

Episode 2: Discover the True Nature of What Mothering Really Means with Jodie Patterson

[00:00:00] **Molly Carroll:** Hi, and welcome to the cracking open podcast. I'm your guide, Molly Carroll as a licensed therapist, coach, mom, and wife. I work with people all over the world on finding and empowering their voice in order to tell the truth, heal past traumas and wounds and let go of stories that don't serve them any more in order to be fully seen and alive.

[00:00:27] **Molly Carroll:** In all their gifts and glory, you see it's about cracking open and getting to the root of the problem and stop pussyfooting around. Because life is short, why not have everything you need and deserve. So join me each week. As I share the stories of thought leaders and spiritual teachers, actors, and athletes, parents, and profits on how they're cracking the moment be that the death of a loved one getting thrown in jail, bullied in grade school.

[00:00:59] **Molly Carroll:** Or hitting rock bottom with an addiction, change their life forever and will change yours too. So get comfy in a chair and grab yourself a cup of tea, a buckle up while driving and listen, while we dive deep to what it means to crack open and forever be transformed.

[00:01:19] **Molly Carroll:** Am I ever excited for our guests today. I think you are all going to be changed for ever listening to Jody Patterson. She is an author activist, beauty explore, and mother of five. She holds the position of chair of the human rights campaign foundation board, our nation's largest LGBTQ, a plus organization.

[00:01:46] **Molly Carroll:** And wonder son announced at the age of three mama. I'm not a girl. I'm about. She set out to inform herself, shipped her own bias and changed the way your community understood gender. Jody's written two books, the bold world, a memoir, a family and transformation held by Alice Walker as marvelous and her second book born.

[00:02:05] **Molly Carroll:** Ready. The true story of a boy named Penelope allows her five children's voices to be heard, showing us how an entire community can be flexible and change for those that. Jody is also a longstanding entrepreneur. Co-founding two beauty companies and receiving

beauty skin expert of the year word by cosmopolitan magazine and cosmopolitan magazines on the mini documentary on Jody's family in 2016 and reaching over 11 million views, I would highly recommend you watch it.

[00:02:34] **Molly Carroll:** It's. Along with the work Jody does with the human rights campaign, she sits on the board of directors for the shahbaz center, which upholds the legacy and teachings of Malcolm X as well as sits on Mount Sinai Institute for health equity research task force, the advisory board of the Ackerman institutes, gender and family project, and Mount Sinai center for transgender medicine and surgery advisory board, the United nations recognized Jodie as a champion of change.

[00:03:04] **Molly Carroll:** I think this bad-ass brave woman in today's episode will teach us all

[00:03:12] **Molly Carroll:** how to be radical parents stand in our truth and feel so much more joy in our lives. So I welcome you to crack open podcast with Molly, Carol. Hi, welcome Jody Patterson. I feel so grateful to have you here at cracking open and falling.

[00:03:30] **Molly Carroll:** Carol, thank you so much for taking the time. Adam, your busy schedule with five children and all the advocacy and work you doing for the world to be with us. So welcome. Thank you so much,

[00:03:43] **Jodie Patterson:** Molly. I'm so excited to be here with you this morning and you fit into my schedule. I love it when things just kind of work and you know, they're meant to be.

[00:03:53] **Jodie Patterson:** The stars in the moon are aligned. Good morning. Good morning.

[00:03:57] **Molly Carroll:** I did love it, Jody and I have been scheduling for a while and all of a sudden yesterday, she's like, I can do tomorrow morning. I'm like done, I'm moving clients around. I'm doing everything so I can talk to you. Cause I know it's important and it, it felt the stars aligned with me too.

[00:04:11] **Molly Carroll:** So

[00:04:11] **Jodie Patterson:** I'm so grateful.

[00:04:13] **Molly Carroll:** I want to begin just with a Hugh mungus. Thank you. I read a lot of. Especially as a parent and a therapist and a coach and an educator, but there was something in the bold world while reading your book that made me really want to be a better moon, which I think is the most important job for me being a parent.

