S2 E31 Choosing what you want to BE on your burnout journey with freedom coach Stephanie Chick

**Stephanie:** My name is Stephanie Chick and I have one son. His name is Eric and he is amazing. He's 30 years old and is the most sincere, loyal, generous, humble soul that I know and has taught me so many love lessons in my life. And my role is a Freedom Coach and a Master Teacher. My focus in my life is to help people learn to live free, both personally and professionally. And, that's what I do every day.

**Jacqueline:** And I love that to be able to say that's who you are, to call yourself a freedom coach. That just sounds so liberating in itself.

**Stephanie:** It is. It is. And it definitely piques curiosity. It's like freedom coach? There's freedom? Yes, there's freedom. And let me tell you and teach you how to get there. So yes, I love it.

**Jacqueline:** So describe briefly your journey to where you are now in your career

**Stephanie:** So, getting the freedom. Isn't free. So it's been a Space Odyssey getting to where I am now. I started in corporate America, working for IBM straight out of college. And after about seven years felt this itch, this tug that I wanted to do something else. I didn't know what that was. And I left and worked for a nonprofit for a few years, worked for a university. And then a former colleague from IBM had moved to HP and he called me up and said, there's a job. And I know you're just going to be perfect for it. And that brought me back into the corporate space.

And for a few years, I was really fulfilled. It was a lot of creative work that I enjoy doing and working on new product launches and then that itch and that tug happened. And I realized that something was missing. And what was missing is what's integral to who I am and what really fuels me every day is my ability to impact someone else's life. So when I became a senior manager, it wasn't the job responsibilities of the manager in terms of the products I was working on, or the functional areas that I was involved in, it was the people that were working for me. And what I realized is I wanted to shift my career direction. And thank God I had a really supportive boss inside HP. When he's coming to me saying, I've got this great new opportunity for you, and I look at him, "that's not it." And he's "what's it." And I said, I want to become a coach. That's how I want to add value. And he helped me make that shift. So I think my whole journey has been about listening to that inner voice that is always giving you guidance on the next step that you need to take and being courageous enough, being surrendered enough to go wherever it leads. And it led me to my calling and my purpose in life. So to me, there's always a benefit of heeding the guidance that you get from that voice within.

**Jacqueline:** And learning to listen to it, I think is hard because I feel like I've spent a lot of time suppressing my emotions. And I think when you do that, your inner voice gets suppressed as well and your intuitions.

**Stephanie:** Absolutely. Absolutely. You got a hone that hearing and also heed it.

**Jacqueline:** So when I read your burnout story, Stephanie, it resonated so much with me. Because you're talking about coming back from travel and I remember coming home from a trip one time and I'd been up since 2:00 AM to get to the airport on the east coast to get home. And then when I got home, I returned home to, a really difficult situation with my daughter. She had a bruise on her face. And I was really uncomfortable with how the nanny that we had at the time was dealing with it. And I was just such a mess, cause I had been traveling all day and then I had to try and stay calm and deal with this really uncomfortable situation. So when I read about your burnout, your feelings of returning from travel it just reminded me of that and it really resonated how sometimes we're so exhausted from those trips that we see something a little differently. So tell us about how you experienced burnout and how it led you to the next place.

**Stephanie:** I certainly resonate with your story. I think the trips give us an opportunity to go, to become introspective to really look within. And, my burnout story. When I think about my burnout, it really was a spiritual drought. It wasn't about the fact that I wasn't successful. I was extremely successful inside corporate America. But what was missing that tug, that itch that I talked about earlier was meaning and fulfillment. Like I want it to have both. I wanted to achieve success, but I also wanted to feel fulfillment when I came into work every day. And it all came to a head for me. After, as you talked about a long business trip, where on the way there, I just didn't even feel good inside of my body. I felt some panic attacks and my skin was itching. Like all these things that are trying to alert you, that something is amiss.

