

**The Brave Files Podcast**  
**Jenn Grace: Vulnerability Sets you Free**  
**Episode 156**

Heather Vickery 0:04

Hey, everyone, welcome to The Brave Files Podcast. This is your host, Heather Vickery. You know, this morning threw me for a little bit of a loop, I came in to record this session for you, only to discover that our darling little dog had completely chewed my microphone cord to bits. After completely losing my mind, and then taking a deep breath, and thinking about the options, I remembered that my amazing friend and client Maui Jones from Reflects Media lives just down the street. He totally saved me by giving me the perfect chord so that we could get this podcast episode out to you as soon as possible. So my heartfelt thanks to Maui Jones for making today's episode possible. Well Friends, Welcome to March brave ones, while I'm wildly excited that spring is on the way. I'm equally shocked that the year is as it always seems to do going by so fast. I catch myself thinking, Oh, I'll get to that I have so much time left in the year. And then I remember how quickly time flies. And if I'm not careful, I missed the boat on something really special or important. Does that ever happen to you? What exciting things do you want to manifest this year? Have you started taking action on them? Are you still waiting for the right moment or the right opportunity? How are you planning to transition into the life of your dreams this year, I would love to hear all about it. And I would love to be part of that success journey for you. That's why I invite you to join us for The Brave Method Workshop March 16 through the 24th. This nine day live, interactive event is exactly what you're looking for. If you're ready to say goodbye to regret and get going on making the brave leap into the next chapter of your life and business. Imagine waking up excited to dive into your day. Consider what it might feel like to simply know you're taking the steps necessary to create the life and business you've always desired. Think about how you would carry yourself knowing that you're out choosing bravely and building exactly what you want for your life. If you're ready to uncover the roadblocks holding you back and say yes to leading an intentionally brave empowered life, then join me for The Brave Method Workshop. Again, it's March 16, to the 24th. And you can register right now at [Vickeryandco.com/workshop](http://Vickeryandco.com/workshop). In the workshop, you'll learn my powerful five part action strategy that has helped hundreds of entrepreneurs choose bravely in their business and find true empowerment within themselves each and every day. Each training session contains practical steps that you can take to help you lay the groundwork for creating your own success through

building a life that's more fulfilling and a business that's more fulfilling. It's time to start that new business write that book, become an entrepreneurial Nomad get paid to speak on the stage, open the store, whatever it is, you can dream you can do and the brave method workshop can help you get started. You don't want to miss it. Register right now at [www.Vickeryandco.com/workshop](http://www.Vickeryandco.com/workshop).

**Heather Vickery** 3:35

You know part of having a life well lived and a business well run is stepping up and out as your radically authentic and vulnerable self. This week's guest is a longtime friend Jenn Grace. Jenn is an author, publisher, podcaster and all around fascinating person with a hell of a brave story. Jen shares with us that when we help others, we help ourselves and sometimes that's intentional. But sometimes in helping others, we help ourselves completely by accident. For Jenn Grace, her drive to uplift underrepresented voices led her to build a meaningful and fulfilling business and publishing this work has led Jenn down the wonderful path of true vulnerability. There's a lot of laughter in this conversation. And I challenge Jenn on what it means to be brave. So tune in to hear about that and you're going to love how she celebrates. It's totally unexpected and absolutely worth listening to every moment of this interview. So let's get started.

**Jenn Grace** 4:38

purpose, empathy and change.

**Heather Vickery** 4:42

This is Heather Vickery. And you're listening to The Brave Files, stories from people living courageously. When we choose bravely in big and small ways, it powerfully elevates our lives. I hope these stories connect with you and encourage you to embrace bravery in every possible way, day after day. Together, we can build a movement of courageous living that enriches both our lives, and our communities. And if you enjoy the show, I asked you to please share it with others. Maybe think of someone who you want to choose bravely right alongside you. Thanks for tuning in. Now, here's the show.

**Heather Vickery** 5:26

Hi, everyone. Today I am joined by Jenn Grace. She is a publisher and author and activist and she happens to be a good friend. Jenn's personal journey through life hasn't always been an

easy one. And yet, she's a constant source of inspiration to me and so many others. And I'm really excited to have you here, Jenn to share your journey.

**Jenn Grace** 5:47

Yeah, thank you for having me. I feel like this is a long time in the making.

**Heather Vickery** 5:51

I know. And I was a guest on your podcast A while ago. But yeah, we have been in each other's hemisphere for quite some time. And I don't know why it was random. We're like, Why haven't you been on the show yet? So Well, here we are. And we are Yeah, yeah. Yeah. All right. So those who listen regularly, and I know you've listened as well know that I normally start talking about a personal journey. And sometimes that leads into people's work journey. And I'm gonna sort of flip the script a little bit today. And I think that the reasons for that will unveil itself, but you are a publisher, but you're not a traditional publisher. And I'd love for you to tell folks a little bit about what you do and why you do it.

