

QUIETLY BOHEMIAN Season 1 Episode 11

My Joy – A Conversation For The Masses

Welcome to Quietly Bohemian the podcast for introvert, highly sensitive people and kindred free spirits where we look at turning away from your inner critic and towards your inner wisdom. So you do your thing your way in your own time and live life. True to yourself. I'm your host, Laura Li, a transformational life coach, and you can find out more about living life your way at quietlybohemian.com

Hello and welcome to episode 11 of Quietly Bohemian and for this week's Conversation For The Masses, we're doing something a little bit different because I'm choosing a B side and I'm choosing a song that I don't even really like.

So that means for once this week, you won't hear me going on about, what a great song this is. And it also means I don't really know the lyric in any great detail. I have unashamedly chosen it simply for the title and the title is: My Joy.

This show, Quietly Bohemian would not exist if it were not for Paula Jenkins from Jump Start Your Joy and her course Jump Start Your Podcast and if anybody listening has the slightest inclination towards starting their own podcast, I would definitely head over to [Jump Start Your Joy](#) and have a look at that because I think Paula's about to start another new round of that soon.

Now being new to all of this myself, I don't know if this is contrary to podcasting etiquette, and I hope I'm not going to offend the podcasting gods or anybody, but I recorded an interview with jump start your joy with Paula Jenkins this week. And can you believe it, Quiet Bohemians? I completely forgot about my tendency to shut down when I have the microphone in front of me or people in front of me asking questions. It was like Pointless all over again.

I should have asked for the questions in advance. When I pitched the show, which was before I actually started the jump start your podcast course, I knew really clearly what I wanted to talk about and how that related to joy and how that related to my joy. I think we can see the connection with the song title there, and so I thought it would be quite simple to talk about those things as part of the interview and I think there were questions that I could have answered by giving my story and talking about the things I wanted to talk about.

And I had prepared that in advance. It wasn't that I didn't prepare at all. It was simply that I forgot how much time I need to think through things in order to put across what I want to convey. And I forgot when I'm recording these conversations with you, how many times I stop and start and think about what I want to say and how many times I hit the delete button and redo something. And in the excitement of doing this thing, it all went out of my head.

So first up, this goes to show that we think we know something. And in fact, we can actually know something, but we don't always act on that knowledge. We don't always live from that

place of knowledge. It takes time and repetition - repeatedly hearing the message and repeatedly going on television or other people's podcasts and learning the lesson in real time, in the trenches or in the arena.

And so that leads me to invite you again, to listen to these conversations with an open mind. Because even if you think you know something, and even if you actually do know something, there is still the possibility for new insight to come

And the reason why I feel like this might be a little bit cheeky and in contravention of some written unwritten, completely made up in my head, podcasting etiquette is because I had so much I wanted to say this week on that podcast and I didn't, I started to talk about it in the dying seconds of the interview and I feel like there was so much I wanted to say, and I had an idea for this week's episode and it was going to be based on Walking In My Shoes.

And funnily enough, My Joy was the B side to that. So it kind of seems to have a pleasing symmetry in bringing that conversation that I didn't have earlier in the week to our conversation today to talk about the joy that I have felt since learning about the inside out understanding of life and how our minds work and that leading me to doing more of the things I want to do and being more of who I am.

And one of the questions I answered when I put my pitch forward for this show was how has joy played a part in your journey. And how does your story tie in with the philosophy that joy is a choice and recognizing that it is often the hardest choice we will ever make?

From my earliest memories, I have always had a very chatty, noisy mind and those thoughts that I'm hearing, what I would categorize as self doubt, and from one extreme of telling me what a loser and a failure I was and how I wasn't good enough, and kind of thinking about killing myself really to to shut that voice down and maybe at the other end things that weren't anywhere near as serious thoughts. Just of what would other people think and second guessing myself and going round in circles and never being able to get past that voice and get going.

And whilst definitely those thoughts, weren't as serious as the others and didn't cause me to consider anything as drastic as the solution I came up with, they still stopped me really from living fully and from doing the things that I wanted to do. And so I lived in what I would describe as kind of a very small space, a restricted space, and when I learned that those thoughts were not telling me the truth, weren't telling me anything meaningful about myself and I didn't have to believe them, and even I didn't have to get rid of them in order to move forward, my life has changed. Moving away from that area and more into living from this space has meant I have done things that have brought me joy.

But even more than that, and what I could never have foreseen before I started is how joyful I feel simply because I am living this way now, because I am expanding, because I am doing more things than I was before, because I am saying things that come into my head without stopping and censoring myself. So beyond the joy say, of writing and publishing a newsletter is the joy of not being imprisoned anymore in my own doubts and fears.

And it really has come as something of a revelation to me.

I knew I was unhappy and unfulfilled before and even at times that sank into depression and I pretty much lived with an almost constant anxiety of various levels, but that was really all I knew. And so I wasn't prepared for the lightness that I feel, the physical lightness I feel, since leaving those thoughts and that way of living behind.

And it seems to me that joy is coming from the freedom I feel and the utter release of being able to do things my way and have it be okay if they don't work out. It isn't that I've never felt joy before. I listen to Depeche Mode. Of course, I have felt joy before, but I would say I've never experienced joy as coming from inside me, as coming from who I am. I have always experienced it in response to something going on outside of me.

And even as I say that, I don't know how useful of a distinction that is and whether my words are able to adequately convey the feelings I have, because the whole understanding I have now that enables me to live like this is that everything comes from inside of us and not from our outside circumstances, but it's almost like I'm experiencing joy as who I am, rather than what I feel. I don't know. I can only just hope that that makes sense and that there's some level on which you can understand where that's coming from.

