

Episode Title: Your Body is Not the Problem

Guest: Courtney Townley

Episode Link: <https://grownasswoman.guide/episode171/>

Jackie MacDougall: New year, new you; we've all heard it, the endless marketing that begins late December and throughout the month of January. I'll admit right here that earlier in my marketing career, I've probably even written those words. But now as a grown-ass woman, I know that I don't need to be a "new me". And you don't need to be a "new you". *2022 us* was more than good enough. This is something today's guest, Courtney Townley, also feels passionately about.

Courtney Townley: Your personal power is not found in a *new you*; it's found in becoming *more you*. And there's so many things that we are doing in our life that is leading us away from what we truly want, and who we truly are, and how we actually want to be expressing ourselves.

And there's a lot of pain associated with living in that place; we start to drink alcohol because we're so uncomfortable there, we eat a lot of food that doesn't really serve our bodies because we're so uncomfortable there. There is a very high price to what I call *integrity pain*. *Integrity Pain is when your actions and the way that you're living your life is very misaligned with what you actually want for your life.*

Jackie MacDougall: If you are ready to decide what you want for your life and take the necessary action to get there, stay with me.

This is The Grown-Ass Woman's Guide. I'm your host, Jackie MacDougall. Welcome. If you've listened to The Grown-Ass Woman's Guide in previous years, you know I love to kick off the year with Courtney Townley. She's been on the podcast several times; and the reason I go back to her is because she's passionate about a multi-dimensional approach to health and fitness – and is just as focused on Sleep and Stress Management, as she is on Nutrition and Movement.

Courtney is the host of *Grace & Grit* where she provides tips, tools, and has incredible conversations around health that go way beyond diet and fitness. She's also the founder of *Rumble and Rise*, her membership community where she supports women like us in prioritizing ourselves and our health. This is meant to be the conversation that after you hear it, you take even greater action towards your health – however that looks for you. Courtney's theme this year is Personal Power. Take a listen.

Tell me more about this Personal Power. How do we find our personal power? It sounds really great and fancy and like--

Courtney Townley: Yeah, it doesn't look like that.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah, but how do we get there?

Courtney Townley: So, the theme inside of *Rumble and Rise* in 2023 is *restoring personal power*. And the reason I chose that theme is because I really feel strongly that this is a message I've been talking about for years; I just haven't been calling it power.

So, I have called it integrity. I have called it self-leadership. I have called it consistency. I have called it radical responsibility. I have called it all kinds of things. But really what the undercurrent of all of that is; learning how to restore, learning how to respect, learning how to own and express your personal power.

And where I spend the bulk of my time coaching women is not on diet and exercise to improve their health; it's on, what needs to be done in order for you to rebuild self-trust and operate from a place of power rather than from a place of self-doubt?

Jackie MacDougall: How does that look different?

Courtney Townley: Well, and food choices are obviously sometimes baked into that, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: And exercise. Because to me, I always say this, but the point of your life is not to follow a certain diet, lose a certain number of pounds, or do some kind of exercise modality; the purpose of our life is to be a fully expressed human.

And self-care is base camp for the mountains we are truly here to climb. So, when I understand that there are things that I want to cause contribute and inspire in the world, and I start to respect myself in a way that allows me to start creating those things; my self-care becomes a vehicle for helping me to do that – rather than sort of just this one path to a certain outcome like losing 10 pounds, losing 50 pounds, whatever the thing may be.

When I feel better, when I am less consumed by pain and self-loathing and all the things – it's so much easier for me to be daring and take risks and put myself out there and be willing to fail, and that's really the work that we're here to do.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: And feeling strong in our physical body, trusting our physical body is helpful in that, right? When we trust our bodies to carry us through and when we treat

them with kindness and respect, doing the bigger work of our life becomes a whole hell of a lot more fun. And I don't want to say easy because it's not easy. It's not easy to put yourself out there and go after the things that you truly want.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: But when you are being supported by your physicality rather than fighting it, that gets easier.