**Jenn Grace** 6:33

Awesome. So correct. I'm not a traditional publisher. So for a really kind of high level and in direct into the point. So my company Publisher Purpose is a hybrid publisher. And essentially, what you can think of as a hybrid publisher is, when you look at a sliding scale, you have traditional publishing on one end, and you have self publishing on the other end. And so hybrid publishing is that beautiful middle ground where you get the services and expertise and experience and just amazingness that you would expect from a traditional publisher, but you're going to be paying expenses that are much more aligned with what you would do if you were trying to self publish your books. So that's kind of the down and dirty. And the reason I do this work is because my personal mission is to really just elevate and amplify underrepresented voices. Because I feel like publishing in general, there's just still a lack of, of organizations that have a real good focus on diverse and underrepresented voices. So I want to be a piece of that larger movement.

**Heather Vickery** 7:35

Yeah, and you definitely are. So to that point, Publish Your Purpose Press, I didn't screw that name up, right, I get it. I have a mug, because I took a , we can talk about that later. But I took

one of your courses, and I got this really great mug, which I love specifically only publishes it basically just LGBTQ work or any minority work.

**Jenn Grace** 7:56

It's any minority work. And the way that I would define that is really people who have a just a bigger mission and purpose in their lives that they want to share. And that they're trying to impact either the greater good or impact specific communities by sharing and telling their stories.

**Heather Vickery** 8:13

That's really cool. I love that you do it. I love what you do. I love how you do it. You all that we're not going to spend this whole time talking about business, but go to Jenn's website. And we're going to link to it in the show notes and see all of these really cool books that she's helped bring into the world and that the team over at Publish Your Purpose Press has brought into the, into the world, which is so incredible. How did you end up in publishing?

**Jenn Grace** 8:37

Oh, what a fun story, I will give you the abridged version or at least a try. So back in time, so we can go back an actual 15 years at this point, I was doing consulting work in the LGBTQ space. And primarily, it started off with, you know, small businesses, independent people just trying to help them just market themselves better, because I feel like my background is marketing. And I find that the more diverse or underrepresented you are in a lot of instances marketing is just you know, there's a lot of emotional kind of baggage that kind of comes with like putting ourselves out there or lack of confidence or imposter syndrome or any assortment of things. And obviously, I'm making kind of a general statement. So it doesn't apply to everybody. But in my experience.

**Heather Vickery** 9:23

You could tell you do diversity and inclusion work. Yes, you put your qualifier out.

**Jenn Grace** 9:27

Yes, of course. Of course I don't want to be I don't want to be completely generalizing and stereotyping people. But so I started off doing it that way. And then I slowly started working with corporations, specifically within Fortune companies around you know, financial services and

insurance. And what happened is that as I was doing that work, everybody around me was saying, Well, where's your book? And then if I didn't have one, they would they would say, well, when is it coming out? And like well, I just I didn't have one and they just assumed that I had to have been actively working on this. And so that those questions started probably Sometime around 2009 2010. And I decided, you know what, I'm going to start a blog. And this was back in the end of 2011. And it was very much kind of like a Dear Abby approach answering questions around the LGBTQ community. And that is the thing that led into my first book. So I wrote my first one, then a second one, then a third one. And over time, everybody I knew was saying, Well, how did you know how to do this? or How did you know how to hire an editor? or What did you like? Where did you go for this? And it was a like a litany of questions on a regular basis. And I was thinking, all right, the first one I did was a really tragic in a lot of ways, like it was a mess. And Heather you, you know this because in my PYP Academy I actually use the example of my first book kind of throughout the curriculum to be like, you know, what, just don't do what I did. And you know, that was a long time ago at that, at this point, I published that one in 2013. But what I did is that I created a program because I was really, I didn't mind having these conversations, but they were coming like, a lot, I was getting a lot of questions. And so I was like, you know, what, I am going to put together a group program that is scalable, that I can leverage my time and I can help more and more people. And that started in the I kind of had the idea and the end of 2015, launched it in 2016. And I had a couple of classes run through in 2016. And they were just incredible human beings. I legitimately love everyone that I work with, like, they're just, there's so many awesome people in this world. And what happened is that I kept having people say, Well, you know, I know that you just spent three months showing me how to do this, but I'd rather just hire you to do it for me. And I was like, Okay, let's let me think about this. And at first, I was a little bit reluctant, because I was finally like, Oh my god, I finally hit that like scalable product where I can like really not be trading time for dollars. And after I sat on it for about a week, or it might even have been over a weekend, I realized that I had developed a relationship, a really deep relationship with some of these folks. And if I weren't the one to help them bring their story to light, then maybe they wouldn't do it at all. And so I kind of took that as a sign from the universe. And there were a number of other things kind of happening at the same time, which I actually write about a little bit in my memoir. But you know, it was kind of there was a number of variables that I was like, you know, what I'm doing this and I, within a weekend decided that I was starting a publishing company named it, set it up and like was ready to roll within a weekend. Yeah, I did not think it through, I did not look at the economics of it, I did not look at Oh, hey, consulting is way more profitable than publishing,

none of those things. But I am so grateful I did because honestly, if I had looked into how hard it is, to have a publishing company, I would 100% would have been stuck or just not have done anything. So I'm glad that I just kind of leaped and you know, the net appeared as it was supposed to.

