

Jenn, 61 Franklin Street Community Garden, Greenpoint, Brooklyn
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Jenn (00:00):

... how to join. And then I feel like a lot of people during the pandemic got really into house plants and sort of home gardening. And I was just like, "I want to get involved in doing something." So I figured, "Let me try out this garden." And I also told them, full disclosure. "I know nothing about gardening and plants other than house plants." So, that's how I got involved here.

Rachel (00:24):

Cool. And actually I think all this... Tell me just what you had for breakfast this morning so I can check the levels.

Jenn (00:31):

Oh, my. I had oatmeal and milk and coffee.

Rachel (00:34):

Yum. And for dinner?

Jenn (00:36):

For dinner? Oh, I don't know what we're having. Probably... I have no clue. We might just pop into a restaurant or something.

Rachel (00:44):

Okay. Levels look great.

Jenn (00:45):

Okay.

Rachel (00:47):

So, tell me your name if you choose to, your age, where you're from, where you grew up, where you live now, what you do. Tell me generally who you are.

Jenn (01:00):

My name is Jenn and I'm 34, and I was born and raised here in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, my whole life, including my family. I'm a kindergarten special education teacher, and I don't know more about my background, I guess. My family is Latino. We're Puerto Rican. I mean, I think that's about it.

Rachel (01:27):

Great.

Jenn (01:27):

I think that's a good gist of it.

Rachel (01:28):

I'm so excited that you've been here your whole life because I'm going to ask you a lot about-

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Jenn (01:33):

Ooh.

Rachel (01:34):

... just changes that you've noticed, and you have 34 years of experience with that. But first, Jen, I'll ask you the question that I ask everyone and it's really the framing question for this project which is, when you think about global warming or the climate crisis, what do you think about and how do you feel?

Jenn (01:56):

I think a lot of people might feel the way I do right now, just very sad, a little bit hopeless. Also in a little bit like expected considering how our society treats the earth and views the environment in general, that I sort of expected that this would all happen. It didn't come as a surprise that this is what we're going through now unfortunately.

Rachel (02:31):

What's an emotional experience that is attached to this idea of being expected as you describe it?

Jenn (02:40):

Like how I feel about...

Rachel (02:41):

Yeah.

Jenn (02:43):

I mean sad, for sure. A little bit of emptiness, too. Yeah. I think that's the main...

Rachel (02:56):

Emptiness. What is emptiness?

Jenn (03:03):

I just feel like I personally have always enjoyed our planet and our earth so much that to see the way that it's heading just leaves a... It kind of tries to suck some of that joy that I experience out of the earth when I go hiking and I look at the mountains, or if I'm on a kayak and I'm in the water and I'm enjoying that experience, but then remembering that we are participating in destroying what we love about the earth, is sort of that emptiness. You feel joy about it and then it gets sucked away when you start thinking about all the sad things that are happening to the earth.

Rachel (03:42):

Yeah. It's hard to have unmitigated pleasure around our natural environment at this moment.

Jenn (03:52):

For sure. And living in a city I mean my whole life and then experiencing going to the mountains or hiking. Or, I went to college up in Potsdam, New York, where it's in the Adirondacks and having a totally different experience than being in a city and seeing nature and how beautiful it is there and how that it

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might not always be there for people to enjoy. Or there are a lot of people that haven't had those experiences of getting out of the city and experiencing beyond what's here to really see that other side of our earth-

Rachel (04:29):

So does this-

Jenn (04:29):

... without having to go far. You don't have to go far to see it either.

Rachel (04:32):

Right. So it sounds like you experience a feeling of loss.

Jenn (04:41):

I feel not loss for myself because I feel like I'm still enjoying all of these things in the earth. I am making sure I still go out there and I enjoy coming to the garden, having a plant when we can, traveling and hiking and being in the ocean or the lake. I think I feel more lost for the future generations that might not be able to have the same experiences that I'm having by the time... Even though I'm not that old, by the time they get to my age, those experiences might be very different.

Rachel (05:12):

So I'm just going to jump ahead a lot and ask you, because you brought it up, but are you thinking about having children?

