

Kim Strobel ([00:00:00](#)):

Hello, hello, hello friends, and welcome to the She Finds Joy podcast where we reclaim the super shiny lights that burn in each of us. I'm Kim Strobel your truth telling, real talk, happiness coach who believes in the power of showing up as our flawsome-selves even, and especially my friends, when it comes to working through our hard stuff. After all, when we're playing in our arenas of bigness, life gets better as we get bolder. So buckle up for the no BS, zero fluff advice that gives you the small steps for big joy. One of the best things about She Finds Joy is our community. So be sure to join us in our free private Facebook group to connect with other women who are creating more joy in their lives, just like you. You can find us at [kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy](http://kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy). All right, let's dive in to today's episode. Here we go.

Kim Strobel ([00:01:29](#)):

Welcome everyone and I'm excited to have Laura Wagner on the show today. Laura is a licensed psychotherapist, life coach and fitness professional. She's essentially a personal development blonde bombshell. Let me just tell you, she is beautifully blonde. On a mission to inspire and teach women how to empower their minds and bodies and create an extraordinary life, whether she's working with her one on one coaching clients, teaching online courses or coaching people to move their bodies and blow their minds through group exercise and personal training. Laura brings her vibrant energy and contagious motivation anywhere she lands in life. She is also a writer and speaker and at the age 46 was discovered and signed as a fashion model for a regional talent agency. Once again, proving her proclamation that it's never too late. You're never too old and nothing is ever too good to be true. Welcome, welcome, welcome, Ms. Laura Wagner to the show.

Laura Wagner ([00:02:38](#)):

Thank you so much for that introduction. I wrote it for myself, which is awesome, but when I hear it and somebody else says it and they say it with such, you know, truth about, yes you are that person. It just, it feels really good. And I was thinking the whole time I was like, wow, I would totally hire me.

Kim Strobel ([00:02:57](#)):

Right. And it's great that we don't have, like, you don't have to downplay your shine and sometimes we forget, don't we as women especially, we forget to give ourself credit for all the good stuff that we have done. We always kind of look at everything that we haven't accomplished or we haven't been able to do yet. And I think it's important to look back and be like, I've done some great things in my life.

Laura Wagner ([00:03:20](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. I always say I'm on a morning news show here sometimes and they like for me to break down coaching wellness, mental health concepts and, and ways of working through your life in soundbites. So I'm like wow, I have to talk about something really meaningful in 20 seconds. So I like to say progress versus perfection to look back and say, what did I do today? Like you said, versus what didn't I do? Or even go further back than that and realize all that you've done. And it doesn't have to be, you know, a mountain of stuff. One move forward is enough. You're enough.

Kim Strobel ([00:04:05](#)):

Yeah, I agree. So, okay. We're going to back up. But what exactly is a psychotherapist?

Laura Wagner ([00:04:11](#)):

Well, I use that as a general term for someone that is a mental health counselor that, I am, my designation in Kentucky is LMFT which means licensed marriage and family therapists. I see individuals, of course, I don't think of myself as much. I take all my therapeutic training and apply it to my coaching, but I really help people more in that coaching what we say that forward moving, goal oriented. But I think therapists also look at the past to see like, why is this person where they are right now? So if you could also be an LPCC, which is a professional clinical counselor, a PhD.

Laura Wagner ([00:04:52](#)):

So that's just sort of an all encompassing like, Hey, I work with people on mental health. So yeah, it's grounded for me, you know, and I went to school and I'm licensed in the state of Kentucky and I studied a lot of theories and I have, Oh my gosh, my practicum was like 3000 hours at a counseling center. So working with people a lot of times, not always in crisis, some people come to counseling or therapy to work on their lives and in more of a coaching way. But yeah, I've kind of more program oriented with my coaching. It's a process versus a Oh session, session.

Kim Strobel ([00:05:30](#)):

I like that. Yes. And so I know that you and I are going to talk about this topic that is like at the forefront right now for women, which is anxiety, overwhelm, depression. And we both kind of have our personal stories around that topic. But I would love if you would kinda share yours with my audience because sometimes when we see someone who is a therapist or knocking it out of the ballpark, like you are in so many areas of your life, we tend to sit back and be like, well, I just wish I could be her. Like, she just has so many great things going for her. I know for me personally, when I stand on a stage and I'm in the \$400 dress and the kickass heels and I'm completely, made app that for a little bit, people are like, Oh my gosh, I just want to be her. Like she does this incredible life. And then I back the story up and I start to share my struggle with panic disorder and anxiety.

Kim Strobel ([00:06:29](#)):

And it's like, it's such a like, aha moment for my audience to understand that I'm both of those people. So I would love to hear your story and your journey through all that you've kind of endured on this path and how you now deal with it all.

Laura Wagner ([00:06:45](#)):

Yeah. I love what you just said because just the other day I, had an opportunity to be a panelist at an event for a woman's magazine, like a Valentine's day celebration. And they had, several women come as motivational speakers and not just coaches, but from all walks of life. And so I'm in the sequin pink dress and I had my hairstylist and makeup artists. I was like, let's do the makeup. Because when I show up for those things, it makes me feel really powerful. And I love, I used to say, Oh, you can't wear something like that to something like that, you know? But I was like, I just do what I want.

Laura Wagner ([00:07:24](#)):

So that's how I showed up. But I am cognizant like you are, that when people see me on that stage that it's like, Oh my gosh, what a powerhouse. And you know, she's got.. And like you said, I do have a lot of powerful things. I am powerful and I'm confident and I own everything I am. And I do. But I also made the point to tell them, you're asking kind of for background but a brief telling of this is also where I've been and where I am now, where I still work on these things. It's always a practice. I say like, so we say coaching practice or therapy practices because we're helping people like learn skills and we're practicing

to how to live a better life. But I told the audience, the MC said, 'You said you've transformed your life about 10 years ago. You got to tell us about that.'

