

Full Episode

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[00:00:00] Or, you say things like, well, I don't feel old.

Karen: Well, what does that mean? That was one of the biggest ahas for me was Ashton saying, well, that's a problem. And me thinking, well, I say that all the time. Why? I don't feel old. Why is that bad? And her saying, well, you probably mean, You don't feel sexless or invisible, but I don't know about you, but I felt sexless or invisible when I was 13.

Karen: Those aren't age related words

I really love this episode because talking with Karen was inspirational and her book is highly educational. And I feel like it was the entry point for [00:01:00] my education on why ageism exists in our culture. It made me feel angry and it also made me feel empowered to Change that narrative because it's really in our power if we take it back.

Dana: I also just love Karen's playful approach to aging. She hula hoops for exercise. She's embracing her hair going gray. She's writing books. She's doing things that make her feel alive and excited. And it's just really wonderful to have positive aging role models like her out in the world, making it look fun because we just don't have a lot of examples of that in our culture.

Mellisa: Yeah, that reminds me that I want to get my hula hoop out of storage. I have a weighted hula hoop and it's a really great exercise.

Dana: Oh my gosh. I had one of those, um, skippets that you put on your ankle and you, you know, it counted like how many skippets you did and That's what it made me think of. I was like, oh yeah, I used to do that for hours at a time.

Dana: Somehow. [00:02:00]

Mellisa: Somehow. Before, well, maybe your pelvic floor is still in good shape, but for me, that's not on the table anymore.

Dana: There won't be no hours of jumping

Mellisa: for you. There's no more jumping jacks. There is no more skip rope.

Mellisa: Well, we are on our fourth episode, and this has been a really life changing journey for us. We're hearing from so many of you

that it's also really, really making an impact. And one of the things that is so important to us As the show grows is for people to not just listen, but to actually subscribe in your podcast app, download the episodes, and actually don't just click the stars to do a rating, but click on the button that says Write a review and leave us a review in iTunes.

I just wanted to share a review that we got from Cricket Rose. It's refreshing to find a conversation around the power of honoring aging and the natural wisdom it brings. So often, aging conversations [00:03:00] highlight ways to minimize the effects or how to biohack your biological age. Can't wait to hear more from this platform on ways to lead a healthy life and embrace aging.

Mellisa: Thanks, Cricket Rose. So you can do the same thing and maybe we'll read your review another time on another show.

Today's episode is brought to you by Four Sigmatic, which is an amazing brand that offers a variety of products with mushrooms in them. These are the PG kind of mushrooms that are... Not the psychedelic kind. Not the psychedelic kind. These are safe for... To, you know, have in your pantry without needing to put under lock and key.

Mellisa: They have protein powders, lots of different drink mixes like a cow mix, plus coffee, really Supplements. Yeah, different supplements. And we have loved and used them for years. Dana, you love the...

Dana: Protein powders, I have all the flavors and my personal favorite is the peanut butter one. Um, but I just have loved them as a brand.

Dana: They have incredible branding. [00:04:00] They source amazing ingredients and they've kept really high standards even as they've grown over the years, so I'm just a huge fan.

Mellisa: Yeah, me too. I love their mushroom cacao mix, which I will also give to my kids. I'll put it in a cup of cocoa that I make for them and they love it.

Mellisa: You can go to our website or anywhere else that we are sharing content about this episode and you'll find the link to purchase products from Four Sigmatic. You can use our code, thisisaging10 to get 10 percent off of your order.

Dana: Get those sweet, sweet discount kids. And thanks for supporting us and we hope you enjoyed today's show.

Dana: Welcome to this is aging. Today we have a super special guest with us, Karen Walrond. She is a leadership coach, activist, attorney,

and writer. She is the author of the Lightmakers Manifesto and her new book, Radiant Rebellion, Reclaiming Aging, Practice Joy, and Raising a Little Hell, which is just like the best subtitle ever.

Karen: Thank you. That one is mine. The [00:05:00] publisher came up with the title, but the subtitle is mine.

Dana: I love that. Well, just to start us off, would you mind if you're comfortable telling us how old you are and how you're currently feeling about your aging process?

Karen: oh, um, I am 56. I was 56 a few months ago. And, um, how am I feeling? Uh, good, good, great, great. I mean, yeah, I'm alive. Things are good. Health's pretty good. Everything's great. Yeah.

Dana: Good. I love to hear it. Um, when it comes to radiant rebellion, just to kind of kick us off, how did you choose? Well, it sounds like your publisher maybe helped you choose those words, but have you since resonated with those words, radiant rebellion, and what do they personally mean to you at this point?

Karen: Yeah, so yeah, we, you know, it's so interesting, the process of writing. Um, and I, I have a great publisher. I really, I really adore my publisher, and they're very collaborative, but they have a say, right, in, in the naming and everything else. And I don't even, I mean, I, you know, I [00:06:00] played with a bunch of, Coming of Age was one, I think.

Karen: And, you know, there was a bunch of different titles that I was playing with. Um, Okay. Bye. And it was so funny because I started writing this book really because I'm not a person who has a problem with aging. I'm very comfortable with getting older. I've always been very comfortable. And I thought I was going to write a book that was just sort of like, Oh, stop worrying about aging.

Karen: It's fine. There's no big deal. Right? Like, I really thought that was the book I was going to write. Um, and obviously as I did some research, which we sort of talked about before we started recording, like, There were all of these things that came up that were sort of like just infuriating, right? Like there were all these things that were coming up about aging and why people hate aging and and how it's ageism is just sort of baked into our society.

Karen: So So I'm writing this book and we're going back and forth on the title and, uh, and I always try to have, um, some light, something about [00:07:00] light in my titles, because light's a really big metaphor for a lot of the work that I do. Um, and my publisher came up and they said, well, how about Radiant Rebellion.

Karen: And I was like, Oh, I love it. Yes, let's do that. And they

said, Well, okay, um, we like it too. But do you think you could write it with a little bit more of an activist bent? And I was like, Oh, hold my beer, right? Like, that's already happening. So it really, it really worked out beautifully, because it was like, Yes, absolutely.

Karen: And what it means for me, um, As far as the title is about, I mean, like so many of the other isms in our society, particularly in American society, like ageism is baked into it. It is designed, literally designed to be ageist, um, by frankly, capitalist patriarchy, right? So, um, and so for me, what the rebellion is about is really sort of, um, like Neo in, in, uh, in the [00:08:00] Matrix sort of taking the red pill and going, Oh, wait, I need to decouple myself from this.