And then I get on the plane and I start to feel this, these chest pains. And I am so worried about my employee, that's sitting either a couple of rows ahead or behind me, that I don't even push the alarm bell to have the stewardess come help me because I don't want to alarm him. That's how burnt out and off track that I felt. And so I get to Boise, which is where I was headed and I get through all of my business meetings and I return a few days later and it was on my way home where I hit the wall. And I am bawling. I can barely see the road in front of me. I'm crying. So uncontrollably, because I know that this is just not where I'm supposed to be. I even pull over to the side of the road. I call my best friend and I'm just sobbing. And in between all the sobs, I'm just like, I don't know, but this isn't it. And she's like you've got to look within Steph. You got to figure out what's going to make you happy and what's going to be fulfilling for you.

And I remember pulling up to the garage, trying to pull myself together, go into the house and, pretend that everything is okay. And soon as I walk into the family room, my husband and son were sitting there at the table eating and they look at me. And it's a look that I'd never seen in their eyes before. And I knew in that moment that I couldn't keep up the charade anymore, that they were seeing exactly what I was feeling on the inside. And in that moment I just gave up the lie. I gave up the charade and I went upstairs and looked at myself in the mirror. And instinctively, it's so, I just, again, I'm always following spirit instinctively. I called to Eric my beautiful only son and said, please come up here quick and bring the camera. And I wanted to take a picture at the moment that I knew that I wanted to break free. And that started me on my road to healing and recovery and finding my calling is to actually see myself clearly who I was in that moment. And that was the person that I knew that I wasn't. I was like, that's not me. And I've got to go find Stephanie.

**Jacqueline:** That's such a powerful story. Stephanie, I think there's so many things in there that people will see in themselves. Like you said, you were successful, burnout is not about not being successful. It's totally the opposite in some ways. And like you said, knowing you were lying to yourself again. That's a really hard one to face and that was something I faced.

**Stephanie:** I was thinking, it's not about there's anything wrong with success, but you don't want to be in someone else's version of success. That was really what was causing all of the physical symptoms and all of the feelings of depression and just disconnectedness. Is because it wasn't my version of success.

**Jacqueline:** I think that's so important to distinguish that. I remember I drove home from work this one night and I was like, you, I was sort of, upset all the way home. And I got home and I managed to just pull it together and I whispered to my husband it's time to get the kids to bed. I'm going to come and do it with you, but I'm going to do it quickly. Because I'm not okay. And he was like, okay. And I was like, let's just get through this. And, we put the kids to bed and then I went out on the sofa and I'm like you say, just physically, I collapsed, I could not stop sobbing. I couldn't breathe. Yeah, it was such an emotional breakdown. And then in the days after that, I definitely started having panic attacks. So yeah, I think those are all really important indicators for people to hear, because I think people struggled to realize they're in burnout and to be honest, I didn't until I read about it later and thought, oh, maybe that's what I was experiencing. I think these stories are so important to share.

**Stephanie:** Absolutely. I always look for the, there's a phrase that I read in a book many years ago, gift in the garbage. I'm always trying to find the gift in the garbage. And so that moment, this horrific picture that I actually use it on my website. I use it in speaking engagements so that people can see the before and after and see that there is a way out of the burnout, but the thing is the gift is that it woke me up. It shook me at my very core. And what the gift is, is that going forward, what I've always taken with me is that anything that disturbs my spirit is a gift. It sounds the alarm. It says the path that you are on, it's not it and choose. Choose what you want for your life.

**Jacqueline:** There's so many questions I have all immediately at once. Let's talk about that choice, because that was one of what you said was your main lessons that you learned in your book 'Deliver the Package'. I was definitely in this state of feeling like a victim that I didn't have choices and was unaware that all my yeses were me making choices. They were just poor choices. So talk a little bit more about that lesson that you learned and then we'll get into more your work with corporate employees.