**Heather Vickery** 12:50

I've heard that from so many people. And I think it's probably like a Henry Ford quote, or something like if everyone knew how hard it would be to be an entrepreneur. Nobody would do it. And you were already an entrepreneur. But it's an interesting differentiation between consulting and running a company like this, what are the differences?

**Jenn Grace** 13:11

Well, the big difference to me was with my consulting company, it was me and one person, so I had a part time person who, and she works with me in my publishing company now was legitimately my right hand in all that work, and I would get paid, you know, \$25,000 to go, you know, fly somewhere, go do a training and come home. And 23,000 of that would be like directly into the bottom line company. Now what like, if I have a \$25,000 product, you know, maybe if I'm lucky 4000 of that would go to the bottom line. So the big difference is that it takes a team. So my company and my organization, while Yes, I'm the founder, and the CEO, I am the visionary. I am not the one doing the day to day, I do individual consulting work with a lot of folks around their books, but it's my team. And they're amazing. And they're the ones that are doing the execution on this work. And so obviously, with the team comes more expenses, and so just the profitability, the numbers are just really different between a consulting business and really any other business.

**Heather Vickery** 14:09

I think that's true. Yeah, I mean, obviously it is true, you're telling us it's true, but I feel like that makes a lot of sense. I have to just say this because I read and I recently just had a chat just a catch up chat You are the most organized business owner I have ever encountered in my life.

**Jenn Grace** 14:31

Thank you so much for saying that it actually brings me joy knowing that that's what you think.

Heather Vickery 14:36

Yeah, but tell, because the people that, we're gonna get I promise we're gonna get to the personal stuff. But this is so valuable to everybody who's listening. We were talking was right at the end of the year we were talking and how people reflect and set up what they want for the coming year and can you just share sort of what your mind boggling to me for assesses?

Jenn Grace 14:58

I'll give them I'll give you the high level. How's that?

Heather Vickery 15:00

All right.

Jenn Grace 15:01

So for me, organization is, is truly, I think it's in my veins. And, again, referencing my memoir, you know, when you grow up in a very, very chaotic environment, you have to control the things you can control. And so that I think truly was a survival mechanism, which has just lended itself quite well to being successful within business. But the end of the year process for me, I have a document that is probably six or seven pages long, that's essentially just a giant checklist that is, you know, going through, you know, things like your p&l statements, obviously, I think every business owner at the end of end of the year is going to go through their their profit and loss statement. But I also go through my entire calendar, and I make sure that there's no because I use my calendar, a lot of times to write the important to dos. So I go through my entire calendar, I delete off anything, that didn't actually happen. I mean, I start on like, I'm doing this in December, and I'm going back to like January 1, it's just a whole list of things like I'm going through, I use, I track my time very diligently. And it's in a program called toggle. So I go through my toggle time, and I make sure that everything is accurate. And I actually look at how much time did I spend on sales activities? Or how much time did I spend on admin minutiae that I shouldn't have been involved in. And so by being able to kind of see where your time is being used, you can really make very different decisions with who do you have to hire, what skill sets are missing on your team, and just kind of move the needle forward that way. And so, you know, that's just a couple of the seven pages of checklist I go through. But, you know, it works for me, and might be overwhelming for others. But I think that we don't operate with data, I think a lot of us and I feel like I follow my gut. I'm very intuition based, but at the same time, we need data to

really help understand the livelihood of our business. And so I just have all the data points that I like to look at. And you know, every business is probably looking at different things. But that's, you know, that's, you know, it's putting it mildly, because, yeah, very complex system.

**Heather Vickery** 16:58

It is complex, and I could see how anybody listening would be like what that's it's too much. It's overwhelming, I can't do that. But what your takeaway is, is just what you just said, is so important, you all have to know what you're doing. You didn't know how you're spending your time and how you're spending your money and how your team is spending their time and your money. And we can we can make so many better, fruitful, thoughtful decisions when we know information. And we often like to hide from it because we're, I guess, afraid of figuring out like, Oh, where did I fuck up? Or, you know, do I actually did actually make any money? We don't want to know that. But most times, I think we find that it isn't as bad as we think it's going to be and we learn lessons and how to continue to level up. So I just was so excited to have you share that because knowledge is power and prioritizing knowledge when we talk about, you know, my coaching method, The Brave Method, the R stands for reassessment reframing and resilience. And that's exactly what this is like, what happened, I need to know what happened so that I can figure out what my lessons are from it and get up and do it again.

**Jenn Grace** 18:05

Exactly. That's exactly it. And it's just it's so helpful to have those data points as entrepreneurs because I think so often we don't prioritize the on the business stuff we're focused on in the business. And if you're ever going to get out of the in the business activity, you have to focus on the business.

