

Ep 138 V2 Elisa Camahort Page

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SPEAKERS

Jen Marples, Elisa Camahort Page

Jen Marples 00:00

Elisa Camahort Page 00:05

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Jen Marples 01:01

Hello, and welcome to the Jen Marple Show. I'm your host Jen Marples, the champion of midlife women and cheerleader for all women dedicated to helping you embrace and rock the second and best half of life. Each week I'll bring you conversations with incredible women who will inspire us educate us and motivate us to live our best midlife. I'll also pop on solid to share my best advice tips and tricks to help you unapologetically go for your dreams, embrace your age, and become unstoppable. If you're itching for a change, ready to pivot or looking for a second act, stick around as this is the show for you. And know this you're not too fucking old. Hello everyone and welcome to the Jen Marple show today I have a beautiful guest Her name is Elisa camel Hort Paige. I'm Alisa about a year ago and I adore her and you are going to adore her too. She has done a lot in her time. And this is what happens at midlife. We've done a lot by the time we've gotten to midlife. So I'll tell you a little bit about what she's done. And we're gonna get into a really juicy conversation today about all things midlife through a really fun and interesting pop culture lens that only Elisa can take us through. And it's actually one of her keynotes that she does a lot to companies and businesses and things like that. And so without further ado, I'm just gonna give a little bit of a intro to her and then she's going to take it away. So Lisa is a co founder of blog her a little blogging platform way back in the day, because if you're 53 like me, right midlife, like Blogger was revolutionary, because it was blogs, it was like first we had the interwebs and

email and then we had blogs, that was like the whole thing. And what I love about law currently says gonna go into it is how it really I want to say was one of the first real big communities that started to get built, and, you know, brought women together. And we realized back then that women needed to be connected about all the things, so at least is going to tell us about that. But I just love that. So she sold that company. And now today she does fractional CEO work. So she goes in and helps companies solve big problems. She's got her own podcast called The Op Ed podcast, Op Ed page podcast, apologies, she's got this week ish. It's a newsletter on substack that we're gonna give you all these links to later but it's amazing, you're gonna love it, and you're gonna want to definitely subscribe. She basically is a badass, and she goes out and speaks on stages all around the world, about all the things and one of her keynotes is about Buffy the Vampire Slayer and how we can live a better life today basically learning from Buffy. When you think about Elisa, obviously a smarty pants with starting all these fabulous businesses and Blog Her. It's like Buffy the Vampire Slayer. So she's going to tell us all about it. I can't wait to dig into all that. But without further ado, Lisa, welcome to the show. I'm so glad you're here and I just adore you.

Elisa Camahort Page 03:56

Oh, thank you so much, Jen. I'm so happy to be here and to be speaking with you. Before

Jen Marples 04:00

we get into all the nitty gritty sort of pop culture, he talks, we're going to talk about midlife. We're gonna get into all of it. Just give us all a little overview of your career like why you wanted to start Blog Her how you ended up wrapping it up what you're doing today, and then we're going to get into our juicy talk about pop culture Buffy is going to help us in midlife. Well,

Elisa Camahort Page 04:20

I actually considered Blog Her to be about my fourth career I had one of my favorite words is peripatetic, which I got from A Chorus Line, there's a song with that it means sort of going from one thing to the next and sort of dynamic. And I really feel like that's what I did in my career. I was in tech, more traditional high tech or working for hardware companies during the.com Boom and then all the way through the.com bust and I started blogging just for fun, you know a psychopath had a personal blog, I was just using it and this was you have to remember this is before social media. There was no Twitter. There. Facebook was for college students. There was no Instagram YouTube was founded after blocker was founded, so it really was Blog Her and then some online communities like Yahoo groups, I think MySpace was around to one thing that my two co founders of blog, her Lisa stone and joy DeJardin and I kind of noticed was that the mainstream was starting to pay attention to blogs, and all the people that they cited and asked for comment and directed people to their links, were all men and predominantly white men. And we thought, Oh, my God, there cannot be this new democratized form of media, where anyone can participate. And we're just going to reconstruct all the old structures of power. And so we decided to start with a conference that was just like any other tech conference or blog conference, but where all the experts and speakers just happened to be women. So we weren't talking about being women, we were women talking about what we were expert in, whether that was business, politics, you name it. It really started as just a project, the three of us were not previously colleagues or friends, we met through happenstance and serendipity. And we just decided to do this project together. It was only after finishing the first event. And looking at the excitement of the groundswell of excitement