Laura Wagner ([00:08:23](#)):

And I'd say 10 years ago, maybe its more than that, actually Kim was, a time in my life... I've always since I was a little girl have had panic attacks. I'm just that highly sensitive, intuitive woman kid that I just felt like I wasn't like other people, but I was, it's just, you know, my heart and all of that, just how I take in life physically and mentally. So I started struggling with that when I was a little girl. I remember not knowing what was going on when I had a panic attack. When you're 10 and that happens and your hearts beating and you feel sick to your stomach, that was just crazy. So that was in the eighties kind of move forward and just manage myself and didn't have too many issues with depression or anxiety.

Laura Wagner ([00:09:12](#)):

I mean, I'd say I was an anxious person. and I had some counseling off and on in college, but the pivotal turning point in my life was we decided to have a second child around 2006 after my daughter Grace, who, or actually was around 2003, Grace is 19. So I had a perfectly normal pregnancy for, you know, nine pound, big old baby, no problem getting pregnant. But what happened after I had her was I got pregnant and I had a loss. I had a miscarriage, which for any woman that's such a tragic and lonely loss, it's not something we talk about a lot, but I continued to, I had another one and within two years I had four miscarriages. And throughout all of that, I was of course getting help from doctors. But that was the first time I learned that doctors they know their stuff, but I'm like, wow, they're kind of guessing what's going on too.

Laura Wagner ([00:10:10](#)):

Like they were sending me to different doctors. And you know, the heaviness of that and my hormones. I really struggle with anxiety and depression because sometimes I'll negate that and be like, Oh, lots of women have had that happen, miscarriages. But I was like, that was trauma. That was a loss of what to me in my mind at that time was I was going to give birth to a little human being and what that does to you to walk through that and the ups and downs and being so careful in life, it really takes a toll on the mind. And I didn't know the things you and I know now about how to manage your mind. So we adopted a beautiful baby boy through that at the end of that journey and it was a miracle. And I had a beautiful realization about myself that really changed me, that my husband and I walking through that and my resilience and strength that I didn't really know I had at that time.

Laura Wagner ([00:11:04](#)):

I sat on the plane with my son. I remember he was born in Hawaii, 16 hour flight and I just had this movie moment where I was like, I can do anything. This is a miracle. I'm holding this little dark hair, tiny eight pound boy. And because I told myself, because I was so sensitive because I got depressed or anxious, I was like, you're not strong enough to handle this. This will break you. But it didn't. I moved on, I'm high achieving and I kinda started going through waves after he was born of depressive episodes. And I think it was, you know, to me it's about your chemistry and your brain. It's also about what's happening in your life and stress. And I just had times when I got into some really deep darkness because maybe I was overwhelmed.

Laura Wagner ([00:11:58](#)):

There were triggers and, I worked with my psychiatrist and my own therapist to get through some really tough times. And people who, and maybe you can say something about this too, depression is just not something that you've can climb out of. And it's not sadness all the time either. That's a facet of it, but it can be that flat feeling of, I don't know, what do I feel? I don't really feel anything. It's like an emptiness and that is devastating. So, you know, I've worked through those things and sometimes I think about that time, probably in the after my son was born in 2008 I'd say that was around 2011 or 12.

Laura Wagner ([00:12:43](#)):

I think what caught up with me, maybe was going through all of those events and my body changing and hormonally, I can't say that for sure, but I think I was doing the best I could and putting one foot in front of the other. And I think sometimes it just settles into your life. And I just kept going, kept going. I'm gonna raise this baby. This is my second master's degree. I mean, and I love that about me, but it's a lot. And I have a hard time slowing down.

Kim Strobel ([00:13:12](#)):

Yes. So, because for me, I was that very anxious child too. I mean, when I was in the fifth grade, I didn't want to go to Disney World with my family because what if my brothers got lost? And before that if we were playing in the neighborhood and I couldn't find my brothers, I was convinced that they were gone and we would never find them. And then in middle school, if my dad wasn't home by six o'clock sharp, I was convinced he had died in a car accident. And so like I really, not only did I have this really feeling personality, actually I read an article not too long ago about being an empath and that even normalized me Laura to feel like there's nothing wrong that I'm feeling person and that, you know, I have all of these emotions. There's nothing wrong with that.

Kim Strobel ([00:14:04](#)):

Cause I also felt wrong about being that person, being the very emotional person who can be very affected from a commercial that has like, I can't even watch a commercial that has an animal that's been abused. I tell my husband don't tell me I don't want to hear it. Like I'm highly affected by all of that. And then when mine turned into full fledged panic disorder at like age 16, we certainly had no idea I was misdiagnosed with low blood sugar. And some kind of seizure disorder and I wasn't treated properly. And then my confidence, I just completely felt flawed and incapable and just terrible. I didn't know what was wrong with me. I couldn't function like other people were. and one of the things that I've learned now is that, I am no less of a person because I have these vulnerabilities.

Kim Strobel ([00:14:57](#)):

And so it's kind of like what you said, I actually have an affirmation right now because one of the ways that Kim Strobel has dealt with her weaknesses is by like becoming this super charged, powerful bad ass woman who works her ass off and chases her dreams and goes after what she wants. But what I began to realize is while that's a great attribute that I have, there is a secondary gain that I get from that, which is to squash down my weaknesses and never ever let them come to the forefront because there's some part of me that was still ashamed of those weaknesses. And so my affirmation, one of my 10 that I write every day is I am honoring the lioness in me who is fierce and incredibly strong while also loving and accepting my vulnerabilities.

Laura Wagner ([00:15:47](#)):

Oh, I love that so much. I'm worried I'm going to cry on this podcast, but I shouldn't worry about that.

Kim Strobel ([00:15:53](#)):

No, I know. But it's like, you know, can I not be both of those? Can I not be the badass who steps on the stage but also maybe going to Walmart last week was really hard for me and doesn't make me any less of a person because I have these vulnerabilities.

Laura Wagner ([00:16:09](#)):

Right? I mean, that's like the whole, I love the Brene Brown, you know, Daring Greatly social worker that did all this research on shame and vulnerability. She says, when you show up, like you were saying as the powerful woman, but you also allow those parts of you that you determine to be weaknesses come to the forefront and it encompasses all that you are and that's beautiful. And that's being in the arena. She says, you're not up in the seats watching and saying, well, you know, I want to offer myself up to people, but I want to hide this part of me. You're in it and showing up, showing other people who you really are, but like allowing yourself. To be that whole person because it takes a lot of energy to push that away and embrace that powerhouse part all the time.