**Heather Vickery** 18:22

100%. I have that conversation with my clients my Intentionally Brave Entrepreneurs program every every single day. Okay, so you've referenced your memoir a couple of times. So now we'll get into all of the really interesting that that that wasn't interesting and juicy it was but you waited a long time to write your memoir, and it it's a little explosive, literally, it will tell everybody what the title is.

**Jenn Grace** 18:45

It's called a House on Fire, Finding Resilience, Hope and Empathy in the Ashes.

Heather Vickery 18:51

And there's a picture of your childhood home on fire.

Jenn Grace 18:55

It is a it is a house on fire. Correct. It's literal and figurative.

Heather Vickery 19:00

So really, it's explosive. But it's a really a wonderful book. We've we have it here at our home and we've both read it and I would love to know having you've written business books before but it's different writing a memoir. What's it like? You've supported a lot of other people doing that. What's it like to be on the other side of that experience?

Jenn Grace 19:21

A bit horrifying, to be honest, I'm not gonna lie. You know it. I did wait a while but at the same time, I truly had no choice but to put it out there because of how kind of trapped and confined and isolated I felt by my own story. And you know, knowing people because we all have different circles of friends, different circles of business relationships, and some people know some things other people know other things and it just gets really messy when you are not being fully truthful with people and it's not that you're not wanting to be truthful. But when you have just about big story and a big thing, it is hard to emotionally kind of get into it with every single person you talk to. So for me, it was very much a kind of this is gonna sound so business esque but like kind of like a scaled message, where it's like, if somebody asks a question, it's like, you can go read the book, and you can get all of the juicy details. Because I do not hold back at all.

Heather Vickery 20:20

That is so you, Jenn. That is such a Jenn Grace answer to be like, Listen, I wrote about this, I need you. It's like telling somebody who says, well, what's that person's email address? You're like, Hello, Google it.

Jenn Grace 20:33

Yeah, you know what efficiency if I could give myself a new middle name, it would honestly be efficiency. So to me, this is just another efficient method.

Heather Vickery 20:41

I appreciate that I do. Alright, well so, will you give folks the the high level, I y'all need to go and read this book, but the cliff notes version of the story that you your story that you share in your memoir,

Jenn Grace 20:59

You know, I find it actually really difficult to put it into Cliff Notes. But how I could describe it very, very high level is part, you know, the first third is around being adopted. The second third is around adopting children. And the third, the final third is about giving a child up for adoption. And so it is, that is kind of the through line, in mental health, and, you know, dysfunction, chaotic households, just a lot of different kind of familial relationships that were in various different states of disrepair. And you know, that's just kind of the high level, because I talk a lot of, you know, because you have like big t trauma and little t traumas. So, you know, some of those are big T, but there's like a whole litany of little t traumas is kind of scattered throughout as well. So I know it can be a bit of an overwhelming read for folks as well.

Heather Vickery 21:51

Yeah, well, and we should say that, I mean, I think the title itself probably gives most folks an indication that you're in for a ride. I am. I'm gonna get skewered for this, I'm not a big fan of the word triggering, I'm over the word triggering, because I really think that everything is a fucking trigger. And I'm not saying that if you if you feel those things, if something sets something off in you, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with you. But I find that we're starting to use that word as a crutch. Because literally, I understand if you have severe social anxiety, I've interviewed people who can't look out their window, because they're afraid someone will see them. So for some people looking out your window is a trigger, I just, can we just, we just not. And again, my point is, if it's going to be unhealthy for you to read a book like this, then you need to know yourself well enough to know, by the description that this is not the right choice. But I love that you are so vulnerable. And I love that you put it out there. In this tell-all shocking way. What was the hardest part of doing that?

Jenn Grace 23:00

You know, what is really interesting is that the entire process, you know, from a process standpoint, I do this for a living. So I know, you know, what step has to happen when I know the

deadlines without even thinking about them. So those are all the things that oftentimes trip up people who are who are writing for the first time. But when I really started to get into it, one of the things was just kind of a concern, like really concerned about how is my family going to react to me putting out as much of our information as I have. And at the same time, it was a calculated risk, because I said to myself that, you know, I have to do this for me, I have to do this for my own healing, I have to do it to kind of come out of the closet around just my life experiences. And if my family is unhappy with that, then maybe they should have treated me differently. Like a great quote, even have that at the end of the book. Like that's it's not on me that somebody else didn't treat me right. And so I kind of put that that fear aside. And I even thought like maybe I'll just do it under a pen name. I don't have to do it as me, I can just I can still get the story out there. And I was like, well, that for me, I fully endorse using pen names for other people if that's what makes sense to you. But for me, I was like, No, that's taking the easy way out. I really have to kind of do this and really do it like I cannot half-ass this at all. And that's why I do go as raw and vulnerable as I do because I push people to their limits on a daily basis about how far they think that they can go with telling their story. And if I didn't do that myself, I feel like I would have looked like a hypocrite.

Heather Vickery 24:35

Yeah, I get that. I we want to walk the walk and talk the talk and do all of that. And I kind of think, so I wrote for NaNoWriMo. Have you ever, do you ever do NaNoWriMo?