[00:04:38] **Molly Carroll:** So thank you for being so bold and brave. And I also feel like I should thank your mama, I'm gonna call you because I love her. You start with, to rise up and love to rise up and. So I'd love to know like what in your right and what have you experienced even today, maybe even something that happened yesterday or maybe happened when you were for me too. So bold and brave

[00:05:08] **Jodie Patterson:** when you quoted the rise up and loves it, just made me go back and think which. There are so many points in my life where, when I now think about things, I actually sit and ponder on my life. It was something that my Angelou said to me years ago, that we rarely ponder on the women who came before us. I really sit and ponder and I took that to heart and I do it all the time.

[00:05:34] **Jodie Patterson:** And I usually have a collage of images of women in my house or women in my family, on my wall, in my house. And it will be like from my great, great great-grandmother all the way up until the present women. And I usually take just one picture and it's a very iconic picture that captures them. And I have those pictures on one wall and I stop in the morning and I look at the women and I might do the same thing at night.

[00:06:01] **Jodie Patterson:** And I usually think of one thing about each woman and the picture usually captures that one thing. Like. My great-grandmother Lurleen who didn't smile very often, very serious, very stone appearing woman, and full of love. She took care of an entire community, and sometimes if I need her strength, I look at Marlene's face from other lens.

[00:06:24] **Jodie Patterson:** And if I need someone spunk, I might look at at a younger person on the wall. You know, if I want zero fucks attitude morning. Somebody who's in their twenties on my wall. So I have this collection of women that come with me wherever I go. I never enter a space without the women. So that's part of what the boldness comes from.

[00:06:45] **Jodie Patterson:** Just always having a community of women that are like literally lodged here and lodged here in my brain that come with me everywhere. So when people are like, oh, you've got such interesting energy.

Oh, you've got this, you know, Jenna sick. Well, I be like, oh no, that's my auntie with me. Those are my. That you feel it, you know, so those are the women.

[00:07:05] **Jodie Patterson:** My father also used to tell us you weren't born to be pretty, you were born to powerful, and then he would say, do something dammit. It's like, it was a call to action from very on, from both sides of my family, the men and the women.

[00:07:24] **Molly Carroll:** You know what you're making me think about. I had this. I was in private practice for many years in sitting in therapist, client was coming in.

[00:07:31] **Molly Carroll:** That was, there was going to be a really tough thing that was going

[00:07:33] **Molly Carroll:** to have that happened to them. Well, they actually wants to child, they lost a child and they were both doctors and pediatricians actually. And they came in and I knew they were coming in and I was just like,

[00:07:43] **Molly Carroll:** oh God, how do I hold space for this?

[00:07:45] **Molly Carroll:** Like, how am I going to do this? And I know you said you don't know too much, but this is a whole nother story I'm going to, but I had an amazing experience where I got a private audience with this holiness in India. And I got a private audience with his holiness, the Dalai Lama, and I was sitting there and all of a sudden, the dial on the key

[00:08:01] **Molly Carroll:** right here

[00:08:03] **Molly Carroll:** is said, Molly, you know, I can a little country, I can stay a peace and laughter and joy, even

[00:08:10] **Molly Carroll:** in the worst, you can hold joy. Even in this moment, you can hold peace even in this moment. So you share your story about my Angelou is so powerful and if you are willing to share, I'd love to hear more about. That meeting and that interaction, because if you want to, what an amazing moment,

[00:08:30] **Jodie Patterson:** I'm sure what I mean, it's it was in some ways, serendipitous, but also in other ways, indicative of black culture.

[00:08:37] **Jodie Patterson:** So my parents, John and Jimmy Patterson lived on the upper west side and their neighbor was Dr. Maya Angelou. They lived on the same floor. They lived right across from each other and Dr. Maya Angelou and my father, John Patterson shared same day. And so they became close friends, being neighbors, being upper west side.

[00:08:59] **Jodie Patterson:** There was at that, at that bedtime in the sixties. And my mom would tell me that Dr. Angelou would say gee melt, which does my reading a few of these chapters. And my mom was she's a bit at the time was a bit naive and just was not really landing on the backpack. Here's this author showing her, her early words, but my mom and she also became.

[00:09:22] **Jodie Patterson:** And then one, one year they were planning a birthday party for the two of them. And right at that morning, Dr. King was murdered. And so instead of having the, a celebration of their, their lives, it became a, it's an innocence of celebration of Dr. King. So they, we shared my family and doctor, my auntie. She had a lot.