**Stephanie:** Absolutely. So there was a phrase that I read in the book by Stephen Covey, The Eight Habits. And it really, it wasn't that I wasn't making choices throughout my life, but it really locked it in for me. Sometimes you read something and it grounds you in a perspective, a positive perspective that you can take with you for the rest of your life. And the phrase was that between stimulus and response, there lies a space and in that space lies our power to choose. To choose our happiness and that has guided me every step of the way. Is that no matter how dire the situation, I know that I have the power of choice and it isn't that choice doesn't necessarily, won't come with consequences and challenges and all of that. But even in all of those things, the secondary things that come along after choice, I have choice in that too. And that is empowering to know that you can be in control of your destiny moment by moment. My clients will often say but what if it's a bad choice? I say then you can make a new choice. The power of choice is that you're not stuck in choice. And it gives you the freedom to explore, to experience everything. Because you know that at any moment, if it doesn't feel correct within your soul, you can choose differently. That's what happened to me. When I looked at myself in the mirror, I said, I choose to have a life in full alignment with what my soul is desiring a life that brings me fulfillment and success. That brings me purpose. And once I got grounded in that, I've never, ever looked back.

**Jacqueline:** And so back to that experience of your breakdown and the gift of that, because again, I actually ended up feeling very much similar that I was grateful that my body let me down as how I experienced it, because I was a very strong, I was very fit and strong and healthy. And so I felt I was paying a lot of attention to my self care of my body, but not necessarily the self care of my mental health. And then when I had that experience of these panic attacks and that full-on couldn't breathe sobbing, it was like, my body was telling me something and I was so grateful to it. Cause I actually paid attention to my body. I don't pay attention to my mind. I would always shut my mind out. In some ways I would always just try and quieten thoughts in my head. And so I was grateful really afterwards for that gift of my body telling me this is enough, you won't listen to your head. So we're gonna shut down on you.

**Stephanie:** The mind can deceive, but the body always speaks truth.

**Jacqueline:** So again, I think that's so helpful for people to really think about what their body is telling them. But can you share a little, like how long did it take you to feel this healing and recovery? How long was that journey for you? Until you stepped into this different role.

**Stephanie:** Wow. That's a loaded question because I think the journey continues. Yeah, my life shifted immediately. And, I took, I remember taking a few pictures after that one, horrific one when I was in so much pain. And even within a few days, I could see the change. I could. Yeah. I could see the fog lifting. I could see the light trying to peer in and. To me, what it opened up was an invitation to dance with life. My work is about being, not doing, and there's a difference between the two. So with doing

**Jacqueline:** Yes. Thank you so much for explaining this because people kept saying this to me and it took me so long to understand what that meant. Please explain it. Go ahead.

**Stephanie:** So doing has a beginning and an end date. Like I do the dishes, I do a presentation and that's how most people look at, walking through life. It's what do I need to do? What do I have to get started? And when is it going to be finished? And I don't look at life from that vantage point. It's a being place, which is a place that is never ending. It is always on. It's always evolving. You are always embodying the vision that you have for your life and you eagerly await it to unfold. So the moment that I decided that I want it to be me and I want it to break free, the being began and it has never ended. There's just different iterations of it, but it's still me blossoming.

And that's the way our lives are meant to be. I have had the pleasure of having an adopted mother from Kerala, India, from all places. Living here, obviously in San Diego, but circumstances brought us together and she was running her own business up until the age of 91. With employees, the whole nine yards, it was a Kumon math and reading program, but she never thought of ending. There was no doing this where it started and it ended. It's I want to be this for as long as I possibly can be. And the only reason why she stopped is the body was failing, but body was communicating truth that there is another iteration for you. And that's where she is still vibrant, still giving, still contributing, but just in a different form.