Karen: Like, once you see it, you can't unsee it. And how can I sort of As my friend Ashton Applewhite says, age against the machine, right? Like, really sort of go, I'm not going to buy into this anymore, of what society says, of what the government says, of what the anti aging industry said. I'm using air quotes.

Karen: And I'm going to define my own aging and I'm going to define the way that I'm going to evolve and expand in my coming years. And so that's really what the rebellion is all about, is sort of all of us collectively deciding that we're going to do that.

Mellisa: Yeah.

Mellisa: I'm curious maybe if you can tie us, bring a through line for us of your work in activism. You know, you've alluded to that. We know that you previously wrote , the Light Makers Manifesto. What is activism to you?

Mellisa: How has that really informed this work?

Karen: So the light makers manifesto actually, and that [00:09:00] this is sort of interesting. We talked about the publisher that was their idea. Like they came to me and said, we want to book on the, the, Um, intersection of joyful, of joy and, and, um, activism, and we think you could write the book.

Karen: Right? Which was a really strange thing to me because even though I had certainly done activist y stuff, I had never really considered myself an activist. And the fact that they kind of reached out to me to do that was a little weird to me. But I do write a lot about joy and light, um, and I talk about how, you know, my first book a decade ago was called The Beauty of Diff'rent, um, And it was about the thing that makes you different makes you awesome.

Karen: And so I had, I've always written about gratitude and light and, and optimism and, and in a, in a grounded way, right? Like not

optimism, sort of blind, but optimism in a, um, understanding what could be right. And instead of what, uh, of. Of the negative things, because I think we sort of have a negative bias, but what could [00:10:00] we work toward?

Karen: And my activism has always been about that. It's about what is the better world we can work toward, right? What sort of fires me up is, is fighting against any kind of bigotry. Right? And sort of any, any kind of bigotry, whether or not it's race or religion or, um, you national origin or any, any of it, like, it just really drives me bananas.

Karen: And so, like, I've always been sort of, um, really about inclusion and belonging and sort of the interconnectedness of the world. That's the thing that really jazzes me. The reason that the Radiant Rebellion came along, which was my idea, is, it was, I wrote it last year, and I was turning 55, and I was about to celebrate my 20th wedding anniversary, and my daughter was turning 18 and going off to college, my only child, and what I thought was so odd was that the only thing people seemed happy about or wanting to celebrate with me about any of those things was the 20 year anniversary, right?

Karen: Like everything, like, oh 55, how you feeling [00:11:00] about that? Oh, you know, big double nickel and you know, that's, that's tough. How are you doing? Or, um, your daughter's, you know, leaving. Oh my gosh, it's, that's so sad. When, honestly, her leaving was always the goal, right? Like,

Karen: like, that was the thing we've been working for for 18 years was for her to find a college that excited her and find something, you know, and, ~you know,~ set her free and, ~you know,~ and so it was a really strange thing to me about how these really big milestones were sort of, people had suddenly turned to think that, oh, that's, that can't be happy.

Karen: So that can't be a happy time. So that's why I ~sort of ~wrote the book. Um, and again, you know, uh, the, the publisher didn't have to tell me to write it in a rebellious way because that's really, it, it seemed to me that there was so much that was getting people down about getting older that didn't ring true to me.

Karen: And so I thought, well. [00:12:00] One, I do want to write a book that says it's not as bad as you think, but I also thought, well, maybe I'm wrong, right? Like, like, like, maybe I'm feeling great about it, but maybe it just hasn't hit me yet. And so I wanted to interview people in all these different, um, aspects of what it means to get older, and sort of get their advice so that I didn't lose that, because I really was quite, um, proud of the fact that I enjoyed living. so it felt, it feels like a sort of an extension of the work that I've always done, like it's always been about you're amazing, you

can create your own reality, we can work together, you can love what's different about you, we can love what's different about each other, and age is a part of that.

Mellisa: mm,

Dana: That's so beautiful. I was so floored by the research that you were sharing at the beginning of the book. And just to share a little sample of that for the listeners, you are citing studies that show the levels of happiness in seniors to be much higher [00:13:00] than people in their twenties and thirties. And even like regardless of change in physical or cognitive abilities that, um, our mental health is actually improving as we age.

Dana: So my question is why, if this is all, So, evident and true, why are we so afraid of aging?

Karen: Yeah. Uh, because of capitalist patriarchy. It was so funny when I was talking with a friend of mine about this, and I actually interview her later in the book, but I was talking to her early on, um, about, you know, I really want to write this book. I asked her, I said, well, if I were to write a book about, like, why aging is great, Um, is there anything specifically you'd like me to talk about?

Karen: And she, my friend Laura, she said, you know, I'd be really interested in if we always hated aging. Like, was that, has that always been the case? And I thought, oh, that's a really interesting question. I'm going to, I'm going to, I'm going to research that. And so I started looking into it and I found the work of a psychiatrist and medical historian.

Karen: Her name is Dr. Laura Hirschbein. And she wanted to know the same thing. And she did something really interesting. [00:14:00] She decided. As part of her research, to research old popular magazines, because she figured popular magazines would be a great indication of what the world thinks about whatever topic it is.

Karen: And so she looked for that and she found that at the beginning of the 20th century, 1900, most articles about aging were written by people who were in advanced 80s and 90s. And they were like, we love it. Like, it's great. Yeah. Okay. I have an ache. I have a pain, but it's, it's really wonderful. The wisdom that I've gathered over the years and I love being.

Karen: Um, sort of the keeper of traditions and, you know, like they, it was very, very positive. Fast forward to two world wars and a Great Depression, and the U. S. government, this is particularly in the United States, uh, is looking around and noticing that there are still lots of people in their 80s and 90s who are working, but there are a lot of these 30 year old men.

Karen: primarily, who have these young families and they can't get work, right? And so they, that's when they decided to institute a mandatory [00:15:00] retirement age. And so they're like, okay, everybody over 65 out of the workforce so that these 30, you know, 20 and 30 year olds can get these jobs. And now, because 80s and 90 year olds aren't contributing to the economy, now they're seen as a burden, right?

Karen: So then, Doctors, child psychiatrists, pediatricians decide to expand their research in like, what makes these people burdens and use as the standard of normalcy a five year old. So if you don't have the cognitive ability of a five year old or the physical agility of a five year old, you are impaired, right?

Karen: And they start to write the articles. So All of that is happening. So now aging is a problem to be fixed and by the mid, mid, mid 20th century, enter Clairol. Well, you don't want people to know you're, you're aging. So everybody start dyeing your hair. And then the anti aging industry sort of blossomed from there.

Karen: So literally within the first 50 years of the 20th century, we went from aging is [00:16:00] awesome. What's, you know, of course, that's great. What's, what's wrong with aging?

