

Casey: Then let's dive in first thing out of every episode, we give me your first and last name and your pronouns,

please.

Mary: Mary Diaz. She, her

Casey: excellent. So Mary, give me a little bit real quick. Give us some context who you are, what you do. Kind of big picture today.

Mary: All right. Well I am a writer. I'm a poet and a copywriter. I run a writing business for the last year and a half or so. And I'm also an artist, I'm a fiber artist, a Weaver, a knitter and a mom, I have two little, two little ones who are 11 and eight and,

This other part of like, there's another side to my work that is kind of emerging. And that is like, I work with women. I have a brand called Femme Feral. That's like working with women to sort of reclaim their voice.

And so like I do copywriting in the sense of helping visionary entrepreneurs find the voice of their, of their work. And, you know, it's a very straightforward process and like getting it onto a website, but a lot of like, there's, there's a more. Spiritual almost side to that work. And that's like really empowering women to like unblock their voice in like energetic sense and all the reasons and all the things in our culture and our conditioning that keep us from using our voice.

And how so much of that is what's in the way when you're trying to write your website in your business and it's like a practical thing, but like, we. You know, really caught up in that stuff. And so I do some, I do coaching and I've done retreats and stuff with women. I hear at Northern California that it's about sort of like reclaiming their, the wildness and their power and the power of their voice.

So that's yeah, more, more of that is happening as well. I

Casey: love that. Yeah. It's funny because we've known each other for a while now. And I think when I first got to know you, you were very much a copywriter for entrepreneurs, and then I've noticed your introduction has shifted more towards just like writer and artists and this Femme Feral

this sounds like you, this is, this sounds spot on. So I'm curious then tell me a little bit about how that came to be like, is this, have you always known your voice or has this been an evolution you've been through that you're now seeing your clients need and bring to them

Mary: while it's? I feel like it's always, I think in this kind of thing, The cracks that let the light in, like, you know, the things that we go through are the things that we offer and bring to the world.

And so, yeah, I mean, I, I think one of my like core wounds that I carried was just feeling really misunderstood and feeling like yeah, like not, not understanding how to bring my voice feeling. Yeah. You know, yeah. I just always having a lot to say and never like having to go through the, the layers of self betrayal and confusion and giving power away and feeling wrong.

You know, I grew up pretty religiously and in, you know, there was so much beauty in, in like the Catholic upbringing that I had that I've come to really appreciate now, but at the, you know, but it was also like, A vehicle for me to make myself wrong a lot. And for me to feel sort of, yeah, disconnected from my power.

And so I had to work through that. And I definitely think,

Casey: I think as a,

Mary: I think becoming a mother. Was for me a real line in the sand in terms of like, getting clear about how I want to be in this, like how I want to use my life. Cause I'm very creative and expansive and I'm a flow queen and I can like, you know, go in all these directions. And I, I definitely like did a lot of that becoming a mother was like, oh, you know, like there's a real, it wasn't that like now my identity is only mother and I get to like merge into that identity and lose myself.

It was more like a calling forward of the larger spiritual part of myself and, and just sort of like, how do I want to be in the world? Especially having a daughter, my daughter my eldest,

What kind of world am I working to build for them? Became, became a sort of the rally cry for me.

I think. Way back. So she's 11. So the last, you know, 11 or 12 years. Yeah,

Casey: that makes a lot of sense. I remember a point in my twenties. I was dating a man who pushed just like my father could good and bad, who is now alcoholic. And my mom was trying to go through the last of salvaging her marriage with my dad and trying to deal with alcoholism.

And she realized that by staying married to my dad, she was setting this example for me, that like essentially staying in this abusive relationship was okay. And, you know, it was like for her, there was this big moment of like, oh, like I'm modeling this for my daughter. And I ever since then, I mean, in the last 12, 15 years, since then, like a shift in our dynamic and a shift in how she does things in the world, realizing that even as an adult, like she's still my mom, I still look to her for like, I don't know what a, what a professional woman in the world should look like.

