

JB059-20-20Show-20the-20World-20Who-20You-20Are-20-20Rick-20...

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I want to invite you to be a founder of my fearless coming out program. In a nutshell, this program will offer weekly live training recorded for those who can't attend live lifetime access to my digital course learning to just breathe, and monthly q&a with surprise experts and guests. I'm only opening 30 spots and this offer will end on April 30. Text fearless to 55444 to get the link to learn more and register. That's F E A R L E S S 25544. See you soon.



00:46

Welcome to Just breathe parenting your LGBTQ to the podcast transforming the conversation around loving and raising an LGBTQ child filled with awesome guests practical strategies and moving stories host Heather Hester always makes you feel like you're having a cozy chat. Wherever you are on this journey. Right now, in this moment in time, you are not alone. And here's Heather for this week's amazing episode



01:25

Welcome to Just breathe. I am so happy. You're all here today. And I'm really, really excited for you to meet and listen to my guest. Rick Clemens is a well known culture disrupter and a good way a closet buster. He's a men's coming out coach and a bold move strategist inspiring gay men to live life with no excuses, no fears and no apologies. Tapping into his 25 plus years experience in personal development. Rick leverages his status as a late bloomer coming out of the closet at 36. And stepping into entrepreneurship at 43 to lovingly kick other gay men in the ass to thrive in their own lives without apologies, both professionally and personally. He is a professionally certified coach has been a frequent contributor to the Huffington Post, your tango, the good men project. He is the author of Frankly, my dear, I'm gay. He's a podcaster has two podcasts life unclogged, edited and 40 plus gay men gay talk. And I just want to share a few things that people say about Rick working with Rick and having interviewed Rick. Rick is all heart, brains and soul. Rick does a sensational job of digging deep and creating a safe, vulnerable space for listeners to grow and think. Rick's speaks with such honesty and emotion that his message is felt as well as heard. So Rick, welcome to just breathe. I am really delighted to have you here today and to have my audience get to meet you.



03:20

Well, thanks for having me. It's always weird that you're here. That introduction is like, Oh, really? That's me? Oh, wow. Okay. It's hard to hear stuff about yourself, you know, and I think that's one of the interesting things about the journey of coming out of the closet is like, really hearing who you really are for that first time and really owning it. It's such an interesting thing. And I've said that numerous times on stages, like, I not only want you to know who you are, I want you to hear in your own mind who you are. really hear it for the first time, you know, right.



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I think that's really that's such an interesting distinction. Because you're right, it's one thing to, to say it but to have somebody else say it to you or to repeat it in your head.



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Yep. Right. And the more we hear it in our own head, it's the validation, it's the commitment. It's the courage, it's the confidence to say, Yeah, this is me. And in that it's not just sexuality. I mean, there's so many interesting things, you know, like, I was speaking to a podcast guest the other day, and she said, I'm just so proud to be me as a black woman. And she goes and I hear that in my head. I'm proud to be a black woman. I'm proud to be a black woman. I said, Well, what was different prior to that, she goes I was ashamed to be a black woman. I was scared to be a black woman now I'm just proud to be a black woman. I own it. This is who I am. Again, change it. I'm black. They're here we are right. But and then so we got into the same conversation said yeah, it's kind of like when I talk to my audiences stuff about like, just hear the truth that you are gay, you are lesbian. You are ba whatever you're trying to gender, to hear it in your own mind and own, it is the first really the first step to like, stepping into your truth. So



05:10

it really is because even if you have somebody else say it to you and validate it to you, it's not the same as you validating it to yourself.



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No, no, you got to own it. You know, you really have to own in fact, when I first started coaching, one of my good girlfriends who was also a coach, and who does phenomenal work in another arena. She's known as the dating with dignity coach, and she's very well known. And she said, you're just not owning it. Rick, you need to own the you're the coming out coach. I'm like, Yeah, I am. No, you're not just the way you just said that you're not owning it. And it got to the point where, you know, a couple of years later, we were at another event working together, and she's like, you're not owning it still. Just let me know, buddy. It irritated me live. It literally pissed me off. I'm like, Okay, fine. Got me going, though, because I started like, okay, yeah, this

isn't suddenly that's when the podcast started. And the next thing I know, I was on national TV, I'm like, Okay, well, I guess I'm on it now, you know, right. I use that whole journey as a really beautiful metaphor for when somebody's really struggling with coming out. And, and all of your parents who are listening, you're coming out to just let me know you're coming out. Own that journey. Own that you're a parent of an LGBTQ individual. Because when you can own that, the journey becomes much easier.