**Jacqueline:** Yeah. So I think you're right in terms of my question being loaded somewhat from my perspective in that just, how much I'm reading about people saying, well take a week's vacation and that solves your burnout. So I think what I wanted to share with listeners is it can take a while. Cause I think, maybe what I didn't necessarily realize was that maybe I was only just starting my burnout when I left my job. And in fact, the months after that, I was still in burnout because that was when, my inner critic came out louder than ever. That was when I lost my identity. I felt like such a failure. Those months were so hard. For me. And so I think I just wanted people to realize that it isn't necessarily an overnight solution, but I also am so glad by your response, because I think that's really hopeful that people can also hear actually, when you make that choice to change it, it can happen overnight, if you're embracing it more, like you say, this is a choice and it's all part of being versus I think I'm still in that stage of saying, when will this burnout recovery end when will this burnout journey end rather than seeing it as this is my journey.

**Stephanie:** The only reason why the journey gets elongated, so to speak. And it's really a mental perception of that. It's where the mind thinks you are. Is because of the degree of surrender that you're in. Let's just go right for the jugular. If you are fully surrendered at that moment. So that's the piece that I didn't really describe about who I am as a person. It was more than just taking a picture and saying, okay, I'm going to go find my bliss in my calling in life. I surrendered, there was no plan B for me, once I looked into the mirror and saw truth. So in that respect, the beam was turned on and it's over. There's no other decision. Will there be again, iterations and things we have to go through as we are blossoming into the flower, the perfect flower of our lives that we want. But, once you surrender, like that pain went away.

**Jacqueline:** And that's so important for you to share. Cause I think you're right. I have just fought, always fought my whole life, and I always get so tired of that because I'm like, why is this so hard? Why is every day a fight? But I think, that's the difference. You have been able to surrender to let go, and that's given you your freedom. Goodness.

**Stephanie:** Most people are wishy-washy about their choices. Yeah. I'll make a choice. If it's going to be comfortable, it's not going to cause any stress on my family or my relationship. When I made the choice that I was going to find it, that's what people are really looking for. They don't want to be burnt out. They want to find it. And when I made that choice and surrender to it, I was also surrendering to whatever was going to be required of me to stay in that place for the rest of my life. And sometimes the burnout is a by-product of the fact that we won't stay committed to the choice that gets us out of the burnout. It's okay, I'm going to follow my bliss. Oh my gosh. You had to sell all your stock options to start your business, which I actually had to do to keep my kid in private school. Yeah. I'm going to do that too. Willingly. Joyfully.

**Jacqueline:** So tell me a little bit about your earlier work with corporate employees and how you helped people release their genius. I'm so fascinated by the way you message things. And we'll get into that thinking about your current messaging as well. But yeah, you were helping people release their genius. What did that mean? And how did you see that as potentially preventing burnout, but not using those words and being able to reach people with something that appealed to them.

**Stephanie:** So can I tell you the truth? Really that time in my life, which is when I first left corporate America. Actually I started the initiative when I was working inside HP, when I decided to change my career direction. But then that became my platform once I left. Hindsight is always 2020. And I realized that, yes, I helped a lot of people begin to unleash their genius and even just to know that was even a possibility because genius is a word that is really heavily loaded and people get very intimidated, intimidated by it. It's I'm not an Einstein, I'm not a Steve Jobs. What are you talking about? What I realized is the truth is that period in time was really me setting my own genius free. So what I realized, given the work that I'm doing now and the vision I have and the impact that I know and legacy I want to leave in the world. I needed to set my own genius free. And what normally happens to me is the work that I'm doing is really the work for me. And because I want to always be of service.

It's okay, I'm setting my own genius free. I'm going to help you too. We're going to learn together what this is all about. And it was a wonderful wondrous ride because I was co-creating with the audience that I was serving at the time. I remember walking into a conversation with a senior executive at Xerox. And he's, "okay, I love this concept of genius. I think this would be great for our high potential employees. What's the difference between talent and genius?" And it blew my mind. I was like, whoa, I haven't thought about that. And I started doing research and it was like, oh my God, it's really a shift in thinking of, talent creates and genius innovates. Talent hits a target that no one can hit, but genius hits a target that no one can see. All of these quotes from these beautiful geniuses started coming into me and it made me start to think differently. And I realized that's the beautiful thing about genius. It is being in harmony and in alignment with everything in the universe, that's how you set genius free. So whether it was a client that I'm talking to or a conversation I'm having with my son, that I am listening and hearing and playing and dancing with everything that is coming into me.