So that makes a lot of sense that like, there were kind of be this, like, what world do I want to create? And what, what do I want to teach this tiny human.

Mary: Yeah. Yeah. It's it goes deep because I feel like. There was a sort of an altruistic or like a impulse in that at first, but like, it's actually a very gnarly and dark.

And like, for me, at least it was like a, a very deep dark path that like got ugly. I mean, it was, I mean, I wouldn't say ugly, but yeah, it was it's like, I think sometimes we say these things online and in conversations that sound really like, you know, self care and, you know, prioritizing ourselves and putting our needs first or having what else?

Like there was another one I was thinking about. It was like,

Yeah, just this like, like self care and it sounds like bubble baths and bath bombs and stuff. And I'm like, for me, learning how to take care of myself and really listen to myself and orient my life from my own inner compass was like a very harrowing journey.

Cause that's just how I am. I like had to kind of make it like

Casey: that. Yeah. I'm curious. Can you recall back to a point where, what some of that work actually looked like? This is a concept I'm always interested in. Cause people talk about doing the work with the air quotes and we're all doing it. I mean, that's the point of the show is talking about how we pursue these evolutions in our life.

But like for me, it's a very specific. I go to therapy and I rambled to my husband. Like I do the talk thing, but I know I'm realizing for a lot of people. That's not the thing. And so I'm kind of curious if you recall, or even what you do now, how, what is the work, how did you figure out that something needed to change and how did you start figuring out you?

Yeah.

Mary: Hmm. That's a really good question. Well I feel like in some senses it's always been, I've always been called into the depths of things. I think, which is partly why like, as a, as a kid, Catholicism did such a number on me because I listened really carefully in church. My mother would say like, just don't listen so much.

Like, what do you mean I'm not worthy? Like I would take it all in. And I had a really like, Deep need to investigate and to how to ask questions and to know, I think myself and I'm on the spiritual side of things. So that's always kind of been in me, but of course, like, yeah, there's, there's, there was definitely like layers, like thresholds to go through on that journey.

So I think, you know, like, like I said, becoming a mother was a, was a big one and then actually doing the work, like coming through those first years of motherhood, which are just such a, you know a dream and a nightmare and just, you know, like you, there's such a surrendering to that period of time. And for us, it was, you know, I was raising my, my baby in Hong Kong.

We lived in China. So there was like isolation and, you know, chaos. And there was all that time. And sort of like through that what is my son was basically ween that was really like this space of. Returning to myself. And I went through some difficult times. I went through a period of time in, in that, at that time of really trying to figure out how to calibrate to myself. And I had, you know, in a relatively short period of time sort of found my partner had a baby, got married, had another baby moved to China, like did all these things. And then there was finally some space to sort of reconnect.

And I mean, I remember at the time it was really coming through in my creative practice where it was like trying to, and feeling that like, Overwhelm and like, how do I hold all of this? How do I be the mother I want to be, and also like carve out some part of myself, you know, I think that's a very common thing that we all go through in those two years.

And I made some commitments to that

Casey: because it felt

Mary: like I had to, I feel like it was, it was like, I really need to figure out how to find myself here. And it's like, I don't recognize myself because I'm seeing myself in a. You know, totally different context that requires a whole new set of eyes and a whole new sort of orientation.

And so actually I, I enrolled in I really intense four year program called the radical at the radical liveliness Institute, which is a really power it's like the most powerful work that I've, I'm not sure is this okay? Are we to talk about like this? Yeah. It's a really powerful somatic leadership program.

And to me it embodies a lot of the way that I want to be in the world and like being able to hold the complexity of the world. It's not a program that's about like prescriptive things and like, you know, Standing out or like it's real, you really have to go through the dark night of the soul and be witnessed in that.

And I'm like, really look at your shit. And I, you know, and that to me was like the, that was a moment of reckoning of like really having to go through and, and and I did, and it was very, very transformative and very profound. I got to like, unpack my shit. And that was, yeah. And that really shifted things for me because once I it's like one of those, once you, once you it's like Pandora's box, once you step into that, you can't undo it.