06:39

It's a game changer. It takes it takes the fear out of it.



06:48

And it gives you confidence. Because you take you have to remove the fear. And you have to step into the confidence to say yes, my child is gay. And no, you can't be that way with my kid. You know. And it's so interesting to just see that all unfold. And one of the biggest things that when I did start speaking professionally, I had been volunteering at PFLAG as one of the speakers on their speaker bureau in the LA area. And every time I had the beautiful privilege to go sit at a PFLAG meeting with a bunch of parents just seen them finally own, okay, this is my child, this is who they really are. There's almost like this sense of relief as well as a sense of fear. But moreso the sense of relief with okay, I finally just said this is my child, this is who they are. Because now it was like they gave themselves permission to go. Okay, now what? What's, you know?



07:49

Well, exactly, exactly. It's the whole idea of embracing right, or good. The thing I always used, like the name entertainment, like once you say it, well, it's out there. Now what?



08:05

detainment as I was listening to some of your other podcasts, I'm like, I want to steal that that's really good. You know, go for it. You could do it interesting, because my whole brand so my brand's definitely evolved. I mean, I'm known as the coming out coach. But over the years, things have really changed and I have grown and everything. And I did get to this place where like, I had a lot of people saying, Oh, I wish I wish to talk to you know, the straight folks. I'm like, I did talk to the straight folks try to get you to just own up that it's okay for us to be who we are. Right? Right. What they were really getting at was you really have this message that's about just unapologetically being yourself. And, and I will never forget the night that this all changed for me. I loved what I do. I still love what I do. But I've gotten to the point where I'm like, if I have to tell my coming out story one more time, I think I'm just gonna vomit all over the stage. I'm just like, it'd become so routine, you know, and I don't like right, I mean, I don't want to be that person. Right? So always looking for different things to say. And I was headed to a college in Southern California to speak to a pretty big group, like 400 students. They were all there for a grade. I'm like, Okay, this way I was dreading this, like, they're not gonna be paying no attention. And here I am white cracker boy, older guy, you know, all this sort of stuff.

And I'm like, okay, Rick, get your head on. You're, you're getting paid for this one. So you know, you go do you? Right, right. But in the middle of that talk, I thought, You know what, I really want to connect with these kids in a whole different way. And I know it was divine intervention because it became the basis of what now is my brand and I said, Okay, let's get real here. I know that about 97% of you sit in this room, you're not queer. You don't fall under the queer umbrella. You're not gay and lesbian. You're not trans. You're not bisexual or even Maybe bisexual. admit to it. Oh, you're not admitting to any of it. But I know that 97% of you are not. I also know that about 100% of you are here because you're getting a grade. But I want to do a little experiment with you. So I said, I realize it's Wednesday, it's the middle of the week, you'd probably rather be going having hump day beer somewhere, but we're gonna, we're gonna go play for just a minute. I said, Please close your eyes. But don't fall asleep. That was one requirement I had, please fall asleep on me. But I want you to think about where you are right now. So you're in this room. Many of you are getting a grade for being here. Many of you are pursuing a degree at this university. Possibly because somebody else said this what you're supposed to do. So if that's you, and please don't open your eyes yet. Raise your hand. And as soon as the hands went up, I said, Okay, now do not put your hands down. And we're all this is a safe space. I want you to open your eyes and look around. It was so interesting, because about 70% of the room had their hands raised. Oh, wow. I



