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SPEAKERS

Laurel Rutledge, Jen Marples

Laurel Rutledge 00:00

Even if you sink back into something that is your zone of excellence, right, you're really, really good at it. Think about the money and the time because time is not renewable, the money and the time that you're spending and putting the effort in. And as you do that, it's one thing if you've made a conscious decision to do it, because it's going to fund the other thing you want to do. But if you're dropping into it, because you haven't taken the time to really decide what it is you want, and you're not putting it in the right perspective, as a stepping stone, you can spend a lot of time a lot of money, a lot of energy, really going after that thing that really isn't what you want. Because you think it's going to bring in a lot of money really quickly, and it may or may not. So allow yourself to shift fairly quickly and allow yourself the time to really invest in getting clear and even the things you think are clear pressure test those things. Is it clear because it's habit? Or is it clear because it really is clear?

Jen Marples 01:04

Hello, and welcome to the Jen Marple Show. I'm your host Jen Marples, a former public relations agency owner turned business and life coach and motivational speaker dedicated to helping female entrepreneurs achieve the business and life they desire in their 40s 50s and beyond. Each week, I'll be bringing you conversations with incredible women who are rocking entrepreneurship and taking courageous action while also dealing with all that midlife entails. I'll also be dropping in solo to share thoughts, advice, tips and tricks that will help you live your best life. If you are thinking about pivoting in your career, starting a new business or looking for a second act. Stick around as I guarantee you will be inspired. And know this, you are not too fucking old. Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Jen Marple show today I have a fabulous guest and her name is Laurel Rutledge. She is the host of the Rutledge perspective podcast which I had the honor of recently being on we had such a great conversation. And she is a career professional and business advisor. And so she is going to tell us about her history and how she got into entrepreneurship, and all her wonderful background. And I know you all are just going to love her and love our conversation today. So with that, Laurel, welcome to the show, and I am so happy to have you here today.

Laurel Rutledge 02:26

Oh, thank you so much, Jen. Yes, we had such a great conversation. It's like we could talk for four hours, right. So I'm excited to be here. Thank you for having me.

Jen Marples 02:34

And that's the secret the secrets out about podcasting, we're just doing this, we can have really great conversations with amazing women. And I just because we have these conversations, because we know it's going to inspire all of you to have a little bit of courage to take one little step to go for what you want to do. If that's a business, changing your life finding love, whatever the hell that is. We are here for it. So Laurel, tell us what you used to do. And then what you are doing now?

Laurel Rutledge 03:01

Sure, well, I am a recovering senior HR executive. And I say that a little tongue in cheek, because there really is trauma associated with corporate America, and in particular with human resources depending on which organization you're in. And so I left corporate America as the senior Human Resources executive for North America, and then ultimately for global for HR strategy and analytics for the fourth largest chemical company in Europe. Prior to that, I consider myself a mutt, right, I came into HR pretty late in my career, although I spent almost 20 years in HR. But I started as an accountant, that it cost accounting, I did an internal audit, I did consulting with Deloitte, I've done some of everything. And so I ended up my career in HR strategy and analytics. And I think that's actually other stuff is what made me a really great HR person, because I am a business person, first HR person. Second, you have to be mission first people always, I think, to be effective. And what I'm doing now, when I left corporate at the end of 2017, I left to do what I thought I wanted to do. And five years in, I finally figured out what it really is I'm going to do and I am an empowered action activist. Essentially, I believe in giving people the power to move, understanding who you are, where you are, what you want, and what it's going to take to get there and what you're willing to do to get there, all in a space of no judgment and with a lot of grace, because we all need it.

Jen Marples 04:25

what spurred the leaving of corporate America and starting your own business, because I know that's a huge shift. I mean, I made that shift, even though I wasn't in corporate America, but I had my own business and we dealt with corporate clients. I feel like it's the same thing because of just the energy and all that vibe and all of that. So having that courage to jump out and start something on your own. Tell us about that.

Laurel Rutledge 04:47

Sure. Well, you know, I would love to say I just really decided that it was something I was going to do. And that's not true. For me. It was actually I didn't have a choice. I was in so much pain. It was so traumatic for me I was in such a toxic place, that in order for me to get myself back and to survive, I had to leave, I had to make a choice. And it was one of those situations where I hadn't slept on a Sunday and five years, five years, I had not slept on a Sunday, because I knew Monday was going to be a nightmare. And don't get me wrong. My whole career has been in manufacturing, I love manufacturing. But when you're in manufacturing, and you've got 24/7 sites, and it's just it's a lot, and depending on the organization that you're in, and where HR sits in that organization, the constant battle just got to be too much for me, I am by no means conflict avoidant, but living in constant conflict around what