And you, you know, and I felt I got to have the space to feel myself and claim myself. And feel my, my likeness and feel how good it feels to be alive. That I've always felt and like have always been taught or took on the messages of tapping it down and turning the dial down and looking to other people for what's true.

And what's right. And what's good. And, you know, through those four years it was, I was able to really orient much more cleanly and clearly to myself. And that, but that also like cost me a lot. Like that shifted it radically shifted the frame and the world that I was building in my life. And I met with my family.

Casey: Right. Yeah. Four years for a program. That's amazing. I think that's, that's the first I've ever heard. I think of a program that long. And I love it because you see so many, and this is no slam on these people. I do this kind of thing, but like six month and three month programs. And like when we're doing that level of work, Like you said it's Pandora's box three months is just enough to like unlock the damn thing, let alone doing any of the work.

And then like, so I think that's amazing to have four years of a single place and program that's helping you support, support you through this process. And I'm curious, so you mentioned that it costs you some things. Can I pry into some of that a little bit? What, what do you mean by those costs? Cause I think this is, you also mentioned holding those complex things is there's this, this pros and cons as we heal and as we make choices in our life, and a lot of times we try to focus on the pro, which is the point of doing some of these things.

But I do want to talk about the costs.

Mary: Yeah, yeah, for sure. Again, it's I think it comes back to this, this story, this narrative that like, oh, you know, doing the work and. You know, getting free or some of these buzzes phrases that sound really pretty on an Instagram post that are actually like, yeah, there's a fallout and there is a cost and coming into truth can be, yeah, it can be really a really difficult process.

I grew up in a world where marriage. And kids and family was just what you did as a woman. And while it was always something that I wanted, there were layers to it.

I'm just trying to figure out how to language this. Yeah. Sort of through that process, a lot was revealed in, in my, in, and not just for me, you know, for, for, for my, my husband as well, like truth comes in and it sort of takes no prisoners and it shifts things and yeah, and my. Needed more space and his truth needed more space.

And we, you know, we went through, you know, years of trying to figure out how to, how to orient to that and to be in our truth and to still, you know, grow. And it, you know, it came to the clarity that the shape of our family needed to change and that we needed to actually really, we both needed a lot more space to be in our truth.

And and that was like, you know, people get divorced. We're not actually divorced, we're just separated. But like, we have been for several years now

that. There was, there's absolutely no divorce in my family. I have a really close, very Midwestern, very large family. And it's pretty much yeah, unheard of. And the story is I did hear about divorce like on the other side of my family, where like, there was a, there was like a shame to them or that's at least how I felt that, like that, that it was just yeah.

And I, so it felt like just, just the reality of like, well, maybe our family is better served and our kids are better served in a different form. Was sort of like completely, like it took me years to even be able to stomach that truth. That's how, like, it really, really Shattered me in, in, in those parts of me, the parts of me that like want to be good and want to do it right.

And have to be seen in a certain way and you know, want to make sure that I'm not

ostracized, you know? I think growing up in a big family, it was like, you know, I, there was just that subtlety of like, don't, you know, you're not wanting to be left out. Yeah. And so don't do anything that would, that would be, that would, you know, and then this isn't like stuff. This isn't the way that my family operated.

It was just sort of the internal world that I lived in. And so I really had to go through. Marriage. I had to make that part of my

Casey: life.

Mary: And then I think it was the deeper revelation that that was like one layer of things that I was doing for a part of myself. And, but there were other parts of myself that,

That were calling to me as well. And I was in choice, you know, I felt that place of like, you get to choose along the way. I mean, it's, Pandora's box in that, like it all kind of comes out, but you also get to be in choice as to how you want to integrate the truth of things.

And ultimately that was, you know, our truth, both for both of us was like that.

Casey: You

Mary: know, we could be better people and parents and friends to each other in a different, in a, you know, in a different context. And that was actually a very straightforward

Casey: in some ways.

