



YOUR PERMISSION PRESCRIPTION

with Nancy Levin

EPISODE 45

LIVE COACHING:
**Getting to the Root of
Your People-Pleasing
Tendencies**



INTRO: Hi, and welcome to *Your Permission Prescription*, the podcast that teaches you how to confidently say yes to you, and consciously create the life you desire. I'm Nancy Levin, Best Selling Author, Master Life Coach and founder of Levin Life Coach Academy. But it wasn't too long ago that I was a burnt out people pleaser, living my life for everyone around me and ignoring my own needs. Fast forward to today, and I've successfully coached thousands of recovering people pleasers to set boundaries with themselves and the people around them, so they can live a more fulfilling life on their own terms. I created *Your Permission Prescription* to help you do the same. Be sure to tune in for actionable coaching methods from me, interviews with other incredible coaches, speakers and authors, plus one-on-one live coaching calls, and so much more. If you're ready to start saying yes to you, then you're in the right place.

NANCY: Welcome back to another episode of *Your Permission Prescription*. Today, we have got a live coaching edition. And as always, I have no idea what the topic is. So this is not scripted. This is not pre-planned. And today I am bringing on Jen, who is one of my students in Levin Life Coach Academy. She's in my training, she's getting certified as a

life coach.

And what I love is that she's here willing to show up transparent and vulnerable and ready to dig her heels in once again to continue doing her own work, to reveal another layer. And that is one of the beautiful aspects of this work that it just keeps on giving and what I love about Jen is that she is really showing up for herself. She is embodying the work as we teach in Levin Life Coach Academy, and she's continually benefiting and committing to the work that we're doing that will ultimately help others as well.

NANCY: So, Jen, welcome.

JEN: Hi, Nancy. I'm happy that you're here with me today. I'm really grateful to be here.

NANCY: And as I mentioned, I don't know what you're bringing to me. So please let me know how I can support you.

JEN: I got a good one. So big aha recently. So I will put myself in a place of suffering so that others feel better. I've done this before. My whole life probably. And so my aha is that my place of suffering has become my place of comfort as I'm becoming aware that I do this.

And how as I'm becoming aware of how I do this, how do I shift my place of comfort to a more empowered me? I have some examples. So like, you know, way back when, I date men for too long and was afraid to break up with them because I fear that they would be sad. So they would have to be the ones to break up with me or you know, even in like disciplining my kids, for like my son charged a ton of money on the credit card that was hooked up to his X-Box and then I didn't ever really have a good punishment. So I suffered financially. And even when it comes to like people working in my home, like a housekeeper, I won't fire them when I'm not happy with what they're doing, because I'm afraid that they'll be sad afterwards.

NANCY: Okay. Thank you for sharing all of this. So there's a few pieces here.

One is, you know, this originates from people pleasing, peacekeeping, not wanting to rock the boat. It also really ties in with the way that you have historically essentially trespassed into someone else's territory. So this is a way we cross our own boundaries by taking responsibility for someone else's emotions or someone else's experience. And we think that by relating to someone else from the point of, I don't want them to feel disappointed or sad or upset or angry that we are doing them a service. What's really happening is we are doing ourselves a disservice. So you have become accustomed to taking the hit. Essentially some version of I'll be unhappy because I know how to be with that. And I would rather I be unhappy than anyone else be unhappy.

JEN: Yes. Yeah. I feel safety in my unhappiness and terrified of their unhappiness and what that means for me.

NANCY: So let's go there. Okay. What is terrifying to you about someone else's unhappiness?

JEN: I'm having a little, yup. It's all kind of coming to me right now that if I, if someone else is unhappy, I'd rather make myself unhappy with myself than have someone else feel unhappy with me.

NANCY: With you...

JEN: With me. Right. So why don't I make myself hurt for.

NANCY: Yes. So there's a couple things. One is you're automatically taking responsibility for their unhappiness.

JEN: Okay.

NANCY: And you're automatically taking responsibility to fix their unhappiness.

JEN: Yes. Right. And I'm also making up what I think they're going to feel before I even do anything.

NANCY: That's right. That's right. So you are projecting a feeling into them and then reacting to what you're projecting.

So just playing with this for a minute, for all, you know, I'm just making this up. I'm not saying this is true, but I'm just giving an example. For all you know, the housekeeper you don't want to fire has been wanting to quit, but hasn't known how to tell you that.

JEN: Yeah.

NANCY: But that doesn't come into your awareness because you are only stuck on this is going to cause her some kind of .

JEN: Right, right. So that

could totally be true. Totally true. It actually makes a lot of sense.

NANCY: This is why I often talk in the training about, you know, we can't make someone feel something. And so this whole thing we have in our language of, you know, believing that we can make someone angry or make someone sad or make someone disappointed or make someone happy for that. That is a power we do not have. So you've heard me say, I know, time and time again, someone else's response to our truth is not our responsibility to manage.

