

THE TRULY AMAZING LIFE SHOW *with Aaron Kennard*

EPISODE # 7

YOU CHOOSE YOUR LIFE – LEARN TO BALANCE SURRENDERING & CHOICE WITH MARY BELTRAMI

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Mary: You really have this ultimate freedom of choice when you really get down to it, a freedom of choice to live and experience life anyway that you want....

Aaron: Hello and welcome to whatever amazing day it is when you are listening to this. I am Aaron Kennard and this is The Truly Amazing Life show where we kick butt at life except when it's kicking ours and then we get back up somehow and figure out what the heck happened and start kicking life's butt again. Today I've got amazingly stunning guest, Mary Beltrami on the line. Mary is a highly experienced life and business coach with hundreds of clients' success stories her clients have heard millions of dollars make massive shifts in their lives with her coaching and support. She's received the National Association Professional Women's Prestigious, 2010 and 2011 Woman of the Year award in the recognition of her outstanding accomplishments in the field of coaching, so she knows what she's talking about when it comes to living a truly amazing life and she can definitely help us all improve our lives. Let's jump right in to the call right now.

Aaron: Are you ready to rock and roll here Mary?

Mary: I am ready to rock it, Aaron!

Aaron: Awesome. That is so cool, I'm so glad. And Mary lives a truly amazing life and that's why she's on the line and I just want to dive in to Mary's brain on why life is so amazing. So without further due Mary, I'm... why don't you just tell us briefly about yourself, introduce us briefly and then just tell us what makes life truly amazing to you right now and why are you so thrilled to wake up and be alive each day?

Mary: Okay. Well, again my focus over the last seven years is to build the coaching business that I've have and in that it just force me in this incredible opportunity of work with amazing people who recognize that they want to be more, do more, experience more in their lives and to be able to support them in that process and on that journey and be a witness to the transformation and ultimately to the transcendence that often occurs, to me it's the greatest honor. And I ultimately believe that, that's my mission in life. That is my Ministry. My coaching is my ministry.

Aaron: That's awesome.

Mary: So that what gets me up every day. I know that there are people to serve, people that help support in their process and in their journey and every day that I have the opportunity to be a part of that and people allow me to come in to their lives and expose the most vulnerable parts of themselves in an effort to come deeper in to the truth of about who they are and what it is they long for and desire to create the life and lifestyle and experiences they want to experience in life. I mean to me, that's the greatest honor and they allow me to be a part of that.

Aaron: That's awesome. It sounds like you are really fortunate and blessed to have found your calling and to be just immersed in its daily and just thriving in that.

Mary: Yeah and you know, it took me awhile to get there but one of the things, that I feel that makes this a truly amazing life is, that there is this wonderful I'd say just position that is in *** on all of life. So you got on the one side of life... on one side of it, you know, you have the ability to... you really have this ultimate freedom of choice when you get down to it, a freedom of choice to live and experience your life anyway that you want. That means, that really means you have the ability, we, the human beings have the ability to contemplate, to identify and *** manifest to live and experience the desired outcomes we choose. But you know, its not even just the ability to choose some of the content of our lives, who are you doing with, what we're doing when we are doing it. But the bigger learning for me, not only that's a huge one for me but it was also learning that I have a choice in every moment how I find meaning to my life experience. Because that's really gets more to the context of how I'm holding and viewing my life every moment, my life continually unfolding, and sometimes it's unfolding according to my plan as I'm working towards achieving a certain goal and objective but oftentimes, things are coming in unexpected that I, I'd really plan a choice of how am I going to respond. That's my choice how I assign meaning to what's happening.

Aaron: That's beautiful and so it sounds like that then is also a major part of what makes you said what makes life amazing for you is just that realization and then living in that ability to choose A what you get in your life for the most part, and B what the meaning of those of everything is.

Mary: Exactly because there will... I love to be able to think out and look at 'what it is that I want next?' What is it that I want to experience and create for myself going forward? And to be able to go to that process, and give myself time to sit in the question of it and to contemplate it, to

visualize and imagine it and then you know be more concrete about it and start create a plan and take actions towards that. And that's just a wonderful you know freedom to know that I, that's mine. I can do that. That's my God-given right to do that. But at the same time when life isn't always unfolding there are things, you know, there's going to be life-content that comes in to all of our lives, you know this very well Aaron, I certainly note from my experiences that gosh you know it maybe something, it's wonderful when it's content that you want to celebrate and you feel blissful and you're just loving that but many times, there are, there stuff that's going to happen that you know we wish weren't there, we wish we didn't have to deal with, it's not fun. It can be down, heart-clenching and painful but yes there it is. So what do you do? I mean, it all gets down to how am I going to assign meaning to this and how do I choose to respond.