organizations say they want, and what their behavior says they want. Older organizations that have this whole bent of, well, if we haven't seen it, it can't be possible, or it's not true. I just got tired of fighting, and I got tired of lapses in integrity. I just got tired of the fight. And I realized that I was not present with my family. So for me, my foundation is faith, family, friends and health. And that's helped with a big age. So physical, financial, emotional, you know, all of that stuff help. And I realized that I was not present with people who meant a lot to me, I realized how tired I was, I put on so much weight, I was just exhausted. And I was not showing up for my team, the way I always show up. I wasn't as patient as I normally would. And I just didn't have what I knew the organization needed. In transitioning from a carve out into the next step, I no longer had the energy and didn't have the desire to fight anymore. And so I honestly did not have a choice about leaving December 6 of 2016. I was at home with my family. And I thought, I'm just done. I'm just done. And I had so much peace. That's how you know, you know, for those of you who are listening, when you make a big decision like that, and you have no anger, no hurt, no nothing, you just have peace, you know, it is the right thing to do. And I just had so much peace. And I went in in February and said, I'm out. Love you mean it, you've got until May to replace me because we were in the midst of a really big implementation. And my goal was not to hurt them. Again, I tell people don't hurt yourself, because you're mad at them. Don't do something stupid, cuz you're mad at them. And I wasn't mad. I was just tired. And so I gave them to me, because I wasn't trying to just be hateful. And this is also how I knew it was the right place divine intervention. They panicked, right? Had they been paying attention as they wouldn't have they panicked, there was no replacement. I didn't know my successor, I had already planned for who my successor would be. But there were so many things that we were touching on and so much knowledge that I had that all of a sudden, they decided was valuable. And so I ended up staying until the end of the year. And it ended up being a great investment for starting my business because they asked me what I wanted. I'm an HR, I know what we've done for people. But I also worry about my own karma. So I didn't make a list. That was reasonable. I didn't do anything really crazy. But I said you know I'm not staying so staying is not an option. So what you want to know is how you get me to stay. That's not happening. If what you want to know is how you can get me to prolong my exit, then we can have a conversation about that. And so I ended up staying to the end of 2017. And helping to get some things in place, making sure that the transition happened, doing everything I could to still go out in integrity, because that's just who I am. But it was time to go. It was time to go and I have not one single regret not one.

Jen Marples 08:25

Well, I love that and you bring up something really big. And that's having the courage and the self awareness to know that you couldn't go anymore and that it was going to have all these negative impacts on you. Because I just know I mean, we've all everyone listening, we've all stayed somewhere too long. I remember being in a toxic, toxic environment. And my whole team and a PR firm we got laid off there was 25 of us and it was like I cried for a day. And that was just my ego of like, How dare you but I'm like, Oh, thank God praise. I was laid off. Thank you for this reverence. I couldn't take it anymore. I was like, Yeah, eating Tums and like Zantac every day and working 14 hours a day. I'm like, that's no way to live. So things happen how they're supposed to. But so for everyone listening, I just want that takeaway to really sink in, and just really analyzing where you are, and you don't have to suffer, you know, and put in that place and let you ask for more money and got what you needed to get. Because you can have I think what you're saying too is you had that shift of perspective. So now you're going in, you're like, Okay, I'm in control here, like you need me. I'm in control. I'm going to take you

know what I can you're leaving in integrity plus it gave you sort of those resources and that runway to start your business. So when you left did you take some time to sit back or isn't it how did you get into what you're doing now?