Mellisa: It's part of life.

Karen: It's a problem. So it's a problem and you've got to fix it. And that's why we hate it. And it's, and, and by the way, it's not just sort of like the anti aging, like, makeup or whatever it else, it's to the, like, the stories we read to our children, right?

Karen: The evil stepmothers and the crones and the witches, right? They're all old. Like, we indoctrinate our children into thinking that old is bad, old is scary, old is awful, and it just goes from there.

Mellisa: Mm. Yeah. It's, it's pretty alarming when you put it that way. And I think that

Karen: Mm hmm.

Mellisa: is, it's, it's a wake up call. I mean, that's, that's why we are doing this. That's why we want to have these conversations because these aren't things that are in the forefront of people's perception or awareness. We're not thinking about what's happening behind the scenes and everything that has brought us to this moment that dictates these cultural narratives and these cultural norms and that we're [00:17:00] living our lives By them.

Mellisa: And so I was also really floored. I got to read your book

after Dana. So I got, I got the benefit of not just reading it, but reading it with all, already she had marked it all up. Actually, I love reading a book that way. So it was, it was really

Dana: I was like, wow, oh my gosh, ask Karen about this! Wow! Yeah.

Mellisa: A lot of great notations., and the same, these same bits of research really stood out to me because I also, I want to know how did we get here? Because I think it's part of the answer to how we move forward. If we just look at this moment in time and try to think of what is wrong.

Mellisa: This kind of comes back to what I heard you saying in, even in your activism work and the approach that you take to that. If we just think, well, we don't like how it is, but we don't understand where we came from and we can't really understand where we can go. And it becomes just a battle or a fight against something that [00:18:00] isn't, isn't necessarily going to change just by our outrage about it.

Karen: Right. And, and I think also, um, in a similar way to sort of, uh, to racism, for example, um, We are steeped in it, and we can internalize it, and we don't even realize it. Right? Like, we don't even realize that we're using words like old to mean bad and young to mean

Mellisa: Mm hmm. Mm

Karen: good. Or, you say things like, well, I don't feel old.

Karen: Well, what does that mean? Right? Um, that was one of the biggest ahas for me was, um, was Ashton saying, well, that's a problem. And me thinking, well, I say that all the time. Why? I don't feel old. Why is that bad? And her saying, well, you probably mean, You don't feel sexless or invisible, but I don't know about you, but I felt sexless or invisible when I was 13.

Karen: Those aren't age related words. And it was such a, right, like it was such a big mind blowing thing for me to sort of think about how even me, as someone who has always loved her birthday and always loved getting older, [00:19:00] have fallen into the trap of using You know, phrases or words that are really ageist without really thinking about, you know, this, the, oh, you look good for your age, right?

Karen: A compliment, a sort of backhanded compliment that happens, or, um, oh, I can't find my key, senior moment, right? Even though I've been forgetful all my life, my teenager was totally forgetful, right? So, that sort of language that we use as a shorthand is problematic, right? And words matter.

Mellisa: Yeah. I think that it's also really interesting, this is

something Dana and I have talked about, aging happens to all of us. So, so many of the other cultural isms and forms of bigotry that humans experience are often in realms where a person may never cross that divide, you know, I will never be a different ethnicity

Mellisa: than I am I yeah, I won't be a man in my life I won't be a child again, but every single one of us will get older and so I think there is such [00:20:00] an opportunity for people to To see the importance and the significance in a way that sometimes they're not able to see about other things.

Mellisa: Now, that's a different conversation, of course, but it's, we all are going to get older. We are all going to experience some form of inevitable decline as we near the end of our lives.

Karen: I mean, I think that that's absolutely true. And also we can face inevitable expansion

Mellisa: Yes, yes, yes,

Karen: Right. And that to me was was really sort of the point of the book is there at no point in the book and I hope you can since both of you have read it, you can tell me if this is true, but I don't feel like at any point in the book I ever say The decline part is a lie.

Karen: Like, I don't think I ever say that, right? Yes, our bodies are going to probably wear out, right? Like, that's what happens to bodies, right? Like, you're probably going to have pains and, you know, but there is so much literature on that part. And I found very [00:21:00] little on the other part, right?

Karen: Like, we are so negative biased as humans, right? We're constantly looking for the problem to solve. We forget sometimes to look for the gifts that some of the things can happen to us. And I think aging is one of those. I mean, I didn't speak to anybody older than me who... Like, you know, on purpose, but I didn't speak to anybody older than me who was like, Oh yeah, aging sucks, right?

Karen: Like, to a person, everybody was, I really love this time of my life, I really feel empowered, I feel more confident, I feel more grounded, Um, I feel more sexy, right? Like, all of those things were there, and It's not like that. It wasn't hard to find these people, right? You know, it wasn't like I was like, okay, I'm going to find the one person who actually feels sexy.

Karen: Like, that was that that was overwhelmingly the people that I spoke to and overwhelming and it wasn't hard to find. So I want to be clear that this is not a blindly [00:22:00] optimistic. It's a very grounded optimistic book, right? I'm not making stuff up, um, I'm not making the data up, there's like, there's a lot of research in it,

like, that is fact, I, I cite all the data, so you can look it up yourself, um, but don't focus on, well, I don't look 20, so therefore, I am bad, or declining, or, you know, you're different, and we're all different, I'm different from when I was 5, right, like, every single, um, Decade, I'm different and I hope that keeps happening.

Dana: Yeah, I felt so personally inspired. I'm approaching 40 and a lot of women, especially, but people in my kind of generation are, I've, I've sensed that as they even approach 30, they feel this urgency to squeeze everything they can out of life because it's all downhill after 40. And I. I love the message in your book because [00:23:00] even though you do cite the U curve of happiness that maybe toward the middle of our, middle point of our life, there is, can be somewhat of a low that really after that, there can be an upturn in joy and happiness.

Dana: And it gives me personally so much to look forward to. And I think that that's the optimism that our culture needs to know. It's, and it's not just blind optimism. Like you said, it's, it's actual, real, factual truth. And I love that you're putting that out there.

Karen: For sure. And I think also, I, this is anecdotal. There's no data behind this, but I feel like in my life, people who are 29 and 39, seem to fear aging more than the people that I'm meeting at 59, 69, 79. I Once you get to a certain age, and I'm not sure what that certain age is, you start to realize, oh, this isn't bad.

Karen: This is kind of awesome, right? Um, it's sort of a fear of the unknown when you're younger, um, for one part. And that's one part I think, again, anecdotal, this is just Karen talking, um, [00:24:00] You know, when you're in your 20s and your 30s, a lot of people are starting families, right? You've got other people you're worrying about.