Aaron: Yeah and so your life still... I mean it's not like any of us go through life in this perfect blissful ease, there's challenges, there's always challenges that pop up in various forms and it sounds like you just embraced that. And that makes your life amazing that you take it all in and find the meaning that you want in everything, right?

Mary: Yes as I am talking to you and certainly for those that are listening, I talk to myself as well so this is an ongoing process you know, me just being human, I have to continually bring myself back to *** but it starts with awareness. I think it's an essential one to really be able to live and experience and know what it is to have a truly amazing life, you have to start with that essential awareness, that will support you in moving in whatever their experience is good, bad or ugly but if you have that awareness and you know you have a choice, you will always have a choice on how you're going to find meaning to it, and how you are going to respond to that. That would define what your experience really is. And even the hardest most could be the most painful experience can also be a part of what makes life so amazing. I know, again, from your experience, citing from the medical challenge that you went through, I mean that is not something you necessarily wanted to happen, you

know it's like, my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease it was a brutal to watch the demise of my mother and for anybody who's been through that I had to... in order for me to show what's best for her because of the decisions and choice that I was making, I had to create a *** of meaning of what was happening that allowed me to really just show up and be with her and support her fully...

Aaron: And so for you what does that look like? When, like in that specific taste, how did you give that meaning?

Mary: For me, when I had... Initially there was anger, there was 'why is this happening?' it just felt you know a lot of things going on at that time and it just felt gruesome it was a roll with me kind of feeling, I am victimized, so I have to get passed that because what I clearly thought and recognized is that, and this is true for everybody, there are stuff that happen in your life that you have absolutely no control over. So I had to understand that I had no control of what was happening and say my mother's condition, the only thing that I have control over is how I was I going to respond. So I really have to think that out and say look, My mother is going through what she's going through and for anybody who's dealt with this, Alzheimer's is a long marathon kind of demise and it's painful, yeah and so I just what I had to get in to myself it's really get to surrendering that you don't have control, one. and it's accepting that. And two, can I allow my mother to move through in whatever she's going to go through and just be willing to show up for her on her journey, that was the commitment I made, was to just show up and be with her on her journey whatever where it's going to take us. And quite honestly, I didn't know from day to day, week to week, month to month what that journey is going to look like, that I just have to resolve in myself that, you know this is something bigger than me, and way out of control but yet my commitment was to simply show up and be in love and support of my mother to how long she needed me for that.

Aaron: So that commitment, what did that do for you then? So how did that play out in affecting your life?

Mary: Ultimately what that does and it really gets to the greater ability to accept the "what is" of life, I learned from her. She was a wonderful teacher that taught me in all of this experience, to simply allow and accept the 'what is'. There will be times, when I visit her, I never know if she would be, she recognized me or she wouldn't recognize me and I just have to be okay with whatever it was, and my job was simply to be with her, to be in a loving, supportive, allowing, fully accepting, space and energy with her, so that she didn't have to do anything, you know, I didn't have to do anything but it was peaceful, it's peaceful and it was loving, and I just always believe on the spirit level, you know what was going on her human body level, I always felt that on the spirit level, we were so strongly connected even though she's passed away and transitioned on three years ago, I still feel her very much, the relationship still continues its just she dropped her body.

Aaron: That's really cool to hear. We'll good that's fantastic way to start. We talked a little bit then about what you're doing lately. Let's dive back a little bit for the next few minutes. And why not... you know it probably hasn't always been for you. You're eluded to that, but let's go to a story from your life that made... think of a story from your life that made the biggest impact on your perspective and enabled you to really live with this perspective that you live with now. Can you think of something like that first?

Mary: Well I can certainly... when I think back, I can really see where there was this huge transformation period for me. So it's really a transitional phase and [inaudible]

Aaron: Cool. Let's hear about it. Take us there.

Mary: So...gosh... If I go back about 7 or 8 eight years ago I was really in a state where I'm experiencing profound unhappiness on I would say so many levels. I just felt so, I guess the word be, just so disconnected from myself and I would say from God, knowing that I literally, my experience was I was dying on the inside, like on the full level. That's how unhappy I was. The truth that I was in a terribly dysfunctional and volatile and unhealthy marriage but I was afraid to leave it, for years I was afraid to leave it. And then I saw that my children were suffering enormously from really this toxic environment in our home which also contributed then to my son's demise in to a really serious drug addiction and at the same time my beloved father just passed away and again my mother was just being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and then really overnight I learned that our whole financial back, our savings and foundation was gone and you know that's all for the *** that we don't have to ***

Aaron: Well it makes up this... I mean it's good to know...