around it, they were like, you know, there's something else here. And so then we decided to form a company. And at that point, all three of us are super, we're kind of serious about it. So we got a lawyer, and we drew up papers, and we were like, very, very focused and serious about it. And we really were the first company that made a market for women who were creating content online, that is now taken for granted the whole influencer economy and how driven that is by women. When we were doing it, it was very, very different. And we had to spend a lot of time evangelizing the quality of the work, the quality of the standards and guidelines that we created for the work and creating an ecosystem for brands and these women who were creating followings and content to come together and be in relationship and being community. We felt that the nature of the market was different, but also the nature of building that integrated community was super different at the time. That's

Jen Marples 07:17

so cool. And I'm still kicking myself that I never got. So one of the blocker conference this out. And it's interesting that you say because we take it for granted, because when you're just taking us through, like the time that was pre pretty much all social media that it really was quite revolutionary, at the time, but I'm glad you guys had the foresight to see that women had a voice because we're obviously 20 years later, we're still fighting for that. You know, 70% of the voices out there in the media in the world are still 70% men. So you know, we're just looking for equality. I was having this conversation the other day, you know, I'm married to man, I'm raising a man. It's not about I don't like to bash men. I do like to bash the systems that were not built, collectively and fairly in a 5050 sort of lens. Because so many women, we don't have to go into all but we all know we all struggle in the work life balance, not because it was all built, not by working moms, or women in general. But yeah, we just we'd love that balance. So I think the work you're doing the work I'm doing, we just want to get the balance back equality. We need all of us to make this world go round. Yeah, before we get into sort of the pop culture stuff I want to talk to you about what do you think was sort of the magic? Because I know there's a lot of women out there trying to build community. They're they're trying to build community, or find communities. So what was sort of the magic of Blog Her? And what would you tell women out there that I know a lot of women, especially in this midlife, they've lost friends change jobs, find it very hard to find new friends and new communities?

Elisa Camahort Page 08:50

Well, I think one of the issues is that I've joined a lot of communities that were really networks. And I do think there's a difference. And I think if you are whether you are organizing a convening of people or you are joining, understanding whether it's a network or a community is important, because we all need networks, like networks are great, but never start transactional. And networks are, by their nature about kind of tit for tat. And there's a place for that we need that. communities, our omni directional communities are about supporting more than the next thing. You've got to knock off your list. Communities have an ethos around responsiveness, reciprocity support, that can be different than a network. And I think a lot of people put out there that they're building a community when they're really really building a network and I would just ask for honesty and transparency. I think that that is what builds community. And there's a I used to say back in the day that web one o was about unidirectional brands had website Somebody told you stuff. And then web two Oh was saying, Oh, now we can comment. Now we can talk back. Like, you know, you speak and then I speak but community is a circle. And community is about responsiveness. And that doesn't mean to build a community, you have to do

everything everyone in the community wants, that's impossible, because people are different. But it does mean you have to explain and offer it up and say, here's why we're doing what we're doing. If it's not for you, it's not for you. We are we don't have to be for everybody all the time. So to me, it's the ethos that kind of separates network from community. And it helps to really define for yourself, what are you really looking for? And what are you really trying to provide? And then just do that, find that go there be that, but know how to distinguish these things. That's

Jen Marples 10:50

a really good point, I don't think I've ever heard it quite laid out like that sort of the network being one thing and community being another thing, because I've led enough groups and like, and we have all been in part of things when there's no structure, and it feels like chaos. And then you get mad at people because they're doing this, but it's because they don't know and it can breed chaos. So I love that just being clear if you're building something being clear on what it is. And if you're joining something, make sure that there's clarity, community management

Elisa Camahort Page 11:17

can feel uncomfortable. Yeah, like I spent many an hour as the person who is ultimately responsible for our online community. I spent many an hour having rational civil disagreements with people online, who had things to say about not liking a decision we made here or there. And I didn't, we didn't change our decisions most of the time. But we did talk to people about it. You know, so community management isn't always fun or comfortable.

