

My hero full episodes

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"The hero's journey can take place on a battlefield or in a cubicle. We can live it out amid public clamor or in the soundless vault between our ears. The demons we are dueling are always the same. They are our own fears of becoming who we are. No one who has ever lived—or ever will—has a journey like ours. And yet our journey is universal. It is every woman's and every man's." —Steven Pressfield MeSamong | Shutterstock Did you know that you are the hero of your own story? Living life from behind your eyes, you are the protagonist, and you are the author. Some might say you are the co-author with destiny or with your higher power. You may have understood this at one point in your life and circumstances got in the way of your ability to see clearly that you can still captain your own ship. You see, on every hero or heroine's journey, the hero gets lost. The hero nearly dies. The hero wants to give up. It's an essential part of the journey, in fact. If you are lucky, you will find your way back quickly, or after a little time. Some people get lost for so long they forget what it was like to be themselves. You know the ones—people who once walked in their full power but now sag beneath the weight of their disappointments and losses. Sometimes the pain in life can seem too much to bear, and there are those among us who suffer harder, maybe even feel deeper. Pain is inevitable, but suffering—the story we tell ourselves about the pain—is optional. We are all heroes and heroines—either answering the call of our highest selves or not. We will most certainly get lost when we don't answer, and we most likely find our purpose when we do. That is just part of the process. Sam Raimi said, "When we read stories of heroes, we identify with them. We take the journey with them. We see how the obstacles almost overcome them. We see how they grow as human beings or gain qualities or show great qualities of strength and courage and with them, we grow in some small way." We all have a unique gift that is striving to come alive in us, and that is the call. After the call is answered, then comes the initiation. The initiation we go through includes the tests, the leaps of faith, the actions we must take to get to the work we are meant to do. This manifests in the shape of anything risky that we wish to gain or accomplish. If we wish for love and romance, we must take a chance at getting hurt and trust the process of relationship. If we are starting a business, we must take one step at a time towards our vision often with failure after failure coming before success. During the initiation, you will need to persevere. When you persevere and you don't give up, you will emerge having grown, stretched, and expanded. You will have found something precious and unique to give to the world. Being the hero of your own story means stepping back from the overwhelm of any moment and seeing that every journey has ebb and flow, up and down. Don't wait for someone to save you. Save yourself. Step into your power and become the hero or heroine of your own life. Subscribe on iTunes, Stitcher Radio or TuneIn Meet the Dermatologist Who Wants to Save You Money — and Just Hit a \$200 Million Milestone for Patients Your Employees Want This Perk, and Giving It to Them Can Improve Your Bottom Line The Hidden Dangers of Not Taking Your Vacation Days This Family-Owned Manhattan Jewelry Shop Struggled to Rebuild After 9/11. Today, 2 Sisters Who Run the 46-Year-Old Business Reveal What It Takes to Persevere. Businesses Need More Women Investors. Here's How That Can Happen. Franchising Isn't for Entrepreneurs, It's for Systempreneurs This Former Disney Exec Shares Her 5 Most Valuable Takeaways on Leadership Following Viral LinkedIn Post This week on We Are Parents, Julia Dennison and Shaun T talk about single parenting. Featuring Emma Johnson, author of The Kickass Single Mom, creator of Wealthy Single Mommy, and a single mom following a divorce, and Adrienne Farr, executive operations coordinator at Parents and a single mom by choice, it's clear that no two single-parent families are the same, but these moms are true inspirations. "Single parenting is excruciatingly difficult," Adrienne—who looks after both her daughter and her mom, who has Alzheimer's and dementia—said on the podcast. "And nobody talks about how hard it is to be a parent in general, but when you literally have no one to help..." Catching up with Adrienne after she recorded the podcast, she admitted that "I must've been having a very good day because I grossly downplayed how hard it is to be taking care of my daughter while trying to work! Since I taped the podcast, my mom has come back home and I am struggling mightily!" Even with the hard times, especially now during the pandemic, Adrienne's decision to have a child on her own was a blessing and truly meant to be. From the 13 eggs she got after two retrievals, 12 of the eggs had abnormal chromosomes. "My one chance was my daughter." For Emma Johnson, a mom of two, lifting up other single parents—who, as Adrienne and Emma showcase in this episode, have just as many struggles as they do rewards that come along with being a parent—has become her