[00:09:44] **Jodie Patterson:** And then over the years we reconnected on the stage of Spelman college because she gave. The speech and she shared so many things with us that day. One of them was always bring your people with them. And now there was ponder on the women and another gray one. And, you know, she was talking to us on stage, but it was like she was sitting next to us and Spelman has that relationship.

[00:10:16] **Jodie Patterson:** With its students and with the women who support Spelman. So when my doctor, my Angela stands on the stage to talk to the Spelman graduates it's as if we're sitting in the kitchen with her and she had been in our chapel and she had been all on our campus, but today was a special day. That day was special.

[00:10:31] **Jodie Patterson:** And she said to us, you know, you were already paid for, we don't have to pay for it. You don't have to pay for anything. This has paid for you. Your life has been paid. And at first, I didn't know what that meant, but when she kept going on and on with this sometimes in song and sometimes in prose and poetry, she explained to us that the women who came before us had spent so much of their lives, carving the path and lay around and paying for us that when we walk anywhere, we are already paid for, you don't have to be concerned.

[00:11:03] **Jodie Patterson:** Do we deserve, as did we fit in? I was supposed to be here. Is this. Our grandmothers, our great grandmothers paid our way, and we

didn't take that as, um, something that we just, we didn't take it lightly. We understood what it meant to be able to graduate from Spelman college. When our relatives weren't allowed to learn.

[00:11:28] **Jodie Patterson:** And when our relatives weren't allowed to earn money. So to get this generation to a private college, the top of the top. We understood exactly what that meant. And so that I hold my life has been paid for. I am here with purpose and with calm because of that,

[00:11:48] **Molly Carroll:** you know, and so interesting though, Gertie, as you're speaking,

[00:11:50] **Molly Carroll:** I just kept thinking with all the work you've done and all the advocacy and as a mother

[00:11:58] **Molly Carroll:** and as a writer and as a business woman and an entrepreneur looking at 2021, what paths do you want to pay?

[00:12:06] **Molly Carroll:** In the next generations with everything that's generations dealing with. I mean, psychologically, I think we're dealing with a lot and the kids and the generations behind us are dealing with it. It's the heaviest denseness energy. If you think of energy and vibration pretty dead, and you know what that's, what stones do you want to lay in your road for not only your children, but the children of all humanity.

[00:12:31] **Jodie Patterson:** Thinking about that. I would like for my children to have the same ease, not material, ease, not, you know, ungrateful, privileged, but ease. I walk into rooms and I don't get nervous whether or not I'm protected or whether or not I am accepted or whether or not I'm seen. And I may or may not be. So any of those things to other people, they may not see me.

[00:12:57] **Jodie Patterson:** They may want to hear. And they may not have built this room for me, but I don't think about those things when I walk into the room and it's because of my mother and my grandmother, my great-grandmother, my father and the lineage. And so if I can do something for my children, I have been working towards giving them the comfort, the ease, the ability, the confidence to walk this life, to enter spaces and to touch life.

[00:13:27] **Jodie Patterson:** I've been calling it star fishing and for children, all children know their limitations because of our age, because of the age or because of your identity or your skin color, that adults really push on the child.

And I want my, for myself as well, and for my children to starfish, like we will stretch out in the sand.

[00:13:51] **Jodie Patterson:** We will touch all of that. Not just the life for black 50 year old mother, no way I've been doing it all, not just the life where a trans black boy, he will do everything he wants, not just the life for a girl, black girl living in Switzerland, like my 20 year old. I want her to beat anything and all things.

[00:14:13] **Jodie Patterson:** And so that I'm paving the road for us to be past our gender past our age, past the titles that we hold so closely to our. And to start a fish

[00:14:25] **Molly Carroll:** and you know, you're doing it. You really are because I read a lot of books as a therapist on trans and

[00:14:32] **Molly Carroll:** LGBTQ plus,

[00:14:34] **Molly Carroll:** and I'm constantly learning and constantly learning.

[00:14:37] **Molly Carroll:** And yours taught me the most because it was so based in humanity and based in storytelling, you know, and not so much clinical or medical or psychological. So I want to go to a bit of your book because I absolutely loved your book and I loved all your children, but for some reason I bet most people would be like, no, you know, Paul's story, which we'll get to.