Laurel Rutledge 09:39

I wish I had I wish I had taken some time. I'm kind of like you, you know my very first job out of college, they hired five new accountants they lay five of us off like five months later right then number five, and so my very first job very first layoff so I kind of got used to you know what, nothing is guaranteed right? Nothing is guaranteed. And so when I left a previous role I actually deliberately took about six months off before I started. And I needed that I was so exhausted at that role. I had been driving 100 miles a day, I worked for fantabulous boss, but I was driving 100 miles a day. Again, it was kind of manufacturing, I was dealing with unions, it was it was a lot. This time, I was like, Okay, I'm leaving. And again, I knew I was going and I was walking away, I was walking away in May, I didn't know what it was going to do. I just knew I couldn't do that. And so that piece of not having to have something, I just whatever was going to happen was going to happen. And so when I did leave, I thought, You know what, this is what I think I'm gonna do, I'm gonna go, I've spent so much of my time coaching and advising companies and people from the plant floor to the boardroom. And I'm just going to do that for myself, I can serve bigger, I can be continued to be transparent, I can continue to be very direct, but I can do so in a much different way. And with the care of the person and not so much worried about litigation, right. And so I really decided I was going to start this kind of coaching, advising, you know, business, and it was going to be up and running in three months. No problem is what I was going to do. No, ma'am. No, ma'am. Welcome to the real world, it's been a lot of work. It has been a lot of really taking my own advice of sitting down and saying, okay, Laurel, you know, your genius. And you know, what you really want to do, and what makes you really excited, and what is really in your purpose, just do that. Just do that. And as opposed to coming out of corporate so so for those of you who are coming out of corporate, remembering that there's a language of business, there's a language of business. But that language is different. If business is corporate language, brick and mortar language versus services online, and then we've been talking if you're in professional services, right, there's just a different language. And so I had some great coaches who I love, but we weren't speaking the same language, we were saying the same words, but we weren't speaking the same language. And because of that, and because I don't think I was as mentally and emotionally prepared for entrepreneurship, there were some peasant detours that I took, and money that I spent that looking back, I'm like, you know, I didn't want to do that online HR portal. I mean, it was something that I thought could really help people because I see small business owners, especially women, that start to build teams, and they just, they just mess it up, they screw it up so bad, because they're so worried about lunch. And everybody, like family want to be so nice. And this is business baby, I need you to leave with your heart, but I need you to act with your head. And so I built it for those people. But I hated it, I wouldn't get to keep up with it. I didn't want to be in that detailed HR stuff I just didn't. But it was that lack of taking the time to get really clear on my end, relying very heavily on coaches and advisors who had very well meaning perspectives, but they weren't necessarily mine. And so coming into year, number five, I would say probably four and a half is when it really really got clear for me, I mean, it's all about alignment, vision, action, it's all about perspective, it's all about who you are, where you are, went to what was going to take to get there. I mean, it is so clear now on how I serve and who I serve, and why I serve. But it took a minute, it took a real minute to get there. And so anyone who's looking to do it, be prepared. If you're

bringing a client group with you, or you know, there are also those kinds of things where people just have something set up or, or there's opportunities to buy something right to buy a business and you just start that. But if you're starting your own thing, give yourself some patience, and give yourself some time to get really, really clear on what you want.

Jen Marples 13:36

Ooh, I'm so glad you said that. That's a really big nugget. And I talked about this a lot too. And that's, you have to take these steps. So it's really important to take the step to actually know what you don't want. Yeah, right. And I, you probably went, Oh, HR portal, just the same reason why I'm like, Oh, I've gone through the exact same thing, defaulting to traditional things that I've done in relation to PR and marketing and how that should be done. Because it's what you've done. It's what you know, but it's not where you want to go. And so, like you're saying, it's so informative, because I've done it, you've done it. Okay, that wasn't the right thing. And so I tell women all the time, you can't just take the first step and think that's going to be everything. And it doesn't have to mean everything either. So if you want to go out and you're starting business consulting now and then you end up going to be a Pilates teacher, whatever, like it's all good. Like, every step you're taking is good, but you've got to start taking those steps. You got to take a step, and then it's informative, and maybe it works for a while. And when you make some money, you're like, Alright, well that was great. I don't want to do anymore, but now I've got some money in the bank to like now then go taking this class or join this mastermind or do some more exploration so and especially because we're at my life. And if you've been doing something for a really long time, it does take a minute to figure out what the next thing is. Unless of course you're Like, you know, I know somebody who I've worked with who's an accountant worked for big firm hated it, to your point was like, I just need to work for myself. But I still love accounting. I love helping people in this regard. And then she's off and running. And that's a whole different thing. But it's harder when you're like, I know, I need to do something, but you're not super clear on what it is. But you got to take those steps, because every step informs the next step. And so it goes.

Laurel Rutledge 15:22

Yes, absolutely. And I think the other piece of that Jen is, and we talked about this a little bit earlier is, not only is it taking that first step, and just doing the thing, right doing something, one of the books that I think made it really good for me is that is the big leap by Gay Hendricks, which talks about your zone of excellence versus your zone of genius. And I am an exceptional HR practitioner, I can own that I'm really good at what I do from an HR perspective, because I'm a business person, right? And so I'm able to speak the language of business. And I'm exceptional at that it is my zone of excellence. But I don't love it, right? Because I don't like babysitting. If you're really going to talk about strategy, you got me all day. But when we get into the whole, he said, she said, Why did you do something stupid, and I have to be nice about that, when you're doing stuff that's really, really way off the rails, it just, it just doesn't feed my soul. And so the thing for people to remember is, even if you sink back into something that is your zone of excellence, right, you're really, really good at it. Think about the money and the time because time is not renewable, the money and the time that you're spending and putting the effort in. And as you do that, it's one thing if you've made a conscious decision to do it, because it's going to fund the other thing you want to do. But if you're dropping into it, because you haven't taken the time to really decide what it is you want, and you're not putting it in the right perspective as a stepping stone, you can spend a lot of time a lot of money, a lot of energy, really going after that thing that really isn't what you want.

Because you think it's going to bring in a lot of money really quickly. And it may or may not right, maybe it's it's a really good thing, but it may not be the thing. So allow yourself to shift fairly quickly and allow yourself the time to really invest in getting clear. And even the things you think are clear pressure test those things. Is it clear? Because it's habit? Or is it clear? Because it really is clear?