Jen Marples 11:45

I know I've talked to a few clients that I've had over time, and everyone's kind of talked themselves out of actually managing committees kind of everything you've just said, Because careful what you ask for because everyone's human, everyone comes in with a different perspective on life and expectations. And that and when they run smoothly, it's because people have been really intentional about having strict rules and following them. So I'm glad we're kind of having this conversation. Because I know it's like swirling out everyone's to build community and find communities and networks, but it's like, what is it? I'm going through that kind of examining some of these networks that I'm in? Yeah. Can I even make it to any of these things? What is it really about? I mean, we can't spread ourselves too thin, they have to really add something. And you want to be able to show up to the way people expect you to show up because it's a two way street. So I love that. So I want to flip it a little bit because we talked about pop culture. So I know that when we said that at the beginning, I mentioned Buffy the Vampire Slayer which, by the way, was one of my favorite shows. Yeah, yeah. And it was unlike anything. Um, I don't think there's any been anything like it really to date. Because we Buffy the Vampire just the name alone, you're like, that's going to be something completely ridiculous. And it totally wasn't. I was so invested in all of them. I really, but I haven't watched it in a long time. But just tell me about it. How did you come up with this Buffy the Vampire Slayer as sort of? Is it a mantra? Is it a guide for life? What is it? How do you talk to people about it?

Elisa Camahort Page 13:18

Well, whenever we look at our like I think of Buffy is like my favorite television show ever and I watch all the kind of addictive you know, Shits Creek and Ted last on all of those. We're all going to have

something different. There's going to be people who are like saying right on to me, like it's my favorite too. And there's gonna be people are like, what, what about the wire? You know, so we all can be different. But what I found interesting was when I was thinking about this is that there is cultural context. And there's personal context that explains why something really hits us, right where we need to be hit. In the cultural context, Buffy came out in the late 90s. You know, there were a lot of horror films in the 70s and 80s. Where women were the victims, the damsel in distress and scream came out the year before Buffy started and started to turn some of these tropes on its head. And Buffy just took the tropes and like smashed them and said, No, the woman is going to be the protector, the woman is gonna be the badass. But if that was all there was to it that Oh, Isn't it surprising and delightful that there's this cute, girly, teenage badass. I mean, that wouldn't have lasted seven seasons, created a series of graphic novels and had the same amount of Google Zeitgeist. And I've looked all this up, you know, it has the same amount of Google intensity today that it had 10 years ago that it just has a very consistent amount of interest. So there's the cultural context of when it came out. It also came out as grunge was declining. And there was some girly backlash like I'm a Barbie girl came out the year before Buffy came out. There was also my personal context though. 1997 is the year I got into tech after being in a totally different industry. And I got into tech by taking a really junior position and everyone you know who who knows anything? about Buffy knows that it took like the demons and monsters of high school and college life and turn them into literal demons and monsters. And so it was the whole show was like a metaphor for that. But it was really the metaphor of someone coming into a new environment, trying to understand their own capabilities, trying to understand what they should do in the world. And so for me, even though I was in my 30s, that is how I felt I was coming into this whole new world of tech. I was often the only woman in the room. So I felt kind of set apart and different. And so all of Buffy is travails. Were very relevant to me. We bring all that when we fall in love with shows we bring what's happening around us environmentally, but we also bring what's happening to us in our lives. The thing is, the lessons that I ended up taking most from Buffy, were not about, oh, she can kick ass. Because the show wasn't just about her kicking ass. Every season of that show. She required her team, she required the Scooby gang, as they were called, she needed collaboration, she needed teamwork, she sometimes had to make sacrifices to get the outcome she really wanted. There were just so many lessons about how she was a leader, and what she had to do to lead her team to quite literally save the world like season after season. But it still really resonated with me about how she handled learning to grow as a leader of people and leader of missions. So that's why I just think nothing kind of does it with the same panache and witty wit and a lot of fan service like constantly calling back to previous episodes. So it's just wrapped up in such an effervescent package that you can derive all these lessons. And still, you can just watch it sometimes when you don't want to think about the lessons and you just want to enjoy a really witty episode of TV.

Jen Marples 17:02

Whoo, I love it. So is there one thing that Buffy the Vampire Slayer can teach us or help us in midlife?

Elisa Camahort Page 17:08

I think there are several things. But I think one of the things that's really important is that Buffy could be scared and strong. And she could be girly and powerful. She contained multitudes, which I think is actually a Walt Whitman quote from Song of Myself, but I like to say she contains multitudes. And so do we multiple things can be true at the same time, there are essential conflicts that we have to deal with.