Mary: So basically, I was experiencing time where my life just felt so completely overwhelming, chaotic and absolutely I would say out of control. I just felt very much of the effect of what was happening to me and I didn't feel I had any real control over anything and like I said I think I was really more on pure reaction and survival mode but more than that I really felt and part of my misery and sense of powerlessness was... it was my thinking and it was very victim, it wasn't really much of an effective of what was happening [inaudible]

Aaron: You felt like a victim... yeah.

Mary: Yeah. You know I feel like I was victimized on so many things like why is all these things happening to me...

Aaron: That question why is such an insidious question, isn't it?

Mary: Yeah, it's like... why not? you know... Why shouldn't be happening to you? I couldn't get there at a time. And I have much better appreciation for the challenging times too but that comes with the perspective but you know, it really wasn't until so I was going through this really painful, chaotic period of my life but it wasn't until I truly understood that I was actually 100% responsible for my life experience and that I was really an active, co-creator of everything that was happening to me only then that I really become empowered with that awareness to make some really drastic critical changes that started me living a whole new way and operating and thinking about my life in a whole new way.

Aaron: So what got you there? How did you all of a sudden come to that?

Mary: Yeah so that wasn't an easy thing. but in the midst of all that was going on, you know I was talking to you know someone very, very close to me and you know him as really, I believed you interviewed him as well, but you know he... like you he's been an incredible mentor and you know just so much... he's been a profound influence in my life.

Aaron: Well I can say likewise, his an amazing person...

Mary: I know and we share and anybody who has spend time and work with him just you know would say the same thing. I just had in you know his profound wisdom but you know he was trying to help me through this really chaotic time and what he helped me understand... he helped me

understand a very important point that was to truly live my own life, life which was truly in alignment with my core values, my own guiding principles, my intentions, my beliefs, you just have to own your life. you have to own how you're living it. First I really didn't get that. But you know as he worked with me, you have to take 100% responsibility for your life and for your life experiences. He said you can't be blaming it on anyone or anything outside of yourself,

Aaron: So even when you are... I mean that you're saying are happening outside of your control, how do you reconcile that with that belief?

Mary: Well... that's where I got to... things that are certainly out of my control that I have no control over I had to come to allow for the fact that, that's just the case. Even for my son's drug addiction, he was all of age, I tried an intervention he wasn't... early on he wasn't having anything to do with that. I had to learn this art of surrender that there are those things that are happening in your life that you don't have control over...

Aaron: Or at least you don't have any immediate control once... we like to think that 'Oh this happened without any of my cause.' or we think we don't even have a cause over a lot of those this is just of a debatable issue, which we don't necessarily get in to right now but yeah continue for it...

Mary: Yeah... yeah...so I absolutely know that there was like, for example for my son's situation it was impart a reaction to what was happening to our home environment, it's just toxic, it wasn't healthy for anything that with one of the ways he just choose to say cope with it. The problem was when I had to get to it, he was of age and I just couldn't pushed him in rehab. I you know, he had *** to that, but anyway, the bigger thing was that , I had to learn through all of this, through my mother's experience, through my son's experience who by the way now has been clean and subtle for 3 years and doing wonderfully, that gets to

you'll never know when life is going to unfold. That I'm.. you know I had to learn this art of surrender and art of allowing, when I say allowing it doesn't mean you have to like what's happening, but to fight anything that's really happening that unfolding right then and there or that's happened, to put resistance against that, is futile because where that going to get you it's already either happened or unfolding and it's just futile waste of energy to fight the 'what is'. And that is what I had to learn, and that's where I found, when I stopped fighting 'what is' of life, like it or not like it, but you know there's more peace, I can move through the experience with greater peace, with greater serenity, with greater perspective...

Aaron: How does that relate... how does that relate to the control of the 100% responsibility part in your... in that equation?

Mary: Because I... again I can look and say How do I choose to assign meaning to his? Because as I... it's going to be my thoughts and my thoughts collectively will create a belief structure and my belief structure will really stand, I will act in accordance to my beliefs and I will experience in accordance to my beliefs. And so it's my thoughts and you know and beliefs that create the emotions and the feelings that I'm going through, So when I am really intentional and cautious about how do I choose to look at the situation and respond to it, I can also then be at a choice on how really, you know... Am I going to deep dive in to some dark-cold depression because of what's going on? or you know can I... Is there a way that I can frame what's going on in such a way that allows me to move through it with greater peace and serenity, rather than fighting it.

