

## Interview with Jen – Teaser

**Michelle:** So, the first thing I wanted to ask you about, because I got the World Changing Workshop and your session, your class there was one of my favorites. I absolutely love your bit about setting a container. Can you just give a brief overview of your practice with that?

**Jen:** Oh, yeah. Well, you know, I was *just* on the phone with a fabulous client. I really don't coach much anymore, but when people come to my retreat, sometimes they're like oh. Please, please, please. So this is someone I've coached for over a year. She's super-talented and she has such a hard time trusting the creative impulse.

**Michelle:** Uh-huh.

**Jen:** And she's also a member of my membership site, which, tomorrow, morphs from the Comfort Café to the Savor and Serve Café, and right now our topic there is creative trust. And so I said, I started interviewing her basically, about her project and she would have these great ideas and then she'd say, "But I don't know how I'll do that." And so, I'd say oh. That's see, creative trust is when you let the idea come, you record it, and you trust that with time and intention you will be able to learn and develop it.

**Michelle:** Uh-huh.

**Jen:** And so having a container allows us to create creative trust and for creative trust to show up and for us to have a relationship with it. But, so many of us, it's like a container support for the creative process. It's either like, we don't feel we deserve it, or, we don't think it's important or it seems like a fluffy extra, or we think it means we're going to have to sacrifice a chicken every time. [laughter] Right? But, it's as simple as really giving a little bit of thought, maybe when you're done listening to this today, like what would make it safer for me to go into the creative unknown. Because the creative process is the process of meeting the unknown. And the more comfortable and safe we can feel in ourselves and in our bodies, the more we're able to do that.

So for me it looks like, sometimes it's as simple as making sure I have tea and water, and making sure, you know, that my phone is on do not disturb and e-mail and Twitter and all those things are closed down. I sometimes use a program called Antisocial, which creates a really nice container of oh, you cannot go into the wider world of the internet and e-mail for 90 minutes or 60 minutes or whatever you set it for. And then as the process of being creative continues, you can have things that you can do with your body, with your breathing, with reassuring yourself, if fear and anxiety comes up, to really keep that sense of safety with you. Does that make sense?

**Michelle:** Yeah. Yeah. And part of what I liked, was when you talked about in The World Changing workshop you said that you just wrote for a certain amount of time. Right?

**Jen:** Oh. Time is a wonderful container.

**Michelle:** Yeah. Well, and I like that because it kind ties in, it's kind of like, oh gosh, I'm going to try and figure out how to verbalize this. Like, I know a lot of people have problems and I've had problems in the past, with like, not knowing when something is done. And if you set the container ahead of time then you already have parameters that you're working within, so you don't have to get to a certain point and be like, "Gee, I don't know. Am I done yet? What am I doing now?"

**Jen:** Right. One of the really cool concepts that I teach about, and people can learn more about it, at, oh God, I don't, if you go to [jenniferlouden.com](http://jenniferlouden.com) and you click on the satisfaction finder, or go to the store and look on satisfaction finder, anyway, there's a product that I created. I'll tell you the basics of it so you can start using it today. And I call it Conditions of Enoughness.

And it grew out of my coaching training and it's basically deciding what enough is for any given, let's say in this case, creative project, and declaring ahead of time and it has the element of lowering the bar so that you actually can achieve what is enough, because one of the ways that we don't create a container for ourselves, and one of the ways we undermine our creativity and our productivity is, we don't know what there, we, we don't know when we arrive there.

There is no there. There is, when you say you'll be done, what the hell does done mean? Right?

**Michelle:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Jen:** And if you're doing brain surgery there is a done.

**Michelle:** [laughs] Yeah.

**Jen:** If you're building a house, there a done. If you're creating a product or writing a novel, or parenting or gardening, most of life, there is no done. Right? There is no done so you have to learn to declare, you have to learn to declare what enough is. And so there's four elements of conditions of enough. The first one is declaring it by like lowering the bar, like, what could I really achieve, and then set it within a time limit. And that's number two. You set a period of time. So, in this case, let's say I'm going to work for 30 minutes. Oh. 30 minutes. That's nothing! Well, you know what? I know I can do 30 minutes with full attention. I can work up from there, but by lowering the bar I may increase my self trust. And that's another thing I talk a lot about in my work. Self-trust.

We need a lot of self-trust to be creative people. So, you set a time limit that's doable, and you know what you will achieve in that 30 minutes. And that may be as simple as, in that 30 minutes I will not do anything but stay with this project. Right?

**Michelle:** Uh-huh.

**Jen:** It's dependent only on you. It's not about quality. "I will write something brilliant in this 30 minutes!" No. I will stay with myself and this project and not do any interruptions for 30 minutes. And then you just quit when you're finished, you declare yourself satisfied even if you don't feel satisfied. And this begins to retrain our brain. To teach us to claim what is enough.

**Michelle:** Yeah.

**Jen:** Instead of it living out there with the blogosphere, or the publishing companies, or our bank account.