Kim Strobel ([00:17:02](#)):

It does. And I actually was, I was, inhibiting my ability to heal from panic disorder by constantly... So when I have a panic attack, when one comes on, I immediately with the strongest resistance possible push it away and which makes it come on even stronger. And so part of my healing process has been really to let it be there. To say, this is a part of you that struggles and let it come and let it be there and know you're going to be okay, but let it come. And I actually think the more that I do that, the more I kinda heal my brain circuitry around panic disorder. You know, I want to know what a panic attack feels like to you and then I'm going to tell you what mine are like.

Laura Wagner ([00:17:56](#)):

Oh. So I mean that's kind of on the continuum of, you know, my story is I'd have depressive episodes, but there was like you also anxiety, you can get anxious about, Oh my gosh, what's today going to be like, am I going to feel good or not? So it's kind of riding waves of that for me. As time has gone on I've built a beautiful life. A couple of years ago I had some stuff go on business-wise and family-wise that were extraordinarily stressful, like kind of devastating. Like we're still here and life is beautiful. But it just, the toll that it took on me and I went into a depression, a clinical depression.

Laura Wagner ([00:18:37](#)):

I showed up for life and I, I moved forward. you know, I wasn't, it wasn't necessarily hospitalized me and never wanted it to end my life or anything, but it was just a steady hum of depression, having a really hard time doing things. But there was an anxiety that came with that too. And it's like you said, I started to think my daughter would leave to go study at the coffee shop and I was like, 'she's going to die on a Tuesday night at 8:30'. Completely unreasonable, bawling, sobbing. So for me, I feel that come up and it's really physical. I always feel it in my chest. And you know, my language starts to become I start talking really rapidly. I just kind of pace around. I want to be alone, but I want somebody to take care of me. It's so overwhelming and I'm like, it feels endless.

Laura Wagner ([00:19:32](#)):

And the other thing I was doing, you were saying the fear of driving to Walmart, I during that time had, which this has never happened with me before, Kim, I mean I've been an anxious person and sometimes an anxious driver. I got modeling jobs. So when sometimes where I'd have to go to regional sites for

awesome projects and so I'd have to drive there. So I live in Louisville and go to Cincinnati or Lexington about an hour, hour and a half. I was petrified to drive on the interstate, sometimes anywhere around my city. I was afraid it wasn't so much either, and I don't know if you experienced this, it wasn't the fear of other people doing something to me, it was a fear of my loss of control or doing something wrong or what if I run into a wall or what if a truck gets too close to me and I get too scared.

Laura Wagner ([00:20:24](#)):

I mean all of these unreasonable. So I'm sweating sometimes, heart rate goes up. I'm sure that has not helped my recent high blood pressure diagnosis. And that's kind of brought me to where before you and I started when you said, how are you? And I'm always open and honest with people. I'm like, it's a pretty good day but I've been going through some stuff and I recently have just walked into 2020 with some health issues that were a surprise and some that were not. But it progressed and I really have to work on my mind in my life. So one was high blood pressure, which part of it is genetic, but another part of me was like, let's look at how you're living and see what might be contributing to this. So like I said, I'm like you the powerhouse do, go, write, speak, but it goes really fast sometimes.

Laura Wagner ([00:21:21](#)):

And sometimes it's never enough. And what I think is good enough is another, if this is good enough to me, another person is like that for me would be a fear. So there was that and then I have knee osteoarthritis and I started having some hip problems as well and it all kind of feeds into each other. And it started out as mild arthritis about when I was 35 and it's degenerative. So it's going to progress. There is no cure for it. You would ultimately need, and I will buy lateral knee replacement. But I think, I thought when I got really physically fit and really embraced fitness, I love it so much and the body and what it can do. I told my husband, I was like, there's some magical thinking that I had and it's not bad, but I thought I'm going to stop this.

Laura Wagner ([00:22:13](#)):

It'll stay where it is, but I am going to be powerful and I'm not, it's not going to get worse. I'm not going to be the one that is going down. But what has happened this year, and this is where I almost feel weepy but I'm going to hold it together is, I have moved to the next stage of the disease and my body is feeling it and I was with my physical therapist today. I've seen my, orthopedist, I have chiropractor, I always say it's Laura Wagner's allied health care team.

Kim Strobel ([00:22:45](#)):

Yes. And at 46, you're dealing with some of these kind of major body and medical issues that are bringing you down.

Laura Wagner ([00:22:53](#)):

So I have been very resilient as I've told you. Like sometimes I'll tell my husband like, why am I so happy sometimes cause this sucks. Chronic pain is very mentally wearing. It is always a hum in the background of your life. It's a three somedays and somedays, it's a seven and you're always negotiating with your body about what you can and can't do. I'm an active person to the point where I always say, but it's not a joke, I'm a middle aged athlete. And I'm doing tabata and burpees and, and big time fast things. But I cross train too. And today because of where I'm at, I'm trying to figure out how to stabilize things. I was walking in the water therapy pool and everybody there was 30 years older than me.

Laura Wagner ([00:23:46](#)):

So where the, you know, and I'm working really hard, but try not to work hard because it stresses me out too. Be with the pain. I'm worried I'll get depressed or anxious because when they tell you that there's something that you can't fix, that it has to be dealt with by removing parts that you were not born with and you have to wait until you get to a certain level before a physician will do that. Cause I'm very young to be going through this.

Kim Strobel ([00:24:21](#)):

Yeah. And when I think it's funny because I'm a big fitness person too, partly because I think that knowing the way the chemicals in my brain already work for me, my ability to work out is one of my core strategies for keeping my mental wellbeing strong. And so it's funny that you bring this up because I think it's normal for us to be freaked out about these things. I was actually at the chiropractor this morning because I've been having this shoulder issue and I'm not going to lie, like I'm starting to get really anxious about it because it's gone on for a year. It's impeding my sleep. And then last week it started hurting even during the day. And this morning when he said, well, I think it's from running, I'm like, I feel like if I lose my ability to run, like you might as well just take me to the psychiatric hospital and check me in. And so I think these things that you were talking about are very normal for us to feel, but people like us with this over-anxious brain and knowing there are certain kind of non-negotiables in our life that keep us healthy from a mental standpoint. It can kind of rock your infrastructure.