Jenn (05:23):

I've known from a very early age, I would have to say from early teens, that I did not want to have children. And I feel like those reasons when I was a teen was mainly... I was never the girl to play with dolls or to play with the babies or to be in the pretend and playing family. It just never really interested me, so I've always kept that stance that I wasn't interested in having children, and of course you get the whole talk of, "It's okay, you'll change your mind," but as I got older it really solidified and the climate crisis has really, really solidified that for me.

Rachel (06:01):

In what way?

Jenn (06:05):

That this, even though they... If I had a child, by the time they are old, the earth might not be in such a bad place, but then their children's children... I just don't want to continue generations of children or adults or humans that are going to be on an earth that is really suffering. And adding another human right now doesn't seem like the right thing. Another consumer, it just doesn't seem like the right step right now. But for me, it's really solidified that... I don't know, it just doesn't seem right. And that also feels sad. Not because I want to have children, but it seems... Oh, boy, even as a teacher and having five-year-olds in my classroom, knowing that the earth might not be the same that it was for me for them and for their futures, and if they decide to have children, it might not be the same for them.

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Rachel (07:07):

And what is your vision for the future? What do you see when you think about the future?

Jenn (07:19):

I mean, I feel we're so far... I don't want to say gone, that sounds so dismal. I would hope... I don't know.

Rachel (07:32):

What do you see? Not what you hope, but what do you see?

Jenn (07:36):

A lot of struggle and just a lot of work to be done still in not just everyday people realizing the climate crisis. I mean the world as a whole, I'm not sure what I see. I do see a lot of struggle and a lot of... I mean, we're seeing it now. There's so much forest fires. We just watched a YouTube about the Sahara Desert and how it's expanding and they're trying to push that expansion of the desert and how it's not just even affecting just our communities here, it's affecting all parts of the world. And had we not watched that video we would've never known that that was even happening because I feel we're always just in such a small bubble in just our own community or our state or our own country that it's really hard to see more globally the effects that this is all having, even though you know that it's out there. So I just see a lot of struggle and sadness in the future.

Rachel (08:53):

When did you first learn about the climate crisis or global warming?

Jenn (08:57):

I feel like in school. I mean, it was about hairspray and, "Don't use hairspray and don't use air freshener because it depletes the ozone." Well, what is the ozone layer? And it's like, "That's why you're going to get sunburn." And so I feel as a kid you didn't really know. There were rumblings about it I feel like when I was younger and my earliest memories of it are of hearing about the ozone layer and how that's disappearing and we're all going to get burned by the sun. I think I started to become more aware of the actual climate crisis when I was in my undergrad in college and I minored in geology and learned a lot about the earth and how it goes through a heating up cycle and a freezing cycle and an ice age, and the natural course that the earth takes, whether humans are on it or not, this is what it's going to do, and hearing how that was accelerating.

So we were even talking about it in my classes in terms of earthquake activity. Ugh, I lost my thread, but that also just made me like, "Whoa, we're really going..." The earth is fascinating in general, and then hearing about how humans have interfered a little bit with its natural cycle. I think that's when I first started thinking about the climate and the climate crisis. And then when Al Gore came out with his book, I forget in what year, in the early 2000s, maybe, and I just remember it being like... People were saying it was such a joke book and this wasn't really happening. So that I remember. I related to Al Gore talking about the climate crisis, and I think I became super duper aware after I graduated. I think there was... I forget what huge event it was. I can't remember, but it's been about maybe 10 years or so now that I'm really honed in on, we really have to do something about our earth or we're really going to expedite the natural cycle that it's going through, through our own actions.

Rachel (11:24):

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So you've become increasingly aware of it through education and then...

Jenn (11:30):

Yeah, and just reading, watching lots of videos, but also feeling like you're just one person and it's so much bigger than us, but just trying to let as many people around you know as well that might not have known before, or that are still on the fence and not believing that it's really happening or... Yeah. I mean, I don't know.

Rachel (12:05):

What kinds of changes have you noticed locally in seasonal patterns, weather, landscapes?

Jenn (12:14):

Just living here, in general, not having a real winter. I mean, I can't remember the last time we had a real New York City winter. I mean we used to get a lot of snow and now, I mean, if we get one or two storms in the season, that's it. I remember as a kid having lots more snow days or playing out in the snow and it being as tall as me walking down the street, but that could also be because I was small and now those same snow banks may not feel... They probably were the same size, but not having a real winter really.