Jen Marples 17:14

Oh, that's good. I know, I had this conversation with somebody about kind of exactly this. So I think the zone of excellence also goes into like your ego, maybe to a certain degree, because it's what you've been good at. It's what you've had accolades for. You're like that, because I caught myself doing it, too. It's like, I'm going back, I could swing back to PR, because oh, you know, that's what I did. So it's, it's a hard place to be to be able to pull those things apart. Because it's like, I can do it every day, today. 15 times on Sunday, of course, because it done for 25 years, you've done HR for all those years, but it's not what you want to do. So if you keep defaulting, I remember having this conscious decision with myself a year ago going if I keep saying yes to me over here, I'm saying no to me over on this side. And then you're gonna do it for five years and wake up five years old, go, soloing this shit that I don't like. And this is based invest purpose on this earth. And I think that's where a lot of the frustration comes in. For a lot of women at midlife, if they're currently doing something now, or if they stepped back, they haven't worked for a while. And they're so frustrated. No, they want to do something and they're not their thing. You know, kids aren't going to be your end all be all they're not and sorry, they're not. So it's like in there is that that burning and that something's bubbling up and they don't know where to begin? Don't know how to start? Do I go back to the thing I wanted, even though it made me crazy. But that's like a natural default because like, well, I did. But it's actually this really if you look at it as an opportunity to do something new then it gets very exciting. So with that, what do you think the biggest challenges are for women at midlife?

Laurel Rutledge 18:45

I would say one of the biggest challenges for women at midlife is not only seeing the vision of what we really want, what our greater purpose is, but believing that vision because sometimes it is so big and it's so different from what we have done or what we've been trained to do or what we were supposed to do that we don't really believe it right we don't really believe that we can do it we don't really believe in the vision that we've been given and I say all the time you know God's got a burning bush from me I do not resign you got you've got to tell me Laurel, here's what I need you to do, right? But as I started moving into this when I think about what has gotten so clear for me now, I've seen this for years like years, literally going back to when I was little now also have a wonderful therapist. I've been in therapy for a long time. Love my therapists highly recommend therapy, because there's nothing like entrepreneurship to make you realize all the head trash you got going on. Nothing. But I think the big thing for us in midlife is really believing in the vision that we see and believing that it really is meant for us right? Spending that time to get clear and whatever comes up for you believe it, believe it. It's not just some fantasy, or some fallacy because Somebody else said it wasn't possible, or it wasn't real. If you've got it, as Lisa Nichols says, if somebody else didn't believe your vision is okay, because God didn't give it to them, he gave it to you. So believe what you're seeing about you believe what you feel about you believe what you believe and feel your divine purpose is it because that's what you've got to start, if you're gonna get there, you've got to be able to see it. And truly believe that it's possible.

Jen Marples 20:25

Oh my god. So what you all didn't see was me dying of laughing like God's got? Sorry, that's like the best thing I've ever

Laurel Rutledge 20:36

he does, um, read science man, you gotta tell me, Oh, my

Jen Marples 20:39

God, I am the same way. And it's so funny. And actually, I had this like thought today after yoga, I'm like, okay, because I'm writing book and this bit is gonna go in the book. And it's my business coach calls him God wings. I call him like science in the universe. It's the burning bush of like, you know, entrepreneurship will bring it to your knees. And of course, when you tap into that vision, only that vision will get you up and get you going some days, and you're like today woke up. Yeah, it's Monday. It's whatever. It's like, Oh, can we all kind of second guess. And then I had two women approached me, the burning bush says, if you will, oh, my God, I listened to your podcast. And that's it on whatever issues this one was going on and on. And it was, like, thank you so much for actually reaching out to me, and then somebody else, the same thing. So those were like, the burning bushes that I needed this morning. Just the evidence, sort of that evidence of like being on that right path. And so like, I love that I already know what the quotes are going to be the pull out quotes for this podcast. I'm like the breaching flesh. But there's that belief, because you're not always going to have that there isn't going to be the evidence, it's going to be your own personal belief. I'm so glad you said that. So you just trust it, write it down, put it on a sticky notes, so you don't forget it. And keep going right? And just keep going and keep believing and trusting. Because I think that is the thing at midlife, you might be on shaky ground, because you don't trust who you are anymore. And we serve and we give and we do this, this, that and the other and then it's like, okay, what do I really want? Right? There's that inquiry. So what advice would you give to the woman who hasn't been working for a while she's stayed home with kids or whatever has been happening, kids are growing up getting out, or she just knows that there's something more for her. But she doesn't know where to begin? What would you say to her?

