five decades on the planet, you've gotten really good at certain things.

**All these women who are driven and then they have driven kids or they're driving their kids**. It's a lot, it's overwhelming. And I just don't think men experience it in the same way and they don't shoulder it in the same way that women do. It's no wonder women burn out. And one of the things I always say to the women I work with is would you put this on someone else? Would you, if you had a friend or someone you cared about, would you say here's all the things I want you to do, I take care of all of this and you would never would, you would never put that on someone else.

**When you get a promotion in a job you delegate your tasks, moms can’t do that**. I remember when I was a young executive, my boss told me I can't get promoted until you can do my job. So I'm going to teach you how to do my job, and then I want you to take everything in your job that you don't want and let's pass that down to the first person under you. And in this way, everyone can advance. And it's a business, absolutely beautiful strategy inside an organization, but it doesn't work in real life for women because there isn't anybody to pass anything on to. And so it's just escalating and escalating. And as you're moving toward the height of your career, then your kids are also experiencing new level challenges. And it's just no wonder that women burn out. And if you look from the outside in, it's shocking that women do as well as they do, to be honest, I think that the requirements are outrageous

**Self doubt or some form of a minimized self impression is part of the struggle with every woman I coach without fail**. Part of it is just a monster voice in our heads. When we step into something bigger than we're in now, our brains don't really do well with risk. It is literally the way your brain is designed to work is to stop you from doing these things. Most of us as young women, we developed some issues around our worth. We live in a world where we're valued less. And so these things that women want to do by the time they're in their fifties, they often feel audacious to women or who am I to want them? And we have all these kind of lies that we tell ourselves about what we're supposed to be doing and what's necessary in order for us to be worth something.

**Women’s self-worth issues bleed over into how they're valuing the services they provide**. So they set up businesses for themselves where they can't profit, and they step out of the frying pan and into the fire. So now they've left corporate and they're in their own business and they're in a money trap. And the way out of the money trap is to increase their prices to market level or to create a premium brand. And that issue of self-value or self-worth prevents them from doing that.

**This insecurity that you're feeling, everyone feels it.** This is the one thing that I felt like I really had to share with our son when he was growing up, that I wish someone would have shared with me when I was young, is that this insecurity that you're feeling, everyone feels. It's just part of the human condition and we feel so isolated in it. We feel so alone in it. And when you recognize that everyone's feeling it and just in different ways, it's just manifesting itself in different ways and every human, but we're all afraid that we're not a lot enough and that we're not going to be worthy of love and that we're going to be judged. And we don't want to feel those things. And we do a tremendous number of things to avoid feeling those things. And when you recognize that's not going to stop and the real key is how do I keep going? Even though I feel that way, right? How do I get back up when I get knocked down? How do I step through the fear, even though I'm feeling it, how do I bounce back?

**It's this really strange teeter-totter of, I'm not enough and I should be successful in the first month**. If you have achieved mastery and you've gotten to a certain level, and then you decide to open a business, there's a sort of this feeling of I can do this. We tend to see things in terms of success or failure. And we forget that life is just a series of trials. We try and then we course correct. And we try and we course correct. And we try and we course correct. And if our sense of self is attached to our results, It's very hard to make the course corrections, because what happens is we try, we perceive failure. We go into a hole. We lick our wounds. We suffer. We crawl back out. We try again. And it's a very painful process versus I'm going to be curious. The women who can stay in curiosity versus judgment, they get further, faster with less pain.

**Every industry has an opportunity to create a more diverse slate of people at the top**. I don't even think we have an in a single industry in America that's that is diverse at the top. And I think there are ways to do that without sitting at the corporate table. The way we get our seat at the table is by being well is by being fully in our power. I was an executive first and then I opened my own business and I think I had as much influence in the corporate world or more as an agency owner than I did as an executive. I think as an agency owner, I had the ear of the C-suite of all the companies that I worked for. And so to be able to influence that way, I was, I think it was every bit as powerful as being in the C-suite.

**Probably 80% of the women who I work with have businesses that serve women.** So I think that's another thing that happens is women come out of corporate and they have this feeling of, I want to work with women.I want to be in a safe space. I want to be how I want to be and say what I want to say. And I can't always do that in a room when there are men in the room and the idea then that at a certain point we pivot and we push other women up or we help other women, I think may just as effectively help us get seats at the table.

**Women will change things is by having money to invest back, in all these different industries**. One of the things I do think entrepreneurship provides is for women is money. Women have more choices when they are financially fluid. In my mom's generation, women would have never left their husbands because they wouldn't have had a way to support themselves, but women become more and more financially flush. And I think entrepreneurship is a way into that. And so one of the things that happens with women as they build their businesses and they become millionaires and they do these things and then they turn around and use the money to influence in different ways. And so I think some of these things require us to think bigger and to have confidence in women at a different level that we can be game-changers from any angle.

**The ideas and stories we tell ourselves around money are so powerful**. I have women who I will repeatedly say, this is not the red cross. You don't run a not-for-profit, you don't have volunteers. You don't have donors there's that you run a for profit business. And if you don't turn a profit, your business can't, you can't stay in business. So it's not going to do anybody, any good for you to undercharge or undervalue yourself. But it's a lesson that doesn't come easy for a lot of women, because we're just taught icky things about it. I think those money stories, right along with the self-worth stories or the self-doubt stories are things that prevent women from moving on.

**We can really start to, to exist in our power, to operate in our power when we value ourselves and make money**. Once we recognize, hey it's on me to make this money. And if I provide the service, I deserve the money and I'll do good things with the money and I'll feed the money back into society this way.