If we get those two bigs or cold days even. I mean, I feel when he was moving up, I'm like, "It's going to be cold. It's going to be cold in New York. You got to get your winter jacket, you got to get your winter boots." And he's been here and he's barely had to wear his boots. He wears his winter jacket sometimes, and I'm like, "This is not what I remember New York City winter being." You really had to be bundled up, so it doesn't even get as cold anymore.

Rachel (13:20):

When did you start noticing those changes?

Jenn (13:23):

I would say in the last five, six years or so, that it just has not been as intense as it could be. And I'm like, "Wow, that's really happening really fast," because I feel like every winter that comes by now is less cold than the one before, and every summer is getting hotter than the summer before as well. So I feel like we're turning on our air-conditioner way sooner than we used to. I think we turned it on in June and we usually try to push to the end of July, and we were like, "We can't make it."

Rachel (13:54):

Me, too.

Jenn (13:55):

It's just too hard. And we have window units, no central air, our building faces another building, which interestingly enough, keeps our apartment cool, so the fact that we're still getting hot enough to feel like we got to turn it on now, that's not so great. That's not a great feeling.

Rachel (14:13):

What did it feel like to start noticing increasingly warmer weather? And what does it feel like to experience the seasons shifting? That seasons that you knew so well, what does it feel like to experience them changing?

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Jenn ([14:34](#)):

I feel like I started out with saying hopeless and sad, and I keep coming back to those same feelings. I feel some people are like, "It's great, yeah. No winter, no snow. I don't like the cold." But it's like, "No, we need to experience those things. It's part of where our state is located. We get four seasons, and this is how those seasons, I guess, should feel-ish." I mean, so it's... And worrisome. I mean, we can only take so much heat and relief and our infrastructure, especially here in New York City and in Greenpoint is not the best to handle huge storms that come through as well. So just really, really worrisome. I feel sometimes our vision is elsewhere and focusing on development where we should be focused on infrastructure and climate and... Yeah.

Rachel ([15:27](#)):

Yeah. I'm also from the Northeast. I'm from the Boston area, and I used to feel really disoriented by these changing seasons, but now I've kind of acclimatized to just expect the unexpected. I'm in this weird space now where I'm like, "Okay, well, what I used to experience it as seasons is different and I'm not disoriented, I just have new expectations."

Jenn ([16:05](#)):

And I think we're not thinking of seasons anymore. We're just thinking of weather. Like now I feel we go on our weather app. Okay, is it going to rain today? What's the high, what's the low? What am I wearing? And it's like you can't even think of your clothes anymore, as this is my winterwear, this is my summerwear. It's like sometimes you put away your winterwear and all of a sudden it's time to whip it out again because it got really cold out of nowhere. And same for summer gear.

I mean there was a day just this year in January where we had a 70 degree day and I was out running in a tank top and shorts and I got sunburn. And I was like, "It's January. These clothes should be put away until spring summertime." So you can't even think of winter season anymore. What does winter even look like? Or spring, or summer, or here where there's not even a distinct spring and fall anymore. It's sort of just winter and then kind of a little warm and then all of a sudden really hot in summer. And it kind of just only feel two "seasons."

Rachel ([17:09](#)):

I love that idea. I mean, I hate it, but I appreciate the articulation. We don't even think about seasons anymore. We think about weather. I mean, what does that do to our internal sense of time?

Jenn ([17:30](#)):

I feel it's so muddy for me in general. Like, where's the beginning of the year? I mean, for us, anyway, here in New York, beginning of the year is technically winter, January cold. And then end of the year, again, cold, December, but it can be... Now with how things are, it could be super cold come September on some days that it could start to feel like winter and there it can feel, towards the end of the year or even messing with your emotions and the lack of light that comes with winter, it kind of really just throws you for a loop.

And same thing with your sleep. I know for me, personally, I sleep better when it's cold, so I have some of my best sleep in the winter months. So those hot days are really hard, and when you have those hot days all of a sudden in the middle of winter, you're like, "No, I need to sleep and I need it to be cold." I mean, it really just messes with your body to not have-

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Rachel (17:30):

It really does.