Mary: But the grief that I went through

Casey: felt,

Mary: I mean, it's, it, it felt bottomless. It felt like, you know, in, in a way that, like, when we talk about ancestral, you know, lineage and energy, and

I feel my practice cultivating more and more connection with my ancestry. Energy and lineage a lot. But you know, at that time that was a, that was a newly emergent feeling, but it felt like there was grief there that was so much bigger than mine.

Casey: I think that's, that's why I so appreciate you sharing that and walking us through that because that's part of why I want to have these conversations is like specifically in the context of marriage and divorce, there's such an expectation that we do these life path things in a certain order and marriage often being one of them and how that becomes intertwined with how our family raises us of my mom never taught me the divorce was bad, but she always talked poorly about herself for ending up divorced twice.

And like my brother recently actually. Jokingly made a comment about her being bad at picking husbands. And it really struck a nerve with her. And I was like, no, both your husbands. Weren't great guys that made stupid choices as they got older, like an and so I want to have these conversations that like people grow and we change and we do this work.

And sometimes that means the relationships also change and not like it's okay. That those change. And it's awesome that you guys could see that you could be better humans and better parents in a different structure, but that also doesn't negate that that grief is real. And that you also have to untangle from things that you've believed your whole life, that you were kind of raised to believe, which makes all of it so complex.

I mean to me, that's why these conversations are so important. And so I appreciate you being willing to share that because I don't think there's a single right. Family structure out there. And so to see that for you guys, and to be able to work on that and talk about it and find a way that's hopefully working for you now, I think is huge.

And more people need to see that there are options.

Mary: Yeah. That feels really, that feels really true. Thank you. And, and I feel like,

you know, there's still that, and I feel that a lot, I feel that with my family too, like the stigma of divorce, it's like, there's this sadness and this like, oh, it didn't work. And. Now the family, you know, there was, there was a loss and it's true in, in, especially those first few years, it's like the grief is real and that, you know, the children are impacted and it's scary.

And it's, you know, all of that, you know, it's sad and there's loss and that's very real, but there's also like, I think we get, I think the stigma of divorce is like, oh, you know, you didn't, you just couldn't stick it out to where there's a story of commitment. And it's like, I find that really weird because it's like, actually I feel so much more

Casey: committed

Mary: to my family and to my well, first of all, like to myself and to my work and like, what do I need to do to figure out how to be.

The mother I want to be and the partner I want to be, and how can I be in radical truth with that? Which is that people need different things. And if I'm only looking at it through the lens of commitment of like, well, this is my person. And if that can't

Casey: change

Mary: it, doesn't leave a lot of room for evolution.

It's like that person needs to stay. You know, he would need to be this way for me. And I would need to be this way for him that isn't like, you know, I don't think you can put the commitment of relationship before the commitment to

Casey: yourself.

Mary: At least the way I

Casey: see it. I agree. You know, obviously every couple is different and I've been fortunate in my marriage that we are a couple who, as we explore ourselves and unpack these things had been able to do it together and bounce it off each other and like accommodate for each other.

But that's not always the case. And so, yeah, I think like, I mean, I've told them like, if, and when you don't, I actually, he said at first, I think we'd only been dating a few months. We'd both just come out of terrible relationships. And it was that rebound that shouldn't have worked, but now we're 12 years into it.

But I remember him saying at one point, he's like, I'm going to do my own thing. And if you continue to fit into that, great. And if you don't see ya, and I was like, at the time, I was like, whoa boy. But like at some level, that's how we continue to do it is there's like, this is what works for me. Can we continue to balance?

Yes. This is what worked for you. Can we continue to balance? Yes. I know plenty of couples where at some point the answer became know, or I know a couple of couples where at some point the answer became we can balance better and be better friends. If we take marriage out of it, if we stop trying to force the intimacy, forced the family traditions, and we're just go back to being friends, everybody's happier.

The kids are happier. The house works better. Like why can we not normalize those conversations? And that that's, that has nothing to do with commitment to the other person. Like you said, it's about commitment to yourself and call me selfish. I think we come first in our own lives and we always should.