Karen: You've got little people you're trying to keep alive, right? Like you're trying to keep safe, say nothing of pandemics and God knows whatever else that has been happening around the world. Um, and at, by the time you get to sort of midlife and older, maybe your kids have grown. Maybe, especially, um, when you're in your 60s and 70s, your parents, who you may have been caring for, have, are gone, and there's a sort of freedom that kind of opens up at that point, right? And so, I think a lot of that U curve, um, has a lot to do, not just with sort of a developmental, whether or not we have mental health, but it's also just the stages of life that we're in, right?

Karen: Like, when there's all of this responsibility to sort of grow your career, and grow your family, and take care of your partner, and, like, that's a lot of stuff, and that's, that can be taxing. That's just, that's just fact. Um, and there's a lot of sort of freedom that opens up, I think, um, as you get older. [00:25:00]

Mellisa: Yeah. Yeah, the 40s are likely to be the decade where you have the most on your plate. You may have adolescent children, aging parents, , career transitions and, and growth and responsibility and all of these things, so it, it does really make sense.

Karen: Yeah, yeah. , like I said, I'm 56. I was born in 1967, which means that I'm sort of on the old end of Gen X, right? And, um, and Gen X was, you know, it's sort of the forgotten generation. And, and, and by the way, using even Gen X or millennial or anything else can be a little bit of problematic terminology, but, um, just to speak in complete generality, generalities, right?

Karen: Gen X are known for the. We were the ones who had parents who were divorcing, and we were the ones who had both parents working. We were latchkey kids, right? We had the little house key that was around our neck so we could let ourselves home, you know, and take care of ourselves. And given that, I think that it's isn't surprising that There haven't been a lot of joyful aging books out there, and that it would be a Gen X person who [00:26:00] would write it, right?

Karen: Like, it's sort of like, duh, we can hang, we can take care of things, right? I would say, like, it's sort of funny that, a lot of the previous books on aging that I found were either very serious things about what's the decline, or there were these sort of humor books that really weren't funny, right?

Karen: Like it was sort of like, oh my God, my back and oh my God, I can't look at myself in the mirror. And oh my God, these wrinkles, right? It was sort of this self deprecating thing that was like, you know, Really kind of, I don't want, I mean not as strong as mean spirited, but kind of just maybe a vaguely toxic, right?

Karen: Like, like kind of thing and I think it probably took somebody in my generation to go, what? Stop it! Like, no, no, no, no, you've handled things before. You've handled tough stuff before. You can handle any challenges that come with getting older as well, right?

Karen: Like you've got this kind of thing.

Dana: Would you say that your parents were the first people in your life to model what like a positive, healthy aging process can look like, or were there other people that [00:27:00] shown a light for you to have a better outlook on getting older?

Karen: So I do come from a, I come from a family of long livers, right? So My grandparents aren't here anymore, but my, the grandparent who was the youngest when he died was my maternal grandfather. He was 84, 85, something like that. But I also had a grandmother who I was very close to who died at 102.

Karen: So, um, so I had, there's longevity in my genes, right? We'll say that. As far as my parents, uh, I would say that my dad is very, very, age positive. I would say he's in his eighties now. Um, he rides, you know, 20 miles a day on his bike and he's really, you know, I mean, it's really funny.

Karen: My mother, my mother has. I think is less so, like, has always been concerned about her age and getting older. And that, that has its [00:28:00] own problems, right? She's the one whose mother lived to 102, right? So I'm like, Mom, you're gonna be fine, kind of thing. Um, and then my dad, who's 80s, acts like he's 30, which is problematic sometimes, right?

Karen: Like, you're like, Dad, you know, like, this is dangerous, like, kind of thing. But I will say, I think because of my dad, the two of them live a pretty adventurous life. They just came back from the Holy Land, right? And, you know, they're in their mid 80s. And, um, and my dad is constantly looking for the next big trip that he can take.

Karen: They are very, very pro living and, you know, in the book I interview my dad because he's so, such a pro life person. Um, but I've had both. I mean, I've had certainly family members who dreaded getting older, um, and it just didn't seem like a particularly happy way to live, so I choose the other, you

Mellisa: Yeah, I'm curious about the longevity piece and, and your thoughts on this because you talk about coming from a family of long lived. I come from a family of not long [00:29:00] lived, both of lived, both of my grandmothers. Both of my grandmothers died by the time they were 65 of pretty. Chronic slash acute health problems, and so it does occasionally occur to me that that's those are my that's my heritage that those are my genetics to some extent, and we, of course, know that genetics is maybe only around 20 percent of, , contribution to that, but I'm curious because there is so much focus on longevity and in our current age where we have all of these opportunities and scientific advancements in terms of being able to extend the lifespan and so much conversation about people really living a much longer time in the next, you know, in the next 100 years.

Mellisa: it can be an anti aging message and it's very nuanced in the sense that of course we, it's very [00:30:00] easy to. To pursue and desire to live a healthy and long life. That is just clearly a good goal And it can also come laden with some of these cultural messages around it's bad to get old.

Mellisa: You don't want to die. Let's live as long as we can. Let's stretch this out. Kind of like Dana was saying about the, maybe the 20 and 30 year olds who are just trying to squeeze everything out of

life. And now there's this new horizon of, well, I could do that for an extra 40 years. Of course I want to do that.

Mellisa: So I'm curious, I'm curious your thoughts on how to balance the love of life, right? lover of life and wanting to experience a long and full and joyful life with embracing some of the truth that we don't get to be here forever.

Karen: Yeah. That's such a great question. Um, it's such a great question because I think, as I get older, I realize I want to live I want to live a good life more than [00:31:00] I want to live a long life, and if it's long, that's the gravy. Right? , I want every year to be a good thing.

Karen: And so, um, and I like you, I believe that, you know, that I think the pandemic was such a great example of this. I mean, I mean, if you think about it, we had this crazy, crazy virus that showed up. Nobody knew what it was. All they knew that it was, it was killing everybody. And within two years, we have a vaccine that's keeping people out of the hospital.

Karen: Right. About like medical advances are so quick and so fast, and there's no reason why it won't continue to get quicker and faster. Right. So I, I tend to believe that all of us. have the potentiality of living longer than we even think, despite genetics, despite anything else. And there's research that I cite in the book that says that having a positive attitude about aging can help extend your life as well, right?

Karen: Like it can extend up to seven years. Um, I think one of the things, um, that has been really sort of eye opening for [00:32:00] me is, you know, I, I was recently asked, Karen, what do you do? to make sure that you view your aging positively. Like, what do you do to sort of keep a positive outlook on aging? And I found myself sort of stumped by the question, because I thought, I don't really think about it.