Jenn Grace 24:47

Of course. Yes. It's amazing

Heather Vickery 24:50

I really love to hear people who this is their profession still take the time to do that. I'm talking about put a pin in that I want to come back to it but the the first year I did it I wrote a memoir esque that I called it Gifts of My Mother, I may not ever publish it as least not as long as she's alive, we'll see. But I was very careful that they were not her stories. They weren't my stories. I wasn't. I was telling things from my perspective, things that I had experienced. And so there are lessons, right. Wonderful lessons, wonderful gifts that I've received and ones that, like, Oh, I watched that. And now I choose not to do that kind of thing. And I think it's really important when you're talking about writing a memoir is that it's, it's yours. And you're not speaking for other

people, you're speaking for you and your experiences. And you're right, if if somebody didn't want you to have the experience you had, they should have behaved differently.

**Jenn Grace** 25:49

And, you know, what I'll say to that is that I really, and I think that we, I think, all people kind of have this where we in our heads blow things somewhat out of proportion. And so one of the things that, you know, and I write about just a lot of different family members, it's primarily kind of a really, the story really is at the crux of it, a battle of will, between my sister and myself, like, that's really kind of she's the through line throughout the whole the whole thing. And what's kind of just interesting about kind of just putting it out there and wondering, like how people are going to receive it is that I have had family members that I felt for certain, would be having zero to do with me after having read the story, because I really, my both of my parents are no longer with us. And I do not write warmly, about just being the upbringing I had with my mother. And what's been interesting is that I've had family members reach out to me to say, I had no idea what you were going through. And I find that shocking, in one way. But it what when they've said it, it's been couched with love and empathy and care. And I thought that I was gonna get like, raked over the coals for sharing my story. And it has been nothing but love and support, and you know, at some point, that is, that will probably change. And I and I, and I had braced my, like, I really was like, prepared for the worst, like, within therapy even like, Okay, how will you know, what are my tools? What are my coping skills when this happens? And so we had a lot of different scenarios played out. And to date, I haven't had any of that happen. And it's been so beautiful, because I've actually repaired a couple of relationships with family members that never in a million years would have thought was possible. And it's because I had the, the courage, as much as I don't like using that word for myself, but I did it and I put it out there. And it was it's been such a healing journey on so many fronts. So it's worth it even with all of the the fear and all the things that we build up in our minds that we think is going to happen when we don't really know what's going to happen until it's out there doing whatever it's doing.

**Heather Vickery** 27:58

Well, that's 100% the truth, all fear lives in the future. Right? That's the whole core of my work is in making brave choices based on what you know, right now, not on what you assume or what you think. But what I love, I absolutely got chills when you were talking about family members who reached out and said, I did, I didn't know. And part of part of that is, you know, just a little reminder to everyone in the world, nobody's freaking thinking about you. And I don't mean that

in the you don't matter way, they're all focused on themselves. They're all trying to live their own lives and deal with their own problems. And so people can't give us what we want, if they don't know what it is, and even love. Like, if they don't know we need something, not to put the onus especially on a child to have to ask for love. But what what's so magical about that is as adults, if we would give people the opportunity to show up for us and love us and support us more often we would be so regularly pleasantly surprised.

Jenn Grace 28:56

That could not have been said any better. That is such a beautiful sentiment.

Heather Vickery 28:59

Yeah, it's really lovely. And I'm so happy to hear that it's brought you better, stronger relationships with with people that you care about. So as you're writing this really, probably very, I mean, obviously a very difficult story. And I imagine all sorts of feelings came up and you're very practical person we've already had addressed that analytical and all of that you still had to be feeling all of these things. What surprised you most about this process for you?

Jenn Grace 29:32

What surprised me most? That's a good question. Well, other than what I was just saying about just really being surprised by those who've showed up.

Heather Vickery 29:41

Yeah. But in the writing when you were writing,

Jenn Grace 29:44

In the writing, you know? Well, I feel like it's kind of a surprise, but not kind of a surprise. One of the things that I talk about a lot throughout the story is just dis Association and how that has kind of played out over the course of of time and for me When you're just like there's, you know, disassociative Identity Disorder, that is not what I'm talking about, I'm talking about, just like dissociation on a very, very kind of basic front. And for me what that yields is just a very, very, very poor memory, where I, I have giant periods of time that are completely and utterly black holes. And I have to rely on the memory or what I told somebody at the time actually, I jokingly always thought my memoir was going to be called, if that's what I said at the time, just because, like, I don't want to ever look like a liar. But there are plenty of times where I'm telling a story.

And then I'll say something to somebody. And they're like, wasn't it this? And I'm like, well, this is not what I told you. And they're like, yeah, I'm like, well, that's what it was, you know. And so for me, that was actually one of the I expected it to be difficult. But then I was also surprised by how difficult it was. And so I even have a caveat kind of in the beginning of the book that very clearly, and most memoirs have this type of disclaimer, that's basically like, Listen, I am cobbling this together by, you know, journals and conversations with family, things that I do remember photos, like really, to kind of put together the entire story. And so it was definitely, definitely a challenge. But there were and I think where that challenge kind of shows up for people is that there's just really big gaping sections of the story that aren't there. So the challenge is, then how do you weave a story together when you yourself are missing just giant pieces of your own memory. So it was expected, but yet it was actually surprising at the same time.