And I don't think that gets more clear as we get older. I think actually, we just get a lot better at managing the multitudes. And at the end of the day, Buffy also has a lot of lessons about how infusing what you do with love can help you get through the tough times on your own and with the people around you. All right, so

Jen Marples 17:57

I want to explore the multitudes. Yes, you and I were talking offline about this. And for everyone listening Elisa, I think it was in your last newsletters, you're gonna have to sign up for her substack and get it because her newsletters are really fabulous. And I love this especially talking about this idea of multitudes and that two things can be true at once in midlife, because it sounds like it's easy. And I've we know, midlife is hard. We have all this stuff coming at us. But it can be this wonderful time and a really fucking hard time at the same time. Well,

Elisa Camahort Page 18:31

that's why I'm so glad for the work you do. And I think midlife is becoming more of a thing we talked about. But let's face it, it wasn't really that talked about when I first you know, I'm 59. So I think women are always sold messaging about what we are supposed to be experiencing as the best time ever. And I think people do that to women hitting midlife a lot. Like now's the time when you're finally free. You're finally, you know, you have no fucks left to give. As the saying goes, when you are just fabulous and really know yourself. You're really comfortable in your own skin. All of those things can be true. They don't have to be true, but they can be true. But I don't think people talk enough of perimenopause and menopause are no joke. And you might hit some roadblocks there and you might have trouble connecting the dots for a while and so you might be going what is happening with me. And then the other thing is I don't think anyone warns you about parenting your parents or caregiving. And everyone I know my age is have some form of this happening. And being prepared for that. I think podcasts like yours and sources like yours that can talk about these highs. In the context of these. I'll call them lows. I'm not I didn't enjoy perimenopause and I I'm still really adjusting and figuring out how to live with caregiving. And that's okay too. And that can all be part of this multitudes these two things can be true. I can feel in some way He's very relieved to be the age I am and to feel like I know what I want. And I'm what I'm in a position to do. And I can also be like, Man, but life hits you like one two punch. And I think we should allow ourselves to feel these things and talk about these things to be warned, I felt unprepared. I felt like this superficial conversation was happening that didn't prepare me. And I'd rather have this real conversation where we can be prepared for, yeah, lean into that no fucks to give like lean in, use that to point you in a direction that's really going to help you make meaning in your life. And at the same time, be aware, these are the things that might crop up that you need to deal with. And they have ramifications and repercussions that are also worth talking about.

Jen Marples 20:49

I was just listening to a podcast this morning Rich Roll, but had said this is interesting thread that just came up because it's like social media. 1.0 was pretty, pretty perfect. It's all like this. And then social media, I guess, like 2.0 is more authenticity. But then there's this thing with authenticity right now that's showing up where it's performative. So it goes into this realm of so I'm very cognizant of when I started this podcast and the stuff I talked about, it's like, I'm a positive person, by nature, but I'm also very real person, the shit hits the fan, I just happened to be a glass is half full. But oh, you know, last week, I was

on my knees with something very crazy. That happened with one of my kids. And you're like, what is it and then you know, it strips it away. You're, like, crying so hard. Your nose is bleeding type of thing. And he's fine. Good. Sorry to leave everyone hanging like it was fine. It's one of these things we all kind of deal with in parenting. So it's just a crazy time. But it's like these two things can be true at once. And I've always made it a point to share and kind of reflect of things can be super fabulous. Like it can be all fabulous having those margaritas at night bubble ball, like, Oh, look at that sunset. And the next time it's like, these are these real things. But that's how I really wanted to dig into this two things can be true at once type thing and I don't want and the women I counseled to to be authentic. And it's can be really fucking scary. And I'm not telling everybody to go do it. And I feel like I'm taking one for the team. I went out there. It's part of my mission. And I can't talk about everything for privacy reasons and things with kids. And I just, I know, and I want to share those types of things. And I'm so glad you're bringing up the parenting. So we'll get into it. But

