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itsjustyou *NEW* sletter

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"Like a child standing in a beautiful park with his eyes shut tight, there's no need to imagine trees, flowers, deer, birds and sky; we merely need to open our eyes and realize what is already here, who we already are." - Bo Lozoff

I love this quote so much. It reminds me of our podcast episode with Amanda - she looked at me and said, "...at what point, if any, were you able to just stop and realize that you don't need to keep fighting, you can rest, you've proven what you need to prove, to yourself and to others. When will you realize that you're exactly where you are meant to be?" Even just writing that, I felt myself emotional and tearing up. I've told my friends, I feel like my entire life has been fight or flight. It's like each day, I'm ready, in fight mode, armed and prepared to battle even when I don't need to anymore. For so long, I was waiting for things to fall apart, living with this deep-gut feeling of pain, loss, insecurity, fear, and internal knowing. I spent years building walls up to keep people out who would create that pain in my gut. I cut people out as soon as they "wronged" me to protect myself and unfortunately, it caused me a lot of pain and reactivity that I now carry around in my pocket when in reality, I don't need to. Raina, you can breathe. Let go. Let it all go. Realize what you have inside of you. Look at the number of beautiful souls that have been brought into your life to help you grow, move forward, and develop into the person you are today, right now. That woman has always been inside of you. But, over the years, you've allowed others, experiences, and thoughts change you, you put a mask on. To fit in, to hide, to cover up what most people would deem scary. But you, you're a fire. Stop. Breathe. Look up. Look at what you've created. Look at what you've built. Look at the women your daughters are turning into. Look at the home you're providing. The safety, the security, the people that love you, all of you. You're safe. Exhale.

- Journal entry: February 13, 2020

THAT GUT FEELING

I found my very first journal as an adult on my bookshelf the other day. It was a prompted journal called: MINDFULNESS - I got it as a gift for Christmas in 2019 and started filling it out on January 6, 2020 as soon as we got home from the holidays and kids were back in school. That's when I told myself my routine could *really* start. The truth is, I hate guided journals. I find them to be too restrictive now. They give me a prompt to expand on, regardless if it's something that I need to work through or not. Sometimes they're so hard to relate to. I would find myself digging deep into my thoughts hoping the prompt would spark a thought about something going on in my life because that's where I so desperately needed answers. The right now.

I was craving direction. Guidance, answers from anything external while hoping that something internal would point to the direction in which I needed to turn.

Fast forward - I've been journaling consistently for hundreds of days and have had a huge ah-ha (even though I've known it for hundreds of days now) the other day as I started reading the book: WOMEN WHO RUN WITH THE WOLVES. I'll share the book details at the end of my newsletter but the story I read talked about a woman's intuition, her inner knowing. Memories and thoughts started to take over as I kept trying to push them out so I could focus on my read. *I only have 20 mins* I thought as I swatted the thoughts away like flies. *Save it for your journal.*

I finished reading, kissed Archie and Dexter on the face, and went upstairs to get my workout clothes on. The kids are back in school now so my routine has flipped a bit, incorporating some big pauses, allowing me to participate in school drop off and pick up for a couple more months before those opportunities slip away. Once I get back home, I make my pre-workout and then slip into my over-sized bucket chair in the corner of my home gym that is designated specifically for journaling. It swallows me, drowning out the

entire world so I can write and fill my blank pages. This is where I do my healing, my uncovering, my dissecting, my growing, my manifesting, the listening of the deep intuition that lives within me. I call her my voice, the one that lives within, and yes, she's a she.

Somehow, every morning in my reading, nuggets pop out as if they're waiting for me to catch them. Perfectly aligned with where I am in life or what I need to hear, I try to expand on them in my journaling sessions each day. As I thought about my own *inner knowing* a memory stood out of my ex who told me at one point that "...following my gut all the time wasn't realistic." like he thought I just blindly *listened* to what my gut was telling me and followed it without question, research, or thinking. My voice popped in after that moment, screaming "*red flaggggg*" as I changed the subject.