Laurel Rutledge 22:23

This is like one of my favorite questions. And it's weird because it taps right, dead center Bullseye into HR. So let me first start by saying this, your HR person, your HR recruiters, in particular, your talent, searchers are trying to put butts in a seat. That's what they're trying to do. Right now we are in another war for talent again, where employees feel much more power, right about what they want and what their deal breakers are, which is wonderful. Now, I tend to be pretty contrary, right? Like, yes, the pendulum has swung, but I still need employees to recognize that it's still a business and they can only move so far, they're only willing to so far. So if you have a deal breaker, be willing to sit with that deal breaker, and employers be honest about what you're willing to have people do and not do what you can and cannot do just we all just need to tell the truth, right? Speak the truth and shame the devil. For those people who have not worked. And those women who have not worked in a long time, you are going to have to tell the story to the recruiter, they don't have the time. And many of them don't have the skills to be able to root out your story from what you send to them. So spend some time really thinking about transferable skills, I don't care if you've been out for 20 years, there are things that you have done that gave you skills that are transferable into the job that you are seeking. So when you look at that job

description, as opposed to doing what women typically do, which is of the 400 things that they put on job descriptions, because nobody knows how to write a good job description, yet, women will look at it and say, I've only done 399 I shouldn't apply, stop it, because most men that apply have done one. So stop it, go look, what are the things that they are asking for? Look at everything else you've done and how that transfers into what they're asking for. I'll do something that's really simple. If I've got a finance background, right, I've not worked in a very, very long time. And I'm looking to go back into the finance area. And I'm thinking, oh, man, they want somebody who's done financial statements, and they want somebody who's done mergers and acquisitions. They want somebody who's done all this other stuff, and I haven't done that. Okay, where have you volunteered? What organizations have you run? Have you done some fundraising for people? There are things that you have done that say, You know what, not only do I still understand finance because my brain didn't atrophy when I went out of the workplace. But here are the many myriad of things that I have done over this course of time and here are the skills that I've built. And here's how that translates into my being able to execute upon this thing you say you want in this job description, transferable skills, skills transfer, if you will. To be an accountant, you can be an accountant in any industry. If you want to be a marketer, you can do that in any industry. When I coach my clients, I asked them, what is the work you want to do? Not what is the job you want to have? I don't want to hear about what job you want to have. I don't want to hear about company want to be in? I don't want to hear about what industry you want to be in. I want to hear about the work you want to do. What does it feel like? What does it look like? Is it inside? Is it outside? Is it with people? Is it not with people? Is it numbers? Is it not numbers? I mean, make a running list? And then look at it and say, Okay, where can I do this? What industries interesting, what companies interesting, but start with the kind of work you want to do and add your transferable skills on top of that I not only want to do this work, but here's how I can add value in doing this work. Because here are all the skills that I have. That's where I would start.

Jen Marples 25:49

Oh, you guys heard it here. First, we have an HR queen, a former HR queen here. So definitely reach out to Laurel if you're looking to go back into the actual corporate world because she's going to tell you how to get a job. Because it's really interesting because yes, women think that because you stayed out and it could just be for like five years, it's not your time that the deck is stacked against you. So because we have you here. And because you know what's out there ageism in the workplace. Yeah. How does a woman overcome that?

Laurel Rutledge 26:24

It's real, ageism is real. What there are five generations working in the workplace right now, five generations, right. And so the first thing overcoming it knowing that it exists. The second thing is being very aware, when you decide to have an interview with someone when you asked to be you apply for a job or you are, are sought out to apply for something. Be aware of what you're seeing, and feeling and hearing listen actively, which means you're listening with your eyes, but you're listening to body language of his knee the questions that are asked, and the questions that are not asked the things that are not said, because that will tell you a lot about the organization, do your investigation, right? Who are they? Who works for them? What do they look like? And I say look like meaning? What age? How diverse? Are they all those kinds of things? And what industry are they in, and then focus very heavily on your transferable skills, you are selling the value that you bring to the organization. That's why I tell