Laura Wagner ([00:25:35](#)):

It's not lost on me at all that I in my philosophy and mission of helping the women I serve, they often come to me with the want is I want to lose weight or I can't stand my body or I want to commit to being a person that that works out, but they also know what I'm doing is something much broader than I don't do diets or any of that kind of stuff is an all encompassing let's look at your whole life. So I'm very clear. I'm like, you're not picking me because I'm gonna like write a training workout for you. I mean, I know about those things and I'm certified, but it's really about like, what's going on up here? How do you become devoted to the body, which is such a loving way to look at it.

Laura Wagner ([00:26:25](#)):

So I'm like, I can't believe this is happening and this is part of my work and I am struggling deeply with this at times and I'm trying to work through, like feeling the pain of that but also telling myself, that I think helps propel forward, this is not, it is a loss and grieving, but it's also the arrival of something in my life that I don't understand all the way. And then I'm trying to let it unfold and figure out, and it's also not lost on me that the things I can do fitness-wise are very mindful. Slow but still powerful. So palates on the reformer walking or jogging in the water, a lot of upper body stuff. I told my friend, Jeff, who also been my trainer, I was like, I could compete in a competition with what this upper body is going to look like.

Kim Strobel ([00:27:21](#)):

And it is about shifting that perspective and you're so right about that. But I also do wonder, I think for, so I had the worst relapse in 20 years of panic disorder in the fall of 2018. So I've always had a struggle, but I mean I've, I've coped in a very healthy way for years. And in September of 2018 I had the worst panic attack I had had in like 25 years. And it kind of took me almost all the way back to step one where I felt uncomfortable being alone at my house. I felt uncomfortable driving five minutes to the gym and I was a little bit like, Oh my gosh, I have finally created this dream business. I drive to Louisville, I get on



planes, I fly across the country and I am right in the middle of launching my happiness coaching business and creating my first ever online happiness course. And you do this to me? Like I was like, the happiness coach is writing the happiness curriculum and all the time she's the most unhappy she's been in her, you know, in the last 25 years. And so there was this part of me that was resisting it and was really pissed off and saying, you know, God, I've done this hard thing for so long.

Kim Strobel ([00:28:41](#)):

Like, why are you having me go through this big challenge again? And I will still tell you, I mean, I wish I would never have another panic attack again. But I also think how interesting is it that the happiness coach was placed right back to that area of struggle while she was creating this program for others who are struggling?

Laura Wagner ([00:29:05](#)):

And, I felt you get a little emotional there. So now I'm not afraid, but I feel exactly the same way because what this has led me to, because I told my husband this morning, I said, that my physical therapist and I are going so slowly, she's like, 'everything you try is going to have to be, how do I feel? How do I feel?' And I just like, I don't know how long I can stay buoyant. Like what if my mind betrays me? And I can't do it. Like, I stay with myself. So, but what I learned was like, okay, so the movement coach with all of her, you know, my process for bringing fitness into your life. But I'm so much about what that does for the power of your whole life in your mind. And I discovered with my own life coach that I've been working with, who told me one day recently, she said, I want you to spend a little bit of time, 15 minutes, 50 words writing every day. Because your writing is so beautiful and it's so impactful on people and you tell these stories and these perspectives on life that are such a gift. And my goal for, and I'm going to say it out loud on a podcast because I've wanted to write a book that you hold in your hands since I was eight years old.

Laura Wagner ([00:30:33](#)):

And I'm going to write a tiny book. I actually went to workshop a couple of years ago called writing the tiny book, which is like, it could be 50 pages and getting itself published and printed, but I wasn't feeling a spark with that. I wanted to take all my blogs and stuff and I was like, well that's great, but I know now what I'm supposed to talk about.

Kim Strobel ([00:30:55](#)):

Yeah, you're in the muck of it.

Laura Wagner ([00:30:57](#)):

And I am, I, I don't exactly what the theme of it is overall, but I'm telling stories and writing them about what it feels like to live with this every day. And this is a middle aged woman walking into my forties not seeing muscles or being able to have the endurance of, Hey, do you want to jump rope through all these intervals and not rest? I was like, bring it on. Now going into my fifties and a couple of years, it's a whole other pace and an unknown world that I am so afraid of but open to. It helps me with my fear of going into a dark place and the panic. So, you know, a strategy for helping people, for me, I tell my clients all the time, I don't know if you do. I'm like, you need to write, write a gratitude list. Write down my clients were depressed I'm like, write me a time journal of what your day is like so we can look for patterns. And so writing for me and telling these stories is really it's really like an embrace for through all of this stuff that feels like everything's scattering.



Kim Strobel ([00:32:09](#)):

Yeah. You know, I think when I look back at it too, I actually know and see, cause I'm still working on healing this in my own life. But the layer of Kim that was still refusing to accept my vulnerability was not contributing to an overall healing. And I think to myself is that another silent gift of this trauma, this struggle in my life is that it has made me go back and do more work on myself because I really had some junk in my trunk that I had been shoving away by my ability to overproduce, overwork, and over achieve. And so I think that there's just divine intervention there. And is there another story that we can tell ourselves that is also true about this moment? But I also love your vulnerability because honestly that is the number one thing that I want this podcast to be is real.

Kim Strobel ([00:33:13](#)):

And so like when we read your bio and it's just like the ladies listening, I know sometimes they're just like, I'm never going to be that woman. Like she, look at all these crazy things that she's done and then for you to roll us all the way back and say, Hey, I'm kind of in the middle of some darkness and dismay right now. I think it speaks a level of truth that our audiences need to hear and understand about us and who we are also as women.