Jenn (18:36):

... those distinct seasons. And your mind. I, for one, really look forward to having winter season. Then it's spring's turn and then it's summer's turn, and then fall and watching the leaves. I feel like you keep can't even enjoy the leaves anymore in the fall because it just rapidly goes from spring to winter. The trees and everything don't even get a chance. Sometimes they're covered in snow right away, or all the leaves are just gone one day, and I'm like, "I didn't get to collect leaves or hear the crunch under my feet of leaves," or have those same experiences that you would have during those seasons. And then I come back to like, "I'm not that old and I'm feeling like things are really, really changing every year in terms of seasons." Yeah. It's really something.

Rachel (19:26):

How does climate crisis affect your day-to-day life?

Jenn (19:32):

I have to say it brings me a lot of anxiety because I feel a lot of pressure is put on the individual to fix this, and you need to bring your reusable back. You need to bring your reusable water bottle. If you get that paper or plastic bag from the store, I personally am filled with dread every time I have to get a plastic bag because I forgot my bag. And then I was just sharing with my partner, I just read somewhere that it actually cost or takes a lot of resources to create this reusable bag that that's never going to decompose either. And I'm like, "So, what am I doing? Do I bring the reusable bag? Do I get the paper bag? Do I..." You're just constantly in this flip-flopping of trying to do the right thing, bringing your own straw, bringing your own utensils, that it just...

Into my day to day life, I'm constantly thinking about it in my head and I can't stop. And there's a lot of guilt that goes with it. So if I get my coffee and I forgot my reusable cup, I'm like, "Great. Now I have a straw that's going to go into the ocean. Some poor sea turtle is going to eat it." It brings a lot of big feelings for me in terms of anxiety and sadness and guilt, where I feel like I shouldn't be feeling that because it's a lot bigger than us as individuals. Like, yes, individuals should be trying to do what they can for the earth and doing good things for it, but there are also a lot of other people who are more responsible for it than just individuals.

Rachel (21:14):

Right. I mean, what for you... Oh, I'm taking my sweater on.

Jenn (21:18):

It's like going back and forth.

Rachel (21:20):

For you, what is the significance? What's the impact of your personal responsibility? Like you feel so much responsibility to monitor all of your behaviors. What is the impact of your personal behaviors in the larger scheme? What's the relationship there? Because it does feel like you do believe what you do matters and matters so much that it creates anxiety and guilt. So talk to me about that relationship.

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Jenn ([22:11](#)):

Oh, my gosh. It makes me not want to give it up. I still feel it's important and I'll keep doing it for as long as I can, but I also have to be more conscious of giving myself grace when I can also, and being gentle with myself. But it is a hard relationship to have, and it's also hard when not everyone around you feels it's as important. For example, for my mom it's not such a big deal for her that I bring my own reusable bag every time, or that I have my own cup. For her she'll still take the plastic bag if she's doesn't have her own, or not see the big deal in getting a throwaway container from somewhere, or continuing to buy a bajillion plastic Tupperwares.

And that can be hard, too, on your own self. So even though I feel a lot of anxiety and guilt, it's also hard when others around you aren't feeling it's just as important. It kind of makes you a little bit want to just say, "Okay, I can't do this anymore," but then I have to keep doing it because it's important to me. It's that same back and forth. It's a constant battle inside.

Rachel ([23:27](#)):

Where does that anxiety come from? Where does that idea of deep personal responsibility come from in the context? Because you also said, "I don't feel like I should be made to feel so responsible," and yet you do. I actually have come from an opposite experience of like, what I do as an individual doesn't matter. What we do together collectively matters, but it's been hard for me to understand the way that your behavior can influence other people's behaviors. So I've come from a very different place and my anxiety plays out in different ways as well, around... Like my eco anxiety plays out in different ways in my day-to-day life. So I'm curious about your anxiety and...

Jenn ([24:27](#)):

I just feel like I don't like to harm things and I feel the earth, of course, is this living thing and when you are throwing trash or you're getting a takeaway container, you are hurting it even though you are putting it in a trash can and it's supposed to go where it goes to the landfill, and I suppose to not go into the ocean. I still feel like you are harming it by continuing to consume and buy, but it's also human nature so it's almost like fighting yourself still, because we like to buy and have things. But it's also harmful to have things that you don't need, necessarily, and throw away, and that anxiety comes, I think, from just knowing that my straw might have gotten eaten by a sea turtle. So I'm not only hurting the earth, I'm hurting this fish, the turtle or bird, and, yeah. And it's not just me that's doing that, but I just end up feeling really bad.

