

Eve Rodsky Unicorn Space

Eve Rodsky: [00:00:00] And so the beauty of a unicorn space is that we know if you connect and share it with the world,

it's that connection, a creative life is a connected life. And I think too many people think a creative life has to be alone in a room cutting off your ear. Playing with paints and a paintbrush like van Gogh did.

That is not, it's really what we see as a creative life is an extremely connected life.

That was Eve Rodsky on psychologists off the clock.

Yael Schonbrun: We are three clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science-based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships, work, and health.

Debbie Sorensen: I'm Dr. Debbie Sorensen, practicing in mile high, Denver, Colorado, and coauthor of ACT Daily Journal.

Yael Schonbrun: I'm Dr. Yael Schonbrun, a Boston based clinical psychologist, assistant professor at Brown University, and author of the upcoming book Work, Parent, Thrive.

Jill Stoddard: And from sunny San [00:01:00] Diego, I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard author of be mighty and the big book of act metaphors.

Debbie Sorensen: We hope you take what you learn here to build a rich and meaningful life.

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Yael Schonbrun: You can go to our website and get a coupon for the live trainings, by going to our offers page at off the clock, psych.com/sponsors. And we'll hope to see you.

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Katy Rothfelder: So if you are a fellow book, nerd like Yael and I, and all of the people around you are tired of you talking about books. Then you can join us once a month to really take a deep dive into the books that we're going to be reading to you.

Yael Schonbrun: And even though books themselves are not therapy. many books offer huge therapeutic value. So join Katie and I with [00:03:00] our background in acceptance and commitment therapy and other evidence-based psychotherapies. to explore together how we can apply some of these ideas from great books in psychology to our everyday lives.

Bring your questions, bring your insights and join us for deep conversations. Once a month, starting May 5th at 12:00 PM Eastern standard time in the U S and if you're interested in joining us and we hope you are . Just send us an email at, off the clock, psych@gmail.com and we'll send you the zoom link.

We hope to see you. there.

Jill Stoddard: I'm here with you Yael to introduce today's episode with Eve Rodsky to talk about her book, find your unicorn space.

This is such an important topic that is all about, , people, but mostly women. Carving out time for themselves where they're not just in a role of parenting or as a partner or as a professional, but really finding their own kind of creative space [00:04:00] and Yael. I'm curious what your reaction to this episode.

Yael Schonbrun: this was an episode.

that really hit home for me because finding my unicorn space, carving out time for me to do things that matter to me because they matter to me. And even if they don't matter to anybody else has been sort of a lifelong challenge for me. ,

I will sing my own praises. I'm actually really talented in being in the support role.

Really. I'm a good parent. I'm a really good therapist. And actually when I look back on it in college, I got involved in rowing. I rode crew for all four years of college, but the. Skillful role that I had on the, on the team was as Coxen, which is the support person, the person who really encourages the people who are actually pulling on the oars to do their best.

And I was, it was good in that role, and I really enjoy being in that role, but there's also something that's missing, right. You're sort of helping other people shine, brighter. Other people put their best out when you're really kind of behind the scenes. And as I've [00:05:00] grown older, I have realized more and more that I also want my own light to shine.

It's not that I don't care about those support roles, but. Also feels important to me in, in various parts of roles that I, I inhabit to really show up and to say, you know, here's my voice, here's what I have to contribute and to have the spotlight on me, but it's complicated because I have an internal conflict about being in that role, like it's uncomfortable.

And it is also something that I want. And so, you know, in my forties, it's something that I've really. Been tackling. And I love this conversation that Eve Rodsky is having with you and with the world at large, about the importance of women in particular, taking up more space in shining their light in ways that feel satisfying and rewarding for them.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. And she talks about the obstacles to that in terms of carving out the time, dealing with the guilt. You know, these are some of the things that, that you're talking about this conflict. So I'm curious, what, what is your unicorn space and then [00:06:00] how have you figured out a way to

carve out. Time for you, you know, you have three little boys and a full-time job. So how have you overcome some of those obstacles?

Yael Schonbrun: It has definitely been an iterative process. And what I will say is strangely the pandemic really forced the issue. , maybe not strangely, but, , you know, I used to fit in my time. Like when I would have a client cancel on me, I would do my writing or, you know, early in the morning I would go for my runs before everybody would wake up and.

During the pandemic with everybody home all the time and you know, so many more demands on my partner and I, there just wasn't space for me to have anything for myself. And it really, like, I will say, like I hit the wall many times over and there was a lot of conflict, but over time I realized, you know, I really it's important for me to get time to myself.