And what that does is it holds others capable of having their own experience and having their own feelings.

Okay. What happens when you hear that?

JEN: I just, I'm realizing that I think I've built a lifetime on predicting other people's feelings and reacting to them before they react to me and anticipate, you know, almost just jumping ahead of, jumping ahead of

myself and jumping ahead of them. But it really all comes down to like me wanting to be in a place that's, sorry, I'm like stumbling over my words here, but you know, I want to be in this uneasy place. I, I don't know.

NANCY: Right. So there's safety for you in that uneasy place and in the discomfort?

JEN: Yes.

NANCY: So, because you get to then rescue, you get to save.

JEN: I get to suffer. You can suffer, watch me suffer.

NANCY: And yes. What do you all get out of that? What's the payoff of suffering for you?

JEN: Pay off of suffering? That's a very good question because it's huge in my life. And I even have been talking to you in my reflections about my raccoon eating.

So that's just, you know, like doing like binge eating and then waking up in the morning and being like, oh my gosh, I totally did it again. It looks like a little raccoon was in my living room and then beating myself up and suffering as well. So it's this, this pattern of wanting to feel and put myself lower and lower and lower and, and tell myself to like, even in these relationships I'm talking about, I find like a certain satisfaction for myself in telling myself I'm a bad employer. I'm bad at relationships. I'm bad at all of this because

NANCY: You find a satisfaction in that you just said, yes. Right? So does that let you off the hook? Does that, you know, what does that do for you?

JEN: Yeah, I think it, one, it lets me off the hook too. I don't have to show up fully present as who I am, because I've already messed it up.

So the bad, the bad part of me messed it up.

NANCY: Yup.

JEN: And. Not have to feel accountable.

NANCY: Okay. Let me ask you this.

JEN: Okay.

NANCY: I want to look at when this all began.

JEN: Okay.

NANCY: Sort of, these are my words, not yours, but the way you were describing it before, you know, being in reaction to others. So as I talk about it being other-referenced, and there's a way in which you're also sort of talking about it, like you keep dodging a bullet, you know, some kind of way to stay out of trouble, some way to not be punished is something I'm hearing here.

So also wondering if you go back to family of origin, you go back to mom and dad. What was the origination? Let me say this again. What was the origin point of not necessarily consciously, but seeing that if I behave a particular way, it keeps me safe?

JEN: I would think what's coming to me right now is when my parents, my mom and my stepdad would fight when I was little and I would disappear to keep myself safe from their arguments or from me being in trouble as well. That, so I'm really afraid of big reactive things or conflict.

NANCY: Okay.

JEN: And so, it may be what I go to every single time that I'm afraid of a conflict is that there's going to be a fight or a spanking or whatever that would be in my house when I was younger.

NANCY: Right. And so you, you made a promise to yourself, I'll do X, so I don't get a spanking or don't get in trouble or there isn't this big conflict. And so you would retreat.

JEN: And then also caretake, try to caretake for my mother afterwards to make her feel okay.

NANCY: Right. So then, so then you took on a role of you were parentalized very young.

So you took on the role of caretaking your mother very young. Okay. So when we are afraid of, we think it's about wanting to avoid a fight or a blowout, what we're really afraid of on the deeper level is that the relationship or the arrangement doesn't work. And it's going to take too much to look at that because once I really see how this doesn't mean, I can't unknow what I know.

So it's easier as you are experiencing to just stuff it down, keep things on the surface and not look underneath at what really isn't working, because if you really acknowledged that you would need to do.

JEN: Yeah. I'd have to look here.

NANCY: Right.

JEN: Right.

NANCY: Right. So even if we stick with the housekeeper example, you know, it's okay. So, you know, you're, you know, you've hired someone to do a job. You know, you're paying the person, you recognize that for whatever reason, it's not working for you. And you would rather, you would rather be, let me say it this way. You would rather your needs go unmet, then rock the boat in any way.

JEN: Yes.

NANCY: And this is the pattern. So this, so over time, I would imagine you have resentment.

JEN: Total. Yes.

NANCY: So resentment rising is a telltale sign that a boundary needs to be put into place and that unmet needs are, really driving the bus. And your needs are unmet because you are not giving them.

So it has to begin with your own willingness to first acknowledge I have needs and my needs are important. And am I willing to consider my own needs at least as much as I'm considering the needs of everyone else around me, it has to be. Am I willing to give myself permission to consider my own needs, at least as much as I'm considering the needs of everyone else, then am I willing to give myself permission to consider my needs even more than the needs of everyone else? And then am I willing to give myself permission to consider my needs first before I consider the needs of others?