It still isn't easy for me to do all the things that I want to do. I'm quite often listening to that voice wanting to hold me back. And in fact, in some ways, I hear it more often because the results of doing the things I want to do and putting myself out there, that horrible expression, putting myself out there, as myself without a mask necessarily means that I have more moments where I'm activating that chatty mind, the ego, the inner critic, whatever we want to call it, that really wants to pull me back into that prison that it has known for so many, many years.

So I hear those thoughts perhaps more often, but I don't know, it's just a different experience now. They certainly don't hold me back as much. I don't believe them so much. And even when I kind of do believe them, I still have the awareness to know that I'm believing something that isn't true. And I guess I have enough experience now of doing things that I feel afraid of or worried about and and surviving them.

The world is still spinning on its axis and I'm still standing. So I guess I have more experience to be able to say, yeah, well, you know, you can do this thing and you can get through it and you can live through the discomfort. Because I talk about fear and being afraid, and it is a visceral feeling when, especially the first time I wrote that newsletter and it took me however many hours to write it, and then it was going out in MailChimp and I finally worked up the courage to hit the publish button, and then I'd never done it before, so I had no idea. So Mailchimp then gives you another screen that says, are you sure? And I'm like, are you kidding me? Am I sure? I'm not sure about anything. So now I have to spend however many more minutes or hours, working up my courage again to say yes, I'm sure to hit the send button.

So I recognize that whilst I'm saying, I'm afraid in that moment, what I have come to realise is what would be a more accurate description is to say that I feel extremely uncomfortable and there is a thinking of being uncomfortable and there is a feeling of being uncomfortable. And that feeling generally for me is I experience that in my stomach, like a kind of churning

in my stomach. Maybe similar to how you might feel before a job interview or a first date or something like that, and you know, the combination of the thinking and the feeling together, which is horrible, and I want to get away from as quickly as possible. I label that fear and I don't know how accurate that is. I think it is more a discomfort, but it is a very strong feeling in the moment.

And I've learned simply to accept that discomfort more and more in order to do the things that I want to do. And I suppose the experiences, the more I do that, the more I understand that I'm able to do that - and going back to that part about how does it tie in with recognising that joy is often the hardest choice we will ever make. So joy isn't my thing, kind of moving past self doubt is my thing. So for me, my philosophy might be, that's the hardest choice we ever made. And I don't know, is it the hardest choice? But it is a choice that I still have to make in order to do these things.

And it is very difficult. And I don't always make that choice. I mean, sometimes I do let that voice talk me out of doing something and I just choose to let that be okay because why beat myself up and berate myself for not being able to go from pretty much ignoring the thoughts none of the time, to ignoring the thoughts 100% of the time?

Everything is on a spectrum and I'm happy to just be in that arena now some of that time. Because I can choose to feel joyful now that I'm on the path instead of being unhappy that I didn't make any one scary choice in any one moment. So in some way, the choices to be true to myself and to feel joy go hand in hand, but there is an overarching choice to feel joy, to be joy, which supersedes each individual decision to either be me or to hide.

Now, if you are not stuck in that self doubt loop and prison, then this episode is probably a bit of a damp squib for you. And if you're emerging from that environment then some of this may already sound familiar to you, but if you are still firmly feeling quite stuck where I was a short while ago, and hearing people talking about being able to move past fear and do things, even though you're worried about the outcome or what will people think or worried about being a failure or not worried about being able to control the outcome or one of any number of fears I could think of and any number of fears that I couldn't, then the best, not advice, the best encouragement I would know to give you would be to say that part of the doubts and the fears that I listened to was thinking that I had to do things somebody else's way. And that often meant thinking I had to take more or bigger action than I was ready to.

So the best way I know to get moving when you really can't see any way forward is first of all, to open up to the possibility that you can do this. I absolutely hate it when people say if I can do this, so can you, because that just means nothing. Just because I've been able to do something, it actually doesn't mean that you can do it, but I do believe that if you have the idea or you in any way, feel inspired to do something, I do believe you have within you the ability to do that.

So first of all, just open yourself up to the possibility that there is a way for you to do this thing. Whatever it is that you want to do. And secondly, just take it, be willing to take it as slow as you need to go and to be okay with that. And you'll know you've hit the sweet spot when the step that you want to take still feels scary - because of course it will. And in fact

kind of doing things that feel scary, actually accomplishing them, I mean, that feels good. It's easy, it's just so easy and in a way boring to do something you're not scared or worried about. Where is the thrill or the fun in that? So the sweet spot is when you find the step that feels scary, but also feels really exhilarating as well. And when you have those two things in balance, balanced enough that you can actually take the step, then that's the thing for you to do and you're good to go.

And just so that we don't leave Martin Gore out of this conversation completely, he does say, my joy, heavenly bliss, my joy, the pleasures I've missed. And it's true. I realise now the pleasures that I've been missing out on, and I hope that you could move into a space where you start to feel a pleasure and a joy that's new to you as well.

So that's it. That is episode 11 of Conversations For The Masses. Thank you for listening. And if there is something you want to do, then I have my Creating For The Masses programme coming up, starting on Wednesday, 22nd of January and it will support you in bringing any dream to life or in just being more visible in your life, whether that's in a business context or work or relationships. And if you'd like to find out more about that, it is over at [my website](#).

Thanks again for listening.