Jackie MacDougall: Right. So, I can hear someone listening, maybe rolling her eyes – or going, 'Not my body, because, you know, I'm 51.' There are most people listening are women over 40, at the very least; and our bodies change and morph into, sometimes, unrecognizable form.

Courtney Townley: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: So, how do you find self-trust with your body when your body, and sometimes feels like it's betraying you?

Courtney Townley: Well, the way that I always like to think about it is that your body is always for you; it is operating the best that it can with the messaging that it has. So, if we are consistently neglecting sleep, and we are consistently eating foods that don't work for our bodies, and we are sitting in front of a desk all day and not making time to move – this is all nourishment that we are neglecting to give our bodies.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: And then we make up the story that our body is the problem.

[laughs]

Courtney Townley: Right?

Jackie MacDougall: Totally.

Courtney Townley: Your body is not the problem ever.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: But your unwillingness to set boundaries, your unwillingness to try some new things on, your unwillingness to maybe put a plan in place to help better organize yourself, your self-talk; these are the problems.

Jackie MacDougall: That's what we do, right? We beat up our bodies, and then blame our bodies for not being whatever it is that someone has told us our bodies should be.

Courtney Townley: It's so true. I did a whole podcast episode about this topic; that your body is not the problem, your weight is not the problem – but there are things underneath what you're making the problem that are actually the problem.

Knowing that your body is really operating with the best messaging it has, knowing that there are certainly a unique set of challenges that come with perimenopause and menopause, and understanding that your body is asking for a different level of self-care.

It's not that your body is breaking down or betraying you; it's that it has different needs than it had when you were in your twenties and thirties. But we are so busy and we are so wrapped up in other things that we don't want to have to do that work – of learning how to recalibrate the way we nourish our body.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: We want it to look like it did 10 or 20 years ago. And, the thing about this stage of life that I think is so important to understand; well, two things. Number one, health is not your body size. Health is not a weight on the scale, health is not a look; I always say these things. *Health is really your ability to manage the total stress load of your life.*

And stress comes in so many forms; it can come through the food you eat, it can come through lack of movement or too much movement, it can come from all the mental stress of worrying and sort of ruminating about mistakes you've made, it can come from environmental stressors.

Like the amount of stress that we have the opportunity to take on, is enormous. And when we are going through perimenopause and menopause, of course, estrogen and progesterone are declining.

And what those two hormones help us to do, chemically, is they help us to manage stress. And I think I've said this in an interview with you before, but it's certainly worth repeating; that in midlife, we are living with the highest responsibility level and the highest stress load that we've probably ever experienced because we're balancing so many things – aging parents, careers, changing bodies, so many things. There's so much responsibility.

Jackie MacDougall: Adult children, teen children--

Courtney Townley: Children, all the things

Jackie MacDougall: -for those who have kids. Yeah.

Courtney Townley: And then, simultaneously, our chemistry is starting to change, which is demanding that we actually respect our stress load in a much higher way than we ever have before.

But this is not what most of us are doing. What a lot of women are doing in perimenopause and menopause is they're maintaining the really high stress load; they're adding more to their bucket all the time.

And then when estrogen and progesterone are leaving, it's no wonder why we feel terrible, right? And our body's doing all kinds of crazy things, because, you know, we think it's working against us; it's not working against us, it's just changing. And that change is really asking to be respected because you can't tolerate stress at the levels you used to.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: And that's a gift of midlife. That's not a-- That's not a bad thing. That's a beautiful invitation to cut some sh*t out.

Jackie MacDougall: Absolutely. There are times in the past where, we've talked about this, like I've always "struggled" with my weight ever since I was little; and I wasn't necessarily overweight, but I was called overweight – and it just like jacked up my brain forever. And so, it's been a long, long journey.

And one of the things this year that I've done is that sometimes when I feel like exercise is the answer, I've actually done Restorative Yoga instead; and holy crap, like how is everyone not doing Restorative Yoga? Like you say the word 'restore', and I can trigger now because of the Restorative Yoga.