people words matter to me, I am a word nerd. I really always push back on people when they say I want to be paid what I'm worth, I want to be paid what I'm worth, no you don't. No one can pay you what you're worth, because you are priceless. Because you exist. No one can pay you what you're worth, what you want to be paid is for your expertise and the value that you bring because of your expertise. And that has a market value. So you want to demonstrate the value that you're bringing, because there is still value in experience. There's value in those battle scars. One of the simple examples I use, because I come out of manufacturing, is we have all of these things in manufacturing that talk about driving to zero, right, zero safety incident zero incidents, your incidents. And that's where you really want to be you want people to go home the same way they came to work, you want people to go home safely. Here's the challenge with driving to zero. When you have zero safety incidents for an extended period of time, the very next one is going to be catastrophic. Why? Because you have people who have never been through it or they don't know what to do. When you start seeing something go down, you start seeing a process, misfire, you start seeing, especially in chemicals, right, you start seeing things happen that could actually blow up. If you had never had a safety incident for generations, right, or for a length of time where you've had turnover, you now have a cadre of people who have never experienced it. And there are not enough drills in the world to cover for a lack of experience. So you want to use your experience, your expertise, your battle scars, to sell your value, how you can respond to things. There was an article I just saw posted that someone was interviewing an engineer. And when they were asked the question that they didn't know the answer to their response was, you know what? I don't know the answer to that. But let me tell you how when something comes to me that I don't know how I approach it, and they got hired, right? So your expertise is valuable, your age, your experience, your battle scars are valuable. And so play upon that in terms of, I'm not going to talk to you about my age, because my age is irrelevant. What's relevant for you as a business that is for profit, that is here to make money that is here to serve customers, is to have someone on your team who can do that. And not only can do that, but can help other people do it and do it in a way that brings the right bottom line but also takes care of people. So if you're finding ages and focus on the experience that you have and the value of that experience that you bring, it's not going to overcome all of it, but it can absolutely put some people on their heels, if they were concerned about who they saw sitting across from them, oh,

Jen Marples 30:06

I'm fired up. That was amazing advice. And I used to say this to people way back when, when it wasn't about ageism, it was more like, do I not have the experience and thank you also for saying things about women in the job descriptions, because that has been talked about time and time again, 15 job points, woman has 15 needs, she's like, I have them all. But maybe I need one more PhD. I've got one, I've got this nailed. And then that's what happens. And then they end up running stuff. And we all see what happens. And we need more women in the workforce. It's an aside, but it's kind of like saying, like that, it's just irrelevant. And also, like, I got this, I used to say this to people, and if you think I suck fire me in three months, but I'm not gonna. So it's like having that sort of that male energy, almost like you're owning it, and going, you've got it because that life experience all that one, because women discount everything that they do. So I'm so glad you said that. Because there, there is nary a woman out there who just sits idle with her children. She's involved in things at the school and yes, fundraising, running multiple things while maintaining a home while maintaining doing other than using trip travel planning this that the other women have so many things that they do on a daily basis. And just because they're

not being paid for it, which we should, that's probably another conversation for another time, that it doesn't have any value and has value. So thank you so much. I'm like I am fired up. Thank you for saying that. Because that's such important advice. And I know, we talked about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship, that's another road. And that's why we talk about entrepreneurs, and it takes a certain set of skills and not even skills, I'm gonna say just, it's not for the faint of heart.

Laurel Rutledge 31:44

It is not for Jesus, it is not.

Jen Marples 31:49

I mean, none of it's really for the faint of heart. But it's really just believing in yourself. Having that self inquiry and seeing like what you want to do and might be too scary, especially for women out there. Because there's a lot of women I talked to divorced, or they've lost a husband and now are thrust back into the workforce. And it's a scary, it can be a very scary place to be of like, holy shit, I gotta take care of these kids, my family. Yeah, the shelves are littered with books out there, but all the women who had everything, and it's all of a sudden the husband runs away, like fighting child support all this stuff. So there you are. So I know it's real. And so we need tools, we need resources, we need women, like, like cheering you on, like we can do it. We all need to band together and support each other and help each other out. That's my other thing. So that leads me to this question. What do you think we as women can do better to support each other?

Laurel Rutledge 32:34

Grace, grace, we need to give ourselves some grace. And we need to give each other some grace. So when you talk about women who, you know, oh, my gosh, now I've got to go do this thing, I've got to go back to work, I've got to, you may got it, you may gotta write, there are things that happen in our lives, we have to do, right, you got to do what you got to do to you can do what you want to do. So give yourself some grace and put things in perspective, here's where my life is right now. In order for me to pay my bill support, my kids do whatever the thing is, here's what I'm going to need to do. But this is not the end of my life. And so I'm going to go in it. And I'm going to do it, I'm going to show up, I'm going to be authentic, I'm going to kick some butt, right, I'm going to do all of this stuff. And I'm going to be making a plan. Because this is what I had to do for now. So give yourself some grace, give other women some grace, because you never know what race somebody's running. You just don't you never know what race somebody is running. And I've got to tell you, often women, especially in corporate America, and in particular women of color, when you look at some of the positions that were put in, when they are promotions, right, quote, unquote, when they are given these really great projects, which are given as cleanup, you're given cleanup, and that cleanup is fraught with all kinds of landmines. It is most times a setup for failure. You're given the crap under the guise of No, no, you're so great. And we're going to promote you here. And we're going to give you all of this opportunity. That's why I say listen, actively. All things are not good things. All promotions are not good promotions, all money is not good money. So when you're making a decision, and looking at what other women are doing and what other women need, start with giving yourself and them some grace. Let's not make assumptions about what race they're running. And let's pay attention to all of the things that are happening around us and around them. To understand how we can best be supportive and how we can be that sponsor that cheerleader, right, because a sponsor and I want people to hear this. There's the mentor, right the