Aaron: That's awesome. Yeah. That is so... I see where you connect that now, that's so empowering, I realized that when you realized that. You are in control not necessarily on how everything comes up, but you are 100% in control of how you respond to everything which makes every difference in the world, right?

Mary: Yes. And that ultimately gets to, Aaron, everything gets down to our choices, when we are more aware and intentional our choices are, that's where I believed we're going to be fulfilled, *** and happy as we moved through whatever it is and again it may not be a what one perceived as a happy experience, I mean when my child is suffering, it's hard not to suffer too you know, but at the same time, I've learned so much through this process that they also have to get through to their life, and then they have to create meaning for themselves, but the only one I have control over, ultimately is myself. That's the only one. And managing me is a full time job.

Aaron: Well I think it's beautiful how you're talk about the art of allowing and surrendering, because that such... it brings so much peace and liberation when you can do that, doesn't it?

Mary: Yes it does. It doesn't mean that you have to like it [inaudible]

Aaron: Or just stop dealing with it. It's not that.

Mary: Yeah... yeah. I don't have to like it. You have to fight the 'what is' of it what happened that just futile. It's a waste of energy and if you focus on that, you know, typically you don't have a very positive emotional response then you have to take responsibility for where that takes you.

Aaron: That's so good. When you left, so you figure this stuff I mean this stuff kind of dawn on you. It sounds like it really kind of helped you open your eyes to you and your sense of responsibility then what happened

there and what was transition out like for you to being able to really start this path of more awareness that you're on?

Mary: Yeah so ultimately as I was becoming more aware of really connecting the dots if you will, I ultimately had to take on a really serious look at how I was living my life and what I was contributing to that. But I also ultimately got to 'you know what? this is not working for me' and back in January 2006 I made the very hard choice to leave my marriage, it was almost 20years of marriage, and I had always been fighting, fighting, fighting, I'm going to figure out how to make this work and not wanting to give up, and finally I just had to allow the fact that 'you know what this is not working', really it never did work, and that's okay. That's okay. I just have to allow for it to be okay and then from that point, I took the big... for me it was a huge step to pack up and leave and I literally just packed up with my personal belongings, I have my clothes and a few personal belongings and I was in the last semester of my graduate space in *** Psychology and I have \$250 in my pocket and I started over. I literally started over. And from that time, I've been able to build a very successful coaching practice. I've been able to coach hundreds of individuals just doing amazing things with their lives, I'm healthy, I'm fit, I'm living in my own home and I purchased myself. I lived in the San Francisco Bay area and I'm just minutes away from the coastal hills where Aaron, as you know I love to cycle, run and hike. In fact I was going to hike this afternoon before our call. [inaudible]

Aaron: Your son is better and well... yeah...

Mary: He's been clean and *** with over three years now, he's working full time, he's back in school doing just beautifully.

Aaron: Yeah. That's awesome. That's such a cool story to hear and I wasn't at all aware of any of those things you've gone through so thank you for sharing that...

Mary: I mean, it was always content and you know that beauty... here's the other thing about life. Because it's always unfolding, this is where you get to the surrender and this is where you get to *** is, I... there were times when I literally thought I would never see my son again, you know, it would just be a matter of day or so before he blew himself up with heroine. And some of our conversation, I literally thought that this is the last call we have and I want you to know that I love you and implore that you think twice before you take some of those things that you weren't some of the things he was threatening, but you know, that's all then. At this point, I could never have conceived he would have come through what he's come through. That my prayer to God always is 'this is way bigger than me, Thy will be done.' You know, I have to let go, and let God.

Aaron: That's such a huge statement, I love that statement, that's awesome. Thank you so much for sharing that. Let's transition, a couple of quick questions then, what... so you're familiar with the poster, The 12 Pillars of a Truly Amazing Life poster, on that, which one of those Pillars stands out to you the most right now and why?

Mary: Well... you know they are all wonderful. All 12 Pillars of a Truly Amazing Life are just all life-affirming and life-empowering. But if I had to pick one as the over-arching pillar of them all, I would say, it is LOVE. And I say love because ultimately I think there are two primary states, there is love and there is fear and either operating and making choices in the state of love or from the state of fear. So when our hearts are really open, we're receptive in allowing for all of life's unfolding and I mean all the situations either that we enjoy and celebrate even those that can deeply profoundly hard, you know, [inaudible] the whole spectrum. But when our hearts are open and allowing for life's unfolding, you know when we are really open to it and without any resistance that where we are living in the state of love. Love doesn't resist the what ifs of life. No matter what's happening, the good, the bad the ugly. Love is the full embracing celebration of life.