Like that feeling of being in the moment and peaceful – and still like stretching your limbs, and opening up your body, and all of that. And I'm not saying that I'm not going to work out or that I don't work out – but I think sometimes when I think, 'I need to go and get on the bike or I need to go and do this other thing,' what I actually need is the opposite; I need to take that half an hour and light some candles in my room and just like be in the moment, open to whatever comes.

Courtney Townley: Well, and I think this is such an important thing to remember, that restoring power for everybody looks radically different – because everybody is dealing with different stressors, and everybody has different Stress Management techniques.

There's lots of ways to manage stress; exercise could be one of them – for some people, at the right time in the right dose. But for someone else who's in a high level of stress and doing the wrong type of exercise in the wrong amount, it can be inducing more stress.

Jackie MacDougall: Interesting.

Courtney Townley: I have so many clients in this camp that I've worked with over the years; and one that comes to mind, a girl that I worked with years ago, who had a very high-stress job – she was only getting about four hours of sleep a night – lots of family stress, like stress in every dimension of her life.

And all she wanted to focus on was eating less and exercising more; both of which induce more stress. What is exercise? Exercise, literally, is a form of inducing stress to create change; that's what it is. You're creating little micro tears and muscle. You're challenging your lungs and your heart.

You are producing a stress response to create change. But that's not always appropriate depending on what kind of resources you have available. So, if I'm short on sleep, I'm not feeding myself well, I have all kinds of mental stress – exercising aggressively can actually be a bigger problem. It's not helping me to solve an unpacked stress, it's actually adding more to the bucket.

Jackie MacDougall: Interesting.

Courtney Townley: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: So, how do you coach? I mean, your membership, you have so many women in there; how do you coach women to, you know, because in a group, but also individually how to figure out what they do need?

Courtney Townley: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Because it maybe for one person it is more exercise, maybe for one it's less exercise. Like how, how do you do that, magical unicorn?

Courtney Townley: Yeah. The way that it works really is that there's four categories of content that I'm always teaching on, and I'm revolving between these topics all the time.

Jackie MacDougall: Okay.

Courtney Townley: And there's a lot baked into each one of these topics, but the four categories are; number one, I always talk about *biochemistry* – and just kind of, what does fundamental self-care look like? What are the basic biological needs of the human body?

So, I've done all kinds of Masterclass on this, but I teach a new one multiple times in the year. The other category I teach on is *strategy*, because my strategy for stepping into my power and restoring my power needs to be different from yours because our lives are very different.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Courtney Townley: And so, I teach certain skill sets that help us to decide on the strategy that makes the most sense to where we currently are in our life.

Jackie MacDougall: Okay.

Courtney Townley: And I teach in a way that helps the student to make the decision about how they're going to implement that skillset, right? So, I'm not deciding for you, I'm educating you about these different possibilities, and the pros and cons of using what when.

But ultimately, because the name and the game of this whole space is to teach people how to lead themselves powerfully, I'm asking them to make the decision about what's the next step? How are you actually going to apply this to your life? What does this look like given your particular combination of stressors?

And then, of course, throughout the month, I'm hosting all kinds of coaching calls where they can come on. So, my membership is called *Rumble and Rise*. And the way the group coaching calls work is I always ask them to share a 'rise' first, where are you winning? And then, of course, we always want to share the 'rumble', where are you struggling? And that's where I spend time coaching them.

So, the other two categories – just to mention on the teaching – is, of course, *a lot of thought management* because the brain has an amazing capacity to produce stress unnecessarily... and then *emotional agility*, which is really the capacity to experience every emotion on the human spectrum without fearing it, knowing that there you can experience any emotion without being harmed.

But the things that we do to avoid emotion, because we don't believe that, we do think that certain emotions are going to harm us.

Jackie MacDougall: Interesting.

Courtney Townley: And so, then we do the eating and the drinking and all of the negative self-talk and the shopping. We do all kinds of things to avoid experiencing certain emotions; and that is what then leads to more physical pain and more integrity pain. So, I teach on a variety of topics but I also teach in a way that, I think, really helps the student to decide for themselves how they're going to apply this information.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. That's what makes you so different in a world where everybody has a blueprint and a formula – you're not telling people, "Follow this plan." You're saying, "I'm going to educate you about behavior change, about your body, about, you know, all of these things that are shared experiences with humans – but I'm also going to teach you how to make your own choices and decisions."