Karen: Like, I think about, if you were to ask me, what do I do to keep a positive attitude for living, because aging is living, that's an easier question for me, right? And I can tell you all the things I do. Like, I can do things like, I do go to the doctor, you know, I make sure that. I'm on top of anything physical that might be changing.

Karen: That could be a problem. But I also like I love adventure. I stay curious. I read a lot, right? Like I, I move right to exercise stress out of my body. And I do all of these things, but I don't think of it as a, and, and so this will let me live until I'm 95. I, I do it more because This helps me live now, right?

Karen: This helps me live now and Wouldn't it be great if I had a [00:33:00] habit like this? So it feels easier when things start to slow down, right? When I do start to get a little bit older then I sort of already have this habit of at least thinking about how I can move today, right? Even if my mobility is different or thinking about how I can like Push something new into my brain today, right or you know, like I want to sort of develop those habits now for the future But I don't think about it.

Karen: Like, okay. Well if I do a crossword today, that means I'm not gonna get Alzheimer's at 85 right? Like I don't even I don't even think about that It's much more about what can I do to take care of my spirit? And really that's how the book is divided What can I do to take care of my spirit of my intellect of my curiosity of my body my movement?

Karen: Because that helps me today. What are the habits you can create to help your today life be amazing and trust that the future life will end up taking care of itself and you will have developed be developing now habits now, so that when you hit those, those things, you'll be like, Okay, well, I'm hearing this.

Karen: I'm, I'm, [00:34:00] I'm Facing this challenge now, I know when I face challenges, it's better for me to face them if I've been taking care of my spirit or it's better for me to face them if I've moved to exercise the stress or it's better for me to research, right, rather than just knee jerk, like, just sort of developing those kinds of habits, I think, help you deal with life as life comes.

Karen: And that's really the only way that you can do it, right?

Mellisa: hm.

Dana: Yeah, I love that perspective because as Melissa was hitting on this emerging longevity industry is, I think, in some ways, capitalizing on fear. They are, they are presenting an opportunity, which is exciting. And of course, who wouldn't want to have five more years with your loved ones,

Karen: sure.

Dana: Turning back to the present moment because if any of these practices that were, or these new, perhaps, um, methodologies or supplements or regimens that we're [00:35:00] introducing into our present, uh, you know, lifestyle, if they don't bring you joy and if they aren't sustainable, What purpose are they really serving?

Dana: Because you ultimately don't know when you're going to die. And I would hate to look back and think, Oh, I was making myself miserable sitting in a hyperbaric chamber and guzzling a hundred supplements and

avoiding pollution at all costs and staying in my house. Like, but then at a certain point you're not really living your present day life.

Dana: So I really love that mindset switch.

Karen: Absolutely. And I think, you know, um, particularly with the health thing, I, I spoke in, in the book, I spoke with a friend of mine, um, Dr. Rita Achari, who's a nutritional neurologist and sort of her. Um, and she's board certified. She's a doctor, right? Like she's a, she's a medical, um, practitioner, um, who also happens to, uh, she's Indian and her, she, her, her father was a doctor as well and, but they also very well versed in Ayurveda and sort of this idea of, of nourishing the wellness inside of you,

Karen: like she talks [00:36:00] about, um, in Ayurveda, yeah. You focus on your wellness, and if you think of food as medicine, that's focusing on your illness, right? What you need to fix. And so what we should be doing is nourishing our wellness, and that idea of nourishing the wellness inside of you, um, not just with food, but with everything, right?

Karen: Sort of like, what can I do to nourish my wellness today, to my mental health? What can I do that? Like, I think that's such an expansive way to look at life. And also, by the way, it's an individualized way to look at life, because you can go on Dr. Google, and they'll tell you, Oh, you can't, you got to eat no protein, you got to go completely plant based.

Karen: Oh, no, you can't go completely plant based. You got to go keto. No, you can't go keto. Paleo is the way to go. Oh, no, you can't do that. You got to get rid of the carbs. Oh, no, load up on the carbs, but then you got to move. Oh, but if you move, you should be doing weight training. Oh, but if you do weight training, what about your aerobic activity?

Karen: You got to go do that, right? Like, you'll make yourself bananas, right? And so this idea of getting curious about Yourself and your health and your wellness and your [00:37:00] body and of course talking, talking to experts, talking to people you trust about who have the data on your body and say, what do I need for my body to keep myself feeling the best and, and okay, I'm trying that and does that actually make me feel better?

Karen: Does it make me feel worse? What does it do? And really sort of taking agency in your own wellness, I think is really the key to a lot of this. Okay.

Mellisa: yeah.

Dana: I, um, just wanted to circle back to one of the big sticking points that stuck out to me in the book, which is your Pointing to the anti aging industry as this overwhelming force that perhaps didn't, didn't start the anti aging, um, narrative but has certainly reinforced it and has begun to prey on younger and younger folks which I see happening all the time and you even say, including men now, so men are, you know, signing up [00:38:00] for diet programs and plastic surgery and I feel this overwhelming wave of these messages coming my way and I just start to fear that if I'm not really engaging in this anti aging narrative, which just seems to be pervasive and all around me that I'm falling behind.

Dana: And so, I'm just curious, based on your research or your own personal experience, how do you disengage from what can feel like an all consuming anti ageist, or an ageist, um, cultural narrative?

Karen: Yeah. I mean, yes, the anti aging industry, and you read, they target as young as 24. That's the, that's their target market to start saying you got to stop aging. And um, as they say, if they can convince you that you need to anti age, they've got a customer for life, right? Because you can't anti age. Um, here's the thing about.

Karen: Here's the thing about it there at no point in the book. Do I ever say Put [00:39:00] down the face cream. Do I ever say? Stop, you know put down the hair dye stop dying your hair, right? I stopped trying my hair and I talked about that but I don't tell everybody else stop dying your hair like I'm not into that because The truth is, it is such a pervasive industry that there are real consequences to making those decisions, right?

Karen: There was a woman who was an anchorwoman in Canada who let her hair go silver over lockdown in the pandemic, and when she came back, she got fired, right? So, there are some real, um, consequences to making some of these decisions, and because it's such a pervasive industry, you will never hear me tell people walk away from the Botox, walk away from the, , the hair dye.

Karen: Like I'm not going to do that. I don't use it. I don't use Botox. Um, but I live a life where there's no, I'm not going to get punished for it. Right. Like I, you know, I'm self employed. I'm like, I'm not going to get punished for it. What I really, really, really deeply hope people do when they, after they read this book is that they at least question why they make the decisions that they [00:40:00] do.