[00:15:00] **Molly Carroll:** But to me, nine something about nine 13. And I'm going to quote something from your book. I've never done this in a podcast interview, but I was highlight why listen onboard and they be typing and they'd pause. And it's in faith is karma cholera's fee. I actually read this to my husband. And he got tears in his eyes because this is exactly

[00:15:23] **Molly Carroll:** how I feel.

[00:15:23] **Molly Carroll:** We should treat all people.

[00:15:25] **Molly Carroll:** Yeah. So this is about Jodi son, nine, something about nine named Moise than of heart sorta way. I call nine to gift and always thought karma was the inevitable, some of your actions making their way back to fate. But as I now understand, and karma is faith. When you believe in something, even without reading.

[00:15:48] **Molly Carroll:** It is the exact moment when nothing is proven yet you still believe, and you keep moving with no specific purpose other than defining more love. It was nine. The one who seemed to fall out of the sky when nine and land in my busy hectic world, who reminded me was such gentle force to

[00:16:09] **Molly Carroll:** find the fall out the loud, everything we need to do. Is to be for long.

[00:16:20] **Jodie Patterson:** I remember that. I remember writing that. Yeah. That's my 90 pu. And so each of my kids have a nickname. This one is his full name is Aaron nine and we shortened that to nine. And then I call him 90 boom. What he's asked me to please stop calling him 90, but I will let you know, nine is he, is that.

[00:16:44] **Jodie Patterson:** We met each other in this most random way. I had a store, it was open late night in New York city downtown. And it was a beauty shop. And one night maybe like at 11 o'clock at night, he rolls in up on escape word into this very feminine, very old world, beauty, apothecary. Um, and he asks if I have a decanter for a few, is he was wearing.

[00:17:10] **Jodie Patterson:** You know, Yohji Yamamoto or some, like there was conduct or some perfume and he came back every other night and then he came back every night and he would help me take out the garbage. And we'd have these long conversations about music from my generation and he's decades younger course. So I did not birth nine, but when we met, he was in high school and we decided soon after to become family.

[00:17:34] **Jodie Patterson:** And then he moved in with us and my children. That came before nine met nine and they became brothers and sister, like instantly. It was really beautiful to see. They think he is the coolest adult ever. And he is the youngest, the most fragile of the children. And I'll say this, you always think that you can, at the molding of a child is important.

[00:18:07] **Jodie Patterson:** When I met nine, there was not a lot of molding because I'd met him when he was 19. All of his early molding happened before I even knew him. And so what I'd done with nine is just meet him where he is. It's frustrating sometimes because we don't do things the same way we weren't raised in the same house, but when we meet, we meet, you try to meet with the most compassion for.

[00:18:33] **Jodie Patterson:** And that's, uh, that is a practice that nine has insisted meet people where they are. It always, it's like a word and a phrase that we throw around, meet people where they are, but when it has to happen, like I cannot force him to have the path that say Panell or Cassius or Georgia has in any form. I mean, it, his life is so different.

[00:18:57] **Jodie Patterson:** You know, he's got a tattoo on the front of his head, across his forehead. He's got tattoos on his neck. Now he dresses in all black. I mean, he's a brilliant musician by the way. And I think go on and on. He went to, he started at Julliard for classical float. And so he's a brilliant musician, but all that to say is my 90 poo is special and it is something to be honored.

[00:19:26] **Jodie Patterson:** Yeah.

[00:19:27] **Molly Carroll:** So what is he doing? How old is he now?

[00:19:30] **Jodie Patterson:** He's 29.

[00:19:33] **Molly Carroll:** He's a man. And he's a musician. He is

[00:19:35] **Jodie Patterson:** a musician. He makes music, uh, in his space, in his home. You know, I think he don't have to be published or famous, fairly to be a musician. He still, I think, would like to be Kanye west Kanye west. Doesn't want to be trying to do west.

[00:19:55] **Jodie Patterson:** Okay. But, you know, he's, uh, he measures himself against pop culture and I really measure him differently, but he is a musician who makes money. He also is a skater and a bike rider. And I don't know,

[00:20:07] **Molly Carroll:** he sounds like a love and a total love. And, and one thing that I think Jody, that part of the reason, there's so many reasons why I loved your book.