And

Mary: we have to, I mean, it doesn't work. I mean, there's like there's times as a mother and what you know, and w anything, you know, there's times where you give yourself over to. Your child too. Absolutely. Absolutely. But like operating from that place is no way to raise kids. It's like that. Like, even on the way of like, if I do that, I'm not doing them any, that's a disservice to my children.

That's like, I think about that. Like if I hit myself and my life's purpose and energy onto my little babies, it feels very heavy for them to carry around. And it's like, I'm over here and you know, we're doing this and you know, there's also like the preciousness of their childhood. And like, they don't, you know, in 10 years they're going to be doing their own, you know, off doing their own thing and like, right.

Not mine. And that will never not burn, but it's like, but I want to know that now so that I am so much more here with. And we can have, you know, the time that we have and like re hopefully learn to relate to each other from our autonomous place and not, you know,

collapse into, I need you to be this for me so that I can make sure that I'm this and all that stuff that happens.

And yeah, and I feel like, no, my acts and I, like, we were doing our work and it's work, you know, it's like, it's work too,

Casey: you know, to hold, let me think how I want to say this.

Mary: We're learning how to show up to together. Cause you get divorced, but you don't get away. You know, it's like when you have right, you're still in it.

It's still there. The things that didn't work still are still there and you have to navigate it, but you get to navigate it from a little bit of a, from more space and that's super helpful. Like I could not have seen that from where I was and yeah. And I think that other people are different.

Casey: You mentioned too. Early on having to kind of give your life over your kids. Like, and I, I use the word balance in a relationship, but I don't mean balance on any given day.

I think that's one of the things that I could be better about articulating. So like for a couple of years when babies are babies, absolutely. You have to give yourself over to that last year, my husband had cancer. Like he ran the house, the world revolved around him, everything was lopsided. But when I talk about balance, I also mean longterm.

And so you do that work now of balancing that, give and take that creating autonomy. And so then hopefully when your kids grow up, then they give back. And so like balance, isn't always in the moment, but like you said, if we create these relationships from a point of self care and self-trust and autonomy, then we can give and take as we're able to.

And so, you know, like now my mom comes to me for. Dating advice. Isn't the right word. She's had a complicated relationship with a complicated man and like, you know, I'm able to give back to her because I have the emotional capacity and understanding of her to be able to give that to her. But I also know that obviously as a baby, she gave everything to me.

And so I think, I think there's an important thing there that as we talk about balance, and we talk about putting ourselves first that I want to like put the asterix, the caveat on that, that like this is coming from a place of give and take, not selfishness.

Mary: Yeah. Well, and it, yeah, it feels exactly that, like, it feels, and now, like, you know, I feel like I really stepped into my thriving in life in the last couple of years when I got through some of the grief that was really had me and was able to like walk with.

You know, it's not, you know, it's not that I don't feel that at times, but I feel so fucking happy in my legs and my, my space. And I have my children and I have my work and I have my friends and my community. That's another thing. That's kind of a sidebar. But like when I got divorced, I was really confronted with like, okay, like who are my people?

And that was, I found that so beautiful. And it's kind of heartbreaking too. Like I leaned in and found and cultivated profoundly deeper, like relationships with friends, women in my community, also moms and who had, you know, who were my friends before, but like, I think that there's a cultural narrative that like your, your husband is supposed to be your confidant and your best friend.

And you're like all of the things and the way that we isolate and the nuclear families, like makes it really difficult to really cultivate meaningful, vulnerable, real connections with other women, which is what we need. And I found that through doing that. That's where I feel my, my most resilient these days is that like I have in my, you know, aren't within, arm's reach so many amazing, powerful women who I can get real with.

And, and that you know, is, is, is really important. And I feel like it's such a. Huge part of the like vibrancy and a liveliness and just enjoyment of my life. Yeah, that feels really important. And like, sometimes it's sad that it takes, you know, getting divorced to sort of have the space to cultivate that.