person that's really going to help you through, but the sponsor is that person who brings your name up in rooms where you aren't present. That's someone who is your advocate, and you may not even know it. They've seen your work in your ethic, they see how you show up. You may never know that somebody's advocating for you. That's a sponsor. So make sure where you can. If you have the power sponsor or another woman or other women who are doing great things, be a sponsor for people, be an advocate for people. That's what I think we can do to really support is understanding that there is such power. There's such power in women, entrepreneurs, and women in the corporate space, there is a level of compassion, there is a level of insight. There is a level of disconnectedness that we bring, that is so powerful. And so if we will give ourselves some grace, not being competition, be a sponsor and an advocate for each other, I think we can go so much farther, because there really is plenty for everyone. It's the systems that make us think there's scarcity in the systems. That's not real. That's head trash. That's a lie. There's plenty. You just got to find that thing that's for you, and seek some help to do that.

Jen Marples 35:52

I love that. Yes. And I'm actually speaking on this topic, women supporting women and a few days, and that's the whole thing, and it's gonna be part of my book, like you are feeling this way because society has set us up to be bickering amongst ourselves and being in fear and lack. So we're not out there loud and proud. I'm right there with you and activism. So if we're doing that, then we're not showing up. We're not showing up to vote. We're not showing up to better our communities. We're just not doing that. Because we're stuck in this in that bullshit. I just call it it's a whole we've been sold a load of shit, basically. Yes. And so just get out of it. Then somebody was saying I can't remember who it was. But that whole thing of like, well, if I like somebody else's flame, mine is gonna dim. No, think about this. You light every woman's flame. And there's a big huge raging fricking bonfire of female empowerment. And we're all lifting all ships are lifting because guess what, the guys have done it forever. The old boys club that did it? Are they scary? No, we have to adopt that same mentality. And, you know, Laurel, when women are put in positions of power, whatever we're doing. So if we're in the corporate world, if we have our own businesses, we're making smart choices. We lead different, we're also looking for more opportunities to have other women rise. I mean, that's just how it works. So thank you for I got so fired up about this. So glad you said all that. What do you wish for women at midlife?

Laurel Rutledge 37:16

Oh, what I really wish for women at midlife is just peace, peace. There's so much that we're battling, there's so much that we're fighting. There is masculine energy, feminine energy, how do we show up what shoes you're wearing? What's your hair look like? How do you just piece the piece to show up as you are the piece to show up wherever you want to be? And do it in a way that is authentic to you. Just peace. And I think we're far from that we are quite far from that right now. There's so much going on, that it's not unattainable, but it is going to be a battle for us to find a collective peace. So I wish for each of the listeners, find a way to find your own peace, that own place where you can just be and you can be still you can be still and you can listen, you can be who you are. Find your village, right I know people use tribe or posse or I use village, find your village that place where you can just be who you are, and be peaceful about that. And just own that. I wish women peace.

Jen Marples 38:19

I love that. I wished for that to God would what a beautiful place it would be if we were all at peace. Yes. Oh. Okay, moving on to a couple of tactical questions. Do you have a favorite book or a resource Do you want to share with my community.

Laurel Rutledge 38:35

So one of the big ones and I mentioned it earlier, I love the big leap. And his follow up the joy of genius. It's like a workbook to find your your genius zone, I highly recommend those. Also for entrepreneurs. This is marketing by Seth Godin. It's talks about niching down but just really kind of understanding and getting clear on who it is you want to serve and how you have to show up. You don't have to go out and have 3 million followers to do anything you just don't. That's just a fallacy, right? That's a social marketing, social media marketing thing. Just be you. So those two are really good. And then I finished reading a book, a couple of books, they are not the easiest reads. But there's some great messages in them if you can get through the books. And one of those is by Chef Andre rush. So it's his story, and it's called Call me shift dammit. And he says some things about when you discount me you discount my passion, you discount my intestinal fortitude, you discount my drive, and that's what sold me on the book. Right? That's like right before chapter six, I think. And then I read David Goggins book that was the guy who's the Navy SEAL who he was on the Today show for a while, and I did his audiobooks. So it was it was read to me, but the things that he did to really push his body and so it wasn't so much about the body pushed, but it was about the mindset. He really talks about guarding your mind and hardening your mind. And I would take that from the standpoint of get help when you need it. You know, if you see something, say something, get help. There's no shame in asking for help. Like I said, I've been in therapy for years. And don't let someone tell you that being in therapy for a long time means you're somehow more broken. If you are with the right therapist, the relationship actually changes, right? My therapist is actually kind of more of a business coach than anything now, but seek out some support and some help. As you are continuing to move, especially in entrepreneurship, you do not have to go through all of this stuff alone. That's a fallacy. There is plenty for everyone, and pay attention, right? Don't get so caught up in seeking so much for everyone that you don't pay attention to the people who don't have your best interest in mind, but seek help where you need it. So those are kind of the four things that I would I would think through I'm reading a bunch of stuff right now. But the big leap, this is marketing, and then the two books by the Veterans, the military veterans are really good. I love

Jen Marples 40:43

getting different perspectives too. So not always kind of staying in the same sort of section at the bookstore. But looking at some different sections and getting different authors and different perspectives. It's so important. Do you have a ritual or practice that you do every day that sort of sets you up for success.