Aaron: That's cool. I love how you said that because I was just thinking about that the other day when I start that list of celebrating life and I end it with loving unconditionally, and I think they are almost the same thing and it's like this perfect book end just like what you just said.

Mary: *** on there and then you have all of them in a mixture but somehow I just think Love is everything. All of those pillars to me, are these extensions of love.

Aaron: Yes. that's awesome. I like that, thank you. So what one book would you most highly recommend to help someone start living a truly amazing life?

Mary: Gosh.. what...

Aaron: There are so many books, I know... but you just have to pick one...

Mary: I mean there are certainly a number of books that have helped me, again to helped me arrive on some of my own thinking and orientation towards life. But I would say, one of my top favorite book is a book written by Marci Shimoff called Happy for No Reason, The seven steps to being happy from the inside out; The Happy for No Reason.

Aaron: I've heard of that but I haven't read it. But I love Marci Shimoff.

Mary: You know Marci Shimoff, Happy for No Reason and what I love about her book, you know not only does she offer great content but

there are some wonderful exercises to help reinforce integrate the information she shares and I always receive, this is the book that I've recommended to the many, many of my clients that I've worked with over the years and I always get really positive rating feedback and some of them said that her book was just life transforming for them, so I would say, if I had to pick one, certainly the context of this is a truly amazing life I would say is Happy For No Reason. It's all about... it's nothing external to yourself, it's all about you know, coming from place with happiness and joy inside.

Aaron: That's awesome. Great! Thanks for sharing that. We did get in to the end of the time here, so to wrap up, why don't you quickly let the listeners know how to get in touch with you. I know you're a coach and I think you're pretty booked right now but leave us some way that people might be get in touch with you for future reference in case they wanted to reach out and talk to you about any coaching or anything that you're doing. And then just leave us with one final comment with the most important thing you've learned from your experiences so far about living a truly amazing life.

Mary: Yeah, okay. Well, I would say right now, probably the best way to contact would just be... but the name of my company is CoherenceCoaching@mac.com. I'll get information that way. Or I'm also found on LinkedIn at this time, Mary Beltrami.

Aaron: Awesome and I'll put this up on the link notes on the site so people can see it at TrulyAmazingLife.com/podcast so they will be able to see all these info too. So that's great.

Mary: Okay, great! Thank you Aaron. I'm in the process now, I'm in this wonderful phase where I can build up this coaching practice I've contacted my services that to other companies where you know, I'll be able to get large number of clientele's for that process but am really now

in this on what I might want to do more on my own, just build my own brand I've been really focus on helping others build their coaching programs in Coherence but you know I'm just sitting on the question, what does it look like, what does that sound like, what does it feel like for me, what do I really want to focus on so am working with somebody right now on that just allowing myself a time to be on that question so, it's all worth coming but I think right now probably the best way to reach me, and you know once I have something more concrete... [inaudible]

Aaron: Yeah. Feel free to let me know so I can shoot it out.

Mary: Thank you, Thank you. And just.. let's see.. I would say, what I would end with, again it just gets back to what I was talking about earlier, your life is a function of an outcome of the choices you've made. Your life is your choice. It's really what it gets down to. You're... own your life. you own it 100% and live it that way. Because otherwise, you might as well live it by default and if you do, I don't think you'll be able to experience a truly amazing life that way. that's the truth. Just know that your life is a choice and every moment you know you're at choice point, what do you choose?

Aaron: That's awesome and that just sounds like it rings through so loudly from your experience that you went through so that's fantastic. Well, thank you Mary. It's been a true pleasure. I've really enjoyed the conversation and am sure people are going to love hearing this from you so thank you so much for being here, am going to wrap up with that, look forward in keeping in touch. thanks again for sharing this with us today.

Mary: Thank you Aaron.

Aaron: Alright, am sure you enjoyed that call with Mary. Isn't she so awesome? So wise. Your life is your choice and you are absolutely free to choose whether your life is truly amazing or not. Just choose amazing. Let Mary and I know how we can support you on that, head on to the blog right now at trulyamazinglife.com/episode7 and leave us a comment on the blog and also please leave a review over on iTunes if you haven't done so already, simply search trulyamazinglife over on iTunes and leave us a review. I would love to hear your thoughts on this and also if you can guess what this song, this music is, I'll send you a free copy of my book. Go ahead and leave a comment on the blog if you have any ideas on what music this is or if you want to know what it is. Thanks for listening and make today AMAZING.

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Thank you in advance!

- Aaron Kennard