life's mission. Parenting, relationships, work—single parents can have it all, and she works to make that easier for them. "It's all those messages," Emma said on the podcast. "Single parent equals loneliness. Single parent equals struggle. But I'm going to make this a success story for myself and start changing that because I want my kids—my son and my daughter and people that are watching me—to assume something different just by osmosis. So that's my journey." Upcoming episodes and topics this season include: Parenting with disabilities Divorce, co-parenting and blended families Multicultural parenting The family you didn't know you had Listen to We Are Family on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, iHeart, TuneIn, Stitcher, Google and everywhere podcasts are available. Listen to episode 8 right now: Parents.com/FamilyPod-Ep8 Plus, follow along here: Emma: It's all those messages. Single parent equals poverty. Single parent equals loneliness. Single parent equals struggle. But I'm going to make this a success story for myself and start changing that because I want my kids—my son and my daughter and people that are watching me—to assume something different just by osmosis. So that's my journey. Adrienne: I so hope that I'm showing her what a strong woman is like. Sometimes she'll see me getting angry. She'll see me being stressed, and I want her to know that those emotions are fine, too. But I really hope that I'm teaching her how to be resourceful. How to not wait for anyone. If there's anything that you want to do in life, then go do that because I can't think of one thing that I can't do, and I want her to feel that as well. ----- Music transition ----- Julia: Hi, I'm Julia Dennison. Shaun: And I'm Shaun T. Julia: And this is We Are Family, a podcast from Parents magazine. In this show we celebrate all the different ways there are to build and be a family—and that includes single parenting, too. There are 11 million single-parent households in the U.S. Whether you become a single parent by choice or due to the end of a relationship or the loss of a partner, or maybe you never even had a partner—no two single-parent families look the same. Shaun: Julia, I know you're a single mom to your daughter. I'm parenting with my husband, but I was raised by a single mother, so this subject is close to me, too. My mother was strong, she was powerful, but she also taught us how to navigate through struggle. Julia: I shared my story about co-parenting with my ex and realizing the beauty of my extended village back in our first episode. So today, we're bringing you two more perspectives. Emma Johnson is the author of a book called The Kickass Single Mom, which really helped me when I was adjusting to becoming a single parent. And my colleague at Parents, Adrienne Farr, is a single mom by choice, raising her daughter, Madison. Shaun: We're going to hear Julia's conversation with Emma first. Julia: Emma and her ex-husband split when she was pregnant with their son and their daughter was still just a toddler. She started her blog, Wealthysinglemommy.com, to show single moms they can build the careers and lives they want. Courtesy of Emma Johnson I called her up back in April to talk about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted single-parent families, dating as a single mom, and much more. Julia: Emma, let me just say that you are my hero. I read your book early on in the process of getting divorced and working out custody, and there were just so many points that I kind of held to my heart as I was hashing it out and really kind of stood up for that 50-50 custody. Especially in America, I feel surrounded by so many ideas of what it means to be a single mom, and so much stigma around it. And it's just so refreshing to read your book and think about it as something that's positive, potentially, and not necessarily a negative thing. So, anyway, I just wanted to start talking by saying, thank you for being so awesome and doing what you do. Emma: Oh, well that's lovely to hear and, well, thank you for going down the road of equally shared parenting 'cause that is a huge act of activism for gender equality, for child welfare, for all of society. And I'm sure we'll get into that. Julia: It's obviously a really difficult time to be parenting solo. You recently wrote on your blog that as crazy as things are for single parents, the upside might be that everyone else is in a similar situation. So the social pariah factor that single moms when you can, because that also helps break the stigma that, you know, we're victims as single moms. Emma: So just in general there's like one little trick that I did for myself when I was going through my divorce and like, there were very lean years. I would always make sure that I had some kind of recurring donation—and I don't care if it's \$5 a week or, you know, 50 bucks a month—that you give to a local charity, to your house of worship, to a candidate that you support. Set up that recurring donation, because when you're going through your budget or your bank accounts every month, it's just going to be a reminder that you have enough—you have enough to give back. And we all do. And maybe it's in time, maybe it's an energy, and maybe it's in