Laurel Rutledge 40:57

So I do have every morning and and I can always tell when I have gotten inconsistent because my days are not as good. I do first thing in the morning, have a meditation that I read daily. I've got a Joyce Meyers book that I do a daily devotional with her. And then I have a mantra that I wrote my business Codex, he had us write a mantra. And so I read that every day. And then I have a thing that I read this right at the it's actually at the corner of my computer, can't see it in my camera, but and it's a mantra that I read, trust yourself. In this moment, you are enough, in this moment, you have everything that you

need. And I read that multiple times a day starting first thing in the morning. And so it's really about for me setting the day setting intentions, reminding myself who I am and who's I am in the morning, and then I try to get my role or my exercise in first thing in the morning, or like my brain wakes up before so I try to get all the stuff done early. Because about eight o'clock. I'm out. I'm down for the count. So getting in early.

Jen Marples 41:53

I love that. I love that. My final question for you. What do you think the best thing is about being at midlife.

Laurel Rutledge 42:01

Here's the thing for me, and women that I knew told me this was going to happen. So I took five of my girlfriends to Jamaica for my 50th birthday. I've been planning it for four years, and we went and it was fabulous. It was just it was truly just a break vacation. And that's when I launched my podcast on my birthday. There was a switch that flipped on my 50th birthday. I'm like, You know what? My most of my life, I haven't really been tolerant of intolerance. I haven't really been tolerant of a bunch of stuff. But I'm a typical lead, right? I'm gonna be in it till I win it until I'm not like that I'm done. But it 50 I was like, You know what, I am just gonna lose the tolerance for the bullshit. I just don't do it anymore. I will walk away. I will love you mean it. We do not have to be friends, right? People are in your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime. And I do not believe in making lifetime friends out of reason or season friends. And so I just have no desire, no ability and no tolerance for the bullshit anymore. And I just don't, I don't get upset. I just absolutely walk away. I don't suffer fools lightly. And I will spend a lot of my time with them. Because time is not renewable. Oh,

Jen Marples 43:15

that's such good advice. It's you know, if we could just do that. Yeah, we can just do that. We'll be so far ahead.

Laurel Rutledge 43:24

Something happened. I don't know what it was it 50 Something just happened about late. What am I doing again? Yeah. And I'm not ugly about it. Right? I just walk away, I'm just not gonna have a conversation.

Jen Marples 43:35

It's so empowering. And you can just I tell women all the time to it's like, just look who you're around. Just because things have always been done a certain way. And you even if it's even if it's family members, and you've done a holiday a certain way, and that gets tough, but you don't have to do it. You get to surround yourself with people who are gonna lift you up and you get to choose who you're around and like you're saying, You don't have to be dramatic about it and say I am not doing this anymore. You just don't do it and like love love from afar. It's all good. I don't remember what you said like love you mean it. Love you mean from afar. We're not going to lunch anymore. Sorry. But you don't have to say it's a gentle it's a gentle thing but it gets you in harmony equilibrium and it's frees up that space and that mindset for you to go do all that you're meant to do in this world. I love that. What a great way to end. So final final where can we find you support you learn more about you?

Laurel Rutledge 44:25

Thank you so much for having me. The easiest way to catch me is just on my website Laurel rutledge.com. That's all run together. And everything's there podcast. Is there fireside show is there radio show is there how you work with me is there everything is on the website. So I would love to have you guys go visit that and if there's way I can be of service. All you have to do is DM me on social I'm at Laurel K Rutledge or the Rutledge perspective on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, some Twitter. I'm not really heavy on Twitter, but you can find me those places. Yeah,

Jen Marples 44:56

awesome. And we'll link all of that in the show notes. So Laurel, it has just been is amazing. thing is I thought it was going to be today. And of course, yes, we could talk for hours and hours and hours. And we know Laurel and I know we're going to something's going to happen and manifest in the future when we're going to get some of these women that we all love together and put something together to support all of you because there's there's something brewing, I all I can say is there's something brewing and manifesting, women are rising. And we want to we want to help and serve and so stay tuned. So thank you so much for being on the show today. I adore you and I'll talk to you soon. Thank you for

Laurel Rutledge 45:30

having me. Bye.