And so it was this negotiation. It wasn't easy because we, you, my husband has a very demanding job [00:07:00] and pretty rigid hours. My, my kids are young and at the time that the pandemic happened, my youngest was just three. And so it was really, really taxing, but we sorted. a couple of blocks in the week for two hour chunks of time that were just my protected time and it's not, you know, so maybe that would be a lot for some people.

Maybe it would be not nearly enough for others, but for us, that's kind of what we were able to negotiate for now. And, I will say, you know, it, it required a lot of conversations and, and give and take.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. And I think a lot of conversations is important because so many of us try once and don't get the outcome we're looking for and throw our hands up and say, well, you know, this works for other people, but not for me. And that this is kind of an ongoing process. , and you know, Eve talks about how this, this is a lifelong process and that it is.

An optional thing that it's really necessary to our overall wellbeing as a, as a whole human. And I thought I would share, , a [00:08:00] as I said before, I'm concerned that, you know, people hear this and say, oh, this is a great idea, but I don't have the time. It's not for me. And so I thought I would, , share another example in addition to yours.

Yeah. L from my friend, Joanne, who is also a listener of PMTC, , who took up trap he's flying as her unicorn. That's the coolest thing ever. And when I was talking to her, by the way about interviewing Eve for unicorn space, she told me

I have literally flown in a unicorn costumes. So hopefully pictures of that will be coming.

Yael Schonbrun: Boy. That's awesome.

Jill Stoddard: Okay. And I'll, I, I talked to Joanne after I talked to Eve. So I'll have to share that with Eve. I think she will love that. But what I asked Joanne is what she would say was the most important or beneficial thing that came out of carving this time out for her. With flying. And I'm just going to read you what she wrote to me.

She said the most important parts for me are the mental challenges to risk messing up and risk mistakes while [00:09:00] trusting my line polar. And then the joy of the movement and my fellow fliers are incredible for encouragement, inspiration, and commiseration when necessary. And I just found this to be so powerful.

You hear so many values in there. You hear the community which eats, talks about the importance of sharing.

And I didn't ask her specifically if she said, oh my God, I can't believe I did that. Which Eve talks about in this episode and in the book that it's important. You, you know, you're in a unicorn space where you say, oh my gosh, I can't believe I did that. But I think if I went back and as Joanne, she would certainly say that that has been her experience.

And when I asked if it was challenging to carve out the time, you know, she like you, she has three little boys. She works, , and is married. And, , you know, I just think it would be too easy to say, forget it. I can't do it. I'm too busy. I have all these things going on and what she said to me as I made it such a priority in my schedule and talk to my husband about how important it was for me.

She added the kids to [00:10:00] it. So on the weekend day that she flies, she brings. Two of her two older boys with her. So she's, you know, having time together with them, but then she also still carves out space to do this alone, but it felt like this compromise.

And she went on to say, it's likely the first thing I've ever done, where I've protected my schedule at nearly all costs. And her husband likes seeing her happy and feeling good. So that makes him supportive too. And I think that piece is so important that we have these assumptions that our partners won't respond well.

But what often happens is they see how beneficial it is to us. And that improves our parenting and our marriage, our relationship, so that like women carving out time for unicorn space can actually, positively benefit everyone around them.

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah.

And, and your partner may want unicorn space too. So it can really be A negotiation in that way. And I will say that's [00:11:00] been the case for my partner and I were, you know, I really value that time to myself. And so does he, and it's. Super easy to find pockets for each of us, but it is super important to try.

And, you know, we don't do it perfectly every week, but the conversation that Eve Rodsky is having about this is highlighting that it is important for us to each do things that are rewarding and satisfying. Just because they're rewarding and satisfying. Like it's sort of the being, not just doing, like, let's not forget about the being with ourselves and shining our light just because it's important to us.

Jill Stoddard: A hundred percent well said, well, we hope you enjoy this episode with Eve Rodsky.

Hey everybody. It's Jill here and I am so excited to welcome Eve. Rodsky back to the podcast. Eve. Transformed a blueberries breakdown into a catalyst for social change. When she applied her Harvard trained background in organizational management to ask the simple yet profound [00:12:00] question, what would happen if we treated our homes as our most important organizations or New York times bestselling book .

And Reese's book club pick fair, play a gamified life management system that helps partners rebalance their domestic workload. And re-imagine their relationship has elevated the cultural conversation about the value of unpaid labor and care and her highly anticipated followup. Find your unicorn space, reclaim your creative life and a too busy world.