Elisa Camahort Page 22:35

yeah, I have a lot of thoughts about this. Because all due respect to those dudes, they have no idea if they think social media 1.0 was all about pretty pretty. They weren't involved in the women's blogosphere of the arts and early teens, because even Kennedy got up at our very first blogger event and said, Mommy blogging is a radical act, because and she was right, because it was being honest about both sides of the parenting that you can fall in love with this creature, and it can still cause you so much pain. And it's also we control what we consume. If I've one message about talking about pop culture obsessions is to say a lot of times we think a lot about what we put out in the world. And I always used to say authenticity only means that everything you say is true. It doesn't have to mean that you say everything. That's true. There's a difference. So you get to draw the lines, only you can draw your boundaries about what's authentic for you. And you get to do that, but we don't talk as much about everything you consume. And you can consume pretty pretty content. Or you can find the people being super real. You know, I talk a lot about politics. But I decided years ago that it wasn't my ministry to like get into long debates with people. It was my ministry to share facts and information and resources and citations to provide to people who are I know, it's preaching to the choir, kind of but I'm willing to do that kind of research and help other people who want to go have the arguments. One of my mantras is I'm here to be helpful not to argue with strangers on the internet. But some people really like that. And we all get to choose our boundaries, on both what we create and put out there and on what we consume, because it all affects us.

Jen Marples 24:19

I love that you said that because we have agency and I've done this I still marvel I think 2020 was real. It's like, I actually can't be a part of most of this discourse, because it's going to bring me down. There's three teenagers in my house, there's things that need to happen. And when I started getting with the podcast, and I started getting more and more public, I will often say you know clearing up the clutter. One of the things about the clutter is the clutter that you consume. So look at what you're consuming and it's it goes to that whole thing you'd like your the five people you spend your time with to so if everybody's like the world is ending, then the world is going to be ending if that's who you're surrounding yourself with. And it goes to like the content and everything. You're consuming if you wake up and you're first thing, it's like, you know, bleeds, it leads, all the headlines you're gonna get are going to be the most provocative, most stress inducing things you can imagine. Because we all know like,

they need eyeballs, and they need you to be spending time on platforms. But you can have a nice balance. Yeah. And make sure you're following different types of people. Because the algorithm if you look, everyone's doing well, all of a sudden, it's all people like you, maybe with your same file, all of a sudden, that just magically happens, even if you clean things out. And it really, it really impacts how we think. And it's all you have to do is take one trip somewhere like at a town and like, be with real people. You're like, Oh, my God, there's a whole world out there. We kind of forget, when our focus is so narrowed. I want to ask you this one question, because in that newsletter you wrote about how did some of these different shows and I love Ted last, so my kids love Ted law. So Ted Lassa was like, amazing. I've cried so many times at TED Lau so because it seemed to me to it's a magical show, and you know, showing like authenticity, it's the end of the toxic male, right. So we're like really peeling back the layers to allow so for president. And then you mentioned there were a couple of shows that you took yourself out of because you love them and you do you want to share what those were?

Elisa Camahort Page 26:13

Yeah, so I think I consider Ted 100 and like Shit Creek to be those ones where there. It's like, I beat bought buying IBM, like, no, no one's gonna get fired for liking Ted last or Shit Creek. And they have lots of messages, although I do think they have underlying messages about mental health and disassociation. And like, all these kind of serious things that they slot in there, which is what makes them so fruitful for me. I'll talk about one example of a show. So Hux is the show on HBO Max, it stars Jean Smart, who's a national treasure, I'd love her. I love her. She plays an aging female comedian, who's struggling to stay relevant. So I relate to her age and stage of life, you know. And she's built up a lot of walls. And she's super crotchety and cranky. And, and she's mean. And she hires a young woman writer to try and help her freshen up her act. And they have this really kind of contentious but close relationship. And I watched season one, and I pretty much ate it up and thought it was great. It's super high quality, it's well written, it's well acted, it's a really good show. But in season two, the level of her meanness got so I mean, and then they would occasionally have a show this glimmer of humanity. And I could tell by the way, the show was produced that we were supposed to grab on to that glimmer of humanity to show the heart underneath. And I thought, Oh, my God, this is if I was working in Silicon Valley, she would. She's embodying the asshole genius that companies put up with. And even though they're just jerks, to everyone around them, they're thought to be so talented or so good at closing deals, or whatever it is that you just keep them around, even though they are single handedly destroying morale and other people's both competence and confidence. And I just, I would watch every week, and a part of me would just be like, Oh, God, she makes my soul hurt the way she's treating people. Then I thought, why am I watching this, I could go watch this in real life. 10 miles up the peninsula, you know, like, I don't need to actually consume this in my life. Even though I admit it's high quality, everything is high quality about it. For me, it reinforces a lesson, I don't need to consume in my entertainment. So I stopped watching a few episodes into season two. And you know, I haven't missed it. That's my kind of example of how I look at something and say, Is this actually serving me? Or is this making me feel bad? And there are other things in life that can make me feel bad? I don't need this to make me feel bad.