Let me clarify here like I had to do then. Only here and now, I'm going to have less desperation for you to hear me and understand where I'm going with this, knowing you just *will*. That inner knowing, intuition, gut feeling, or *voice* as I call her, is that deep feeling or sound in the bottom of your chest that whispers and creates butterflies in the pit of your stomach. It's the voice you hear when you're silent or faced with something that doesn't feel aligned. It's the knots in your stomach when you're going through something that requires a pivot in life. It's the pit in your stomach, the nausea, the aching in your bones. This feeling doesn't always mean you ate something bad, haha - instead, it's our intuition speaking and telling us the direction in which we should turn, whether it's comfortable or not. I

I think we often brush this feeling under the metaphoric rug because of fear. Fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of facing the situation head on, fear of confrontation, fear of letting go, fear of moving forward. I started to think back over the course of the last 20 years - god, typing that makes me feel old - and tried to remember the first time I ever felt that inner knowing. I started to brain dump all of the things I could remember, life events, shifts, transitions, pivots, and moments where I remember her speaking to me

the loudest. And that's what I wanna share with you here.

The times I listened and ignored. The times I tried to quiet her out of fear or hush her up out of curiosity. The truth is, she's always known the direction I should go. Journaling has revealed that to me. Looking back at tear-soaked pages asking myself: *is this what it's supposed to feel like?* And responding to myself with - *No, it's not.* I wish I would have started my journaling habit 20 years ago. I think of how much pain I could have avoided if I'd worked my shit out on paper sooner compared to keeping it tucked away in the folders of my brain. I know

the truth is: without that pain, I wouldn't have these experiences to share & lessons learned.

The gut feeling.
How often do you listen?
What's she telling you?

She's always pointed the way for me, whether I liked it or not.

The earliest memory I have of her, the voice, popped in at 18 years old when I saw the

little plus sign on the first pregnancy test I ever peed on. Truth is, I was that girl in high school sharing that I had no interest in having children or starting a family. I said it in my head so much I believed it to be true. The first gut feeling was most definitely nausea and nerves to tell my boyfriend & parents but once that passed, there was an insanely deep inner knowing that I was about to be apart of something so much bigger than me - the role of a lifetime. That role came with many stresses, fears, obstacles, and limiting beliefs that I carried around for quite a while as I just trusted that I was making the right choice to be a mom to these two little girls.

I paused to reflect how amazing of a choice I had

made as I heard them laughing outside of my office door. They changed everything for me. Every. Thing. It's like there was a *knowing* of what I was going to need in my life before I even knew what I needed.

Exhale.

I went about my mom-life the best I could, putting my girls first in every way possible as I battled to save my marriage that I felt unravel a little each day. If I'm being honest with myself, my gut, the voice, was screaming at me the first day I met my soon-to-be husband as ran around sneaking kisses on my lips while dodging his then-girlfriend at the same time. Sometimes the flags are so incredibly red our mind

disguises them as a big red bow like they're a gift from G.O.D. himself.

My intuition told me to run for the hills every time I had to pick him up from a drug house, drive him home because he was so drunk he couldn't, and each time I had to confront a new woman who swore he was the new love of her life. I was exhausted and the direction my gut was

trying to point me towards was too painful to follow. I felt it, the nausea, the pull, the fear - all at once. As soon as I said "I do." it was mostly a promise to myself that I would do anything in my power to keep this little family together because those two little chubby-cheeked babies deserved it. It took me a really long time, *a really. long. time.* to listen to the voice telling me they deserved something better, even if that meant their parents weren't married anymore.

The moment I found him fumbling through the backpack for pills in his closet at 3 am was the moment my voice took a big deep breath of surrender. I had held on for 10 years to the idea of him, what he could be, what *we* could be, and what



this marriage could one day look like. I remember so many times over those last years asking family and friends: "How will I know when I'm done?" I get that question weekly on my Instagram from followers who are going through their own battles and I respond with the answer I got all those times - *You'll feel it. You'll feel the undeniable knowing.*

When I filed for divorce there was sadness for *what could have been* but a deep knowing that I was doing the best thing for me and my daughters took over, easing the pain. During this life transition, the voice was the loudest. She was so proud of me for following that intuitive push to escape and in the same wave of emotion, completely and totally terrified.