Karen: Right. So if you are a person who dyes your hair. I want you to stop and go. Why am I doing this? Right? Is there a real... What are the consequences if I stop? Are there really any consequences? Right? I've had people say, who are single, who say if I stop dyeing my hair, nobody's gonna want to match with me on dating apps, right?

Karen: And I feel like I can be, um, I might be... Excluded from opportunities for connection, right? Right? Like that's that's a big thing Like I I can't I can't judge that so I don't judge any of that, but I would say stop and think about What are the consequences if you stop and what are the consequences if you start and would life be better for me when I stopped?

Karen: Dying my hair. I was terrified I was like and it was and you know what it was it because I told you I don't fear aging but I thought I don't care if people think that I'm my age, but what if they think I'm 20 years older because I stopped dying? And then you think, well, what does that mean if they did?

Karen: What if they [00:41:00] thought that? Like, why would that be a bad thing, right? And just sort of really, um, really interrogate. And so, and also for me, like, I was like, well, I'll just cut all my hair off, and if I don't like it, I'll start dying again. It's not a big deal, right? It turns out, for me, It was the best thing I ever did.

Karen: I will never go back because people react differently to me, right? Like, I love the way people react to my, my hair, right? And it's not really about the fact that I look better with silver hair. It's more, people are, I think, reacting to the fact that I'm comfortable. Like, I'm clearly not elderly, 80, 90 years old, but I have silver hair and that shows a sense of Confidence maybe or not caring what other people think and that's what I think people are reacting to more

Mellisa: Mm hm.

Karen: whether or not my hair So for me, I will never go back to that But I totally get it if people want to and I I I pay no judgment so that wrinkle cream like Are you really going to get rid of those fine lines and wrinkles?

Karen: Like probably not, [00:42:00] like

Mellisa: Mm hm. Mm

Karen: But does that cream make your skin feel moisturized and you like the way your skin feels when you put it on? Buy it, right? Like, That to me is sort of really uncoupling. What are the reasons that you're, you're buying this? Um, where do you want to put your money?

Karen: Where do you want to, what kind of products do you want to support? The other thing I would love to add, by the way, just because it's so on my mind this week, I don't know if you guys have seen, um, the news of Pamela Anderson, like,

Dana: I was actually thinking

Karen: oh my gosh, right? Going out at, at, at Paris Fashion Week, possibly the biggest stage, right, for fashion and deciding not to wear any makeup.

Karen: And I think there's something, um, really sort of lovely about that. Jamie Lee Curtis called it brave. I don't, you know, and yeah, I guess there's some courage in that. But it's more like the way she's modeling, I'm going to take control of my narrative, especially as a woman who probably had [00:43:00] the narrative control her for a lot of her younger life, right?

Karen: It's so wonderful to sort of witness that liberation. And I think following people who sort of liberate themselves from it is a really inspiring thing and really sort of may inspire in you how can I liberate myself from some of this anti aging messaging? What are some of the things I can do?

Karen: And maybe it's something like I'm going to wear the miniskirt because I like the miniskirt but I thought I was too old to wear the miniskirt so I'm not going to wear the miniskirt but damn it I like the miniskirt so I'm going to wear the miniskirt today, right?

Karen: Like whatever it is that you can start to to uncouple yourself from that.

Dana: Yeah, your

Dana: own personal rebellion.

Karen: but yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

Dana: Yeah, I had, I forwarded that news story to Melissa and we were discussing it this week and in some ways I hate that it's, Melissa and I have talked about this before, that we don't like the narrative or the language that someone is brave just by showing up as themselves because I think it elicits this type of, they should [00:44:00] be afraid.

Karen: Yeah.

Mellisa: Right. Ha ha ha.

Dana: okay. But in other ways I saw it and I was just so encouraged and floored that she did that because And I don't even think that she was trying to make it about herself, or even make a statement. She was just like, this is what makes me feel happy and my best. And she, I watched an interview, and she said that a lot of people spend two or three hours in makeup chairs at Paris Fashion Week.

Dana: And she wanted to go to the parks, and she wanted to go have, a coffee at a cafe. And it's just like, God, that resonates so much. Because when I think about how I want to spend my time and precious... You know, resources and, um, focus my, where I want to focus my energy. It's less and less around trying to edit myself and restrict, um, what may be happening and, um, try and resist my own aging process, whatever that is unfolding like. And so to have examples like [00:45:00] you and Pamela Anderson and other women who are just embracing where they're at and doing it in such a joyful way, it's just, I think it's paving, paving the way for such a different perspective of aging.

Dana: And it just lights up my, my heart in so many ways. Yeah.

Karen: And, you know, and one of the things that I, that it struck me because I saw that interview as well. And one of the things that struck me about the concept of, of bravery, what I will say about that, about taking control of your own narrative, that it feels a lot scarier than it is, right?

Karen: Like, it feels a lot scarier before you do it than when you do it. And, and for me, it, for me, it was a lot around my career, right? I was a, I was a lawyer in the oil and gas industry. And I was the, One of the few women, right? And I was an engineer before that. So I was one of the few women here in Texas certainly one of the few black women if Often the only black woman and I remember especially in my you know, 20s and 30s like [00:46:00] what does a corporate woman?

Karen: Dress like well, it meant that I had to straighten my hair It meant that I had to wear a certain suit right and then and I was like, okay well, the truth is like I am never going to look like what a corporate lawyer looks like in the oil industry in Texas because they are generally male, white, middle aged, right?

Karen: At the time when I was like, like, that is never going to be who I am. So when I finally decided, you know what, I'm just going to just dress professionally because I'm at work, but dress professionally As the way I define it. All right, and it means that I'm not going to put chemicals in my hair anymore Right because I don't want to and and but I'm going to be groomed and prepped and I waited like I waited for people for The backlash and it never came right same thing with not stopping down my hair.

Karen: I waited for the Oh God You really aged right? I waited for that and it never came and it's so it's the [00:47:00] same thing I'm sure with with Pamela right that she thought I'm gonna go to fashion week But you know what? I'm not gonna wait, I'm not gonna put any makeup on, right? And I'm sure in the back of her mind, she, there was a part of her that had to brace herself, right?

Karen: That, especially if she's a public figure, there are people that are like, Oh my God, what happened? She let herself go, right? Like, I'm sure, and she probably is getting some of that,

Mellisa: She is.

Karen: Right? She probably is getting some of that. But, I suspect, overwhelmingly, what's happening is people are like, Holy crap!