Rodsky explores the cross section between the science of creativity, productivity and resilience described as the antidote to physical, mental, and emotional burnout. Rodsky aims to inspire a new narrative around the equality of time and the individual, right to personal time choice that influences sustainable and lasting change on a policy level.

Rods he's work is backed by hello, sunshine, Reese Witherspoon's media company, whose mission is to change the narrative for women through stories.

Rodsky was born and raised by a single mom in New York city, [00:13:00] and now lives in Los Angeles with her husband, Seth and their three children.

I am so excited to welcome Eve. Back to the podcast This is her third time with us on the podcast and I'm pretty sure we've had a few, two timers, but I'm pretty sure Eva's our first third timer and, yeah, L and Debbie and I were joking that like SNL, we might need to get you. one of those smoking jackets for the third timers club. So, welcome back to the podcast Eve. Thanks so much for being.

Eve Rodsky: I love being with you. I feel like you asked such thoughtful questions, Jill and it makes it really fun and meaningful. So thanks for having me.

Jill Stoddard: Today we're here to talk about your second book called find your unicorn space. So why don't we just jump in defining that. So for people who haven't seen the book or read the book, tell us, tell our listeners what is a unicorn space.

Eve Rodsky: What's a great question. , sometimes it's easier to define it by what it's not, what is not is adult friendships and what it's not [00:14:00] is self care, which we, they come, those come with unicorn space, but it's different. What a unicorn space really is, is a recognition that we deserve uninterrupted attention.

For things that we love to do for things that make us come alive. And the thing about a unicorn space, that's so interesting is that like a mythical equine, it doesn't exist. It doesn't exist for women until we reclaim it. And so that's why this book, while it is a plan to help you find what yours is. The first hundred pages had to really similar to Fairplay work on the unlearning for why we don't believe that we deserve this space in our lives, in the first place.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. absolutely. Let's talk about like, w why is this a must, you know, what are the benefits to having a unicorn space, the drawbacks to not have any unicorn space, because , I think one of the hardest sells here is women believing that, not [00:15:00] only do they deserve this space, they need this space, but to really recognize, Like, why you say that this isn't optional, that this is a must. So, so do the sales pitch here? What, however are we going to convince super busy people, women, especially to work on this, to try to carve out this time.

Eve Rodsky: Well that, you know, I think a lot of people say to me, are you really adding, asking me to add something to my to-do list that I want to do when I don't have time for the things I need to do. , and this is not a privileged

narrative. , in fact, my research showed that people who identified in the 9.9% of the income spectrum had.

Even a harder time discovering what their unicorn space was, because I think what happens Jill is that as we climb up, quote, unquote, the extrinsic ladders of success, the 2.5 children, , the nice car, possibly a nice house, whatever, whatever society tells [00:16:00] you, you're supposed to want. , we shrink to fit into those, those extrinsic goals.

And so really what this is about is busting out of the expectations of what it means to live a happy life. This is not a how to be happy book. So this is a book that is committed to your daily flourishing. We know that creativity defined as unicorn space is linked to daily flourishing. That's the opposite of Adam Grant's word languishing.

It's the opposite of the word cloud for. Fairplay, which is probably the longest longitudinal study now of unpaid labor in the world. We know that the words that came to people's mouths most frequently in my interviews and 17 countries, Jill, , when I asked them about how they felt about their home life, it was overwhelm and.

So overwhelming boredom is not a place where anybody can live long-term without it having severe mental health and physical health, [00:17:00] manifestations. So the idea behind a unicorn space is it's not how to be happy book, just like you would say, Joe. I loved your take on mental health and it's not, you know, you want to be happy all the time.

What the true definition of mental health is that I anchor in unicorn space is you want to have the appropriate emotion at the appropriate time and the ability and strength to whether it's

unicorn space is our resilience. It's our umbrella. It's the ability and strength to weather, the overwhelm and the boredom.

And that is why I believe it has to be a practice. It doesn't have to be daily, but it has to be an umbrella that you can hold it up enough so that you don't get wet.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I love that. I love that. And you say, you know, it's fundamental to our health as a whole human, and I think, you know, too often, especially in Western cultures, it is this like keeping up with the Jones's go, go, go, do, do, do. And everything becomes about [00:18:00] all the things you have

to do. And so little about the things you want to do, and our creativity just gets Destroyed

Eve Rodsky: Destroyed it's really for women. , , there's a , , a concept called time confetti, where we may have. , we have less leisure time already, than men, but our time is it's even worse because it's chopped up into these small confetti moments. , one time use study showed a one woman in the pandemic sheet was interrupted every three minutes and 42 seconds.