11:09

thought, wow, I have something here. Yeah, I just took some oil coming out journey. And I related it to something that anybody could relate to, which is doing what anybody else wants you to do, right? Doing the thing that everybody tells you you're supposed to be doing. And honestly, that became the basis for everything, whether I'm like, I've got something bigger now, I can go do this talk, and I can relate it to anything. And suddenly I did I started working with him. You know, I'm a marketing guy. But sometimes you're too close to your own stuff. It's like I just couldn't break through. Right, I started working with a friend of mine, who was brilliant. And we came up with the brand, have no fears, no excuses, no apologies. And that works for any people. And I do this now with entrepreneurs, I do this with college students, I do this with the LGBTQ community. I can do this with people in midlife. You know, like, I've got to go break out of the the drudgery of this job, whatever it might be. I could even do this with LGBTQ parents who have a child who are LGBTQ. You got to dump the excuses why this is a problem for you face the fears of what's coming up for you and unapologetically go own that this is who your child is. And it just every time I get to talk about this, obviously, you can see I just I love talking about number one. And I love helping people see we're not that much different. Because everybody has something that they're making excuses about, that they have fears about that they keep apologizing for like, oh, yeah, well, I'll get to that someday, or I really wish I would have got that. I mean, let's take weight loss. That's a perfect example. We all like, well, I can't get the weight off and I'm afraid. And then, you know, right after the holidays, I'm like, Well, I put on 10 pounds. Okay, it's I can use that analogy. But I think it's a beautiful space to invite parents who are working with a team, or a child doesn't have to be just a team to really unpack that for themselves. And get really super honest, you know, because it is a journey there. It's not an easy journey. Sometimes I get it.



13:21

No, no, it's not. But it's an it's a journey. That doesn't end. Right. There's no, there's no ending to this journey. It's I think the biggest piece of it is embracing that. It is a journey. And you're on

it together. Yep. Right. So I mean, just like parenting is a journey. I mean, everything we do in life is a journey, right? I mean, it's kind of an overused word, but it's it's an accurate description. So, you know, I think it's a lot of it is just the like, You've been saying the mindset, like once you kind of shift that. We're like, oh, okay, well, I can do this, because there are now steps that I understand. Right? Instead of it being like this whole just, this is so overwhelming, or this is so scary, or I don't I don't know, you know, I? I don't know what to do. Right, right.



14:16

It's so interesting. I'm gonna go back to the PFLAG situation. Yeah, I remember using the same analogy like, you know, people, a lot of parents in the PFLAG. You know, when they share. They say, you know, the day that my child came out of the closet today, I went into the closet, and I'm like, Yeah, you're right. Because you gotta go figure this out. But I also believe that once you start to own it and figure it out, part of the power is to realize every day you're going to have the opportunity to come out to because you never know a conversation, a casual conversation, something you say it's suddenly it's like, oh, I'm faced with this, you know? So part of what I encourage anybody, you know, whether you're the parent or the actual individual who's like coming out of the closet out who you are in your world is to not be disillusioned. It's kind of like diversity and inclusion, hot buttons that are going on in our beautiful world these days. They're like, Okay, we address this once a year. Now, it's not a conversation, it's a daily conversation. Same thing with coming out. It's not a one and done. And I wish it was actually I wish it wasn't, I wish there was no having to do it at all. But it's a it's a daily experience. You know, I'm coming out, you know, today on your podcast, and I always, you know, I see that at anytime I get the opportunity to speak about this. And sometimes it's a casual conversation anywhere, and I've had people like, Wow, I can't believe you actually said that. I'm like said what? And I had, I had somebody actually kind of say that to me. A few weeks ago, I was in Trader Joe's and Corp and Ira just kind of chat. And they're like, Well, what are you up to this and my hubby and I are probably gonna go for a hike. And this gal as I'm walking out, she goes, I just want to tell you something like, Okay, did I drop something and she goes, I was standing behind you in line and she goes, You're impressive. And I don't even know you go, she goes, but you just said, Yeah, my husband are going out for a hike. She goes. So many people wouldn't share something like that in public. I'm like, What's my truth? I'm not what I you know, I said, I guess because I have become comfortable. Yes, I know, there's, there are places I may not say something like that. But I try not to hide it at this point. And it is tough. And I as a parent, I've been through it in my own world. And as parents that are listening, I'm not saying what I'm saying to like, get over it. I'm saying what I'm saying to like, you will embrace this in your own way. Right, and learn and love to embrace it in your own way. I think one of the things that I love, I love my community. I love my LGBTQ community. But I'll be the first to also say, we put a lot of high expectations on everybody else starting to march to our drum, which I think is unfair. I would like it, but everybody accepts us. But there's also a matter of give people time. It's also a matter of, I've given you plenty of time, now get over it, you know, but I think sometimes we and this is again, for the parents listening, and maybe some of the teams to or kids that are listening to this. You have to make space for people to step into this. And if you don't make space, you're going to get pushed back. And just in my mind, justifiably so. Because when we don't give people room to like, Okay, I need to process this. We can't demand that they accept it right out the gate. I know, I am raising my hand, those of you who can't see, I'm raising my hand because I after the second time that I did come out, I told my parents, that's the way it is you have to accept this. Man, I was a jerk. I mean, I was a jerk. Now, we're 20 some odd years into this. I don't accept when it comes up anymore. I'm like, No, we've had this conversation we're done. You know, we're done. Right? You know, you have you