And I think as a grown-ass woman, that's truly what we need; we don't need somebody telling us what to do so we can follow it, and I'm so f*cking tired of it.

Courtney Townley: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: Oh, there, well, the message is out there that; especially this time of year, they're looking to make us feel 'less than', so they can make money. And now, you make money at this.

Courtney Townley: Sure.

Jackie MacDougall: I'm not you know, acting like you're altruistic here, and like, but you're an educator. You're not like-- I don't know. There's something about it, and that's why I have you on 5 billion times.

Courtney Townley: My philosophy is that I am willing to be your coach until you have the skillsets to be your own; and that's my objective, I'm going to make you the coach. I'm going to literally work myself out of a job when you work with me; that's my point. That's like the whole premise of my business.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: And what's really interesting is I've had women in the *Rumble and Rise* membership for three years. Not because they don't self-coach, not because they don't have the skillsets – but because they love the community and that touch point of being, and it helps them to stay in integrity with themselves.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: And they want to keep learning and growing, so they do that. But it's really funny because I can tell the difference between someone who's been in there for several years versus someone who's brand-new--

Jackie MacDougall: How, tell me?

Courtney Townley: -because a brand-new person is coming to get coaching, right? But once you've been coached by me enough, when you have a rumble, you actually coach yourself as you're presenting the problem.

Jackie MacDougall: Interesting.

Courtney Townley: Yeah. So, I hear it in my longtime students when they're presenting their rumble, they're also presenting the solution of how they're going to solve it, and it's like--

Jackie MacDougall: And you just sit back and go, thanks girl!

Courtney Townley: I'm like, my work is done here.

[laughter]

Courtney Townley: And I have done nothing. I have said nothing.

Jackie MacDougall: Well, you invested in that person--

Courtney Townley: Sure, of course.

Jackie MacDougall: -so that they could do that.

Courtney Townley: Yeah.

Jackie MacDougall: That's got to be so rewarding for you.

Courtney Townley: So rewarding, yeah. And when a client tells me that, because I get these emails once in a while; someone who's been in there for a long time and they'll say, "Oh, you know, I'm going to step away for a while because I want to spend some time and money on some other things." And I always say to them, "First of all, never say, sorry, this is exactly what self-leadership is."

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: Like, 'I'm cheering you on – this is awesome, and the doors mostly are always open.' I say *mostly* because we're probably changing that a little bit, where we're going to open the doors four times next year. But still, I mean, that's a lot of flexibility in terms of people, you know, coming and going.

But I agree with you. I think that we are very conditioned to outsource decision-making to other people, to people who know the human body better than we do, to people who understand business better than we do.

And there can be a period of time where outsourcing is really useful, but here's what happens in the long run; if you do not learn how to make strong decisions for yourself around these things, at some point, you are going to push back like the biggest three-year-old toddler because you're not making the decisions.

And there's something very ungratifying about that. And also, there's no one, no professional who is going to travel with you for the rest of your life. So, you can keep bouncing from program to program to program looking for the blueprint, or you can create the damn blueprint.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes. I would like to create the damn blueprint, but I would like to do it with you in my corner.

Courtney Townley: I think especially for women, there's such a power in that being with other women and listening. Like last night we just had our end-of-year recap of like everyone sharing their rumbles of the year and also their wins of the year, and how they worked through certain problems.

And I know that members probably learned as much in that one hour listening to everybody's share, as they did from listening to me if we were a full month. Because when I listen to another woman stepping into her own power and being willing to experiment and not make failure mean that anything is final, it compels us to stand back up and keep going.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Courtney Townley: And just try-- Like what happens if you went to the grocery store today and you ran into a detour, you would not pull over on the side of the road and pitch a fit for the next six months about what--

Jackie MacDougall: Oh, you don't know me Courtney, you don't know me.

Courtney Townley: I would hope, my friend, that you are not doing that. But we wouldn't do that. What would we do? We would kind of just take the detour; we would find a different way to the grocery store, and that would be that.