Rachel ([25:31](#)):

Right. And we're living in a world that is structured to make it almost impossible for you to do harm on a daily basis.

Jenn ([25:40](#)):

Yep.

Rachel ([25:41](#)):

Have you ever gotten active... Have you ever taken political action around the issue of climate crisis?

Jenn ([25:52](#)):

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I mean I personally haven't, and it's not a great reflection of myself, I guess. I find myself very, I don't want to say neutral. I don't know what the term I'm thinking of is. I just, as a person, haven't really gotten involved in a lot of movements or political action. That feels... Not that it doesn't matter, it does matter. Why I don't get involved I'm not sure, but it does feel hopeless, too, I mean, and that's so sad to say in a school that I'm in that's really about change and social justice and pushing and questioning and not just sitting back. But it's hard and I don't know if it's just a personality trait in myself of getting involved and fighting for more because...

I've had my class make posters about the climate crisis and the climate march and we've gone, but I just don't know, what can I give if I were to participate? And does my voice matter? I feel like it does, but does it? When you just see things just continuing on, and again, those who are at marches and are fighting, they are not the problem. And it just seems so way too big for us, but then again, we'd need to come together and fight. I just I don't know how, I guess, or where my voice would go. Like if I'm holding a sign or writing letters and trying to take action, I think I also feel like if I don't see anything change because of my action, I'm going to feel more sad and more hopeless, so I refrain from getting involved so I don't feel that way.

Rachel (28:04):

Yeah. I think I share a little bit with you sort of a deep belief that what I do won't make a difference. But I was having this conversation with somebody at another garden who practices Zen Buddhism, and he framed it in a way that actually was maybe a way for me personally to have an in into understanding more action and my own action is meaningful, like getting involved in meaningful ways. And he said like, "There's this Zen Buddhism idea of you're required to do the action, but you are also required to not be invested in the outcome." And that for me helped clarify my anxieties or my beliefs in my own powerlessness. That it's not about powerlessness or power, it's about taking the action.

Now what have I done after feeling that way? Nothing, but it's making me feel a little bit more powerless versus powerful isn't the question I should be asking myself right now. But I really, really, what you said, really resonates with me. Do you feel like you or your family and community will be, or have been, impacted differently by climate crisis because of the various identities you hold, like racial, national, sexual, gender ability?

Jenn (29:54):

Hmm. I'm not sure. I mean, I think we will, coming from Hispanic family where having a family to begin with, just starting with that, is really important. And for me to be the outlier in my family, choosing not to have children and seeing my brother just had a baby and thinking of her, she will be impacted. So, yes, my family will be impacted by the climate crisis as she grows up and comes into the new earth that we're living in. That's not going to be the same as my brother's childhood. I mean, but, I don't know if they'll see it that way.

Or, I don't know if that's from... I mean, climate crisis? Yes, we are a Brooklyn family who lives very close to the waterfront. I mean, my brother now doesn't, but should this area flood and something happened to our home, for example, my apartment that I've been in for over 30 years, if something were to happen to it and I had to move, I wouldn't be able to afford to live here anymore. I'd have to leave. So even just thinking of that, if something were to happen and that's impacted by climate. I mean, not necessarily the prices of Greenpoint, but just the way development is going along the Greenpoint Waterfront.

Rachel (31:45):

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How does thinking about climate crisis impact how you plan for your future?

Jenn ([32:01](#)):

I mean, it's really gotten me to think of what I can live with and what I can live without. So I mean right now I don't have a driver's license. I've never learned how to drive. So it's like, "I don't need a car, and cars are not the best thing for the environment right now." So it's even made me think about even small things that I would buy or even if we decide to move, thinking about where we would go that would be away from the water and not in a waterfront area. Oh, boy. I mean, it's hard to think about the future lately. I mean, even before the pandemic, it's always been hard for me to think about anything more than like a year.

Rachel ([32:55](#)):

Why?

Jenn ([33:00](#)):

I think even beyond... No, I think it has to do with the climate though, too. And personalitywise, I'm not a planner. I very much live in the moment, but when I think about the climate, it does make me think about the future in a very sad, depressing way. So I think that's part of why I don't like to plan. But, boy, it's like the climate and the political state of the world, it's just very hard to think about the future. It just doesn't seem very hopeful, happy, so it's like thoughts or feelings that I tend to try to avoid. But then it's hard when you work with children to not think about the future-

Rachel ([33:00](#)):

Oh, my God.