Jen Marples 28:50

Right? I don't need to actually put it into my repertoire and make you feel bad. Yeah, um, yeah, there's certain things you know, people recommended and like, it's just not my thing. You can have all the

awards and this and that, but if it's not gonna lift me up, and if I'm like, in either you're kind of in a mentally heavier stage or whatever, sometimes you just need to go right to like the cotton candy. And that's what we need, right?

Elisa Camahort Page 29:12

Never did watch Silicon Valley. And I maybe if I watched it now, with some distance, I would find it amusing. But I was like, do I need to watch a show about bumbling male entrepreneurs who fail upward? And, you know, like, no, like, No, I don't. You know, when we raised our first round of funding at BlogHer in 2007, less than 2% of venture capital went to women, solely women founders, whether those they were solo or like us three women founders companies was solely women founders. That number has not budged. It hasn't budged. It's almost 20 years. So I don't need to watch bumbling male founders failing up.

Jen Marples 29:51

Yeah, you know, we're gonna feel sorry for you. We don't feel sorry for you. I don't need

Elisa Camahort Page 29:55

to cringe about that. That's just life. Going back

Jen Marples 29:59

to that Two things being true at once. I want to shed a little bit of light, because we've talked about this before we got on about the challenge of being in this middle phase. Yeah, so we talked about a little bit, but the there's the aging parents, I my dad was sick this summer. I mean, everyone is dealing with something. It's just, it's age. I mean, yeah, it's what's what's going to happen at that age. And then you know, there's career pivots and talking to these friends of mine. On the weekend, some friends from 20 plus years, like, you know, some different stories, one, I only got five more years max left in this because it's something so killing and wiggly, you can leave earlier, but she doesn't see the path out yet. The other one is a single mom, who, at 53 is finding it really hard to find a job. She's kind of a specialized thing. She's like, I'll get to the end, nothing and nothing. So that's its own set of ageism, it's rearing its ugly head over here, the number here, so another friend of ours was done very well, she worked her ass off, sold her company, and now is kind of riding out this transition. And then she's gonna look to do something new. I mean, it's just, everyone's got these varied experiences. And that's just as little microcosm. But what I love and just want to delve into just a little bit more, because I really think it's kind of like a life vest or a parachute for it. Not even a parachute, but just more of a life vest is that the more we talk about this, and that it's hard, because this group of friends hadn't been together for many, many months, and I'm always pushing like, I'm always here, if you need me if it's midnight, two o'clock in the morning, and there's a crisis. I'm here for anyone all the time. And we don't talk about enough we know mental health, especially at midlife with menopause. I mean, it's just this stuff that we ride this wave that talking about this universal experience, and shedding light on it telling these stories it needs to happen, because I'm very much over here like Yeah, yeah, yeah, you're not fucking able to do this. But yeah, this shit is hard. Those two things can be true at once. Absolutely.