being a good friend. We're all in this together. I've got something to give. You need it. So we're just spreading it around for the time being. Julia: So, Emma, what advice would you give for single moms who've maybe just lost their jobs or are worried about finances and it just feels like, you know, total despair? Emma: Unemployment benefits are really very generous right now. Often paying people more than making with their regular wage. So by all means, sign up, no stigma attached at all. Take advantage of everything, of food stamps, if those apply to you, your local food bank, there are resources out there. And it is going to be hard. I'm not going to kid you. So I think that, take that to heart. Julia: Emma stresses that living frugally—even when it means giving up opportunities for your kids—is an investment in their future. Emma: I just got an email from a mom. She's just going through a divorce. She's unemployed. Her kid's dad is not able to contribute financially. And she's like, "Oh my God, I feel so bad because I can't send my kids up for extracurriculars. They're used to having dance and sports and all these." I was like, "No. Focus on the basics." Oh, she was saving up for a house. That was a really important goal for her. It's like giving your children the gift of financial security. And I'm not talking about abundance of wealth. I'm talking about you're confident that you can pay the bills every month, your own confidence to look your kids in the eye and say, "I'm doing everything I can to take care of myself in my older years so I'm not a burden on you." You're giving your kids the confidence that you're dating from a place of confidence and not financial desperation. Julia: Mhm, mhm. Emma: Such a gift to your children. They don't need the fricking dance classes. Your kid is not going to be Baryshnikov. It's just not, you know, you're not depriving your kid. They can do without, or they can go to the YMCA and do the cheaper thing or whatever. They don't need that. They need to be financially secure. Julia: I'm sitting here doing quiet snaps. Quiet snaps. Yes. I absolutely agree. So as a white single mom, I really try to check my privilege. I know that I am in a place of privilege, just for the very fact of being a white mom. How do you think race, class, sexual orientation, and other identity factors like those impact perceptions of single moms, and how are the messages different and challenging for the various groups? What are ways we can work to help everybody? Emma: Well, yeah. So that is the stereotype that single moms are poor and Black. And statistically we know that disproportionately Black women and Latino women are more likely to be single moms and be lower income. So. You know, I, in my work, I'm very mindful of that. But then again, my work is very much based on personal experience. So I have no business speaking about anyone's experience except my own, though I do very much call out other white women to check their privilege, right? So there's a single mom narrative and then there's a divorce narrative. So we know that the majority of single moms are not divorced. If you are divorced, you are privileged. So statistically you are way, way, way, way more likely to be white. If even the word alimony crosses your lips, you are rich, and if you can hire an attorney, you are rich and you're not just at the mercy of the family court system. The goal after divorce or a breakup is not for everybody to maintain the lifestyle they enjoyed because that's impossible. The goal is for you to move on as an independent woman. And support your own house on your own. Because when you go and earn, when you're active in the workplace, when you're aggressive about getting the promotions that you deserve and the raises you deserve, you family friends, can take away from my co-parenting experience. Emma: Hell yes. They want your life. Julia: 50/50 thing. I mean, I can't tell them. Tell you how many times I will say, let's go out and get brunch on Sunday. And I'd have a friend that would say, "Oh, I don't know. I took a Sunday off like two weeks ago. I really should just be home with the kids." Or even now with COVID, I have, you know, all these parents who are juggling the working full time and watching the kids full time. So the way I have it is half the week my ex has Ezzie, so it's 100 percent parenting, 100 percent working, taking calls with Ezzie. Then I have her, and it's 100 percent parenting, 100 percent working and taking calls with Ezzie, and just figuring it out. But for two and a half days, it's nothing and I can get work done. So I said to my friends, why don't you take a page out of that book and you tag team—and I mean that literally you let your husband watch the kids while taking calls. And then watch the kids while taking calls the next day. And they were like, well, I couldn't ask him to have the kids while I'm taking a call. And I said, well, I have to. So clearly you do. So Emma: Every time I do some public speaking, I always insert this joke. It's like inside of every married mom is a single mom, and it gets laughs because it's so freaking true. Every mom has either felt like she doesn't have the support of her partner or she fantasizes or has thoughts, or maybe