Laura Wagner ([00:33:42](#)):

Yeah. And I think one thing I want to tell people too people who do our kind of work about happiness and an expansive life, we will say things like, find the gift and what the adversity is. And that can sound so vapid and like throw away like, yeah, yeah, yeah, live your best life. But I'm like, no, that is one of the most important kinds of work that you can do when you are faced with adversity, that you really don't know how it's going to unfold. I mean, you have some ideas, but your day to day, everything right now is changing. And it is a real challenge. But you know, things like this, talking with someone like you, and by the way, this is like one of the most beautiful conversations I've ever had. But talking about it, I tell people to be metacognitive about themselves, which just means hover above yourself and kinda, without judgment, watch what you're doing. So like today I'm in the pool and I'm talking to the 78 year old man who's telling me about his knees. And I'm like, yep. And I'm like, God, this is so sad. And I was like, okay, here I go again. I was like, no, look at you in here doing the work.

Kim Strobel ([00:35:01](#)):

Yes, yes. And you and you are, you're, you're, I love what you said when you said you're standing in the resiliency of who Laura Wagner is today, which means you're in the struggle. You have a lot of unknowns, but you're also so connected to that like inner part of you, even if your mind betrays you at times or your body is betraying you, there's like that divine soul that is in you, that you're aware of. And it's like, I tell people, I don't know if you saw my post a few weeks ago, but when I was, sometimes I worry that I tell the same stories. I'm like, did I tell this on the last weeks podcast, I can't remember?

Laura Wagner ([00:35:49](#)):

Don't worry about that! They're worth telling again and again.

Kim Strobel ([00:35:50](#)):

I think you need to hear it personally because back when I was like 20 years old, I was going to a psychologist. I was getting cognitive behavior therapy for my panic disorder and my homework was to go to Walmart and to touch the very back wall of Walmart. And I literally like just driving five minutes to Walmart was just overwhelming to me. And then to think that I had to go in the store and touch the

back wall, but I did it. I did the exposure therapy and so I told her, because I started going back to her 20 years later, a couple of months ago to have some EMDR on this reoccurring panic stuff that I was dealing with. And I went to Walmart two weeks ago, Laura and I told myself that I'm going to go back and I'm going to touch that spot again.

Kim Strobel ([00:36:35](#)):

And I took a picture of my finger touching the spot that the 20 year old woman touched all those years ago, 25 years ago. And I said to myself, yes, I didn't think that at age 45 almost 46 that I would ever be going through what I've gone through again in the last year and a half. Like I would never want to know that it was going to get that dark again. But when I placed my finger on the wall, I said, but I am not that 20 year old girl. Like I might've gone through this. I am different at the core of who I am. So the woman touching that wall today, she might still have some of the struggles, but she has a set of tools and strategies where she has rebuilt herself time and time again that that 20 year old woman did not have. And so I touched it with like acknowledgement that maybe I didn't expect to be here experiencing this again, but that I am not that woman.

Kim Strobel ([00:37:34](#)):

I am such a more stronger, resilient, self-made woman who is fully capable of enduring the struggle and getting through it once again.

Laura Wagner ([00:37:46](#)):

I mean I, you and I are just, we should be twin sisters that just didn't find each other until now.

Kim Strobel ([00:37:54](#)):

We live an hour and a half away from each other it's craziness.

Laura Wagner ([00:37:57](#)):

Well, we'll meet up for sure in person. But I love that you said that because that's one of the things I tell myself is when I say why am I happy some days through this? Like I'm not in a place where I'm not depressed even though that is one of my fears. And then you get anxious about being depressed. But it's like you said, I'm like, you know, I'll be 49 in July. And I'm like, Oh my gosh, where you were like you said 10 years ago. Sometimes what's really revealing to me, I've been on Facebook since I worked at the University of Louisville a long time ago, so 2006 when it was just for college students. And Facebook will do that thing where they're like your memory from eight years ago.

Laura Wagner ([00:38:39](#)):

And sometimes I'm like, Oh my God. But what will happen is I will see my language in those old posts and it's some of some days if I was having a hard day, it was so heavy. And so, just why sometimes am I bearing the burden of being tired, overwhelmed, not that I was always, but I could just see sometimes I would, my vulnerability was to say to people, Hey, you know, I'm struggling, which I still do, but the language I used was that it was outside of myself. Something was happening to me. So a circumstance, things do happen to me. My body is a fact that this is happening. It's not something I'm making up. Like you can see x-rays.

Kim Strobel ([00:39:24](#)):

Yeah. And you have to be able to feel the pain and suffering and disappointment and pissed-off-ness that you are feeling around that.

Laura Wagner ([00:39:32](#)):

And I, and like, okay, so this is a real lesson and self coaching. What am I making that mean about me and my future? But it's like you said about going through this really awful episode a couple of years ago. I mean that's basically the same thing that has happened to me when about the end of 2017 I just, I didn't fall apart. I see it now, but I did in a way. I was like, you just had to walk through that at and be at the time of a 46ish year old woman and you knew so much more. I just thought at the time I was like, why is this happening and why is this happening again? I can't handle it. I can't handle it. and I'm worried about going to that again, but I think it's getting back to what you said, this unfolding is me having to deal with probably for sure some past issues, some things about the way I live and maybe treat myself in my brain about a pacing of my life that needs to be different.

Laura Wagner ([00:40:38](#)):

And a languaging in my brain that needs to be kinder than I might be. And about really taking in life. I'm all about like get on the airplane and go to Italy and I love being home too, but I just, I move quick and I always say I'm wound tight and I love that about me. But there's a part of me, I know that that needs to come out.

Kim Strobel ([00:41:02](#)):

Because I think we do it Laura, because we have to prove to ourselves that we really are worthy. I do everything with a sense of urgency. I do everything very fast. You and I, by the way, are, I dunno if you've done the Gallup Strength Finder. Have you done that? We're going to share our top five strengths because I think they might be similar.

Laura Wagner ([00:41:21](#)):

I have, but I can't remember what they are, but they're always everything I do, whether it's on the Myers-Briggs, I'm an INFP, which they're like only 1% of the population is this. I'm like, well, of course. It's always, what careers should you be? A healer, and a creative person, a writer. And I'm like, all right, well, I made my job.