Elisa Camahort Page 31:57

And I think we all need to wrestle with what aspiration means to us today. In this stage of life, what is ambition? What is aspiration? Oddly enough, one of the greatest lessons I had about this came from when I got a chance to interview Sarah Michelle Gellar who played Buffy. For blog, her actually she came to two different bloggers, I interviewed her twice. And the first time I asked her, if she felt at the time she was pursuing an entrepreneurial venture, she wasn't really acting. And I asked her if she felt this immense sense of pressure, because the something she did so young. And by the way, she had already won a Daytime Emmy before her Buffy. So as a teenager, she wanted Daytime Emmy and on all my children. And then she does Buffy, which is this cult hit. I said, you know, do you feel pressure about everything you do? How can it measure up and she's like, Oh, it's exactly the opposite. I feel like no one can ever take away from me that I was part of something that has that kind of legacy and that kind of long life. And if I never do anything else, I did that. That's like plenty. Everything else I do now is bonus. And I thought that was a great and she's considerably younger than me by at least a decade. And I thought that was a great perspective. And it's something I remind myself of, for me, it's Blog Her for you, it might be something else. But like, we've already done stuff, that's super impressive, you know, everything else is bonus. And so having that has been helpful for me, getting clarity and making my fear concrete instead of abstract is really helpful for me, especially around finances in the future. Because I can craft the whole scenario that's fear based. Because if I don't really understand what's actually looking at what we spend, and what we have and what we make and what our lifespans are likely to be, like, sounds really morbid. But I would just like clarity, just tell me, where am I? What do I got to do for these different future paths I could pursue. And I find that more calming than just spinning a scenario in my head that it could all fall apart. And I could just you know, I could have nothing. For me fear is easier to manage when it's super concrete and very, very thought out what's the worst that could happen and you spin that thread out until you really get to the worst. Most people. Probably most people listening to your podcasts, have some kind of safety net have some kind of community or network, some opportunity to not have the very worst abstract, all fall apart scenario happen. And sometimes it's just really helpful to say I did that when I spent every dollar I had and took up \$50,000 in debt before we got our first round of funding and blogger. And when people asked and I was already over 40 When I did that. So people asked me if I was afraid and I was like well no, I had really thought about it. Like what happens if this all goes south and we don't get funding and I have no money and I have all this debt and I'm like I guess I go back and sleep in the twin bed and the house I grew up in and like had a job, I guess that's what happens then. And then I just rebuild, it was really helpful to think that like, I didn't want to do that. But it was helpful to imagine like, that's what would really happen. And so I think that's also a really helpful thing to do. And I think it's just that it's really hard to be honest about what aspiration and ambition means to you now, and it's okay if it means something different than it met 10 years ago. And you can always decide, you know, in five years that like, you know what, I have one more big thing in me and I'm gonna go like, get that big thing. But we, I think we also get a lot of messaging about everything is always got to be a big thing. You always got to be shooting for the stars, we all have to want to be Oprah. Or, you know, we all have to want to be like the most successful person ever. And I'm like, Oh, we could have a different goal for life. You know.

Jen Marples 35:51

I love that you said that. Because I always say to everyone, it's like, you're not to fucking I'll do whatever the heck you want. And that's if you want to go big and be Oprah. You want to go be the next the midlife Oprah. Or if you just want to go take tango lessons or salsa dancing lessons, because it's

interesting to you. It just has to mean something to you, right? matter what it is, with COVID and turning 50. Like all that stuff was happening at the same time. For me, it's it was really redefining. And I know for so many women that I talk to it's what's next and redefining actually what success looks like. Basically the same generation here at least, or you're just a few years older than me, it's, we were taught more as more as more as more as more the Gordon Gekko like that was our whole thing. You know, Diane Keaton and baby boom, and like country, baby, oh my god, now I'm dating myself, but you know, country, baby applesauce or whatever. Like she had to grow it to be this big thing. And then it's like, why can't I just be selling it out of my country house, or whatever it is, you know, it's like, because we were taught that and now it's like, we realize, I think and I hope when we get to this age, as a general population, half of us if we were married and divorced, or somebody dies, we move away, the kids are gone. If you have kid, there's just all this stuff. And I'm not driven by that thing I was I don't think I could do that, again, of what I did before and building my first company. I think I lived on fumes. And that didn't get me very far. Because we all did it. Because we could did it go do it made money, whatever. But now and I know just from reading books of like, just actual scientifically backed things that say that women now I want something to mean something. Yeah, I couldn't go back to what I was doing in that the exact same way. I couldn't ever go back to that. And I think most of us, we just can't. And it's to finding success, because I've just used the house and the cars and the Joneses and all that bullshit. Like it doesn't mean anything. If you don't have your health if you don't have happiness, is your soul being touched in some way? And not saying and I want to also a little caveat from like a sore doesn't sound super privileged, because I know that a lot of people don't have a lot of choice. But when I did well with my message, it's like even if you have that, that nine to five, we call it the soul killing thing. You can still be adding things in that bring you joy, and you get to do