Heather Vickery 31:34

And yet you did it and you pulled it together so beautifully. It's impressive, because this is hard stuff to do. It's it's hard to speak our truths. And I do so much work with authenticity. And so do you and show up as yourself and believe that the world's gonna, gonna take you and love you more for that. But it's hard to do that and actually put it into practice. You said something that I cannot wait to talk about. And I can't even believe that you set it on The Brave Files. I'm so glad that you did. You literally like I could hear your cringe when you called yourself courageous. And so one of the questions that I love to ask is, do you feel brave? So what what is your issue with courageous, my friend?

Jenn Grace 32:22

Good question, let's have a little mini therapy session.

Heather Vickery 32:26

Not a therapist, just a coach.

Jenn Grace 32:31

I have to I have to put that disclaimer on a lot of things often as well, which is why I think we get along so well, because I feel like we both straddle that coach slash therapist hat. You know, I find it interesting, because I have never in my life had an issue with confidence ever. And not to like an arrogant degree, because I certainly don't think I'm an arrogant person. But I do. Look, I there's a lot of people around me that I feel like really kind of struggle with confidence. And I am

like, I know what I'm doing. Get out of my way. I'm on a mission. And I feel like a lot of that is very internal. So I'm sure that might be projected externally, just because it's what I believe is like my internal operating system. But when it comes to like brave and courageous and things like that, I feel like people can say that about me. And I feel very honored that that is what said, but I don't ever think those are words that I would use to describe myself.

**Heather Vickery** 33:25

So when I hear that, what I find is that it is just simply because people don't feel like they're worthy of treating themselves the way other people's would treat other people would treat them.

**Jenn Grace** 33:39

I see that. Yeah.

**Heather Vickery** 33:41

Right. Like, or we're conditioned, whether it's so I mean, society does do this, but certainly, parents and family members can condition us Oh, don't be so cocky. Oh, don't be so confident. Oh, don't be so sure yourself or you're not all that. Like I don't know, if did any of that come up for you. Were you raised with like, stop pushing everybody's face that you know everything or Don't be so confident or any of that?

**Jenn Grace** 34:06

I Good question. I'm not not 100% sure on that. But I wouldn't be surprised.

**Heather Vickery** 34:11

Per, per I don't remember a lot of my childhood. Yeah, I think especially strong willed independent women. We've just we see it all the time. Oh, come on, now. Just sit down and listen and let somebody else lead. And it's really hard to say, No, I'm going to take up this space. And you do that very beautifully, unapologetically. What my mission is like literally my whole goal with all of the different elements of my business and this show, and my my work in the community and my work as a friend and a family member is you know, embracing the idea that brave looks different for everyone and we all have us. We all have it in us. And and brave is not the absence of fear. It's not about being fearless fearless is for sociopaths and three year olds. It's, it's about knowing that you may not know the outcome, or that this thing may be hard to do, and understanding why it feels scary, and then choosing to do it anyway with a thoughtful

intention. And again, for some people that's looking out the window or going to the grocery store. For some people, it's quitting your day job and starting a business or writing your memoir. You know, for others, it's completely different. And there are 1000 different ways every day to choose bravely. And when we re write what that's going to mean to us. We feel really fucking good when we do it.

Jenn Grace 35:40

Mm hmm. I love that. And you know, what I would add to this, and what I think is interesting is that I feel like brave and vulnerable, in my mind are very interlinked together, because I feel like, to me being brave, would be being vulnerable, and saying something that, you know, would be outside of outside of my, my norm of, yeah, safety zone. Exactly, exactly. And so for me, it's really thinking about, because I can remember a time and I may or may not write it, write this, I don't know if it made it into the final book, I should say. But I remember a time when I was in high school, and I had a boyfriend. And for the record, I identify as queer. And so you know, dating a straight man is not not my thing. But,

Heather Vickery 36:28

But it was this one time,

Jenn Grace 36:30

it was a you know, for a couple times in high school. And I remember him calling me a cold hearted bitch once, and I was probably 16 or 17. And it my dad passed when I was 15. So I was definitely guarded, cold and very cranky. And like, get out of my space, like, I can remember that, like that feeling of no one is here to protect me, I have to protect myself. And so at the time, like I really was just kind of layering on like going into like a cocoon of, you know, no one can hurt me, I'm putting up this defense mechanism, all of this armor like I am indestructible. And it has been an evolution of just my growth. And honestly, a lot of what I kind of talked about in the very, very last part of my book of just kind of like the healing and the journey, is to not be brave and not be, you know, someone that can go into battle and conquer whatever. Because again, going back to the confident confidence piece, like I like I feel very confident I can figure out whatever I need to figure out from an intellectual standpoint, and a pragmatic standpoint, and being practical. But when it comes to the emotional side of things, to me, that's what everybody was really like. And I mean, for some people, it could be reverse.