Single mom. Two kids.
An empty bank account. A thriving business dependent on how I show up. Fear and overwhelm took over every empty space in my head as I tried to wrap my brain around what my new normal was going to look like. I giggle now thinking about my expectations on what that new normal was going to look like because within 5

months, my Ulcerative Colitis had begun to flare so violently, I was in the hospital without a large intestine.

Stress had hit me so hard my body couldn't handle it. The gut I had began to trust so deeply decided she had enough of this chaos and was *out*. I sat in the hospital bed knowing that things were going to be different, I just wasn't sure how. I was back within a few months to have my internal pouch (J-Pouch) placed and there she was again, the voice. As I began to heal, it felt different. My body felt odd, my heart beat fluttered uncomfortably, and my gut was backing away slowly with her hands up in the air saying - *wait, this doesn't feel right...* I ignored her and left the hospital hopeful.

I held on for as long as I could - *feels like that's the theme here* - to my J-Pouch but the reality was, I couldn't gain weight, I couldn't hold in food, and the pain running through my core was unbearable. I tried medication after medication to control my new piping, accepting the disappointment in my doctors face as I shifted from one to the next. At my final appointment, I couldn't stop the tears from running down my face as he discussed my options of continuing this game of life with medications or return to a permanent ileostomy. I sat - desperately listening to her, the voice, and I said "Ostomy."

February 15, 2018 I woke up with my permanent bag and everything in me was screaming - *yesssss* - finally. Our bodies know. We just have to listen.

As I restarted my healing journey, I had a new outlook on life. My body, my mind, my soul had been completely uprooted and shifted. I had no idea who this new woman was, the single mom, the flawed body, the divorce statistic. I needed to take some time to reevaluate who she was and what she wanted life to look like.

I spent the entire year healing & traveling all over the world to find the answers. Each new place I planted my feet brought me a new outlook with wider eyes. Each morning I woke up eager to experience and in the evenings, I fell asleep with gratitude for my body allowing me to be there. I got to know her, my voice, on a whole new level.

She told me it was time to show up a bit differently. The old ways can start to become so comfortable that we don't realize what *good* really feels like. I started to release old ways of thinking and old habits, trading them for new ones that felt more aligned.

She told me to start dating, so I started to date. I fought it of course, but that inner knowing that I didn't have to be alone kept taking over. With the



swipe of a finger, *he* came into my life. After our first date my head was all in. It felt good, laughing and sharing pieces of myself with someone again. I found myself silencing the gut feelings, chalking them up to unnecessary worry and/or old wiring from my marriage trauma, brushing them under the rug to be looked at another time. Fast forward 3.5 years: our love story came to an end. I spent some time looking over journal entries before we decided to split and realized how loud my *voice* was on those lined pieces of paper, trying desperately to get my attention as I tried to figure out what else I needed to change about *myself* in hopes that it would work out. Red. Flag. Raina.

And now, I believe that people who come into your life are not always meant to

stay. Oh man that's painful, the journey to realizing that. I grabbed my journal and wrote, realizing how much I'd grown over the last few years even though life felt stagnant. The growth was overwhelming. I made a list of all the good & beautiful things I gained from the relationship and knowing this human, having them so close to me in this life: the slow down he encouraged, the awareness he helped me

create, and the intention he helped me bring. Thank you voice, for making me do that deep dive.

Exhale.

Lemme lighten the mood a bit here, shit.

I felt her again as I house shopped. I was so tired of being cooped up in our 1920 brick home in downtown Denver with windows that wouldn't even open. Surely that was against code in some way?! I was hesitant when I went to view the home because it was a little farther out of the city than I was hoping to be and at the top of my price range at that. The moment I stepped into the house I think I gasped. At least, it felt like I did and now thinking about it, I really hope I didn't make the

sound out loud. I felt it - deep in my core as I walked around witnessing the little tiny rainbows on the walls that reflected from the crystal chandeliers that hung from the ceiling of each room. I felt it as I walked from room to room soaking in the light that hit my face from every angle through the giant windows. I felt it as I walked out into the back yard watching the dogs explode with excitement from the sliding doors. I felt it as teared welled up in the back of my eyelids, being blinked away quickly before my tour guide thought I was nuts. Yes, that was it. Luckily, we were approved and moved in just 2 months later. I still feel it, every morning I wake up and make my way downstairs to start my morning routine and every night I was my face before bed. This is where I'm supposed to be right now.