The shadow pandemic here, , for women is that we don't believe we have a permission to be unavailable. From our roles. And so as you become a parent and our partner and our professional, those are great things. And what's so many women said to me is that they felt allowed to pursue those things.

What they did not feel allowed to pursue was anything that uniquely benefited them, , to the point where one of the questions I started to [00:19:00] add in Joe, To nerd out here a little bit, , it started off as a standard questionnaire, similar to sociological, , studies where you get a qualitative answers, and then you get more qualitative answers in the, you look for patterns.

One of the questions I started to ask was how many times this week, can you tell me the most important thing you did that week was outside of your roles as a parent? And our partner and our professional.

Jill Stoddard: Hmm. that number was probably pretty

Eve Rodsky: Yeah, it was zero. and I asked one woman that question, and then recently she just reached out back to me.

She was so excited about. Even the most important thing I did on this Saturday is I jumped into the Atlantic ocean with my polar bear club. And it was so important to me. And I'm here to tell you, Joe, that that is a unicorn space. That is creativity redefined. Because she was curious about what it would feel like to jump in water.

That's the first C the second C is she connected with a group of polar bears it's connection. [00:20:00] And the last is completion. She did it. She actually jumped it. Wasn't an unfulfilled dream. So that curiosity, connection and completion cycle is really what we're talking about here.

Jill Stoddard: And then you also talk about the three rules of permission. So you alluded to this, this idea. We need to give ourselves permission to be unavailable.

Eve Rodsky: Yes. That's one.

Jill Stoddard: Yep.

And then tell us the.

Eve Rodsky: yes. That was the first. That was the hardest. So that was the biggest hurdle availability Eve is my identity. What would I, what do you mean? I. I have to keep my phone on. , of course I'm going to pick up if my son is sick. , of course I respond to texts, right? So availability as our identity was definitely the number one hurdle for women reclaiming their creative life in the 17 countries.

The other two that were runners up were, , even if I do Joe, believe I have a permission to be unavailable, , guilt and shame actually affects my decision making. It will affect my decision-making [00:21:00] and it will change. , what I'm doing that day away from my unicorn space to other tasks that, that I feel are important, , for my family.

And then the third runner up was even if I believe I have permission to be unavailable and I can vanquish guilt and shame, I actually really don't know how to ask for what I need from my partner or my. Boss. , it's, it's not coming out. The words aren't exp you know, they're not coming out of my mouth and I know I want to ask for the time, but I'm feeling really scared.

Jill Stoddard: And all three of those are our big, I mean, it it's, it is not hard to see why people struggle to really create this time for themselves. So, and, you know, I really, really recommend this book. It was so inspiring to me. I loved it so much. even I have a slightly short interview today, so we're not going to be able to.

Too in depth with these things, but I really encourage listeners to [00:22:00] check out the book. I want to talk about how we figure out what our unicorn spaces. So before we do that, I am going to read the definition

Eve Rodsky: Great.

Jill Stoddard: from the book, which is. The active and open pursuit of self-expression in any form and which requires value-based curiosity and purposeful sharing of this pursuit with the world.

I love that. , so maybe we can talk a little bit about, maybe. Could you give us a couple examples of like what maybe people that you've spoken to, or maybe from your own personal experience? Like what are some examples of unicorn space and maybe some examples of what it's not.

Eve Rodsky: I love that so much. That's a great way to start because we can start dreaming. , with each other. So, as I said earlier, it's really, , what you see as the through line, when people have these unicorn space experiences, they're often feeling curious, [00:23:00] connected, and they complete something. So as I said earlier, that woman now, every Saturday, she's jumping into the Atlantic ocean with her polar bear club.

But one of my favorite examples as a woman named Katrina Medina, , she. At Sam's club. And, , until recently, and her husband married was an auto mechanic and she tells me the story of how. One night Mario comes in and hears her reading to her son. And at first he's like, is that like a audio book on, or, you know, a CD.

And then he realizes it's her. And he's like, wow. You know, you really should do something with that. You have a very beautiful voice and you embody these characters. You're not really reading. You're more narrating. And so she. Had a, that light bulb. I wonder moment. I wonder what that would even look like.

So she starts to Google. How do you narrate audio books? She finds [00:24:00] out that you could literally take a microphone on clearance, which she got at Sam's club where she worked. She borrowed her husband's laptop and she records a section of princess is behaving badly. She uploads it, you know, no editing to, narrations.

And then she tells me that shortly after she gets a phone call, that she booked her first audio book narration, and she does it with the author. She said she's like bursting with, I can't believe I just did that. Now that was number one. I want to say that almost every single interview I did. And now we're coming up on 750 that.