Heather Vickery 37:41

Absolutely. Yeah, that's exactly it. I love that you, you said that. Because brave, we have this vision that it means putting on the armor and slaying the dragon. And sometimes it means taking the armor off. And sitting quietly, and, you know, holding space for yourself. And it can be all of those things. And that's really just on such a mission to redefine that. And for everyone, just like you know, we've all heard you should define define success on your own terms, right? Like, don't try to achieve I'm not gonna try to achieve Jenn Grace's version of success. I'm gonna try to achieve Heather Vickery his version of success and brave is really the same way and it's going to feel different for all of you. So I love, thank you for sharing that. And just this whole idea of approaching it differently. I hope that you will, maybe think about it differently. Because being brave and courageous, isn't isn't a bad thing. It isn't a thing that doesn't get to be yours. And it isn't about confidence.

Jenn Grace 38:43

Mm hmm. Yeah. I love that we went down this rabbit hole. I'm glad that I said that. Because I feel like this is it's something for me to ponder moving forward.

Heather Vickery: Yeah, absolutely. All right. Well, that is big is a really fun, natural lead in I am a big fan of celebration and success. We we don't do it often enough. I believe that celebration is a lost art that brings us together as a community, and just connects us to our joy. And when we do brave things, big, small, medium sized brave things, and we know it and we feel good about it. It sort of leads to celebration, it sort of leads to us honoring the experience and so how do you celebrate anything?

Jenn Grace 39:30

I'm laughing because the visual I have in my head and you know, I I'm just I'm blunt. I say what comes to my mind this is I feel certainly you're not gonna have had this answer yet. Or maybe, maybe I'm wrong.

Heather Vickery 39:43

Oh, I so hope that's true.

Jenn Grace 39:44

Would be great. But so I think celebrating to me, like there's, there's things that we do with the team when you know, something happens and we're excited and we'll celebrate it's like a virtual toast or something like that, and that's fine, but for me personally, when I have, like I celebrate a lot of little wins. So it doesn't have to be like, Yes, I just, I just landed that new author or whatever happens.

Heather Vickery 40:07

Absolutely.

Jenn Grace 40:08

I celebrate like the really amazing conversations that I have in a day because I feel so blessed. Like I genuinely feel so blessed that the message that I have put out into the universe, the way that is boomeranging back to me, I get to meet and talk to incredible human beings every single day of my life. And it's such an honor and a blessing. And to me, like sometimes I end a call and I walk away from my desk like just kind of like Mind blown of like, I cannot believe I had the privilege to meet this human being. And for me, like the celebrating, like, you know, there's an I was an athlete growing up so there's like, you know, you're doing the fist bumps, like you're, you know, just like very masculine type of things. But literally what my go to move is, is that I will sweep up whichever cat is closest to me, and I will spin them like I am a Disney Princess. And they are whatever woodland creature that is in that Disney movie. And I will sing to them. And so that is, that is how I roll I sing and dance with my cats.

Heather Vickery 41:09

Yep, that's the best answer ever. And you're right. You are certain. You are correct. No one has ever said that. And also, I'm so I'm so in love with that. So I do I do dance parties. That's a big thing that I do. And and share it and like to share it and I think you I don't know you're picking your cat's up because they're the living breathing things near you. But I think that's just such a fantastic visual. I want somebody to make me a little GIF of it.

Jenn Grace 41:40

Oh my god. Yes.

Heather Vickery 41:42

Can we get a gif?

Jenn Grace 41:43

I'm sure we can find a way to make a gif. Because it's ridiculous. It's a whole thing at this point. And you know, if you were to ask the question, like, what's the the career that you feel like you missed your calling in? I really feel like I missed my calling in writing jingles.

Heather Vickery 41:57

I thought you were gonna say Disney Princess. And I'm like, really?

Jenn Grace 42:00

Oh my god. Can you imagine? I don't know what Disney Princess that would be but no, no, like, I legitimately make up songs every single day. And it's just swapping out like it's just any random song that I hear on the radio. Like, I just come up with my own version immediately. So I have dozens upon dozens of songs. I just walk around the house singing. And it's usually about one of my cats because I am a crazy cat person apparently is what the result of the conversation is ending to.

Heather Vickery 42:25

Keep those stereotypes alive.

Jenn Grace 42:27

Obviously.

Heather Vickery 42:31

That's so good. What a great answer. But what I mean, listen, celebration is much like what we just talked about with with bravery. I'm a, I'm a big believer in celebrating those little wins. And they can be from, you know, actually getting out of bed or getting out on time without pressing snooze, or having a great conversation or finishing the blog post you never wanted to do or

publishing your memoir, or whatever, right? But your is when we share that joy. And even if you're sharing the joy with your cats, and you're physically experiencing it, right, so spinning around and singing, it's this full body experience. It sets off our parasympathetic nervous system. And that's the only fucking thing in the world that decreases our levels of stress. This is why celebration matters.