have embraced me and my husband, you know, you don't, you can you can say what you want to say. But that doesn't mean I have to stay in the room and accept that does not mean I have to stay on the phone and accept it either. Right. And every once in a while. With one of my parents, I have to like literally like go a long time without talking to him. Like, I'm not gonna do this with you again. You're 77 years old, I'm 58 years old, I think we can kind of, I think I'm an adult, let's get rid. I've raised two kids, I know these these things that even I, as a parent, there's time to like, shut up, Rick, just shut up. You need to like a kid do their thing.



18:57

Exactly, exactly. I think that is I'm so glad you said that. Because that is a very important piece that we kind of miss. Right? The whole, you know, we'll kind of say, oh, take time to process it. And then we just keep going right? Instead of really talking about what that means. Like not only do you know, do you is the person coming out, Connor is the person coming out need that time and space to process, right? The parent needs that time and space to process. Anybody who you're sharing that information with needs the time and space to process it. And obviously, you know, our goal is to you know, hopefully someday it will be a world where that doesn't need to be the case. But right now it is and I think that is just a it is the kind thing to do. If you want to have these relationships,



19:59

well it's it's Not only the kind thing to do, and one of the things that I say when I talk about helping. So I focus as you said in the intro, I really focused on men and men life helping them come out of the closet. That was my experience, even though I did it at a younger age, too. But there's a key element to this. I want to help men in midlife come out of the closet. And here's the key elements with dignity and respect for themselves and everyone else on the journey. I will not work with a guy well, yes, pretty much I will not work with a guy who says, I want to come out and it's all about me now. And I've given everything else I've given my wife, the house, I bought got the kit, I won't work with that guy, we will not match. Even though there was a bit of me that was kind of that way at the beginning of this whole unraveling thing. I can't do that. Because there's, again, there's a processing piece. Now, at some point, if your spouse is just like, Nope, not gonna do that. And I've worked with some people who had a really tough space there and I get it, I get it. It's not it is not easy to like suddenly, oh, this person I'm married to there's suddenly who not who I thought they were, I get that peace. But there's a lot of people who go through divorces for a lot of other reasons, besides your spouse is gay. So let's get real about that. But I also feel like you have to do this with dignity and respect. If you want dignity and respect in return. You can't just say it's a one way street. And when your teen teen or child is dealing with this, and they're not giving you that time, that's probably a really good conversation to have with as a parent. I mean, we all have these parents, right, the other. I've tried to teach my kids dignity and respect. I had to go there with him like, Okay, I really took 23 and 26. But



21:55

yes, yeah. So and I think, you know, I often when those things happen, I think, Okay, this, this is not fully developed yet, right? So, there's that piece where you kind of have to slow it down and be like, Okay, this is, you know, let's let's just stop for a minute and talk about why why it is

your feel like you're really feeling the way you're feeling, right? Because typically, it's not, you know, so and so's has disrespected me, I don't feel or or it's like that. You know, I'm gay, and everybody else needs to get out of my way. Right? Like, forget everybody else, because this is who I am. And I hate everybody. And that's like, I think that's a definitely a natural piece for especially an adolescent teen young adult coming out, and probably for anybody coming out, but, you know, just seeing in the space where I work, and they need to work through that, because that's not okay to continue. They will not, you know, it will not end well.