Emotion is what I want to give to you. If you will know you're in a unicorn space, if you say to yourself, I can't believe I just did that. So she has that feeling. And then soon after she tells her mother, she wants to get a tattoo on her

arm that says reading books is like breathing air. And her mother's like, well, why don't you like [00:25:00] slow your roll?

Because you've read like one audio book and you know, why did you wait to see if you actually have traction with this? And her answer was so beautiful. It was. Well, you know what mom, nobody could take away from me what I did already. And so a unicorn space is really an experience that no one can take away from you.

It does become, as we said, that umbrella and often it's one where after it, you say to yourself, I can't believe I just.

Jill Stoddard: Um,

Eve Rodsky: So Jill, whether it's your first podcast or, you know, jumping into the ocean or doing your first watercolor painting, that's what we're, that's the sentiment where, what we're wishing for our listeners here.

Jill Stoddard: And I think too, it's that feeling like where you just feel more Alive

like where you feel a sense of zest and like complete flow or presence. that doesn't tend to come out of the things we do in just our regular old everyday life. Parenting and partnering and professions.

Eve Rodsky: Yes. Yes,

Jill Stoddard: [00:26:00] But let me, let me ask, , I think, cause this is a good segue here, because I imagine if the woman Katrina, you said her name

Eve Rodsky: Yes. Katrina.

Jill Stoddard: that Katrina may go on to earn money for reading audio books. Maybe it'll become something she works at for me, podcasting is absolutely a unicorn space and I don't make money at it, but it does, it is work. You know, I still consider it like part of what I do as a professional. And then the other thing I think about that's become a unicorn space for me more recently as I've grown to love hiking,

Eve Rodsky: Who I

Jill Stoddard: it's something that it's so fun and I I've come to do it almost every weekend with my son.

So I'm doing it while I'm also parenting and podcasting is part of being a professional. So can unicorn spaces double as things we do professionally and things we do as parents, or is it really important that it be separate from those three PS?

Eve Rodsky: No, I, I absolutely think it could [00:27:00] double. I just think you need more. So what ha what happens is that, , things can evolve. And I think that's the hardest thing, Jill, for women like, like us, , is that third C like, what does it mean by completion? Because does it mean that you have to be paid to have the perfect podcast?

You have to have 10,000 million downloads, or is this a place where you're curious where you connect with others? And you actually upload the episode. You share yourself with the world, like that's hard. And so I will say that's an absolutely a unicorn. , and, and it's tied to your profession that, so the only time where I see that, that can be a negative is if people start feeling like it's a side hustle, quote, unquote, or they get demeaned for it, like it's a passion project, or somehow it starts to lose the, I can't believe I just did that.

So what I will say is that. The, if you have cycles of curiosity, connection and [00:28:00] completion, they oftentimes I'm living in three unicorn spaces in a week. Right. So I really want to learn to make chocolate. , I'm obsessed with this idea of writing a murder mystery. , I'm still doing a lot as, you know, a lot of work in activism, which is my first and foremost, my first unicorn space, but it's sort of like children, you don't love your third child.

You just love them differently. And so the more women can take up space the better. So that's the, the completion people, the people like us, where we have so many ideas, so much stuff on our plates. So I just say to you, you know, just don't burn out, make sure you have yourself care, make sure you have, you know, your friendship time.

So what I would say is because oftentimes when people have unicorn space as part of their profession, like you do.

Jill Stoddard: Um,

Eve Rodsky: I would say yes. Do you do that with your kid, but also a great tie. Hiking can also be a great time to reconnect to friendships as well. Another

great thing about having the completion [00:29:00] of a unicorn space in the outdoors is when, , you have some rigor around it because that's how you know, it's not self-care anymore.

It's the sharing with the world. So whether it's, you're sharing to be accountable to a friend, because you're going to do a harder. Or maybe your son is your spiritual friend and your accountability partner. If that feels good to you, then you both can do harder hikes together. But that's a really important piece of this.

Is that the shadow, the other shadow pandemic we're talking about here is that for women, even though we've been around more people, a lot more women that were reporting loneliness to me, that people are crawling all over me, but I feel really isolated. And so the beauty of a unicorn space is that we know if you connect and share it with the world, whether it's Piloti books, who I write about who takes her gluten-free pies and she shares it with her neighbors and puts it in a piloting contest.

It's that connection, the connected a creative life is a connected life. And I think too [00:30:00] many people think a creative life has to be alone in a room cutting off your ear. Playing with paints and a paintbrush like van Gogh did.