So if you can engage in a practice where whatever's bubbling up to the surface and you ask yourself, what do I need here? Instead of what's going to keep me safe or what is going to have conflict be avoided, or what's going to keep me out of trouble, but if really the question is, what do I need here? What do I need? I need, and again, I'm making this up, I need the housekeeper I'm paying to actually do the job that I need done. That's what I need.

JEN: Or here's another one that I just realized, right. I need to drink water during the day because I, because I don't know if this is okay to say, but water so that I don't have to pee in the day. Cause I don't want to take that time away from having to do other stuff for other people.

NANCY: it's believe it or not.

This is a huge, huge issue primarily for. Really? Yes. That I don't want to give myself five minutes to go pee because it's going to impact what I do or

who I serve. So, first of all, thank you for saying that. I know that there are so many people listening who will resonate with this. And I will say that for a very long time.

I did too, for a very long time. I did too. When I was in my, when I was in my position at hay house, when. All wound up with [00:18:00] my value and worth is determined by what I do and achieve and produce. Absolutely. So that's part of this too, for you. What, how are you, how are you determining your own sense of value and worth and what do you make it mean about you?

If you literally give yourself five minutes, How many, five, four times a day to go pee or whatever. Like what are you making that mean about you?

JEN: Well, it feels like you mean not going to the bathroom? Like, what am I making?

NANCY: I don't know, both ways. What is the, what does it mean if you don't and what does it mean if you do.

So if I don't,

JEN: I'm a superhero, right. Because I don't even have to have human needs. Right?

NANCY: Yep. Yes.

JEN: Yes. And if I did do it, it would be, you know, [00:19:00] like a selfish act, you know, who am I to go pee for five minutes when there's all this other stuff that can be done during the day. So don't drink water.

NANCY: Right.

Right. So. I literally, I'm not joking with you when I started my coaching practice and I took on way too many clients out of the gate, I literally had to put in my calendar, go pee. I'm not joking. So I invite you to put in your calendar. Gopi, I'm going to like that three times in your Workday or

whatever, how many ever times the same with water, you know, whatever [00:20:00] you can do to sort of like whatever hack you can do to trick yourself into, into being able to do something that you've decided.

Is something that only mere mortals do because I've got news. And I often will say this, you know, like my humanity is my least favorite quality sometimes, but it is a quality. We are human, you know? And so I know, I know that there are these like water bottles that you fill and it tells you like how, you know, how.

How you're doing in your water intake for the day or whatever, you know, for me, I drink two Mason jars, big Mason jars, full of water each day. I drink one before I even drink my coffee. And then I drink the other one, whole Mason jar, a whole Mason jar of warm lemon water. Before I drink my coffee. [00:21:00]

JEN: I'm gonna try that, but I'm probably going to have to write, have to pee or go pee, like plenty of time.

NANCY: You, you very listen. Now I just, you know, P all the time and I'm free to pay. I know it sounds ridiculous, but these are the ways we deprive ourselves of our needs. Like, this is, this is a biological need that we are depriving ourselves of. And there's something. And I feel this with you. Cause I th because this is something I really get, you know, I thought that there was some super power in depriving myself restricting myself, you know, I got off.

Having no needs and you know, my whole marriage to my now ex-husband for 18 years, I didn't drink a drop of alcohol. I had it wasn't that I had [00:22:00] a problem with alcohol. He did. And part of my agreement to be with him was to not drink. Well, I didn't have a drink at my wedding. I didn't have a drink in Italy.

Like I didn't have, I didn't have a drink for 18 years straight. And. It became this thing that I was like righteous about because I could so withstand any temptation. And I could, I knew how to deprive myself. I knew how to

restrict myself. And I thought that that gave me some power and really what it did is it diminished the.

What do I want to say? Like it diminished my ability to really connect.

That's

JEN: making a lot of sense for me in my life. Like that's for everything. Right. What you just said is related to my [00:23:00] question in such a big way that like, I'm not actually really connecting with anyone, especially myself. As I'm trying to put on my superhero Cape and do all the things without having to have any needs or any wants or any money thing.

Yeah, that's really, really, really huge. And I'm also a little bit like terrified of. When I connect to myself, who's there. Who was there?

NANCY: Yeah. So this was, you know, this was a really big part of my own process when I was leaving my marriage, when I was going through my own coach training. And then ultimately when I was writing my book, jump in your life will appear.

And I don't know if you've heard me talk about this before, but I'll just share this, you know, so the first [00:24:00] step in jump, the first chapter is admit to yourself what you already know. And I knew I was working with my editor and I knew that I was going to share parts of my story as the through line of.

And so my editor who also happens to be my very best friend, she said okay, great. We're going to begin the book with the story of your affair. And I said, oh my God, no, I'm not putting that in a book. I'm not, absolutely not. She literally closed her laptop in front of me and said, great, we're not going to write a book where the first step is, admit to yourself what you already know.