And that sets you free because what happens is we get tunnel vision. Or we think this is the only way to look at things. Genius is always turning the glass upside down, looking at it from different vantage points. And again, it was beautiful because I was unleashing myself and unleashing others at the same time. And, here's what I ended up learning toward the end of that state of being is that I found, this is the learning that I got from the people that I was trying to help. Not every one wants to be a Steve Jobs, or as I said, an Einstein or anyone who is top of their field of Kobe Bryant, but everyone wants to be free. And so where I am now in terms of helping people to live free, it was the evolution of that. It's like people want freedom to be whoever they want to be. If I just want to be the best, stay at home mom, and I'm burnt out because I've been trying to be this senior level, C level executive, and that's not really who I am. I just want to be a great mom. I want to be, I want to have the freedom to be able to do that. And there's genius in that too.

**Jacqueline:** So your programs now very much do focus on living free. So who are your typical clients and how do you help them?

**Stephanie:** Most of my clients come from corporate America only because I know their world. And I also think, I always think our life, everything that's happened in our life is taking us toward the next part of our journey. So the fact that I started in corporate America, and now that's where most of my clients come from, I think that was by divine design. And they usually come to me because they are bound by something. Relationships. A lot of them obviously unfulfilling work. They too want to have more meaning and more fulfillment in the work that they're doing. Maybe there've been past mistakes that they've had in their lives. They're unhappy. They have attachments, they have fear, but there is something that is enslaving them.

And they want to break free and they don't know how to do it. They've been going to classes. They've been listening to inspiring YouTube videos. They've been getting other coaching, maybe some have been in therapy, but they are not getting to where they want to be. And what I offer to them is a framework for living free and the behaviors that liberated me on my own personal freedom journey. So I was using the behaviors that I teach. I was using those behaviors when I was looking in the mirror and dealing with my own level of burnout. And the foundational behavior that I teach is, you gotta be truthful. You won't be free if you're not living from your deepest truth. And what I tell people, is why am I not being free? It's because the way you behave keeps you enslaved every day, you are facing opportunities, challenges, situations in your life. And the way that you respond to these everyday life experiences will either enslave you or liberate you.

**Jacqueline:** I love that your work focuses so much on behavior change. That definitely stood out to me being a Behavior Change Scientist myself. So how did you identify the key behaviors that you want people to work on. And how do you impact them? Cause it's interesting that you say being truthful is a behavior because that's not the typical behavior that I would think about. So I'm even struggling to get my head around. Oh how does that manifest itself? What are the actual things that I have to do. I'm so much thinking about behaviors, like you say the doing with a beginning and an end. So maybe that's part of it is my mindset. It's not in this place yet, but tell me about these key behaviors that you focus on.

**Stephanie:** So the seven behaviors for living free is: be truthful, be courageous, be detached, be loving, be faithful, be still and be happy. Through my own personal journey, as well as working with my clients, what became apparent to me, these were the behaviors that were liberating them that were putting them on the path that they really wanted to be on. What is so interesting and there's a huge degree of sort of spirituality to me mysticism to me that it's like I get the download and then I back into the data that validates it. So yes, it's always reverse engineering for me. And what happened is, I was in the very room that I'm sitting in right now talking to you. And I was just in meditation for about 20 or 30 minutes. And when I came out of meditation, I heard this message. Go get a piece of paper, write this down. This is what you're supposed to be doing. This is the package that you're really supposed to be delivering. This is who you must be to live free. Like literally I'm hearing my spirit say these words and I'm just ever obedient.