Jackie MacDougall: Right.

Courtney Townley: But man, that is not what we do in the process to change.

Jackie MacDougall: No.

Courtney Townley: We make a little mishap, we take a wrong turn, we rerun an experiment and it doesn't turn out the way we expected it to; and we make that mean horrible, painful things about who we are. And that's why we don't realign. That's why we don't get back on track.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. 'Realign' is such a good word. Such a good word.

If you're ready to realign your health and need a little support, Courtney is hosting a FREE 5-day challenge that starts February 13th called Healthiest Year Yet.

It's not a fitness challenge. It's not an overhaul-your-life overnight challenge. It's not a detox or a list of rules and regulations to follow. This is a 5-day mindset reset to help you get clear on what you want for your health in 2023, why you want it and what skills you will need to develop to get there.

I am definitely taking part in the Healthiest Year Yet challenge, and I would love for you to join me! It's totally free.

I have some very personal reasons for taking control of my health this year, which I will share in a future episode. But if we don't do this now, when? It's available to us, and it's free. I have a link here in the show description.

You give so much of yourself through your podcast, *Grace & Grit*, and through your socials; and I love your reels. You've gotten more silly and fun, which I really enjoy. But then, your membership obviously too, is just at a whole other level.

Courtney Townley: This I can promise that *Rumble and Rise* will change the way people move through the rest of their life.

Jackie MacDougall: It's pretty amazing because if I think about all of the other things I've done – I should list out all of the gimmicks, all of the diets, all of the stuff I've fallen for.

Courtney Townley: All of the outsourcing.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. Thousands upon thousands of dollars in my lifetime, never did I consider spending a small amount per month to learn how to move through the world so that I don't have to keep dumping money into something that isn't really for me. And I'm not even here to like sell your--

Courtney Townley: No, I know.

Jackie MacDougall: It sounds like we're here to like sell your membership – that, we have no intention.

Courtney Townley: We've been talking about it. I know.

Jackie MacDougall: I feel so strongly about finding our own way. You know, there's so many people who are trying to like the voices are out there that I believe that the voice that we really need to listen to is the one within; and not enough women are doing that. And that, to me, is being a grown-ass woman; listening to what we want, saying 'no' to things that don't align with us anymore, doing the things that we have to do.

If there's certain things you just have to do, like that's part of being a grown-ass woman. But there are plenty of things you don't have to do where we're listening to all these other people instead of like our intuition. And so, I love that I could bring my desire of tapping into my own intuition into your membership – and you'll just teach me more how to do that, not less.

Courtney Townley: I could create programs that would sell like hot cakes, like *how to tone your ass in 30 days*; I could do that with my eyes closed, right?

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: But I choose not to do it because what I believe is so much bigger than that; it pulls me out of integrity with myself to do things like that. So, I am willing to put the long game in front of me, and this is what I try to do with my own students in the health arena.

And it's really tough because when we are desperate to feel better, man, do we do some crazy stuff? We sign up for all kinds of things that we absolutely know we will not be able to sustain. But we do it because we're so desperate, and desperation is never a great place to be making decisions from.

Jackie MacDougall: Truth. Absolutely.

Courtney Townley: And so, I would just invite anyone who's listening to this today. I mean, I'm really not selling you *Rumble and Rise*. If you want to join us, that's awesome. But I really would encourage you just to consider; whatever I do pay for in terms of programs or communities, is this something I can actually see myself sustaining over the long run?

And I don't mean being a part of that program in the long run. I mean the work that you're learning inside of that community, is it helping you to actually change the way you move through the world in a permanent way?

Jackie MacDougall: That's a great question.

Courtney Townley: And so many things that are out there that we are being sold to, especially this time of year, are definitely not sustainable; nobody wants to eat cabbage Soup. And I know that, I don't know why everyone uses the Cabbage Soup diet for this, but nobody wants to eat Cabbage Soup.

Jackie MacDougall: Because we've all done it.

Courtney Townley: Yeah. Nobody wants to pay 19.95 for a supplement for the rest of their life.