23:00

No one No one wanting Well, on the other side, either. And that's why I say I want to give people enough room to like grow into it. But if they don't, after five or six years, if there's okay, then it's time for that relationship to truly, like, move into a different space altogether. You know, and I always get the question like, well, you know, how did your ex wife do this? Well, it wasn't easy at first, and then we kind of went through a really good space. And then due to other things, we don't really have any relationship at this point. And I'm okay with that. And even our kids are okay with that, because it is just what it is. But I gave room, she also gave room, I'm not gonna say it was a one way street, and you just finally figure it out sometimes. But I love what you just said, and I'd love to give something to your listeners. It's a really great tool that I use when people are like, but this is what you have to do. So let's take your example of the teen who says, Well, I'm gay, and you just need to have have to accept this. So here's the tool. So then say, and this can be used with anybody but like, okay, so then if I do accept this, then what? And whatever they say and say, okay, and then what? And then what this is not being a jerk. This is like, I'm trying to get that person to like, what's really what you're wanting from the person that you're saying. You have to accept it. Because you have to accept it, isn't it? It actually isn't what they're trying. They want to be accepted. Okay, let's get real about that. But it's about the fourth or fifth time you asked this beautiful question, then what are so what I don't really like So what good sounds like a sassy little kid. But okay, so if I accept you then what? What is it you're wanting? And then if they answer and say, okay, and then if I do that, then what is it you're wanting? Because first we're starting to have a conversation now an adolescent teens probably and go Mom or Dad, you're being a real jerk right now. Okay, well, we're the parents who have we get a little bit of privilege to be that The whole point of the exercise is to really get to the bottom why? And it's such a powerful question. I use it all the time, my coaching practice with people, you know, they'll say, Well, you know, if I, if I come out, then you know, all my friends are going to reject me. Okay? And then what? And that always comes down to well, I don't want to feel lonely. I don't want to experience loneliness. I don't want to experience rejection. But sometimes it takes that three or four times are asking, and suddenly it's like, okay, so here's what I just heard you say? You don't want to come out lose friends, because you don't want to experience rejection and loneliness. So let's work with rejection and loneliness. How could you not feel rejected and lonely? And what could you do? And I think this is something that parents, oh my gosh, ask the questions. Allow your, your child teach them how to do this, like, okay, so Mom, Dad, you're really having a hard time accepting because you're afraid to what other people will think. So what if other people think this, then what? You know, you'd have to have? I gotta give some credit. If, if a team could ask those kinds of questions. I'm gonna be like, I five, like, wow, you're not on social media, are you? You're on social media, and you're going for like the Deepak Chopra. Is it all that? I don't know. But it's just such a, I feel like it's a really valuable tool that people can take away from this conversation and really learn and use.



26:30

Oh, my goodness. Absolutely. Because not only can you use it in this specific conversation, you can really use it in every Yeah, every time you kind of hit a communication roadblock, right? Where you're kind of I love that so much. And I hope everybody out there's like really taking this in, rewind, use it with your



26:50

use it with your spouse, and if I don't make dinner, then what?



26:57

See how far you get with. But right, yeah, good luck. Good luck. Well, you know, I



27:02

actually have used it a lot. in it. Yeah, exactly. But in the few times that have had the beautiful privilege, and I do consider it a beautiful privilege to work, I'm not a therapist, coaches completely separate. So there's a lot of times I'm like, Hey, y'all need therapy? You know, I love but you know, but there's been a few times throughout my coaching career where I've had the privilege of work with, you know, a couple, a husband and a wife, you know, sometimes it's been the wife coming out at the time has been the husband coming now. Where that questioning, has helped that couple navigate so much, and really start to see each other, even though they're in different sides of the court, so to speak, it kind of almost helps bring them together, you know? And that's why I love sharing that tool. I think it's one