And it's not always that way, because I think there's, you know, plenty of women who are married, who get that and prioritize that as well. But

Casey: I think you're right. There's kind of a, a social narrative of our spouse should be our best friend or we should have a singular best friend. I'm a person who has never, who's rarely had a singular best friend at any point in my life because I want certain things from certain people and they bring certain things out in me.

And so if I'm. Struggling with creativity. I go to this person, not the last person I'm gonna talk to about creative stuff is my husband. Cause he's a noxious leader, logical. And like when I know I have myself worked up into like an irrational, emotional tizzy, I go to my husband because he's obnoxious really logical.

And like, I think it's the guy, I think he has his place. And so I think it's, like you said, it's, it's sad that divorces what took for you to find those people. And I hear adults talking about how hard it is to make adult friends and like, how do we, how do we stop that? How do we change that? Because I think we're all looking for good friends and how do we relieve that pressure and find those people.

Mary: Yeah. And I've always like, I'm a real, I'm an, I'm a total, I'm a total extrovert. You know, I grew up in a huge family around lots of people. I love that. And so I've always been around people and I've always had really great friends, but there's like something like, I think that there was like a pivot in my energy and my mind and my intention that was like, these relationships are so important to me.

These are as important to me as my romantic relationships. It actually, you know, and the care that I want have intention to show up for is, you know, is a priority. And that actually, when I do that, that like my, you know, it's like, that's where we come alive. And like, where are, you know, like we have potlucks and the children are friends and there's they're supported and they can get picked up.

And there's just like a larger network of community of that village. You know, it's like the Mirage and the holy grail of having that village that we all want. And it's like, it's there in those relationships when you're willing to sort of, and also like be seen, like I'm a fucking mess today. You know, I had this beautiful experience a few weeks back, or my friend and I were both like going through our stuff, you know, just having a day.

I mean, we called, she called me or I called her, I forget. And like we ended up, she came over and like helped me clean my kitchen and like we cried and cleaned and like we got met and we were messy and it was like that helpful. So good to both of us. Like, we both had a need that got to get met because we were willing to kind of lean in and just be like, oh, I'm a mess today.

This is, and then celebrate you know, when things come, you know, come back into alignment. It's it's great.

Casey: I think that's one of the pros and cons of social media is this thing of like, we always put our best face forward and like, there's the very American thing I've learned the, of like the grocery store clerk asks you how your day is and you say fine, and like other countries, you don't ask somebody how their day is going, unless you actually mean it.

And like having that willingness to show up honestly, is so important. I, my husband and I went through a lot of infertility stuff and there's a lot of shame in our culture, around in fertility and about talking about sex. And so it was super hard. So I found an anonymous group on. And because it was anonymous, I can show up completely authentically and completely honestly, and find the support that I need.

And from there, I now have three great friends. We all ended up child lists that we have sentenced, you know, built a relationship on, but it took that willingness to show up vulnerably. And I think we get wrapped up in trying to do everything, quote unquote, right. That we forget we have to give and receive.

And then that's where we struggled to make these connections. And these relationships kind of stay superficial. So to have somebody come over and like, hope you clean your kitchen and cry is like spectacular.

Mary: Wow. And I was like, this really feels

Casey: like one of those, one of those

Mary: moments of like, this is, yeah.

Like, you know, these are, this is what it's all about. And, and also like it takes, that takes a lot. And it's hard. I think that there's a lot of, I mean, with women. There can be so much sisterhood wound stuff that keeps us catty and on the surface and our stories get up and we have to be willing to do that work.

And I think there's lots of different ways of doing that work. But you have to be willing to look at like your own triggers and the reasons why you don't want to be close to people or why you, and I think that it comes again, like in the cracks, like the struggles that we have, the things, you know, that bond us together.

You know, for me, it's like, yeah, it's a lot of these, you know, single moms. But yeah, it's like you, you unite around a particular thing that, that unifies you and it's really. It kind of cuts through some of that stuff and just cause you need each other, it's like we need each other. We really do. And when we have connection connection like that, like that I feel like is where resilience comes from.