made a call to a lawyer because she's so fed up and that's the thing I couldn't ask him to step up. Well, why the frick not, right? It's like it's not rocket science to take care of, keep a child alive. Again, this is a conversation for very educated, affluent people. We have turned child rearing into a competitive sport, and it's just like, get kids video games, give them a box of crayons, whatever, and do your work and yeah. There've been a lot of really beautiful things written by men who say, like, I really felt like I stepped into my fatherhood after my breakup. Because for all the reasons, like it's overwhelming when you have kids, right? And our only, for most of us, our main point of reference was our own childhood. One generation ago, the world was very different and it was a lot more chauvinistic than we would hope it would be. So we all just blindly slip into these gendered roles. I am convinced that separated families in the numbers that we represent today and divorced families are the ticket to closing the gender gaps. Julia: Totally. I mean, the mental load for me just got fixed very quickly when I divorced and started co-parenting. Cause like you say, he just, you know, we just have to parent when we have this kid. He has to parent when he has Ezzie. OK. So talk to me a little bit about dating. I know it's a little bit of a weird time to be talking about dating because I just saw a report out of Harvard that says we might be social distancing until 2022 and I thought, "Oh my God, am I not going to go on another first date until 2022?" Trying not to dwell on that. But thinking about dating as a single mom, that is a huge stigma. And it was really refreshing to read your book and hear you talk about setting a good romantic example for your kids and not necessarily hiding the fact that you're dating while also reassuring them that their home life will remain stable. Emma: The idea that your kids even knowing that you're going on a date is somehow going to traumatize them is just bananas because you are a romantic, sexual woman. Whether you are romantic and sexual with a long-term husband or as a single person. You're not going to be, obviously, speaking about your sex life with your kids, but why wouldn't you just let them know you're going on a date. They're going to start going on dates, starting at, what, 14, 15 years old. Why is it OK for a 14-year-old to go on a date, but not a 40-year-old mom? Of course, it's just a normal thing. And I wrote about this in my book, like my mom was single and she'd go through periods when she would date a lot, and she loved it. Like, she was so happy. So I like loved watching her get all dressed up. And this is back in the '80s and the guys were probably raised in like the '50s and '60s and they'd come over to the house. We lived in a small town. They'd come to the house for a first date with flowers. Julia: God. Emma: And she just loved it and it seemed kind of glamorous. They'd go out to restaurants that we would never get to, and it was just like, this really positive memory as a child. So this is such a great opportunity to model healthy dating, right? Not rushing into serious relationships, not having some guy move in right away because you need help with the rent. Just keeping obvious, healthy parent-child boundaries about it all. But again, showing that this is a normal, healthy part of maturing as a person. Julia: Right. You make a great point that it's a really great time in your life to be dating because for once you don't necessarily, and this doesn't apply to everybody, but for me at least, I don't have this pressure to necessarily meet somebody, get married, have a baby the way I might've had before in my dating life. Right? Emma: I totally loved it. And for me, it was such a wonderful, I mean, I've been in a relationship now for three years, but I dated like crazy for a long time and it was such a convergence of that freedom that you just described. Right? I didn't need anybody's money. And also for me, my kids were very little when I got divorced, but motherhood for me was a very, physically empowering experience. It was like, wow, my body is so awesome. Like any hangups I had about my body. I was like, my body made these gorgeous, chubby, healthy babies. And I was just like, so over it, you know? And also like getting older, and I'm older and dudes are older too, and my body isn't perfect, but guess what? There's isn't either and just like being so much more forgiving of myself and my lovers. And I dunno, it was, it was just this very, cathartic, freeing, empowering experience for me. Julia: I love that. Emma, thank you so much. Did you have anything else you want us to talk about? Emma: No, I really appreciate it. That was, you know, it's all my favorite topics. Shaun: Julia, I really appreciate you and Emma having this conversation so candidly, because I believe that being a single parent or a single mother is actually an amazing thing. I don't think it's any better or any worse than being in a relationship. I know the struggles could be a little different because there's two people versus one. But just having a parent that is empowering and strong and showing you the

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