Parenting has always been one of those areas where I've listened to my gut the most. I think I've said this a few times already but I mean it. I think my ex's have hated that and maybe it's because they never had the connection that I have with the two humans that came from the gut which I speak so highly of. As much as I listen to that inner knowing, I question her also. *Am I doing this right? Was that the right choice to make? For them? For me? For the future? I should*

have said that differently. I shouldn't have snapped. I could have handled that differently. That book said this. This book said that. He was raised this way. I was raised that way. It has been a decade long journey of questioning my own choices in hopes that they were the right ones in the long run for the two humans the universe handed me.

It. Is. Terrifying. My therapist has heard most of these worries and uncertainties, forcing me to do a deep dive on finding my confidence as a mom. This has been the most transforming challenge because it's forced me to do a deeper dive into my authentic self and intuition. It's allowed me to be okay building a bond with them that no one can break so I can be their go-to when things are hard - because we all

know things will get hard. It's forced me to pat myself on the back and celebrate little wins that I otherwise wouldn't have taken the time to acknowledge. It's shifted how I show up for my daughters and the amount of presence I bring to each moment I get, knowing there are limits on these days. It's helped me become unapologetic in my parenting approach, building my confidence a little more each day. My biggest job is mom and I know exactly how to show up as her.

Exhale.

Let's talk business because second to motherhood - this is where the bitch (voice) gets loud. This is also where Raina gets loud. I love my job. I love what I do. I can look back and say that about the majority of the jobs I've held

because there is something in me that wants to spend zero time in a space that she hates. I am kind of scrappy when it comes to this. I remember being approached about the wellness side of what I do in early 2013. Someone told me that I could make money promoting wellness - workouts, supplements, etc - and help other people through that process and I heard her loud and clear from the depths of my gut say YES. And that's the exact response I typed. I knew with everything in me that it

was the direction I wanted to take not knowing how big of an anchor that business would be for me in my life. As I write, I'm getting ready to speak to another team about this exact thing - how big of an anchor this business was for me in so many deep depths and highest highs of my life. I think the Universe/higher whatever you believe in, knew I was going to need this outlet, community, and resource through what was to come.

As life pivoted, so did my business and in 2021, I expanded into the world of Life Coaching. I didn't just fall into this, I was walked to the ledge and shoved off into it by *her* - the voice. 2020 stripped me of everything that felt good and my gut told me

it was time to let it all go to reinvent myself. It was a much needed rebuild that came with an intense slow down of realignment. As I paused to rebuild, I really took the time to get quiet with myself and figure out what Raina 9.0 wanted to do with this life she was given. The voice had been kind of trampled over on my journey to success prior to this and I needed to take the time to get reacquainted.

I started to gain insane consistency in my newly found love for journaling and it changed everything. One of the biggest things journaling allowed me to do was cast a vision for my life. Not like, a 10 year plan though that's great - but a short term (2 yr) plan that shifted how I showed up on a daily basis. I believe I've shared that vision with you in a couple of

my newsletters, the homes, the horses, the garden, the business, etc. Deeper than that, I got to put myself in that moment with my future self and see how she felt, how she carried herself, how she showed up on social media, how she ran her business, the energy she carried, the vibe, the flow - it was beautiful enough to bring tears to my eyes as I wrote deeper.