Kim Strobel ([00:41:44](#)):

Yeah, yeah. It is. Like, I think that I actually used this term and it might've been Carolyn Myss. Do you know Carolyn Myss, the author? She talks a lot about spirituality. And I don't know if she's the one that coined this term, but it's basically called an unraveling. Like in order to have a spiritual shift in your life, you will endure an unraveling in your life. And for me, I was kind of like, okay, I'm unraveling and it's chaos and I hate it and I don't like it. And I'm confused. And I feel like on an impostor building this course while having these struggles myself, and who am I to tell people how to live their best life when right now I'm laying on my floor crying and I can't drive to Walmart, you know? But I think that for people like us who cannot make ourselves slow down, it's almost like there's this intervention that says, my golly, if you can't make yourself do it, I'm going to do it for you. And then we're going to, you know what I mean?

Laura Wagner ([00:42:46](#)):

I will tell you, you said that and I was like, Oh my goodness, this goes so with my work with women and helping them check in with themselves and seeing the direction to go, we look for outside cues a lot. Plus the world tells us, Hey, we'll tell you what to do, particularly women. And we're like, okay, okay. If I do it right, then I'll figure it out. But in terms of the body and just life, I say to my clients, your body will always tell you the truth and I this month I was like...

Kim Strobel ([00:43:18](#)):

Screw that shit.

Laura Wagner ([00:43:21](#)):

That's my line to other people. That's not for me, but I'm like, I said in a, I'm doing a meetup group and I said at the end of the content I wrote for the description of the group I was like powerhouse woman. I live what I teach and I teach what I live.

Kim Strobel ([00:43:40](#)):

Which makes you the best person to be the teacher. Honestly. Did you ever read the Big Leap by Gay Hendricks?

Laura Wagner ([00:43:48](#)):

Yes. I just read it. I'm wondering, I'm like, is my arthritis the upper limit problem?

Kim Strobel ([00:43:55](#)):

I know. And I'm also thinking about people like us who like to move fast, like to do things fast, like to take action, like to be very busy, kinda like to, you know, I'm a competer, so like I'm not just going to be the girl who runs the race. I'm going to be the girl that you know competes in the top 5% of the race and all this silly, crazy, overachieving stuff that I do, but I also know that I have the hidden barrier, which is I'm fatally flawed. Like, there's a flaw deep inside of me that feels like I am not good enough or whatever.

Kim Strobel ([00:44:30](#)):

And so I to keep myself busy and accomplish all of these things and look and feel like the badass woman to cover up the fact that deep inside I believe I could still be flawed or bad. And so I'm recognizing that and I'm taking steps to work on that. That happens to be one of my barriers is understanding that my value at the end of the day is not based on how many miles I ran, how many workouts I got in, or how many things I accomplished or how much money I made. Right now, Laura, it still is. I'm just going to tell you it still is right? But I'm aware. I'm aware of it being an area that needs to have continued work on my life. And so for you, going back to your situation, when you say you looked back at that 2006 memory post or whatever, you know that you are a different woman today than you were. Into the inside of you is different. Which doesn't mean you won't go into darkness. It's a possibility. Of course it is. But you have a rewiring inside of you that was not there in 2006.

Laura Wagner ([00:45:41](#)):

Correct. I am becoming more and more just as a person but as a practitioner of a, I call it a neuroscience geek. I'm fascinated by the brain and the architecture of it and what we can do with our thoughts to like rewire those neurons, your pathways and that you're creating. I will tell clients when they are landing on

a thought that does not serve them. Like for me, like this is awful. It's going to get worse. I'm gonna get depressed because I'm in pain every day or some days. But I was like, that is a well worn road for me right now. It's like Paige Street where the mall is, you just go straight down. You just don't worry about it. But for me to go the other road, the fork in the road and I'll tell my clients so you have a different thought that's more empowering that it's not like an affirmation that you might not be able to leave.

Laura Wagner ([00:46:43](#)):

There has to be some truth to it that you can be like, all right, I can hang on to that possibility, which for me is I am going to find a different way to live that I will love and embrace. This is a gift for me to slow down. Now that road for me is like taking a four wheeler and going in a bunch of mud. My brain is like, girl, we don't do this.

Kim Strobel ([00:47:10](#)):

But you know, the happiness research is super strong that our external circumstances, which this would be an external circumstance for you, that the brain research says that external circumstances contribute to only about 10% of our longterm happiness. And so it's like, you're right, do you choose eventually, not right now cause obviously you're going to be a little less happy, you're going to let it impede you. You're pissed off, you're angry, you're upset. But like looking at the longterm vision of your life, is it really going to greatly decrease your ability to feel happiness, joy, and fulfillment in your life? And then I have to tell you, this book I'm currently reading is called, I'm looking at my phone right now. It's called Rewire Your Anxious Brain. I'm going to show it to you. It says "How to use the neuroscience of fear to end anxiety, panic and worry."

Laura Wagner ([00:48:08](#)):

I love that. I'm on it now.

Kim Strobel ([00:48:10](#)):

Let me tell you what, but it's so neat because they talk about the differences between anxiety and panic. So anxiety actually fires from your cerebral cortex, which is the right behind your forehead and, and then the panic, more fires from your amygdalas, well they call it the amygdala, but there's two of them that are actually behind your eye socket. And they both create completely different responses in our body. And so I'm only on like chapter three, but I'm really looking, like you said, for those neuroscience strategies that cause it's all about how do I rewire the circuitry in my brain, right? That's what we want to do.

Laura Wagner ([00:48:48](#)):

I think for people like you and me that we, live in our emotions that are really strong and gripping and scary like that back of that amygdala, that fight or flight part of us. I think learning is solid scientific things a lot of times is really grounding for us. And I've read the book that I'm just like nuts about right now that actually helps me a lot. It's Atomic Habits by James McClary.