I just run to the office, grab a piece of paper and I write down these behaviors and then I hear. Unbeknownst to me, these were the behaviors that I was actually using as I was breaking free and finding my destiny. I was being truthful. So here's an example. You're like how do you put this into practice? How do you recognize this? When I was sitting in that office with my boss and he's saying, I got this great new opportunity for you Steph. I didn't hear truth. It didn't feel correct to me in the depths of my soul, up to that point, because I wanted to keep progressing, keep adding those notches on the belt and on the ladder of, oh, now I'm this level. And I have these levels of perks and power I would have normally just said, okay, this is going to move me up to the next level. I'll take it. But in that moment, I said, you gotta be truthful. This is not where you're spending your time and energy outside of work. You're already exploring coach training programs and investing in it with your own money.

That's where you really want to put your time and energy at least explore. To see if this is where you want to shift your career direction. And in that moment, I decided to be truthful and the profound impact of that was one, my boss listened and was curious about where this was all coming from, because I'm in a senior sales and marketing job. What do you mean you want to now become a coach inside the company, but what was so beautiful is that then he spoke truth back to me. So truth, one behavior begets the behavior from the other. So if I'm standing in truth from my boss is going to come back to me. And he said, the truth is, I just stepped into this new role and I'm having some challenges as a leader.

He said, are you any good at coaching? Yeah, I'm good at it. What are you talking about? And he said if you're so good at it, why don't you coach me? And now my mind is being blown at this moment. One, I'm scared to be truthful about what I really want to do. And now my boss is saying, okay, if you want to do it, let's start with me. And we co-created again, about the genius of all of this, we co-created a relationship where yes, I'm still your employee. I'm still working for you. But during the time that we are coaching together, I'm in charge like I'm guiding and leading you. And we're both going to honor the relation, these two distinct relationships that we now have. And once we did that for a few months and he saw the impact that I could have on him personally, he gave me free rein then to pilot, a coaching program inside HP that had never been done before. And it started me on my path to where I am today.

**Jacqueline:** That's awesome. That's such a great example. And it also reminds us that unless we do that behavior, the doors don't open to all these opportunities. We approach it with fear.

**Stephanie:** And that's the difference between being and doing. What being means is that you are going to embody this behavior no matter where you are, what you're doing or who you are with, you don't turn off the spicket because you're sitting with your boss.

**Jacqueline:** And then you discover he's crazy too.

**Stephanie:** He's just as crazy as I am.

**Jacqueline:** That's you know, it's really, you're asking a lot. This is tough. When you said that in any situation you would be this truthful.

**Stephanie:** Yes. Otherwise, you're doing the behavior. You're doing it when it's convenient, when it's optimal, when it doesn't cause you to shake in your pants, like that's doing the behavior and that's not going to set you free.

**Jacqueline:** It is, that's really profound. I'm ooh, that would, that would be hard. But I really appreciate it because I think, like you say, if you want to be a different person, you have to take these steps. Goodness.

**Stephanie:** Yeah. Yeah. You're expressing the same kinds of emotions that my clients go through, but then they come out the other end of this and their minds are like, they're blown. They're like, wow, this is what's possible.

**Jacqueline:** That is that's profound. And I'm so excited that I'm having this experience with you right now. It's yeah, I think that's so powerful because I think it will show other people the impact you can have.

**Stephanie:** And it's really, I'm just showing I'm being a beacon for, talk about B. I always capitalize the B-E and in words, and it's because it's to remind you. We need that constant reinforcement to be. And what I want to do is to be a beacon. So I have to eat my own dog food. I have to, the moments where it's like oh my gosh, I need to be loving in this. This is challenging to me. Like I surrender, I surrender. And even when I'm bringing new clients on board, I know the work is messy and it's challenging, as you said, it's difficult. It's hard. I'm not worried about that. I can work in the mess with you. Are you surrendered? That's what I'm looking at. Are you surrendered to this practice and to these seven behaviors? Because they will do the work for you. Like I didn't consciously know that they existed. Within me until that download. So I didn't think I had a roadmap. People get a chance when they're working with me to know from day one, here's the roadmap. It's, I'm struggling. Okay. Which of the seven behaviors would best serve you in this moment? Okay. Be courageous. I don't know my truth. Okay. I guess I need to be still until I can hear it.