That is not, it's really what we see as a creative life is an extremely connected life.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, that's such a great point. And, and I think, gosh, I'm sitting here thinking, wait, so maybe hiking, isn't really a unicorn space. It, well, I guess I'm sort of sharing it. So, you know, I've told this story before about the first time Liam and I did a hike. He wanted to do this really hard, almost straight up hill.

And I was like, There's no way I'm not going to be able to do it. And of course I wasn't going to say no, I have to model for my child that you try better to try and fail than not try at all. And we did it and we made it all the way to the top of these really high, you know, we're having to use our hands to go

up that how steep these were. And he said, I knew you could do it, mommy. I'm so proud of you. and so then this started this thing where we do this every weekend and we try to

Eve Rodsky: And by the way, that's an, I can't believe I just did.

Jill Stoddard: I can't believe that's what

Eve Rodsky: just can't believe it. Yes. Yes.

Jill Stoddard: you [00:31:00] said, I can't believe I just did that. That's what made me think, oh, the hiking, maybe that's a unicorn space, but then I'm thinking about the sharing.

You know, he and I are sharing it together, but I actually tend to post on Instagram every time we have a new hike, because there's always some unintended lesson that comes out of it for both of us. Like we're not, I'm not going in there to teach him and model for him, but there's always something that happens during these experiences.

Together around values, you know, challenge and, and encouragement, all sorts of different things. And so I'm just sort of like often posting that on Instagram. So I guess there is

Eve Rodsky: That is, well, that is, I was going to say that's an absolutely unicorn space because you complete the ICC or, or a version of whatever you set out, your goal, you have, you are sharing. , and again, I want to explain to our listeners here. That it doesn't have to be on social media. We're not sharing can be very fraught for people because now it's sort of always tied to just social media, but it could be with just your child or your community.

you want to [00:32:00] understand your motivation for why you share in this case, you know, you're sort of passing on life lessons, Jill, and connecting with your child and then taking those lessons and then using them to better your community. So 100%, that is absolutely a unicorn space. And the beauty is. The fun part of having outdoors and hiking is your unicorn space is you and your son can remix it.

You can try a different city for a different hike. You can start looking at traveling culture and maybe how you best places in your town for new hikes. Like there's a lot of curiosity and expanding it and making him your, your sort of spiritual friend in this.

Jill Stoddard: That's exactly right. And it's become almost more about finding Adventure. than hiking specifically. So then we went and did an indoor climbing gym, which neither of us had ever done before. So it was, it's been, it's become about having these like new and challenging adventures together and like, Ooh, what are we going to do next?

You know? And it doesn't feel [00:33:00] like I'm doing. It as a parent, like, it doesn't feel like this thing I'm obligated to do in my role as parent. It really does have more of that. I can't believe we just did that.

You

Eve Rodsky: That's what you're looking for. If you have a good, because the reason why I always push against the motivation that I can't believe I just did that. The cure, if you have the curiosity, connection and completion is. , so many women have subjugated their own interests and for their partners in my research.

And so that's why I do keep it separate, but it doesn't have to be separate if it's really, truly something you love to do with your kids or your partner. It's just that so many women said to me, well, I took up golf because I want to see my partner or he, , you know, He plays in this, volleyball league.

So I'm going to try to take up a valuable lesson. I don't, I don't want you to do what someone else's passion is. I want you to find your own, but if you come to it together, the way you and your son did collectively as accountability [00:34:00] partners for these outdoor adventures, that's such a, that's a beautiful, a really, really good example of a

heavy in a corn space.

Jill Stoddard: And you talk about how you started by saying, what are you in a current unicorn space is not. And one of the things you say in the book is that it's not a hobby, it's different from a hobby. So how do people know whether they've, whether they're like just engaging in a hobby.

Eve Rodsky: Well ho hobbies.

Jill Stoddard: how they can look similar,

Eve Rodsky: Uh, no, a hundred percent. And this is the difference. It goes back to that creativity as a daily flourishing activity. So a hobby, when I asked people about it, it, the number one word that people associated with it were, it was infrequency. , I strum on my guitar when I can. , I grab, , you know, my paints when I can, , I grabbed a game.

Of chess in Washington square park when I can. And this, the idea of taking a [00:35:00] space is different because what we're talking about here is, is the

practice of adding this to the bottom of your Maslow's hierarchy. That this is when I asked Kat Medina. So what was your life like before you read narrated audio books?

She said to me, well, what is life like if what's the opposite of brief. And so we may not realize that we need it, but then when we're in it and we have this, I can't believe I just did this. The zest for life human beings are meaning seeking people. I mean, we're meaning seeking species. And so the problem is a lot of the pandemic we spent on activities that have happiness without meaning, which are the Dominic pursuits, like binge watching TV and doom scrolling.