[00:20:15] **Molly Carroll:** And what I would say to people is, you know, I seek by the book that listen to the book because you already read the book and you really feel her. She has a way of reading that you feel. And I

[00:20:24] **Molly Carroll:** loved how

[00:20:26] **Molly Carroll:** you called nines mother earth, mother. I just asked her permission. So just even that like, oh, we beat this guy in my shop and then I can praise them.

[00:20:36] **Molly Carroll:** And you just, the thing is that, you know, my second book was on intuition trust within it's like you don't question your intuition. Yeah.

[00:20:42] **Molly Carroll:** Do you both story for your even AF it's like, oh, maybe it should go. She goes, she goes, so that part you just feels like I'm going to call them up.

[00:20:50] **Jodie Patterson:** Well, I think that was my mom's raising.

[00:20:52] **Jodie Patterson:** I mean, we don't do anything without checking with the family and you know, who are your people, right? Yeah. And sometimes your people are not biological. You know, it could be a friend or an aunt or some, but who are you people? And then of course, because I was raised by Southern women. I'm not going to infringe upon this child without talking and checking with his people.

[00:21:15] **Jodie Patterson:** And so his mother and I spoke birth mother and I said, And we have a great relationship right now. We text monthly. We co-parent 90 poo and she's always been so gracious with me, nine closley Mylon, and she's never, and she, he calls his, my, my other children and his siblings and, um, birth mom has never, ever questioned that.

[00:21:41] **Jodie Patterson:** And I think it's a beautiful thing

[00:21:42] **Molly Carroll:** I did too. And I just want to commend you because there's so many children out there. That need

[00:21:49] **Molly Carroll:** a whole community.

[00:21:51] **Molly Carroll:** And we're raising, we're living in these houses with just our four or five or you seven people or city sometimes like 10 or eight or six there. I don't know how many people you have.

[00:22:01] **Molly Carroll:** I'm sure your whole neighborhood, that house violent in your name. And I'd be like, Jody, what are you doing? You know, man, I knew you were on it. So I mean, talking about your children and

everyone. And then what I loved is I know the whole world is. Your son Chanel and your experience and your transformation to being a funnel.

[00:22:24] **Molly Carroll:** But I also just want to honor all your children.

[00:22:27] **Jodie Patterson:** Thank you. They

[00:22:28] **Molly Carroll:** really do, because I have a lot of people who call you and your interviews. It's a lot about the, and I'm sure we all love the Nala, but it's like caches and Georgia. Like I held each one of them in my heart because I'm one of five. So I was like, I know when it's like to be one of five I'm one of five and I'm the second.

[00:22:45] **Jodie Patterson:** Oh, okay. You're right. People ask all the time, like, can you in Pinel comment, meet us? Can you in Pinel do a campaign? Which I think is I'm always grateful for the campaigns because one, my kids college tuition is expensive. Right? I think it's important to see black queer families see black families. See black love, not just in hashtag form, but.

[00:23:10] **Jodie Patterson:** So when they asked for me in Pinel, I say, it's a, if it's a joint deal, the brothers are coming to and Pinel, whenever it doesn't work out for his brothers to be there pronounced gifts, it portion of his earnings to his brothers because of this is a family affair. It has been a process that all of us leaned on each other to get to.

[00:23:33] **Jodie Patterson:** Look at Penelope's a good job, you know, you're really confident and strong and thank you for being authentic and showing us what black trans looks like. He has to think his brothers and his sister are that tube. So, and so I thank you for seeing all of them because we really have been shaping each other.

[00:23:53] **Molly Carroll:** Well, I mean, and I want to share more about that, but to just have one last thing who may not know Pinellas story, can you tell us a story, but I do want to actually ask you also after that too. That balance and being in one family, some people take the thought light sometimes and some people the other, and don't know how to other people feel.

[00:24:08] **Molly Carroll:** It's a balance. Yeah. She don't really is a balancing act. So can you just tell us Pinellas story for those people that may not know?

[00:24:16] **Jodie Patterson:** Well, I, I was raising five children in New York. I was living in Soho is married. My second husband. I had a very big life, a busy,

big life, which I thought was great. You know, for me, big and busy men getting down to business.