Cause then we can weather. Like I feel very, you know, capable in my life now of weathering through things, you know, and that the support, like I trust that the support I ha I need in myself, in my community, in, you know, and, and that it's it's available and that I have the strength or the capacity to

Casey: advocate for myself and

Mary: getting like collapsing into stories about why, you know, nobody wants to help me or why, blah, blah, blah.

Casey: Yeah. And it's so easy to go to those stories, how we've been raised and conditioned. But once you kind of break through that or throw that away or trust yourself enough to say like, I'm just going to put this out here and see what happens and then not have it, you know, blow up in your face is, and you don't know until you try.

So that's like the shitty part. So if you can find that common, what does that come to nominator? Like you said, you know, other single moms for me, it's been then fertility, community, whatever that groundwork is. And then you find your people from within there. And as you learn for me, I have found, as I learned to trust other people more, I also learned to trust myself more.

There's kind of this back and forth that if I'm picking good people around me and they trust coming to me, then apparently I'm doing something right with my life. Yeah.

Mary: Yeah. I, I love that. There's so much power in willingness. That's one of the things that I'm working with these days. It's like, what am I willing to do here? How am I willing to see this differently? How am I willing to change my story around this?

So. You know, that comes up all the time. And with my work with, you know, the stories I have about myself with, you know, navigating the relationship with my ex, like what, how am I willing for this story to be different? And that in that willingness, it's like that opening where you get to start to change the story and it doesn't have to be a hundred percent different.

All of a sudden it doesn't have to be, you know, like all the way through. It just has to be like that pivot towards something different. And I feel like that's how a lot of my stories have

changed. You know, it's like a little bit at a time I'm willing for this to be different. I'm willing to show up differently a little bit and I'm going to fuck it up and like not do it every time.

But over time it's like, that's the, I feel like the self-trust I know that I can feel powerful when I can. Pivot when, when I know that I can trust myself to make changes that need to be made and that like, they don't need to be perfect. Perfectionism is, is you know, the thing that gets in our way more than anything, it's like, well, but I can make it a different, I can show up 10% differently today.

And then that's going to, and trust that like that seed is going to, you know, I'm planting that seed for the future.

Casey: I love that. The willingness to change, I talk about the importance of curiosity is like, if you're not happy where you're at, you have to be willing to even look at what the other options are to begin to figure out what's next.

In the infertility world. I saw a lot of couples really struggling because the one or both partners was adamant that the only outcome that was acceptable was a child. And. Like that's hard. And so for me, like the first step was even being willing to acknowledge or look at what life without children could look like.

And then it was like, okay, I'm willing to have a conversation about this. Okay. I'm willing to kind of try this on for size. And then it was like, okay, I'm willing to live this life. And like, it became a very, but like I had to at least be willing to look at it. And, and so I love that you pointed that out because really that's the willingness to change and look at how you show up.

You also have to be willing to even just look at the options before we can even make that set. And sometimes that's the first step. And I have found in my own reflection on a wide variety of life, things like I have to be willing to even look outside the current box to even begin to unravel what's next.

Mary: Yeah. I love that. That's beautiful. It just feels like what you, what you said there, like we get into trouble when we get really narrow. Like how things have to be, if it's this one person, if it's this one, like job, if it's the one outcome that absolutely has to happen, you know, it's like we, we end up, I think getting in our own way. And missing the possibilities that are out there actually.

And it's in like that again, this is like really gnarly work. It's not just like, oh, just expand your mind. It's like, no, it's really heartbreaking to change these stories. This is how I want to be in the world. This is like, this is the way family was supposed to look. And I don't want to give, you know, that there's that part of us.

That's like, I don't want to give that up and I'm going to fight for it. And I'm going to, you know, scream and cry and have a tantrum about it because it's, it's, you know, but then also what else is possible. And it's like, it feels like that broadening of just like looking at the horizon and going wide and saying like, life is full of possibilities.