For me, emotional eating, and other times we are meaning seeking. And we think that that has to be at the expense of happiness, which is a lot of times it's caregiving.

So when you can actually combine an experience that has meaning and [00:36:00] happiness, like at the top of that hike and your body sort of just explodes that's the feeling that's linked to this mental and physical health benefit that we're talking.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Okay. So let's say we've gotten all our listeners on board, right? Like, okay. Yes. I buy, I want to find my unicorn space, but I have no clue what it is and how, like, how do I even go about figuring out what this might look like for me? I mean, how did that woman decide to go do polar bear plunge and you know, audio narration?

You know, I, my husband didn't come and tell me that I have a nice voice. So how can people even start to. Discover what this might look like for them.

Eve Rodsky: Well, we, , we started a game, so I thought it could be fun. Since we have 10 minutes for us to play this game, because then it can show people how they can model this for themselves. , this is a great way to get curious.

You can find it. You can, if you go on to Fairplay life on our newsletter every week we do this [00:37:00] drop of these cards, you can have them as a PDF, but let's play. So, I'll have you pick another one. We just modeled sort of a discussion around outdoors. So, and, and we know podcasting. So let's pick a third unicorn space for you today, Jill.

So what I'm going to do is I'm going to read. This is off the cuff. We didn't decide to do this until right now. I'm going to, I didn't send you this in advance. I'm going to read you 50 choices.

So 50 choices. You're going to stay with me for one minute while I read all of these, and you're going to pick one card that speaks to you.

Jill Stoddard: Okay.

Eve Rodsky: again, we probably would have been outdoors if we did it, we did this earlier, but another one, just pick another one

Jill Stoddard: This is great. Well, and listeners can, can do this for themselves

Eve Rodsky: That's exactly play along.

Jill Stoddard: their own yeah. Play

Eve Rodsky: You're going to play along with us.

And then I will model the kind of conversation I want you to have with yourself. And that's what people will do as a follow-up exercise to this podcast.

Okay, here we go. Card one, genealogy and lineage. You have to listen to all [00:38:00] of them. So don't interrupt until you hear them all genealogy and lineage, other worldly pursuits like tarot and astrology, magic, finding foraging, and collecting. Restoration and renovation, design research and learning math and sciences, teaching fashion writing event planning, health and wellness, language and anthropology, video games, games like puzzles, a Wordle, coding, engineering, baking, cooking, building, and DIY arrows and axes.

Pottery florals, gardening and farming, photography, woodworking, metallurgy, music, stitching and needles. And craft storytelling, water, sports, outdoors, travel and culture, performing [00:39:00] animals, dance rhetoric, martial arts sports with wheels, memories, and archiving running triathlon sports with balls, snow sports theater in production, circus racing.

Last one, spiritual wellness, AKA yoga, religion.

Jill Stoddard: okay, well, so four came out, but

Eve Rodsky: Just one. Yes. Just

Jill Stoddard: what, I'm going to tell

you that two, two go together.

So both writing, both writing, and storytelling

jumped out to me, and those can be the same. And then both health and wellness and yoga and spiritual retreats popped out to me. So I feel like we could

Eve Rodsky: Batch them. I love, I love the batches. Okay. So let's, let's do, so this is what I'd want you to model for you out there who are doing this with us? The first question they're going to just ask yourself two questions. Question one. Why, why did you pick storytelling,

Jill Stoddard: Okay. So let's do the writing. We'll do writing and

Eve Rodsky: , writing yet?

Jill Stoddard: Um, [00:40:00] why did I pick it? Uh, it's a place where, when I write, I just like totally go into another world, like a totally different zone flow.

Eve Rodsky: Okay. And what do you, and so you, so escape new perspectives. It sounds like those are things you get. , now tell me the values, either the values or the feelings that you get when you're writing and stories.

Jill Stoddard: Well, when I write, I, I would say like, I, I feel more, so it's going to say, I feel more alive. You know, sometimes when I write, if I'm writing like a personal essay or something like that, I don't necessarily feel good. I mean, you know, sometimes I'm like crying and very

Eve Rodsky: Appropriate emotion at the appropriate time together. Exactly. This is not about being happy. Anybody? Yes.