Jenn Grace 43:17

Yeah, I love it. You have to. You have to celebrate because no one else is going to celebrate for you.

Heather Vickery 43:23

That's what I'm talking about. They are not do it. I love I love that I saw something on Twitter the other day where somebody said, Oh, if you if you can't survive without compliments, don't be an entrepreneur. And I'm like, Fuck that. Give yourself compliments.

Jenn Grace 43:38

Hell yeah. Hell yeah, you should give yourself compliments. And that's what having like a gratitude journal is, you know, like, you don't have to have a gratitude journal for everybody around you, you can be grateful for the things that you're bringing to the table too.

Heather Vickery 43:50

Absolutely, Hey, nice plug there, I wrote two gratitude journals. Those of you who don't know that, we'll link to it. That's so funny. That's so good. I could go on and on with you all day. And I'm so grateful that you've carved out some time to be here with us and share. So we've so much insight and knowledge and just joy that you bring to the table. But we're closing out here. So I get to ask my last big question, which is I'm so excited to hear your answer, which is what is your favorite charitable organization to support?

Jenn Grace 44:22

Oh, that's such a such a hard I know I have so many. You know, I'm going to, to piggyback off of my love of animals. And there's a local nonprofit organization here in the Hartford area of Connecticut called Protectors of Animals. And it's where I've adopted my three fur babies from and I just love the work that they're doing. But you know, in the same token, there are so many

amazing LGBTQ organizations that are, you know, that are out there and just phenomenal and my company as typically at the end of the year, will send the authors that we've worked with in the year, you know, some kind of, you know, just an end of the year gift, like just something that's meaningful from from us to them. And this year, we decided to just make a very large donation to an organization called, We Need Diverse Books. And so their mission is to bring more diverse books into the universe for children to see themselves represented within. And so I have a lot of passions, I have a lot of things that I'm very interested in. And so you know, it spans a whole wide gamut, but I love kind of just being philanthropic when possible.

**Heather Vickery** 45:33

Me too. Me too. And I love that I love the book organization. I mean, I'd love the animal one too. Both of those organizations will be our charities of the week, when this episode airs, we will link to it we will share it and promote them and listeners, you know, this is the same call. I asked you every week. Do me a favor, go go see what they're up to click their social media likes, look at their stuff, share it with other people, if you have something to give, whatever that is time, money, energy, anything, please do that these things matter. They matter a lot. And, and I just learned about the book organization's a new one for me. So I'm so excited. To know it.

**Jenn Grace** 46:13

So cool. It's like, Well, it seems like an obvious tie in of course, that's what we're gonna do. And with a COVID. Everything was taking so long for things to be shipped and whatnot. I'm like, you know what, we're just gonna start doing this because everyone who got our postcard that was like, Hey, this is what we did in your name. We were like, Oh my god, this is amazing.

**Heather Vickery** 46:28

It's the best gift ever. Absolutely. The best gift ever. I love it. Oh my gosh, Jenn, this has been so wonderful. Will you share your three words with us one last time?

**Jenn Grace** 46:36

Yes, they are purpose, empathy and change.

**Heather Vickery** 46:39

Yeah, I'm just sitting with them. Yeah, purpose, empathy and change. And really, you embody that. It's clear that you you're driven by purpose and that your this is your type A organized, all of

that you understand why, you understand the motivation. But you are such a lovely, kind hearted, empathetic person. And yeah, they're beautiful. Three words. Thank you so much for being here.

Jenn Grace 47:04

Thank you for having me. I'm so happy that we finally did this. This was a very fun conversation.

Heather Vickery 47:09

Me too. It was it was a lot of fun. I always love when we get to laugh through these episodes, because sometimes they're heavy, but there's always something to bring you joy. Listeners, I hope that you are kind of lit up from this. Go check out Jenn's work. If you're thinking about writing a book, she's a really excellent resource. There's all sorts of stuff we didn't even get to talk about. So go visit her website, which is [PublishYourPurposePress.com](http://PublishYourPurposePress.com)

Jenn Grace 47:34

You got it.

Heather Vickery 47:36

I'm like, that's just a mouthful, Jenn, can we shorten that shit?

Jenn Grace 47:39

I actually already did, you can go to [PublishYourPurpose.com](http://PublishYourPurpose.com).

Heather Vickery 47:42

Okay, there you go. But do that, but also, you know, you are, you are in control of you. You are the only person that you need to live braver, to live more joyfully to live in gratitude and celebration, you have everything you need. You already have it. And if you're interested in learning more, and being with a group of people who are ready to leverage their fear into intentional bravery to make the brave leap, I hope you'll come and hang out with us in Brave on Purpose, which is our Facebook collective. It's 100% free and it is an incredible community of people who are ready to welcome you and help you make that brave leap. So just visit Facebook and search Brave on Purpose. And I hope that I will get a chance to see you there. We'll see you next Thursday. This is Heather Vickery. And I am here to remind you today and every single day to go out and choose bravely. Hey, friends, I want to share something really

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Heather Vickery 51:46

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