Jackie MacDougall: No.

Courtney Townley: Nobody wants to do a six-week bootcamp at 5:30 in the morning for their rest of their life.

Jackie MacDougall: Well, some people do, but--

Courtney Townley: That's true, there are people out there that do. And so, just like, again, going in and asking yourself the honest question of; what do I truly feel like I need, and how is this program going to serve me? Not six weeks from now, but six years from now.

Jackie MacDougall: I love that so much. And so, I'll link to all the Courtney goodness in the show notes as I always do. You just remind me when I talk to you that all of the answers, I already have them; I just need more education and understanding and community to kind of exchange those ideas and those thoughts. But nobody else has the answer for my life.

Courtney Townley: No, never.

Jackie MacDougall: I do.

Courtney Townley: Never.

Jackie MacDougall: And if you're listening, nobody else has the answer for your life.

Courtney Townley: Nobody knows your life the way you do. Absolutely.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah.

Courtney Townley: Absolutely. And this is where that self-trust comes in; that so many women I work with when I'm first introduced to them are lacking self-trust because they've been outsourcing, because they've been relying on these programs to lead them home to themselves.

And that's never going to happen because those programs are only addressing one tiny little component of a very big life. And so, you, as the person who is living this big life – and has all these different dimensions to your life... needs to take every ounce of advice, education and information that you collect about your health and wellbeing, and put it through the filter of not just one dimension of your life, but the wholeness of your life.

How is eating this way going to affect my family? How is moving this way going to affect the other things that I'm responsible for in the day that I want to be giving time and attention to? How many resources is this commitment going to take up from my life? Because resources, while renewable are very limited. It's really important to be just asking those questions when we consider what that next level of support might look like.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. I love that. So, you ask women in your community all the time their *rumble and rise*, I'm going to ask you.

Courtney Townley: Yeah. Oh good.

Jackie MacDougall: Let's look at 2022.

Courtney Townley: Okay.

Jackie MacDougall: Give me what one of your wins, one of your rise.

Courtney Townley: Let's see, I'm going to-- I'm going to share two, like first of all, I have half a book written. I had a plan to have a whole book written by the end of this year, but I got half of it done.

Jackie MacDougall: Awesome.

Courtney Townley: So, that feels really good. And then the other rise for me is I have always had a love affair with movement; and just with COVID, you know, things, I was still moving, but I was just moving in a very kind of rote way. Like it was just very routine, and I was just getting it in.

But this year, I committed to working with this movement coach that I got hooked up with about a year ago. And it's just been awesome because it's something I love so much. It's a form of expression for me. It just feels really good to get back to that. So, I feel like--

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. Is it dance because I know you're a dancer. Is it dance-specific?

Courtney Townley: It's not dance-specific. It's, I think, you know, that years ago, I worked with Ido Portal; I was a student of his for years. A lot of people don't know who Ido is, but you should; he's probably one of the most brilliant movement teachers I've ever come across.

But he incorporates dimensions from every discipline. So, you will Olympic lift, you will do martial arts, you will work on Olympic rings, you will dance; you will do all the things.

Jackie MacDougall: Wow.

Courtney Townley: Because what his goal is, is to find your gaps, your weaknesses; and that's where you train. You don't train your strengths.

Jackie MacDougall: Oh, okay.

Courtney Townley: You train your weaknesses. And all of this is not to have pretty muscle or to get to a certain weight; the purpose of training this way is to expand your capacity for movement. So, I can go into any movement arena, and I may not be the best one in the room; that's cool, but I can be there – and I can feel confident that my body is well-enough established in its strength and flexibility and resilience that I can take any of it on.

Jackie MacDougall: That's so cool. Was it in-person?

Courtney Townley: It's not. This guy is in Miami, and I'm in Montana.

Jackie MacDougall: Wow. Yeah.

Courtney Townley: So, we do everything through the internet, and he writes my program; and I, you know, do exercises. And what's cool is this is, kind of, in a way, it's a parallel to what we've been talking about here because, yes, I'm getting help from him with specific skill sets, but the whole objective is to take those skill sets and live a bigger life through movement, right?