And you are unwilling to tell this story. And that really, I mean, this is now, you know, this is now 10 0 10 years ago, ish. Oh, more than that. [00:25:00] And I really had to look at, okay, am I. To tell myself the things that I don't

want to know about myself. Am I willing to look behind the door of, you know, that I, everything that I've shoved in there, like that closet door that you just shove, all the stuff in, and then you, you know, close it with your back and hope you never have to open it again.

But this is what keeps us disconnected. This is what keeps us unable to. Intimacy. And I don't even mean romantic intimacy. I mean, true intimacy where, you know, my vulnerability can meet yours in a sweet spot, so that I feel a sense of belonging with you. The things that have us feel, the deepest sense of belonging with others and connection with others are actually those things that we don't want.[00:26:00]

JEN: That's so beautifully said

NANCY: that's true. Yeah. Yeah. You know, and so part of it is like, can you get right with the parts of you that you have, that you have

believed you have to hide in order to be loved and.

You know, can you get in right relationship with that? Because, you know, in one breath, we're always saying like, I just want to be accepted for the truth of who I am. And then we spend all this energy trying to hide that truth.

JEN: It's, it's a ridiculous circle. We're running in all that all the time. Right,

NANCY: right.

You know, and I, I often, you know, we'll talk to clients, you know, who are. Let's say going out on a first date and I'll say, what happens if you go [00:27:00] on that first date as you, what happens if you go on that first date as you and you are doing the picking and choosing. So instead of wanting to be asked on the next date, check in with yourself, do I want to go on, do I want to go on another date?

We spend so much energy wanting to be picked and chosen. That we package ourselves to be digestible to everyone else instead of really looking at, do I want

JEN: this?

Yeah. Yes, I do that all the time. That's right.

NANCY: Yeah, that's my constant. Right? So again, you know, we've talked about this in the training. You know, if the antenna is outward on, what do they think, what do they need? What do they feel? What do they want? The invitation here is to bring it back inward. [00:28:00] What do I think?

What do I feel? What do I need? What do I want? And start there, start with yourself, not with what you think about someone else or what you think. They need or how you think it's going to land on them. I'm not saying to be reckless or to be careless, but to be over, to be overly concerned and believing that you can take responsibility for someone else's experience is actually ultimately depriving you of having your.

Yeah.

JEN: Yes. There's so much of my life I've missed out on because I've been running in this circle of not actually being present with myself and think, and putting myself first at all. And, [00:29:00] and, and I want, I think one of my fears is coming up, as you're saying, this is. And I have to look at, like we say, in the training stuff of like, what is the worst thing that could happen if somebody was angry at me or somebody didn't like me or, or any of that, but what, what happens if, when I go here, if I don't like me, myself?

NANCY: Yes. What does that mean? What does that mean? Yeah. Yeah. I mean, at the, at the end of the day, it's you and. That's the real that's sort of been

JEN: missing is intimacy with myself too, because I haven't really looked in

NANCY: here. So what's something that you can imagine doing to feel more connected to yourself.[00:30:00]

JEN: What's popping in my head right now is to. Right. Okay. Right. Just put pen to paper and write maybe a ladder to myself. I love that. Yeah. little love letter, a little

NANCY: love letter. A love letter to yourself. Yes, you do it.

JEN: I will do it. Yeah. I think that that would be a fun exercise for me. And I also feel like.

Not just fun exercise. I don't know why I said fun. I feel like it'd be really nice for me to just write to myself and let myself know that I'm safe.

NANCY: Yeah. Yeah. Let yourself know the things you need to let yourself know so that you no [00:31:00] longer associate safety. With staying small, staying invisible, being an overachiever, being an over giver, being hyper responsible.

Those, those are all ways in which you keep yourself disconnected from you.

Yeah. When will you write your letter?

JEN: I will write it by next Tuesday.

NANCY: Okay. Will you let me know?

JEN: I will let you know. How about I write, I write in my reflection. I'll do it by perfect. Perfect.

NANCY: And butterfly. I put it in your reflection for the training. Perfect. And then I'll know that you did it. Okay, great.

I'm holding up accountable.

JEN: Thank you for holding me accountable. I

NANCY: appreciate that. Is this helpful for.

JEN: Like so incredibly [00:32:00] helpful. Amazing. I mean, I'm just like, my heart actually opened a bit more today, so I really thank you for that, Nancy. I mean, since I've been doing the LLC training and I did the destination me previous to that, but I've really started living in my body for the first time ever and in my center.

And I feel like our conversation today is really just. Opening me up so much more to feel safe here. And I appreciate that. I really do. Thank you so much.

NANCY: So welcome. Thank you. And thank you to everyone who's listening and we'll be back together again. Next time.