Jill Stoddard: right. I mean, I just, I think these things make me. I feel more what, you know, whatever the, whatever the feeling may be. [00:41:00] And there's something about the process of creating, you know, going from a blank page where nothing existed to having a thing that I have created

that

Eve Rodsky: that so much. So creativity, escape, like new, new worlds. I'm hearing discovery. And so what's so beautiful. If you say, like, I want a life that opens me up to new worlds that has some version of escape where I can change

perspective where I can be creative, where I can make discoveries. That's where I want people to live with their unicorn space.

Right. That it's deeper because then you're more likely to do it. If you say, and, and the other thing that's really. When you say, like, I really want a life of creativity and escape and discovery. It's a really beautiful thing because you can get that actually through your hiking with your son. , so I would say, you know, a way to add sort of creativity and [00:42:00] escape, like we said, is at a travel and culture component, I was going to actually combine foraging with you and your hike, you know, is there something fun you can forage for? Can you make like a dried flower bouquet every time and you pick things to come back with, , or you have to pick one thing on the hike that you bring home and you put in a jar. but I think it's so fun because you can really start playing around with what a life of creativity and discovery looks like for you.

And it doesn't always have to be that one thing because the other problem that happens for women, especially, and it was so interesting how I saw these cards use gel, where that men were so much more willing to use them as verbs and women were using them as nouns. So there's a lot of beauty. What I wish for us all to do as women is to verbal fire life, as opposed to now unify it.

So you don't have to be a runner. You could be a person who runs. You don't have to be a Potter. You can be a person who, who makes a piece of pottery. [00:43:00] You don't have to be a hiker. You could be a person who hikes and men were much more willing to discover and say that they were that as opposed to I'm a hiker, I'm a runner, I'm a Potter things that have so much pressure on them to be excellent.

And so I think that's where I would start is as you play with us and, you know, hopefully. Follow along in this journey and Jill, hopefully I can come back again. but I love being with you cause you asked the best questions, but I would say really starting with being able to play in the verbs.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, well, that's such a great point and I know we only have a couple minutes left, but you know, one of the things I was thinking about was obstacles. And of course, what we already talked about in terms of time and guilt and all of those things. But I, right now, speaking of writing, I'm writing a book on imposter syndrome

and I, so I just kept thinking about this as I was reading, like, gosh, how often do those imposter feelings get in the way of people moving forward with this unicorn space?

And I think this idea. I'm a person who hikes versus I'm a hiker [00:44:00] is a good example of that. And even for me, when we started doing this, I didn't have appropriate shoes and I needed to buy hiking shoes and I could not get myself to buy the shoes because I kept having this narrative around. Like, but I'm not a real hiker.

Like who do I think I am? Oh, I'm going to be one of those people who does something once and then goes and buys expensive hiking shoes. Right. This whole like imposter narrative got in the way of me being able to do that. and I, and I think that relates to what you're saying, sort of this pressure of like, but, but I'm not really a hiker.

Is that something you've heard

Eve Rodsky: hundred percent and it's been so fascinating because we've been on the road three months now. And. Again, when I play this game with men, they will pick a car. They will tell me why they're interested. Women always qualify it. Jill, I want to get a diking, but I'm not really a hiker. I love yoga, but you know, I'm not a yoga teacher.

I'm terrible at it. Like there's always some qualification. And like I said, the [00:45:00] running towards the noun. And so I think this gets to the last, see that completion, see that it's time for us to retire, excellence and understand that completion can mean many different. You don't have to, you can buy the hiking shoes, even if you only hike four times,

it's okay to play.

It's okay to experiment. It's okay to try things. You're not a failure. If you decide that that's not the thing you want to do. And that's why the verb is so much more freeing, you may be a person who writes once, right? You don't have to be a writer. I,

I always

Jill Stoddard: space is just a space of discovery. Like maybe my unicorn space is just going to be to play and experiment

Eve Rodsky: The play and experiment,

Jill Stoddard: to try a little everything and see what lands and, and like that can be it in and of itself.

Eve Rodsky: It can absolutely be. Especially if you understand that a creative life has a connected life, because it's the sharing that brings all the benefits. It's why I wish I could tell you a walk [00:46:00] around the block or a spin class is the answer to burnout, Jill. But really the thing we're talking about here is a daily, weekly, yearly lifelong practice to stay committed, to being interested in your own.

Jill Stoddard: I love it. Well, that is a perfect place to end. I'm definitely going to have to have you come back at some point to talk in much more

Eve Rodsky: well, especially for imposter. When your book launches, I would love to have you on because. Thank you for addressing imposter syndrome. and I can not wait to read what you find. And I will say if I can add my small 2 cents and it would be a to Verba five, as opposed to now notify your life, it does help with the imposter syndrome.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, that's great. Well, Thanks so much for being.

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