Jenn ([33:55](#)):

... you have to think about them, and that's been hard working with children and thinking about the climate. I've had a lot of not interesting conversations. So I work in a classroom where I have a co-teacher and it's been very interesting, and she's older. She's 65, so I feel like we have a very different sense, though she is understanding that there is a climate crisis happening, but that it's not the responsibility and it should not be the worry of young children. Whereas I'm coming from, children should know. We shouldn't scare them about the future and about the climate and about the earth, but they are our next generation that's coming forward, but they also need their experiences. It's just very interesting, because we'll draw through paper and we're throwing lots of paper away, or just seeing them in the cafeteria just throwing stuff away. And you're just like, "Aah." I mean, it's very hard to think about young children in the future.

I had a student this year that really invested in the coral reef and about it dying and not being there. And she became like a little activist telling all of our classmates and all of the adults about the coral reef and how we need to take care of it. And at one point she was hand-drawing a flyer about it. And one day she stopped and said, "I can't use the paper anymore because it's bad for the coral reef to keep making." It was just very interesting. So it was just hard to think about how children are also processing the climate crisis. But, again, it's not their worry and it's not their fault, and it's also not our fault, either. I mean, oh, my gosh, I don't know. I'm going on these tangents, I'm sorry.

Rachel ([35:58](#)):

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What? I mean, you teach kids. What are the tools that we need to cultivate? What are the emotional tools, the psychological tools that we need to cultivate in order to move forward into this new world that we're living in? How do we transition from living in the world we pretend that we're living in to the world that we're actually living in? And what tools do we need to make that transition?

Jenn (36:37):

I think it comes back to, the world is so much bigger than just ourselves and there is a larger community out there than just me and my family. I feel in kindergarten we really focus in the beginning on me and my family, and then we start branching out and saying me and my community, and then still seeing that our community that we're in is bigger than that, too. And I think just that care in each other and in our earth and where we are living is just really what we need to bring to children. Because I feel with so many adults that I see, I'm like, "They missed kindergarten. They need to go back to kindergarten where we care about others and that's what we're learning."

Rachel (37:17):

Oh, my God, you're so right.

Jenn (37:19):

"And, you guys missed kindergarten and you have to go back." And I feel like if we just went back to those caring for others and treating everything around us with respect, including the earth, including our neighbors, just everything, so that even means not throwing trash on the ground or just little actions like that are just so important. Just really understanding that the world expands beyond just you and your family, which is what you learn in kindergarten. And I feel like so many adults have forgotten that, but I think as humans, we are very egocentric.

Rachel (37:56):

So, moving into the future, we need to bring a community awareness with us.

Jenn (38:02):

And a very larger community awareness. I mean, as I mentioned before, hearing about the desert, I was like, "That's a community that's affected that we don't know about, and our whole earth is a community. We're all here. This is where we're all living." We can't see it as United States and we can't see it as continents. It's literally a whole global community that I think, as people, we really get into where we live only, so New York City or even, micro, in Greenpoint. This is where I live and this is what I'm doing here, but realizing that it's way, way larger than that.

Rachel (38:45):

Do you have energy for a couple more questions?

Jenn (38:47):

I do.

Rachel (38:47):

Okay. Great. Good. My next question is, where are we now and how did we get here? How would you define our current moment, and how did we get to this place?

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Jenn (39:09):

I think we got here by being like a horse with blinders on and continuing forward, forward, forward, and pushing to the side, "Okay, yeah, I know it's getting hot. Yeah, I know it's getting really cold," and continuing to push that over. "Yeah, I know the forests are burning," and just continuing to push that to the side. And I really do feel like that's just continuing to ignore. Ignore and postpone. Or, it's somebody else's problem. They will fix it. Very much the same as what happens here when you throw something on the ground. The person who cleans it will clean it, so just thinking that somebody else will take care of that. And I think that's how we really got here, a second entire earth.

Rachel (39:48):

And what's the here? Where are we now?