Elisa Camahort Page 38:04

that. Yeah, I think there's a, you know, people say money can't buy happiness. And that's not true, up to a point, money to have your very baseline needs met. You're definitely happier when you have your baseline needs met that. I mean, I'm not just saying this, there's research, right? Oh, yeah, definitely up to a certain point of income, it will make you happier to have more money because you have more of your basic needs met and you have less uncertainty and fear about the future. So absolutely. Like if you've got a nine to five soul killing job, but it gives you that amount of money to kill that fear, then find other things to fulfill your soul and replace the soul killing but yeah, I'm not telling anyone to like quit a job that gives them their basic needs, after a certain point of income. Sure, incrementally your happiness doesn't keep improving but but that's because I have a kind of a Deaf personal definition of happiness that's maybe different than some folks a lot of people talk about. Like that literally happiness is the delta between expectations and reality. That's a common definition. And so if you just create a set of appropriate expectations, like you can make it reality and be happier, I don't think that's happiness, that's probably satisfaction. Like you can be happy but not satisfied with right where you are, or you can be satisfied but not happy. To me happiness is the measure of happiness is the delta between your values and how closely you can live to your values. And that if you can't live your values, it chips away at your sense of self and happiness. And so I think that's why as you get older, you start to realize that that matters so much. I think we really start to get a sense of our values and our and having purpose and meaning. It's one of the most important things you can have in your life in addition to community and friendships and family and health right and that That's how a lot of times you can get happier as you get older, even if you're struggling with things, two things can be true, you can be dealing with all

the muck, and all the stuff that goes on as you get older. But you can actually feel more happy because you know how to winnow away the stuff that doesn't mean as much and you know how to try to seek out the stuff that aligns with your values, and you get more confident about doing things that align with your values and saying it out loud, and living your values. That gives a sense of happiness with self, you know, happiness with how I'm living my life. And if I have happiness with the choices I'm making, and how I'm living my life, that goes a long way towards just overall kind of sense of happiness.

Jen Marples 40:53

I absolutely love that. And I don't think I've ever thought about it as being values. But I think that's it's really true. I was just as you were talking, I was just thinking about, okay, that is the truth. There's certain things we would have all maybe done things back in the day. But it wasn't true. And then you realize that was like that soul piercing, crushing, oh, this doesn't work. And everyone can make different choices. Exactly. One can add things in and take things away. We don't have to be around negative people. We don't have to be friends with certain people. We don't have to do most of that stuff.

Elisa Camahort Page 41:24

We are not being held to some of the things one of my favorite writers, she has a new book out herself and is the therapist named Mina B. I just heard her speak recently. And I just got her book. And she talks a lot about boundaries and how we actually can make boundaries we didn't think we could make. I'm not saying society encourages, especially women to make all the boundaries we can make. I think we get a lot of messages. We are socialized to be the peacemakers or to be the ones bringing people together to be the people pleasers. We're not supposed to be the ones that reject the typical relational, you know that we're just supposed to go with it and make it work. And I'm like, you know, that is something I think we all get a little better at as we get older too, which is being like, I'm going to draw my boundaries a little differently.

Jen Marples 42:19

Yeah. Oh, my gosh, I could talk to you forever. So I have a couple final fun questions for you. Okay. What do you wish for women in midlife?

Elisa Camahort Page 42:26

I wish cold breeze and equal pay.

Jen Marples 42:29

Hallelujah. I love that. What do you think the best thing is about being in that life? It

Elisa Camahort Page 42:36

really is that you just get more and more of a sense that all the things you cared about appearances and perceptions and all of that you get a better sense of your boundaries, and you get a better sense of what you can control and what you cannot control and to focus on the things you can control. And that just becomes clearer. When it's clearer. It's easier to try and act on and so I do think that that does happen as you go into midlife. Love it.

Jen Marples 43:03

Alright, so finish the sentence, you know, it's coming. I'm not too fucking old, too.

Elisa Camahort Page 43:07

I'm not too fucking old to have purple hair and one more company idea in my brain. Oh, I

Jen Marples 43:15

can't wait to hear all about it. Oh my gosh, it's been so amazing chatting with you. So amazing. So tell everybody where they can find all the things the newsletter I've been raving about the podcast, all of it.

Elisa Camahort Page 43:26

At least the cp.com is my website. And I'm Elisa, CP on the platforms I'm actually participating in which right now is Instagram threads and tick tock and yes, this week ish newsletter is on substack and the Op Ed page podcast is anywhere you listen to podcasts.

Jen Marples 43:45

Oh, I love it. Well, thank you for being here today. I love this the duality This is such a deep and layered and nuanced conversation. I just love it.

Elisa Camahort Page 43:53

Thank you so much.

Jen Marples 43:54

The goal here is just to leave everybody a little bit more educated, inspired and also to feel like they're just not alone, navigating midlife because none of us are alone. This is a universal experience. We're all dealing with mostly the same stuff.

Elisa Camahort Page 44:07

Thank you so much. It's been great.