Karen: You look great. You look amazing. And what a statement to be the one person in fashion week who actually is bare faced and is like healthy and like that's insanity, right? And it's been overwhelming. And that to me is the biggest thing. And it's the biggest thing about being a part of this rebellion about aging, right?

Karen: You start to define what your age looks like for you. Suddenly, people just react to it in a positive way because you are, you are rooting yourself And [00:48:00] what it means to be who you are. And that is always sexy. That is always inspiring. That is always radiant, right? I mean, that's the thing.

Mellisa: Yeah. And you can do the things like let your hair go gray, or accept changes in your body, or allow the changes in your body without fighting them... But if you don't actually embrace it in some way, it doesn't have that same radiant quality to it. And I, you know, just speaking from personal experience of the last few years of my own body going through a lot of changes and for me really disengaging from a decades long eating disorder and really punitive exercise habits.

Mellisa: My body changed a lot. I gained weight. I didn't Look how I did for a really long time and I faced relational consequences, you know of changing attraction and That was brutal. It was absolutely brutal and I'm now, you know I don't know if I can say I'm on the other side of it [00:49:00] But I am I am in some ways on the other side of that and I'm noticing that now I'm just loving myself in a different way It, my body isn't changing.

Mellisa: I'm not losing weight, but I feel so much better in my own skin because I'm no longer trying to tell myself I should be this other thing that I just can't be. And so now

Karen: people react to that? Like,

Mellisa: are reacting to it differently.

Karen: confidence and your growth, you know. Like, they see it and they're like, God, you look amazing. Right?

Mellisa: It's, it's really crazy because I spent years, for example,

this is just a really, minute example, but for years I would hunch my body to hide belly fat, for example, because somehow psychologically it seemed that that would be more attractive to hide it. And now I don't hide it. And I feel like you said, I'm being received so much differently. I haven't changed. My body. I've just changed how I'm inhabiting my [00:50:00] body and also how I actually hold my body, right? My posture and the way I, the way I move. And so it's just, it's so fascinating.

Karen: Absolutely. And I think also the, the anti ageism movement learns a lot and can learn a lot from the body positivity movement. Right? I mean, there's a really sort of a link in there about sort of this idea of inhabiting your body, what you said, and sort of loving. I don't want to say loving your body, but loving on your body.

Karen: Does that make sense? Because loving your body can take, that can be a really hard thing, especially for people who struggle with it. Right. But loving on your body and taking care of your body and taking care of who you are and taking care of your spirit and taking care of your joy and taking care of the health that's already inside of you.

Karen: Like that's an amazing thing. And I think it's going to be a very transformational thing personally. internally transformational thing when you do that

Dana: Yeah. And also, the focus of that is not on the external, it's all [00:51:00] internal, and that changes everything. It makes it so much more sustainable and joyful, and um, changes the narrative altogether.

Karen: Absolutely. And, and the external is going to change. Sometimes it'll change in a way that the, that the world will think, oh my God, like, you know, zaddy, they got so hot. Or, and sometimes it will change in the way that the world will react in a negative way. But if you're sitting there taking care of the other stuff that, It, the change is going to happen and it's not going to be, it's not going to feel like a catastrophe when the change inevitably comes, when the physical, it's inevitable that we are all going to look different, right?

Karen: We look different from when we were five, of course we're going to look different when we're 95, right? That's, that's, that's living. And so, but loving on yourself, man, you can do that eternally,

Dana: That's so good. Yeah, I liked, I thought it was interesting how in the book when you were speaking about letting your hair go gray, that I believe it was your mother who was maybe a little bit resistant to that, and the question that came to mind was, well, how was that [00:52:00] experience of having your mother question this decision to

embrace this part of your aging, and then I'm also curious, Because she said, Oh, what does, what does your husband think of that?

Dana: And you said something like it's my hair,

Karen: yeah.

Dana: you know, and as Melissa was alluding to, sometimes these changes in our physical appearance can bring a lot of insecurity around our relationships. And I'm just curious if it has affected your relationship at all, you're embracing your aging process in a more natural way

Karen: My relationship with my

Dana: with your partner.

Karen: with my partner? Oh, no, I mean, no, mean, you know, like there's a part of me that even if he tried to say anything, I'd be like, I'll tell you what, you dye your hair first, right? Cause he's got silver hair, right? That's not going to happen. And, um, no, it definitely, as a matter of fact, I get more reaction when I let my hair grow.

Karen: Like he likes it really short. He's always, when we met, my hair was really short. And so he always likes it really short and I get more of a reaction. Um, when I let it grow, not that he ever says anything, but if I cut it again, he's like, Oh, I love [00:53:00] it this way, right?

Karen: But no, the silver, no, I absolutely no reaction to that. None from my daughter. Um, my mom still comments on it a lot. Like every time I see her, I just, which is so funny cause she has snow white hair, right? But like, like just the other day I was at her house and she's like, Oh yeah, it's getting silver boy.

Karen: You got that from me boy. You know, like, so she, she still comments about it. Um, My dad, interestingly, I think at this point I might be more silver than my dad. My dad's hair never really went that, went that silver. Um, but, um, yeah, I, no, no, no, no. I mean, honestly, I think my husband probably wouldn't dare say anything like that.

Karen: We've been married 21 years. Like, he knows better. He knows when to keep his mouth quiet if he doesn't like something. But, um, but no, it's been very, very positive. And I, and honestly, I kind of like... That we look the same age now, right? I like the fact that , that we look age appropriate for each other, I guess, in a way, right?

Karen: Um, which I, not that I [00:54:00] thought I looked that much

younger than him, um, before I started dyeing it. And I will say, , I look back at pictures of myself with my dyed hair, and it feels really, jarring to me, right? I'm like, who was that? Like, who's... Who was that person?

Karen: This, this is who I am now. Three, you know, what, two years later, I guess, since letting it grow out. Um, yeah, it, it, this feels like me now. I mean, this just, it would feel weird to, I think,

Mellisa: Yeah.

Karen: it. I kind of wish it would go completely white, but

Dana: Yeah.

Karen: I'll have to be patient. Ha

Dana: with you. I just started sprouting some greys and I'm so excited about it, and I truly would go, I would have silver hair tomorrow if I could.

Karen: Oh, I think it's beautiful.

Karen: I really do.

Mellisa: I'm well on the way. I've got a lot of gray hair. Yeah.

Karen: yeah, I was starting my resistance before I had always said, as soon as my hair goes completely white, I'm going to stop dying, right? Because my hair is like, it's, I'll have polka dots if I do it, right? Because it's just patches and that'll just look weird, right? Um, and so [00:55:00] When I decided, I thought, I sort of braced myself for the polka dots.