Laura Wagner ([00:49:20](#)):

I'm such a cognitive and you know, work with your emotions and thoughts and what he's saying about habits really is about working on your identity and your thoughts. But I've just loved, you know, the unfolding of doing these things and training your brain and your body and organizing things to support yourself. I find that really healing for me, even though it seems like, Oh, you know, you put these things

in place and then things work because what it teaches us is and why you and I bounce back even when we go down the slope. I always say, if people said to me, what is the one thing that you feel like you do best when you counsel, coach, teach women? I said, I'm helping them learn how to build resilience.

Kim Strobel ([00:50:05](#)):

Cause you've lived it.

Laura Wagner ([00:50:08](#)):

Yeah. It's not going to go away. Life is not going to go away with all of its twists and turns, but your ability to return to yourself at whatever point this curve in the road is and say, okay, I'm gonna move forward and feel the feelings and figure out a different way to be. Resilience, that's what it is. It's not about never feeling cruddy again. It's about saying, what were you saying about being the person that runs all the miles and everything that flaw, but that beauty in you that you pull. It's like I said about being in the pool today was, Oh my gosh, I'm in here. This is so sad. And I was like, look at you. You told all these things that are like, I don't know that could happen. That could be scary. And you got the pool and you walked. And I've learned how to do those things over and over again. That doesn't mean I don't sit there and think, I almost cried in the water today cause I had some of those thoughts, but I just shifted.

Laura Wagner ([00:51:12](#)):

I love the word right now, pivot. I didn't really play sports, but I played basketball a little when I was a girl. And I know, you know, the one thing they teach you is pivot. Keep one foot on the ground. You don't get to runaway, but just turn your body with the other one. Position the body differently. And that's a really compact, powerful move. And I'm like, well that's what I learned to do. I don't totally raise my foot off the ground. I really can't right now with my physical issues, but I can turn literally turn my body and say, well what can you do? How can you live with this? But not live with this UGH like live with us. How can you be with this?

Kim Strobel ([00:51:57](#)):

I love that. It's funny because I think like when people say, well what do you do? I teach women how to overcome hard things and still find immense joy in their life. And it's because I've been through really hard things in my life. And then I use these stories to teach my content, which is exactly what you will do. You will use this eventually as a story to help others. and then I have to, Oh, I have to go back. I have to go all teacher on you a minute. So did you know in the teaching world like, like school teacher? Cause I'm a former school teacher.

Laura Wagner ([00:52:32](#)):

I am too! I was a high school English teacher.

Kim Strobel ([00:52:34](#)):

You were? AH! I was a fourth grade teacher! Yeah, we are soul sisters for sure!

Laura Wagner ([00:52:40](#)):

We are, I know,

Kim Strobel ([00:52:41](#)):

Oh we just came out of different vaginas. Oh my goodness. Okay, so we have this term, so we talk about how a person has like the reading voice, which is reading the words on the page or observing something, right? Like there's a lamp with flowers on it in front of me, but the metacognition voice, we actually call that the thinking voice. And so the thinking voice is the voice that is having thoughts about what it's reading or seeing. And so I wanted to introduce you to that term and we call that the thinking voice. And it's the story you're telling yourself about whatever it is you're seeing perceiving or experiencing.

Laura Wagner ([00:53:26](#)):

I love that I'm going to use that because not that I'm trying to like elevate everything and go above my clients, but metacognitive, I'm like sometimes I have a hard time explaining. Sometimes I'll say like the bird's eye view of your brain and reaction but I love that, the thinking voice because I tell my clients all the time and people don't do this. I said, okay, your homework is, I want you to think about your thoughts. Download them. You don't have to do anything with it. Just like bring it forward and just put it all out there. Cause it's fascinating what's going on in there.

Kim Strobel ([00:53:59](#)):

And we have it running all of the time. I'm like, just think about when that one person texts you and you have a thought, you're like, son of a gun. Is she really asking me to do that? Like that's your thinking voice and it's having thoughts about something you just experienced. So yeah, that's really powerful. Oh my gosh. I think it's so interesting, again, I think this is just complete divine intervention. I love that we both just showed up to be real today. I love that you're sharing your struggle, that you can be this badass woman who's hitting it out of the ballpark and you can also be the woman who is unraveling and kind of falling apart on your inside at the same time. Which is how all of us as human beings, this is life and it's real. And it helps to hear, especially a woman who is as powerful as you, it really does help to just normalize it for the rest of us. And so I appreciate that you were willing to go there with us today.

Laura Wagner ([00:54:58](#)):

I'm just delighted by this. You helped, this conversation, because I came home and today and I was kinda aching a little bit. I was like, Oh God, should I have walked in the water? And you go through all of that stuff. And I truly believe, and this is a prime example, when I'm talking to you, I'm sharing the story. I'm laughing, those chemicals in my brain, you and I are the neuroscience girls it's releasing that into my body. And I feel physically, not all the way better, but I feel better. And so that is what all of this will do for you. The vulnerability, the unlocking things, putting it out there. What's the truth about you? Which is that it's hard for you. It hurts. It's painful. Your brain or your body. But wow, we can also be powerful too. It all works together.

Kim Strobel ([00:55:49](#)):

It does. And so people who want to find out more about you, where can they go to find you, Ms Laura?

Laura Wagner ([00:55:55](#)):

Well, they can go to my website, which is [www.Laura-Wagner.com](http://www.Laura-Wagner.com). I married a husband with a very common last name and I was like, I can't have the URL I want, but people find it all the time. You can also find me on Instagram I am really loving Instagram these days. It's at [@LauraWagner71](#). That's my birth year. I like it when I don't feel like getting in the conversation stuff with Facebook but I like an



image or just a more short comment that you just put out there into the world. And I like doing the Instagram stories so you follow along.

Kim Strobel ([00:56:35](#)):

I am really loving Instagram stories too.

Laura Wagner ([00:56:39](#)):

They are so fun. It's like making a little movie of my day. And I can be so, I think I'm so hilarious.

Kim Strobel ([00:56:47](#)):

I know. I think like I'm really good at like seeing, Oh this would be a great thing to add to my Instagram stories. So we'll have to, we'll have to start clicking on each other's everyday to see what we're up to. Cause I'm @KimStrobelJoy on mine.