27:53

oh my gosh, well, thank you. That is that is really, it is so valuable. And so I'm just sitting here thinking, Oh, my goodness, like the number of conversations because I know, you know, what plays in this is for everyone, you know, not just parents when your child comes out, but you know, like in your space, when married couples one comes out, you know, this is across the board where there is that? Sometimes you're so stuck and frozen in that fear. And that that what if write that having a question like this to really use as a tool to slow it down. And really get to the bottom of okay, what is what is causing this fear? What am I most afraid of? Yeah.



28:38

Because there's always something underneath. There's



28:41

always



28:43

Oh, you can do this forever this with your you can do this with yourself. You don't have to have somebody else. It's like, okay, I really, I really want to get up and exercise but I just don't feel like doing it this morning. Okay, and then what? Well, then I'll feel like I got better rest, okay. And if you get better rest, then what? Well, then I'll feel more alive. Okay, then you feel more alive than what you'd be able to do? Well, then I'll be much more focused at work. Okay. So you kind of give yourself a hall pass today because, you know, hey, I'm, I'm not, I'd be able to say, well, if I miss it, then I'm going to feel guilty. Okay. And then if you feel guilty, then what? Well, then I probably will have a really cruddy day. That when you're like, Okay, do you want to have a cruddy day you want to have a good day? It's it's just, it's so good. I do this with myself all the time. Like, because I've got a lot of, you know, as we all do, I have a lot of stuff going on. And sometimes I'm like, well, I could edit the book, or I could do this. But if I don't have to look, I'm like, yeah, if you don't edit the book, then what? It will be there tomorrow. There'll be you know, of course, the books sitting here yelling at me right now. Like, that's what you say every day to me, you know?



29:51

I understand. Yes.



29:52

My office is a very fun place to play because everything talks back to me my book, my podcasts, all the stuff, my clients But, but I think it is a powerful thing also, for you parents. I want to just because I've had some challenges with my own parents



30:17

I think it's important to know you, your child still loves you. It has nothing to do with something you did wrong.



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This has nothing to do with not being loved. And I know that's a hard thing for many parents to wrap their head around.



30:36

But if you realize, or you can start to step into, I'm not gonna tell you what to do. But if you can start to be invited in to think about how much does your child love themselves? If they're saying this is who I am? And how much more do you love your child when they're being exactly who they're meant to be? There's a beautiful story that it's been at least 767 years ago, that I

was listening to are actually watching Oprah. And she had Martha Beck on a really well known life coach. She was kind of, she was kind of Oprah's life coach protege at the time. Now, Scott, I was pretty proud, three, four years into my coaching practice at this point. She said something that has stuck with me forever. She goes, it's interesting about an end, this is about the time she was kind of coming public about being a lesbian. I was like, Oh, my God, she's one of us. And I was like, kind of shocked by it. But she said, here's the interesting thing. She goes, as I've learned in my own journey coming out of the closet, of course, my ears immediately perked up on it. Oh, she goes. If I'm pretending, and I'm in a relationship, and I'm pretending who I am in that relationship. And that person who's having a relationship with me, is not aware that I'm pretending I'm having a pretend relationship. But suddenly, if I'm in a relationship, and I'm pretending to be somebody I'm not. And I feel like my spouse is pretending to be somebody they're not because they're afraid to tell me who they really are. And it just has nothing to do with sexuality. Like, there's lots of things we pretend to be to be in our relationship. She goes, if I'm pretending they're pretending, guess what? We're having a pretend relationship. And that's really stuck with me. And especially when you're dealing with your child, if your child is pretending to be somebody, they're not. You actually not having a relationship with your child. You're having a relationship with the person your child is pretending to be. I just let that sink in. Because that's huge.



32:50

That is, that is so huge. That is so absolutely profound.