[00:24:35] **Jodie Patterson:** And so everything seemed to be adding up. I had a lot of privilege. I would call it. I went to Spelman college. My husband at the time went to Harvard. We had businesses and love and children, but there was like something that was not quite jelling in our home life. And I cut. I couldn't figure out. And it was the, uh, the third child Penelope who was so diamond problematic.

[00:25:02] **Jodie Patterson:** And I said with a smile on my face now, but at the time I was not laughing, right. Penelope at the time was only just a toddler, reoccurring nightmares nailbiting until bloody refusal to get dressed refusal, to brush hair refusal, to brush. Stamping on clothing screaming. If you tried to change Penella, Penelope clothing, even diaper, when it was small and LP was protests and everything.

[00:25:31] **Jodie Patterson:** And then Penelope became a bullying. So pushing siblings, pushing, uh, friends at the park, and I could not figure it out. I thought more love. I got a big family. So let me sit with this. Um, more story time. I read a bazillion books. I thought maybe it's a dairy allergy and let me make the food really clean.

[00:25:50] **Jodie Patterson:** Let me dive into all the things that my mom taught me about raising kids. Good food, warm hugs, attention, reading Storytime, but Penelope is aggression and anger and sadness were increasing. So I picked up Penelope one day and sat lb down and closed the door and we sat on the floor and I asked an LV, what is wrong?

[00:26:13] **Jodie Patterson:** Like, why are you so angry? First time I'd ever asked and Penelope confided in me and said, mama, everyone thinks I'm a girl and I'm not, I am a boy. And so I thought maybe this child was a feminist. Maybe this child was like a revolutionary, you know, maybe, maybe a lesbian. I was thinking, okay, I get that. So if you feel like your brothers act like your brothers, And Penelope quickly said, no, mama, I don't feel like boy, I am a boy.

[00:26:46] **Jodie Patterson:** And so that was the moment when she, when he provoked a conversation in this woman to really examine. And re-examine what feeling versus being is, um, what gender is and long story short nowadays, transgender, not lesbian, not tomboy, not rev. Without a cause, but trans a trans boy into new years to understand it.

[00:27:12] **Jodie Patterson:** But that is the crux of it. That there was a gap between the way he saw himself and the way the world saw him, the way he knew himself and the way the world is treating him. And so I have tried to close that gap. Penelope is boy. He told me so over and over again. And so the world must see him as a boy.

[00:27:31] **Jodie Patterson:** And I have been working as an advocate and ally and loving. To allow people to be who they are and then for the world to see people as they are,

[00:27:44] **Molly Carroll:** you have really broke down barriers and LA Joni, you've done a beautiful job in that way. And there's so much that story I love, but I mean, the one thing I think for the skeptics or for people who don't question, so he

[00:27:58] **Molly Carroll:** was three.

[00:27:59] **Molly Carroll:** Yeah, he was. If you wasn't 13 and always just trying something out or always questioning or the friends or by the friends are gay and friends of trans, he was.

[00:28:10] **Jodie Patterson:** And, um, so I've done clearly have done a lot of research years, and I'm now the chair of the human rights campaign foundation board, which is our largest thing.

[00:28:21] **Jodie Patterson:** So I have not just shot from the hip. I haven't just acted spontaneously. I have researched. Talked about and inquired and sat with. So here's something, just a little tidbit of information. The brain, every brain, my brain, your brain Pinellas brain at three around three years old, goes through an identity phase, placing itself in the world.

[00:28:45] **Jodie Patterson:** And then again, several more times in life, but three years old is around the time when all the brains are asking itself, who am I in this? And so we would never notice the process because most brains match up with the body. And with the way the world sees us PNLs and S and millions of other people, the brain is different.

[00:29:06] **Jodie Patterson:** And it says, I am not who you see me as. So it's just that there are some flowers, who's pink is brighter or whose turquoise is brighter. And we noticed them different. You might not notice the grass it's still there. It's growing in the same way that flowers do, but you might notice the flower more because it stands out.

[00:29:28] **Jodie Patterson:** Pinella is similar in that his brain works the same way ours does it identifies it. Three. What stands out is that it's different from the way we would see him because his body and his brain are different. And I don't use the words that some people use that he is in the wrong body. I think he's in the right body.