I imagined my highest self, the highest version of me if I had all the confidence and belief in the world - what would she do? What would she teach? What would her business look like and how would

she show up for those things? Casting that vision and putting it up on a vision board allowed me to create an internal shift into building the business that made me wake up with excitement every day. Vision and manifestation are things I used to think were woo-woo, only for witches, haha - only for those who were clearly from another world than the one I walk around on. Then I allowed myself to get curious about it. *What would that look like a feel like, living as my highest self?* Then I dove deeper - *why couldn't I make that happen?* It seemed totally possible when I wrote it all down. I then reflected - *where am I now, what's my current reality?* And thought hard - *what are the tiny little shifts I can make now that will start aligning where I am with where I want to be?* I walked a



one on one client through this the other day and labeled this time as: **THE BEAUTIFUL IN BETWEEN**. The beautiful in between is the process, it's the journey, it's the now, it's the aligned habits and intention that is going to take you from point A (now) to point B (vision).

Can you see it?

Exhale.

Good or bad, our gut, intuition, inner knowing, universe, voice - however you want to label her - she knows. Most people are too busy and distracted to get silent and still enough to listen to her - I know because I've lived in that space. The space where I didn't know what day it was because I was cramming my day with so many things to keep busy so I didn't have to listen.

I shoved her voice down and put headphones in to drown her out.

From tiny choices like what to eat for breakfast to big decisions like divorce, we must stop searching for everything outside of ourselves for direction. We are desperate, digging, searching for answers that can be found anywhere but within. We may even hear it sometimes, the pull or the tug, and immediately question or doubt it because *surely* the answer isn't that easy to come by. Surely it wasn't within us the whole time.

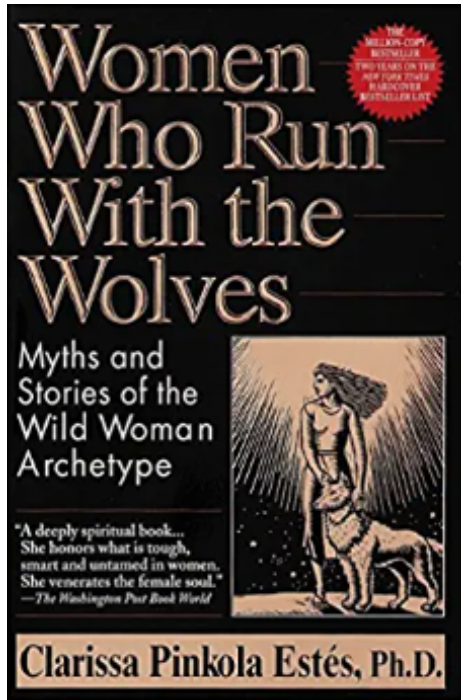
As I finished the section in the book: WOMEN WHO RUN WITH THE WOLVES - I sat looking back over the pages. "A woman knows..."

I believe she just needs to clear the noise. She needs to filter through the bullshit, the wired beliefs, the old stories she's so used to telling herself on repeat, the doubts, the fears, the worries that aren't ever going to become a reality... she knows.

Journaling has helped me clear my noise. I'm not trying to sell you on journaling, only sharing the power of it. It's helped me come to my current reality, helped me write what's in my head - all the ever consuming thoughts - and put them onto paper to write out the reality. The stories won't stop, we just have to shift them. The story that I'm just a statistic - divorced and single parenting, the illness that keeps most people hidden and full of shame and fear, the entrepreneurship and the need to hustle in order to survive and grow - these are all stories that we carry. We hold the pen (I prefer pencil) and we get to write what they look like.

MANIFEST LIKE YOUR
LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

MUST READ.



This book is like, the size of my hand. It was recommended to me in 2020 and has sat on my shelf for a couple of years because of its puny size. How judgmental of me, haha! It's all about timing though and like every book I've read over the last couple of years, it was exactly what I needed to read for the moment in life when I read it.

This book is tiny but jam packed. I typically read for 30 mins/day and a full chapter each time working my way through books at lightning speed. This slowed me down, again. It's so dense and packed full of nuggets that I can't read it as fast as I can some others. Each chapter starts with a Wild Woman Archetype story or myth and is then dissected to share the deeper meaning and truths behind them.

As I write this, I've been reading it for weeks and I'm only a few chapters in but each day I have to hold back from taking pictures of nuggets that stand out because I don't want to be that annoying woman on Instagram so here - I share - that you *must* read this book. Take it one page at a time or down the whole thing. 10/10.

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