33:01

I can attest to that grill, right? Yeah. Because I came out at 19 to my parents. And there's a blessing in this whole story. I believe there's a blessing. I actually, and I say this, anybody who's heard me before, they're like, Oh, we know what he's about to say. But hear it again. Because it's a good, it's a good lesson. I actually don't believe I'd be sitting here having this conversation if I stayed out of the closet when I came out at night. Because I was naive. I was not sexually active, per se. I've done what most quote unquote, heterosexual boys had done, you know, played a little robot around with a girl here and there, but I never had sex sex. Never like, you know, beyond the Monica Lewinsky Clinton stuff I hadn't done even do that. Okay. And I came out right as the AIDS epidemic was just just starting. I honestly believe if I had got stayed out, I would probably be dead. Because I wouldn't have known what was going on. I would have been like, let's go do this, all that sort of stuff. Right. But then what that led me to was for the neck. So from 19 to 36. I pretended to be somebody I wasn't. So everybody that I was having relationships with. I was in a pretend relationship with now there was aspects of it that were true. I love my wife. I cared about my family. I loved my friends, but there was a piece of Rick that was completely pretend. Right? And man that completely pretend ate me alive. Because I was one thing in certain spaces and something completely different. Now all of us do this. I'm not saying you know, I'm talking more to the depths of I had to keep my story straight. Right, and it got really torturous, literally torturous to keep the story straight until it didn't. And the reason I share that story is not only for kids who are listening. Because I want you to go enjoy your life and be who you are. Because there's nothing worse than to pretend to be something you're not. But I also share that story. Hopefully that a parent will hear that and go, Oh my God, this guy was tortured for from 19 to 36. And for some of my clients, I mean, I have clients that are 6570, the oldest person I've worked with so far, we 78 years old, and just coming out of the

closet. Oh, wow. So just just let that picture sink in for that many years of your life, you have hidden this. And when he worked with me, he goes I've known since I was 18. But again, society said this wasn't when he goes in, I had a beautiful life, because I had a beautiful life, I had an amazing journey with my wife, I have great kids and, and it's just, you know, it's those things, but I share that story. Because to me, pretending is one of the worst. Pretending if you're in Hamilton, you're in a Broadway show, okay, cool. But pretending to be somebody you're not. And in fact, when I have the beautiful privilege of speaking to an audience, the last line of every talk, regardless of whether I'm speaking to entrepreneurs, or college students, or whoever it is, is the truth of who you are, is far more powerful than the false truth that you're pretending to be. So go show the world who you are. Because I want everybody to be who they're meant to be.



36:48

Wow. Is there just like, you'd hear a pin drop in the room when you say that, because that is that is so powerful. And that is something that every single one of us can benefit from, right?



37:07

And doesn't matter about your sexuality, or gender identity or anything. It's about who we are as humans. You know.



37:16

And I think it also though, you know, speaking specifically to to my audience and to your audience, it is a, it helps us wrap our heads around, right, it helps us really something else that you would said a little bit earlier, that really struck me, and I don't remember exactly what it was, but it's along the same lines where this is not about your parents, this is not about you. Right. And this is this is and I think that's a very easy thing for us as parents or perhaps as the spouse who didn't know, right to be like, What did I do wrong? Right? What, what could I have said, this is a failure on my part, whatever, you know, narrative you have, and to realize, oh, this is not about you at all. This is about your child, your spouse, your friend, your you know, your adult child, stepping into their 100% authentic self.



38:24

I love that you brought that up, Heather, because I agree. It's not about them. But it's about them. It's not about them primarily. All of us play second base in these spaces. When my daughters were figuring it out themselves. I I became the jerk parent, and I'm like, Oh, my God, I can't believe I just did this. I said, I would never do this. My parents did this. Why did I just do that? And it actually became my very first Huffington Post article, where I talked about a situation with my older daughter. And I'm like, you just did what your parents did to you, Rick about her exploring her sexuality, bad shame. All of that on you, Rick. But when I realized, Okay, wait, this isn't about me. It's about her. And I need to like move to second, you know, move to second place. Right? Then I could breathe. And then I could see clearly what kind of clearly we still, like work through it. But it here's, I'm going to share this because I think this is