Karen: I was like, oh, this is going to look bananas, right? And of course, nature knows what it's doing. It just, you know, it's certainly whiter in some, like, it's really white underneath, right? And it's certainly whiter in some places than the other, but, um, nature knows what's up.

Dana: Yeah. It looks amazing. Yeah, I think that something I'm curious about as I've been married for 13 years and I'm curious about the transitions that we'll go through at various milestones. And even in this last, um, little stretch of our relationship, I've noticed that the way I'm viewing our relationship is in a much less juvenile way, much more mature and grounded and, oh, that's what love looks like now.

Dana: And less about, you know, the dates he takes me on or the outfit that he has

Karen: Right. Ha ha

Dana: it's, it's natural. And it's something I honestly look forward to because it's something I think that preoccupies a lot of people's minds is I've got to stay looking a certain way. I've got to [00:56:00] present myself in a very attractive fashion and have a good job and all these things.

Dana: And it, I'm hoping at least, and it sounds like in many ways you're living this out, but it becomes less and less about those external things. And so much more just about the bond that you have between the two of you and nurturing that bond and how that pays dividends over the course of your relationship.

Karen: I mean, one, I think the thing for me, the big, the big sort of. Oh, shit. This is, it's about to get real, right? As far as our relationship was when we lost our home, right? So, , in Hurricane Harvey, we lost everything. We flooded. We lost the house. We lost our clothing. We lost our car. We lost everything, right?

Karen: We were literally had to build from the ground up. And I remember, like, literally waiting out of the house and chest deep water and thinking, Oh, this is the for worse part, right? The for better for worse. This is the for worse. And going, I hope we manage, right? Because this was going to be it.

Karen: Our daughter was a teenager, was just a [00:57:00] teenager, like 13 years old at the time. And, the way we managed it, like we would, we would have, um, weekly date nights where we would, basically we would pick a restaurant and then we would go through the spreadsheet of what we had accomplished the last week to build, rebuild the house and what we had to do for the next week, like what went on the spreadsheet and then we'd have a dinner.

Karen: And we really rebuilt well, right? Like it was this really hard thing. And we, we did it very collaboratively, and we talked through it, and we were methodical about it. I mean, we got closer as a result of it. And I remember, you know, moving into the house, the house again after we rebuilt 15 months later, thinking, Alright, we're forever.

Karen: Like, if we can manage that, we're gonna be fine. And so, there's all those sort of moments, I think, in a relationship that sort of test the relationship, um, that have nothing to do with your personalities, really. It could be something totally external, like something really [00:58:00] catastrophic has happened.

Karen: And now, how are you both going to rise to the occasion? In a way that takes care of each other as well and takes care of your

family and is one person to me doing most of the lifting and is the other person and, and is that okay? Maybe that's how your marriage works. It's like you sit down.

Karen: You're not good at this part. I'm good at this. I can do that. And then there was a lot of that, right? There was a lot of the, you're better at like figuring out the money. So you do that. I'm better at project managing. So I'll do this, right? And, and you sort of play to your strengths and figure out, um, Yeah.

Karen: How that works. And that to me, for me, was like, Oh, we're, we're good.

Mellisa: Yeah. That's amazing.

Karen: that feels like we kind of segwayed off, but there we go.

Mellisa: there, the segues are good. I think that's, I think it's really relevant and wherever people are at in their own relationships, these are things that everyone, not everyone, but many of us, Think about and, we need, we need the stories and the positive [00:59:00] examples of how this can look, because that's not what we see on Instagram or in the media.

Mellisa: It's not even a lot of the stories we hear from, from our own friends and peers. So we need to hear some of these stories. So , thank you for being willing to share that. Yeah. Well, I would love to hear a little bit more about your book. It is launching in just a couple of weeks.

Mellisa: At the time this episode goes live, it should already be launched. So, can you tell us a little bit about that and where people are going to be able to find that?

Karen: For sure. So I don't know if we're going to see the video, the video of

Mellisa: there's video.

Karen: Reclaim Aging, Practice Joy, and Raise a Little Hell. Available wherever fine books are sold. You can find them at, you know, on Amazon and Barnes Noble, but we always love to support our independent bookstores. So

Karen: please, please, please go to your independent bookstore and buy your book, the book there.

Karen: You can also go to RadiantRebellion.com and there's ways to buy. From everything, including your independent bookstore, um, through there. So the book comes out, it drops on October [01:00:00]

17th. Hopefully everybody has already bought a book. Uh, by the time that they got that, if not, please do. Right now, as we're recording this, I'm in the, I'm in the, um, trenches of sort of book promotion and pre orders and everything else like that.

Karen: And, of course every, every author wants to be on the New York Times bestseller list and wants to, you know, for, for ego purposes, it would be disingenuous for me, um, to say that that wouldn't be wonderful. Um, but I really want people to buy this book Because in the process of writing this book, I learned how pervasive the problem is and how much we are, um, steeped in this ageist culture.

Karen: And I really, deeply want to change the narrative around getting older. And I think the book that I've written here is a book that, um, Like I said, it's grounded. It is not about, it's not the solar pollyanna thing, but it is, I think, a tool to help you start to uncouple yourself, to take the red pill like Neo [01:01:00] and sort of uncoupled, uncouple yourself from the anti aging matrix, right?

Karen: And really start to have conversations about it. And, um, somebody said to me that they, they just started reading the book and they said, I feel healed. By just the first couple of chapters and I'm like that is absolutely what I hope so So I really hope people buy the book because not for the ego stroke that that would be but because I think it really can Help you sort of heal yourself from this crazy ageist world that we live in Thank you.

Mellisa: And the book is also really practical. It's not just a bunch of stories and some research to round it out. There's a lot that you offer to really help people actually examine those internalized beliefs and reframe them and work with these pieces. So I think it's, I think it's a really powerful tool.

Karen: Thank you. Yeah, I'm a big journaler And so there's a lot of journal prompts and things in there to help people sort of examine their own lives as well [01:02:00] Yeah

Mellisa: Well, thank you so much, Karen. We're so grateful that you joined us. So excited to know you. You live just a few hours away from us, so we are hoping that hopefully we'll get to, yeah, we're in Austin, so hopefully we'll get to see you someday soon. Uh, we have,

Karen: there's a book, there's a book signing in San Antonio, which isn't far from there, so it'd be lovely if you guys could come visit. I'd love to hug you guys in person.

Mellisa: Yeah, that would be wonderful.

Karen: Yeah. Thank you so much for having me. I'm really, really honored that you all included me, for sure. Thank you.

Mellisa: Yes. Thank you, Karen.

Karen: My pleasure.

[01:03:00]