Laura Wagner ([00:57:02](#)):

Well I found you there on then I'm also on Facebook, I am there. That is like where a lot of people I connect with begin and there's my professional site, Laura Wagner Life Coaching. But you can also, I take in friends all the time and my name is Laura Macaulay Wagner, which I would have had that URL.

Kim Strobel ([00:57:23](#)):

Yeah, you would have! So this is maybe going to be a little bit of a challenge for you, which I think we like a challenge. So I always end each podcast episode by asking what are you currently doing to reach for more joy in your life? And so I think this is a good time for us to talk about that. What are you going to do or are doing to find a little bit more joy in your life?

Laura Wagner ([00:57:51](#)):

That is such a good question because I think what I've been telling myself is what can I find that will help me tolerate, feel a little better. I think it's probably doing things like, I was thinking about this today. So with my fitness stuff that I'm doing, I love group exercise. So my cohort of people and friends that I've had, I'm like, I've lost them or I haven't lost lost them, but I'm not with them anymore. I'm with like the 70 year olds. Those are my people. I love them and that's fine, but I'm like, that is so heavy to me. But I also thought today it made me feel so joyful. I was like text these women as a group and say let's set for the next six months, a day where we can go to brunch and if you can make it great and if you can't, you can't that month. And that brought me a lot of joy that I'm like, you have not lost certain parts of your life. It's changed and you need to interact in a different way. But also what brings me joy is like really great self care. I love things like massages. Those things help me. So anything that I can do to really, it sounds like pain relief, but it just floods my body with...

Kim Strobel ([00:59:10](#)):

I'm headed to get a massage right after this.

Laura Wagner ([00:59:13](#)):

Yeah. And now I'm like, well, this is medically necessary.

Kim Strobel ([00:59:18](#)):

Yes. Well, I have to tell you it's funny that you and I have a little bit of a similar path here, but in order to slow down, I have been told and had a million signs from the universe that I need to start doing yoga. So I went to yoga class this week and I was the youngest one in the class. The rest were between 70 and 85 years old. And I could only stretch about 25% as well as what they all could. But I was like, this is exactly where I need to be. And so I'm really, I'm actually shifting my whole running schedule so that I can now hit two yoga classes a week because I absolutely need the slowness and the groundedness. And it doesn't mean that I have to sweat and do all these crazy muscle movements in order to get a workout, you know?

Laura Wagner ([01:00:10](#)):

I know. I mean, that's what I'm learning and I keep telling myself, Oh, I'm so young to be going. And everybody does. Doctors tell me that the older people in the pool are like, what are you doing in here? You're so young. I'm like, if one more person tells me that. But what I know it's not something I want to hold over people, but I know my people our age that are in their forties, mid forties, I'm like, I am experiencing something that they might, I hope not, but they might experience 20, 25 years from now. So there's some kind of wisdom that I'm gaining that, I don't know, I'll probably will still be doing what I'm doing, helping people. But knowing the path that, you know, how hard that is when my friends are as we age. And what I'm learning too, our bodies are not meant to be here for forever.

Laura Wagner ([01:00:59](#)):

I mean, and that's okay. I mean, it's sort of, if I can look at it and reframe it, this might sound weird. It's kind of a beautiful process. How you know what you're born with. And that's one of my signature lines. It's really my mission is this is the only thing that you own, this vessel that carries you everyday. It's with you from your first breath you take when you're a baby and the last one that you take when I hope you're a really old lady who dies in bed surrounded by love. How are you going to take care of this? How are you going to love it and what experiences are you going to give it? And boy, more than ever, Kim, I really need that.

Kim Strobel ([01:01:42](#)):

Yeah, that's exactly what you're doing. You're taking care of your vessel even though it feels like you shouldn't be having to do what you're having to do. The bottom line is you're doing it. You showed up, you went to the pool, you did, you're walking in the pool. You're showing up in a way that your body needs you to right now.

Laura Wagner ([01:02:02](#)):

And I'll have a whole new clientele when I'm like 70 of all these people who are like, I'm falling apart. Listen, I got two new knees, everything's gonna be fine.

Kim Strobel ([01:02:13](#)):

And you're going to write a book about this anyways, so all is good. Oh my gosh Laura. Well thank you, thank you so much for being on the show and sharing your vulnerability and having the courage just to do what I call step into the arena of bigness and that's what you're doing. You're stepping into the arena of the bigness of who you are as a woman. So I thank you for that.

Laura Wagner ([01:02:34](#)):

This brought me so much joy. That is what you do. And thank you. I just am so honored and delighted. Thank you for this.

Kim Strobel ([01:02:47](#)):

Whoop, whoop, we did it! Thank you so much for joining me on the She Finds Joy podcast today. I'm super honored to share this space with you and I hope you learned something new and helpful. As always, this conversation will be continued in our free private Facebook group. You can join that group by going to [kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy](http://kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy) to connect with other joy seekers just like you. Additionally, if this is your first time joining the show, know that I am here every Wednesday with a brand new episode, so make sure you subscribe, go to whatever podcast app you use and subscribe to the show so you never miss an episode. You can go to that directly if you go to [kimstrobel.com/podcast](http://kimstrobel.com/podcast) that will put you in Apple podcast where you can click on the subscribe button and you can also leave a review. If you scroll down just a little bit, you will be able to leave that five star review and just leave me a few sentences letting me know what you thought about the show. It really helps me if you let me know how the show has impacted you and how you are striving for more joy in your life. You might be nominated to be the joyful woman of the week. Also, please share this episode. My goal is to help more women unleash their happiness, one daring day at a time. So please take a screenshot on your phone, share it out on social media, tag your friends, tag me [@KimStrobelJoy](#) on Instagram or in our Facebook group, [kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy](http://kimstrobel.com/shefindsjoy). I'm quick to reply and I am super eager to send you some Facebook love. It makes my heart happy to be able to connect and surround myself with other women who are all ready to do this work. So thanks for being here and I'll be back next week. Until then, no matter what you do today, make sure you know that you are enough just as you are. Here's to finding more joy!