Jackie MacDougall: So cool.

Courtney Townley: So, I'm not limiting my movement practice into the gym or these sessions that I'm doing with him; it's so I can climb mountains and swim with my kid and go take a dance class, and just keep moving in a powerful way for the rest of my life.

Jackie MacDougall: That is so cool. I love that. You're always investing in yourself and becoming more of you so that you can then live the life that you want, and also bring that to your students. So, I love that so much. And what about a rumble? Any rumbles?

Courtney Townley: There's lots of rumbles, Jackie, always. I don't ever expect, there will be a day where I'm not rumbering – because if I'm not rumbering, I'm not growing. Like that's the bottom line.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Courtney Townley: So, rumbles are a beautiful thing; they're just not always fun to go through. So, I would say, one of my biggest rumbles this year was just, was Time Management. I really love what I do, which is a mixed blessing. It enables me to give so much of myself to my job, and really be passionate and creative in what I do. And it also is very hard for me to create boundaries around that.

You know, I find myself, you know, working at four o'clock in the morning or on the weekends; and while I love my career, there's a lot of other parts to my life I love too. And I really want to challenge myself to create more-- I don't know that I believe in balance, but I do want to create more time for those other things next year.

Jackie MacDougall: Yeah. I love that. And you know, we were talking offline a little bit, and that's what I did in 2022; I realized I had so much in one side of things, and I wasn't just living my life. You know, I was online all the time, and podcasting, and talking to all these women that... *how lucky am I?*

And I was also missing out on my own present life. You know, I was starting to volunteer for my kids' band, like marching band organization; and just do things, and be present and remember--

I think Covid just, in some ways, shook things up, obviously negatively – but also helped us align our priorities. And we've talked about that ad nauseam, but I'm no longer just going to go through the motions of what other people think I should be doing.

Courtney Townley: You know what's interesting, this year, specifically, I have had – I mean, I can think of five people, at least, who are, I would say mid to late forties, early fifties, who have had very successful careers who just bowed out this year.

Jackie MacDougall: Wow.

Courtney Townley: They just decided that; I love it, I feel really good about what I created, and there is more to me that I want to express and I want to live out. And again, because resources are limited, it always comes back to hard decision-making.

You know, I always say like, make hard decisions and make decisions hard; meaning, hard decisions are decisions that – you know, we don't necessarily – we spend months or years not making because we're so afraid of failing. And at some point, we just have to make a decision and realize if it doesn't work out the way you expected it to, you just get to make another decision. That's the truth of it.

Jackie MacDougall: It really is.

Courtney Townley: And then making a decision hard means that when I make a decision, I'm all in; I'm not going to keep ruminating if I made the right decision, I'm not going to ask everybody what they think about my decision. Like I'm going to decide hard to own my decision.

Jackie MacDougall: That's awesome. That's awesome. Courtney, I could talk to you all day; you know this. I just appreciate all you're doing to elevate women, and help us get back to ourselves – more of ourselves. It's so important.

Courtney Townley: It comes from a selfish place in that I want this community, I want to be around women who are doing this work.

Jackie MacDougall: Yes.

Courtney Townley: I need that. This is why I created it is because I was hungry for it.

Jackie MacDougall: And I can see that you're surrounded by the women who are willing and able and interested in doing the work; not just the ones looking for a quick fix. So, well done. Well done, there. Well done.

Courtney Townley: Thank you my friend, and I include you in that. You're like those women, who are willing to experiment and make hard decisions and own our mistakes and all of the things. That's why you're my friend, my friend.

Jackie MacDougall: I adore you. Happy 2023!

Courtney Townley: Happy 2023!

Jackie MacDougall: Thank you so much, Courtney. And thank You for listening. Let's connect on social media. You can find me at grownasswoman.guide on most social channels. And if you haven't yet hit 'Favorite' or 'Follow' on the podcast app of your choice, you'll be notified when the next episode is out. And trust me, the next one is super important. Until next time, you are a grown-ass woman. Act accordingly.