**Jacqueline:** That's great. And I love that, that you have this roadmap. I think that is comforting even though the work that one has to do in this, along the road is challenging. The fact that you've got that map is so comforting.

**Stephanie:** Yes. So here's the left-brain part of me. It's once I got the download, which is coming from the right brain, I'm like, prove it to me. Like I want to get in a client situation where the behaviors don't work. Like the only way that I know that this is right, is that you show me that this can work . I'm like, you dumped this on me, then I'm going to try to break it. I'll use it, but my eyes are wide open. I'm looking for the gaps. And what blew my mind is, I started coaching using these seven behaviors right after I got them. I'm like, okay, I'm going to give up my own, my old methodology. I'm just going to lock into these behaviors.

And I had someone come into me who was a C-level executive working for a nonprofit, and she was just burnt out. What you're talking about. She'd been in a job for, oh, my gosh, probably a decade and again, much success, but like that she didn't feel like there was anywhere else for her to go. And last like a hail Mary pass from the leadership team was get her a coach. Maybe if we get her a coach that coach can help her figure out where her next opportunity inside this company is because we don't want to lose her. But when I met her and she was interviewing me to see if I would be a good fit for her, she was a wreck, just crying and just, no hope. And I just held the space for her. And once she said, I choose you. I'm like, okay, I got something for you. And it's going to help you. And so I began to teach her the seven behaviors. Here's the thing that blew my mind. Once she started to use the behaviors and put them into practice and part of the behavior that was the breakthrough for her, she wasn't being truthful about what she wanted to do inside the company.

She was just trying to go along again with what everyone expected of her. Once she got an opportunity to really be truthful about that. Like everybody was like, that sounds great. Like when can we get started? Like we think it's something we have probably needed to do. We didn't know how to do it. You're giving us the roadmap to do it. This woman went from total feelings of wanting to give up, in six weeks, revamped her whole job. Sold it in and started. And was soaring within two months by using the behaviors. It blew my mind because without that roadmap, people were meandering. Like I could get them there, but it was a much longer journey and they were getting there mainly when they were in session with me. Then they didn't have anything to anchor them when they were out of session. So they were all over the place. She had the seven behaviors guiding her when I wasn't there. And she was getting herself there much more quickly. And so that's what blew my mind. It's not only will it get you there, it'll get you there faster. And I thought that's the only data that I need to see.

And so I kept doing it with more and more clients and they all got the same success. Come in, dejected, no clue where they're going to go. Always looking side eye at me like, yeah, I've been through this before. Nothing ever seems to work. So I teach these behaviors seven behaviors during seven weeks, because you need about that amount of time for real sustainable behavior change. It doesn't happen in these three weeks that people think you need the first three weeks. You're just trying to dismantle all of the enslaving behaviors. And they're not completely gone. And then the second half is really trying to embody the new behaviors. And so you need that amount of time, but within the seven weeks, everybody was transforming their lives personally and professionally. And I thought again, that's all the data I need. It works. I'm about success. If I could see success, it works.

**Jacqueline:** And I think there's so many things I want listeners to hear here in what you're saying, which is. 1) in your job, ask for a coach. It is it's been shown to have fantastic return on investment. If you're struggling your job, your employer can sponsor you to have a coach and employers, if you've got employees who are struggling, get them a coach. I think coaching is just so amazing. I'm not a coach. I am a beneficiary of a coaching of lots of coaching. Yeah, I really want people to hear that. And I think the second thing I really appreciate what you're doing is you're taking people in corporate America and you're helping them to stay in the position that they're in. Because with burnout, often it results in you leaving your position. And I have seen so many women and again, probably a little bit, my bias that I am now in this, female entrepreneurial space. So I'm seeing a lot of other mom-preneurs and things. And my concern is. Yes, we're still influencing corporate America from the outside but corporate America has to change from within as well. And I'm concerned, like if we're all burning out, who's left to do that change. And again, not putting that responsibility on the women who are already somewhat, you know, the victims of that environment. But I so love that you're empowering them to stay and change that environment.