Jenn (39:55):

I feel crossroads is too generic. It's not, because I don't know if there's another road to really go down. I mean, you can go down it and still continue to be blinded, but I don't know if there's another path and I feel the now is a really tough place to be. It's a planet that's struggling, or, hmm, going through its natural cycle at a faster rate. I don't know if it's necessarily struggling, but it will just go through its natural way a lot faster because we've accelerated it. It's going to do what it's going to do. Oh, my gosh, I lost my thread again.

Rachel (40:49):

But you were saying, it's not a crossroads because you don't really think there's two paths.

Jenn (40:59):

Where we are now. I'm not sure I have a good answer other than a place where there's a lot of work to still be done, of course, and we really need a lot more people to become more conscious about what's really happening, even if they're like me and they're not feeling like they can go and fight and protest, but just realizing that this is what's happening. I think that's where it just starts, is saying, "This is true and this is what's going on," and just acknowledging it, I think is the biggest thing. And we're not. So it's like a place where we're still struggling to have that really be acknowledged across everywhere really.

Rachel (42:00):

So, what do you fear for, for the future?

Jenn (42:13):

I fear an increase of just a lot of natural disasters. Bigger storms, earthquakes, and just the people who will die and suffer because of that really is what I fear the most. And just having to hear that more and more, either it's on the news or you're reading about it and the emotional toll that that does on the individual, to keep seeing these natural disasters or to keep seeing these forests burning and the animals also that suffer because of that. That's what I fear for.

And for children who have to see that, too, I feel more and more. I mean, I feel like when we thought about forests burning or earthquakes, I feel as a kid we didn't hear so much about it so it wasn't as scary. I feel like children more and more are exposed to that kind of news and that can be really scary, to think that they're hearing and they are developmentally not ready to process those feelings or know

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what's going on really. But just feeling for the people who are really going to suffer through these natural things that'll happen in our earth.

Rachel (43:31):

And how do you grieve for what we've lost and what we will lose?

Jenn (43:42):

I don't know if I have grieved or if I know how to grieve for that. I'm really not sure. That's a hard question.

Rachel (44:08):

What do you feel hopeful for?

Jenn (44:13):

I feel hopeful in those out there, engineers, scientists, researchers, the young children, too, and teenagers who have great ideas of what to do. I'm really hopeful in their ideas for the future and what they're going to bring to at least slow us down a little bit in what's happening. And I feel that that energy is really something that I feel a lot of young people are running with right now to really try to fix what's going on with the climate. And I'm really hopeful in what they'll develop and come up with as long as they're given resources and space and time and respect and acknowledgement and to not take the air out of their sails because I feel we really just need to let the young folks really keep running with it.

It was really hard for me to hear some people say, "They're just kids. They don't really know." Children have a voice and their voice matters and they're going to fix it. I mean, they might not fix it, fix it, but I'm sure with how technology is going, I really feel like we can do a lot and we just need to give it time and money and energy and importance rather than trying to keep things the way they were. I feel like we keep trying to go back and go back and go back. Yeah.

Rachel (45:52):

My last question is, are there any questions that I didn't ask you that you were expecting me to ask you or that you wish I had asked you?

Jenn (46:07):

No. I mean, I really didn't know what to expect. I just thought I was going to do my garden shift today and we would just eavesdrop and then leave.

Rachel (46:20):

And you didn't think you'd have anything to say.

Jenn (46:22):

And I thought I wouldn't have anything to say.

Rachel (46:23):

And you've been talking for 45 minutes.

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Jenn (46:26):

And I also was like, "I don't get involved in anything." Yeah. So, no, I mean, I really came with no expectations and didn't think I'd have anything to say at all other than be kind of rambly and kind of go like this all the time. But I feel like it has been something that for years it's just been really important for me and it's been hard to feel like it's important to other people. I mean, I feel like with our same breath we say, "Save the earth," and then we turn around and we get a takeaway container or something. I don't know. Or we paint green onto things to make it seem like it's healthier or more... But then again, like I keep saying, it's so much bigger than us and we can't keep beating ourselves up for getting a plastic bag or throwing something away. Yeah.

Rachel (47:23):

Thank you.

Jenn (47:23):

You're welcome.

Rachel (47:24):

I'm so glad you talked with me.

Jenn (47:26):

Oh, yay.

Rachel (47:28):

Thanks. You're so generous.

Jenn (47:29):

Oh, thanks. I was so shy.

Rachel (47:32):

No, you're not. You're awesome-