pivotal for parents too. I had this freakout moment when she said she was dating a girl. I had totally freaked out why? Because my parents had said to me, you are going to ruin your daughter's lives and you're going to teach them to be just like you. And there was in you know, high definition TV happened in front of my eyes. And I was like, Oh my gosh, I don't know. I don't know if I can bear this and that was really really truly what it was is I don't know if I can bear this. And then I suddenly said, Rick, back it up, man. Back it up. Yeah, it isn't about you. And that's why I love your podcast, because I think you bring that forward. Like, it's about having the conversations. And it's about making this about your your kids and about making it about others. And we all beautifully get to be humble if we can get ourselves to that space. Humble and take the second space.

 40:31

All right. But I think that if you, excuse me just said that so very clearly, it's not that we don't matter. And that how we're feeling doesn't matter. And that it's, you know, it does very much, but it is not a matter of this is a reflection on you. This is, you know, she's kind of shifting that from, like taking this on as like, oh my gosh, to write, okay, I can I can sit with this and process it. And it still might be super uncomfortable. And I may not understand it. But oh my gosh, this is my kid. Yeah, exactly. So Wow. Thank you. So many. Absolutely. Beautiful pieces and incredible tools that you have shared. And I'm laughing because I'd written down like six questions I wanted to ask you and and I didn't ask any of them. But I still have time here. So right i should i rapid fire them to you.

 41:42

Yeah, because I love rapid fire because I'm like, I can add the you know, I can go on but then I'm like, Oh, I can throw it I can drop like, I think I can like your ego step aside. Right. But no, I Yeah, I'd love let's see what we can do here.

 41:54

Let's rapid fire for like two minutes. Before we wrap up. I think that'll be super fun. Okay, so you talk about having a six step process? What are the six steps,

 42:05

six steps are to realize you're in confusion. And the only way you get out of confusion is to get curious. And the more curious you get, the more courageous you get to go do the thing and be who you want to be. But it takes more than courage because you got to commit to it. And as you commit, you gain confidence and the more confidence you have, the more consistently you can show up as a parent of an LGBTQ child or as a person who is LGBTQ.

 42:31

Wow. Okay, that's awesome. Okay, again, everybody rewind and write that down. That can be your new post it note. I don't know if you're like me. I have posted notes all over my desk that

your new post it note, I don't know if you're like me, I have posted notes all over my desk that have all these different things. That's a post it note right there. I love that. That's awesome. Oh my goodness. Okay, so next one. What is the most important we kind of touched on this already, but I just want to say we'll say in rapid fire. Most important thing parents can do to support their LGBTQ child.

 43:07

take second place.

 43:10

I love it. What is the most or one piece that most important but one piece of advice that you would give to a young person coming out? You're worth it. I love that. Bravo. And then what is your advice for overcoming fear? Because that is part of your tagline which I love.

 43:37

Fears are only as powerful as we give them life.

 43:48

Rick, it has been such a delight. And I think that we could probably go on for another hour.

 43:55

But when you will, when you come on my podcast, right?

 44:00

Exactly. We will we will we will shift over everyone. This is so exciting. And I'm so you have I will put everything that you need to know about Rick in the show notes. And you can find his website. His podcast has books, all of these amazing things. And I mean, if you even picked up like one of these absolute pearls of wisdom, you can only imagine what his books and his podcasts are like so I highly, highly recommend

 44:28

them. You might not want to talk to the gay male man. It's a little bit it

 44:34

Well, thank you for having me. I've so enjoyed it. I can't wait. I can't wait to have you online. So this will be fun. Continued over there. So



46:48

that's right, exactly. It will be oh my goodness. Yes, to be continued everyone.



46:55

Thanks so much for joining Heather today. Remember to just breathe. Take a few minutes every day to calm and center yourself. Reach out anytime with ideas, questions or feedback. Please rate and review just breathe on your favorite platform. Subscribe to Heather's website [WWW dot chrysalis mama.com](http://WWW.dot.chrysalis.mama.com) to receive her monthly newsletter and stay informed. Join the private just breathe Facebook community to chat with other parents and allies and share with anyone who needs to know that they are not alone.