**Stephanie:** And it's to live out their truth. And some, in some cases, the truth is I don't want to leave. I just want things to be better. And in some cases for me, I stayed for two more years after I got on this path. But then I realized I wanted a bigger platform that I had more people to serve beyond the people inside the company I was working for. And I wanted the freedom to be able to do that. It's just be able to live the most authentic life, and in some cases, I'd say probably three quarters of the people that I coach, they don't leave, but they become much better where they are.

**Jacqueline:** And so you and I spoke a little bit about that briefly before in terms of your approach is an individual approach. And then you have to have this in alignment with the environment you go back into or that you're in because we know as behaviorists, we can change somebody's mindset and give them motivation. But if they return to an environment that's not supportive of that change, then you know you really no amount of motivation can break through that. So can you share with me a little bit what you would like that environment to be? And especially what workplaces can do to support women of color. What changes would you like to see?

**Stephanie:** I think it really boils down to me is that the workplace has to be a win-win value proposition, not a win lose. It can not be all about the employee and it cannot be all about the company. Both needs and interests. So when I started as a coach inside HP, I had to find the value proposition for them. And I was in an all hands meeting and I saw that they were having problems, developing their bench and developing high potential employees, particularly amongst women and people of color. And I said, you know what? I can solve that problem. Let me be the internal coach. And I can solve that problem. That's a win-win value proposition. It's not let me force this on you because this is what I want to do, but it doesn't resonate for you as a need. And so that's what I really want for companies. And for individuals is to see each other. Like we've got to come to the table and understand each other's wants and needs and find the common ground.

Oftentimes employees don't feel seen and that it matters what matters to them. And if a company can't meet their needs, let's have that conversation. What you're doing is magnificent. Like I get your vision, but it isn't in alignment with where we're going. So how can I help you? How can I help you find that place? And that's actually what my boss did for me. He said, Stephanie, I can tell how much this matters to you and I'm going to try to help you. And if I can't, I'll tell you. That's all that I wanted was a chance. I'm not going to hold him hostage if he can't make it work for me. But do you see me? Do you hear me? Can we have the conversation and the dialogue. And I remember actually before having that authentic dialogue, he ran from me. Like I would see him in the office and he knew I wanted to have this deeper discussion and he was running like, I'd come down the hallway and he'd divert down the other way. And finally, I just went up to him. I said, I just need you to have a conversation with me. Don't run from me. I see you like I'm being truthful. Like I see you dodging me cause you don't know what to do with this unicorn that just showed up on your team. But I need you to talk to me. I'm not going, I'm not trying to force your hand on anything, but I just need you to see me. There's a beautiful African Zulu phrase called "Sawa bona" and it means I see you. I exist and that's actually how they greet one another. It's not. Hi. Hello. It's Sawa bona. I see you. We all want to be seen. Companies want their prospective customers to see them to see their added value. So does employees.

**Jacqueline:** But I think you're right about how manages also in the leaders need to be seen for what they're trying to achieve too. So I love that you're really, the win-win and seeing it from both perspectives.

**Stephanie:** Yeah. I knew that. I said I'm not going to be able to be successful if I don't find the win for the company too. I have to have as much compassion for what they're trying to achieve as what I want to achieve.

**Jacqueline:** My goodness, Stephanie, this has just been such a powerful conversation today. I'm just so grateful for your message and your time today.

**Stephanie:** I am grateful to have the opportunity to be with you. I see you. I see the powerful work that you're wanting to do in the world to help others so that they hopefully never get in the space of burnout, but if they are that you are going to help them find a way out. So thank you.

**Jacqueline:** It's really powerful to be seen. Thank you for that.

**Stephanie:** Yeah, no, it is. It's the most powerful thing that we can do for each other. Just see each other.