And like, I get to, once you get into that place of like, I get to, I get to create that it's like the most creative act of our lives. Right. It's our life. And so it's like, it's a divinely creative act, two. Be in this life. And when we can understand that we have the power to create it and that we, and that yeah.

That it get caught. Like it's not always going to be the way we think it's supposed to look, but that it's like once we get through the, you know, integrating that, the grief and the acceptance of that, then it's like, then we get to have our life. Then it gets like our family and our doing that our way.

And co-creating with, you know, with God or however, however that belief lives in you, you

Casey: know, so somebody listening in today is feeling kind of lost from themselves. They've had that moment and they're going, oh shit, is there a single first piece of advice or action or direction that you would point them?

Hmm, that's a great question.

Mary: Well, the first thing that comes to my mind has to do with like really giving ourselves permission to feel what we feel. I think that's like one of the most profound

Casey: shifts that

Mary: in my life is like, I just, you know, like we feel things and then we think we're not supposed to, or we cover them up or we distort them.

What were we, you know, repressed them. I've never been one to totally repressed my feelings. Cause I feel things really big and I always have, and I'm like, you know, I'm very sensitive in that way. So it's like make some space, I think, to feel what what's there. And a lot of, you know, and I think that there's a lot of rage.

There's anger and we get afraid of the dark side of things. Oh no, it's fine. It's fine. We get afraid of. Primordial rage. And I think there's like all the power and turn on and like delicious. I mean, like all the alive misses, I think on the other side of some of the repressed feelings. So finding a safe container to just express and that can really be like into your pillow.

Like when the house is empty, like bring it and fully see how far you can just bring the pure emotion because the emotions itself are so actually so pure, you know, it's like, they can, it's just like, you know yeah. Like processing and being in touch with what you feel, because that is your guidance system.

And then you get to. Come back to yourself and, and, and be the adult and say, okay, now that there's that feeling. And like, now I get to decide what does that mean for me? If you don't have contact with what's purely in you. That's I think where we get in our head and we get depressed and we get stuck and we get like compulsive and all those things.

So giving yourself the experience of what you're truly feeling and, and then asking yourself what you're willing, willing to sit with. Like I guess, depending on the situation, it's like, what am I willing to do here? What am I willing to see here? Because sometimes a lot of it has to do with look like the willingness to look at what's what truth is in front of you.

And maybe you're not willing and that's okay too. It's like, okay, well, I'm not really willing to see that right now. That's cool. Then you know where you're at, right? It's about orienting yourself to where you actually are. Rather than be rating yourself. Cause you're not somewhere that you think you should be or what's wrong with me for not being here or there.

It's like, oh no, this is just really where I'm really shut down right now about this. And that's just where I am.

Casey: I love that. I think that's so important. Like you said, I think we get so focused on the, doing the work or being quote unquote better or more aligned that we forget. Like you have to figure out where you are today.

To figure out where you're going. It'd take any like navigation course. I, all of a sudden my military navigation course flashed through my brain. And like, you have to be able to see, to see where you're at today. You have to be able to articulate two points to triangulate back. So I've got to feel the grief.

I've got to feel the rage. I can see where I'm sitting and I know I want to get to that mountain. So now, now I can plot that path. And I don't think anybody's ever pointed that out in these conversations that we've got to start with the dark shitty part of it. And I really, I really appreciate you pointing that out.

I think that's a super important step in all of this. Mary, this has been an amazing conversation. I so appreciate your vulnerability and your audience and your openness and your insights. Where can we find you if people want to learn more about you and what you're up to?

Mary: Yeah. All right. This is just.

Likewise, it's such a, such a, a brave conversation and space that you're holding. I really appreciate all that you're bringing. Yeah. So I am on Instagram as Ms. Mary Diaz. So M Z M a R Y D I a Z. And my website is MaryDiaz.com.

Casey: Perfect. And that will also be in the show notes. So you're easy to find. Thank you so much.

Mary: Thank you so much, Casey.