[00:29:46] **Jodie Patterson:** It's his body. It's the right. He has a body that is one way and his brain identifies as boy. And that's just the way it is. Period. I love that part of the fuck.

[00:29:58] **Molly Carroll:** How you heard the other boy talking? I came home June or July or so you heard you met another trans boy. And I was like, that was the first then where you're like, well, we can still stay in his deck.

[00:30:14] **Molly Carroll:** We don't have to change his body. You know,

[00:30:16] **Jodie Patterson:** I was the, it was a teenager. Uh, a young adult who said I am in my body. So this is a boy's body. This body belongs to this boy. Therefore it's a boy's body and I'm not doing any surgery and it's still my body. This boy's body. That was just an eye-opener for me, because there are so many ways to be trans, to be cyst, to be black, to be white, to be mailed, to be female.

[00:30:40] **Jodie Patterson:** And we have to define it for ourselves. Sometimes we make adjustments to the body and sometimes we do. Sometimes we change our names and sometimes we don't.

[00:30:51] **Molly Carroll:** Okay. So let's say that a parent sitting here listening and they have that little voice in their head and they don't want to hear it. I can buy the kid game, make it in my child is going through something and I'm scared.

[00:31:07] **Molly Carroll:** I will really fucking scare. Yeah. It's going to make, push me out of my box push man. And my religion pushed me even out of my family more. What could you see them? Joni

[00:31:17] **Jodie Patterson:** scaring, indifferent as dangerous? I would never say you're not right. I would never say don't be afraid that you can look at right now.

[00:31:27] **Jodie Patterson:** You can look back decades and it is clear that being different is dangerous. People get killed for their religion or their preference or their identities or their lives and their loves. And there's so much.

Hatred out there in small forms and then a large form then, and that hatred builds into laws, right.

[00:31:50] **Jodie Patterson:** It accumulates into laws. And then we have a society that is literally, you know, pointing the trigger at my son. So yes, I was scared too. I thought being trans was a death sentence to not only the person, but to the family and that energy, that fear was going to eat me up. I mean, I was drinking too much. I was crying too much.

[00:32:14] **Jodie Patterson:** And so that empathy, that energy is real because the fear is real, that the hatred is real. Can't tell me it's not. And what I decided to do was put that energy into activism. So I don't stop. Right. And even when you start to put that energy into activism, you start to feel really good. It's self preservation.

[00:32:32] **Jodie Patterson:** I promised you it works. If you're afraid of what is. Fight it by fight in it, get in there, like get in the, in the moment, be an activist, be an ally. Don't implode because it's very easy to, so I want to tell parents who are nervous, find others that resemble your child. If you only know one trans person and it's your kid, or if you only know one by kid one by person, and it's your kid, that's scary.

[00:33:00] **Jodie Patterson:** You think the whole world, she knows different. There are millions like our children, there are millions like us, so you have to go out and find the community that's LGBTQAI. Plus go to conferences, sitting on parent groups, their camps for our families find the community, and I can give a list of them that you can hopefully post, but make sure that you don't see your child.

[00:33:24] **Jodie Patterson:** There's only one in the world that is.

[00:33:28] **Molly Carroll:** What you're saying is so powerful because from a psychological perspective, right? I studied so much of this and embrace it so much with all the people I work with. And we know so much around connection. What I love about that is so much that I've learned and we all know is that there's, there's the power in connection.

[00:33:46] **Molly Carroll:** The deep power in connection is one of the best SSRI as you can get. Take one of the best mental health tools and spiritual tools you can have is not knowing. And it feels loneliness that kills us. And so what I hear you saying, which is so powerful for all parents, no matter what your child

is going through, whether it's a sexual identity or race or educational, they don't feel smart.

[00:34:09] **Molly Carroll:** They have dyslexia, ADHD, or whatever. They're going through to find a community of people where they don't feel so alone if they don't feel so alone.

[00:34:18] **Jodie Patterson:** And there's like this, um, you know, my. Never raised us to use the word minority. I mean, recently as an adult, I've heard that I'm marginalized, I've heard black women are marginalized that LGBTQ AI folks are in the minority and that we're fringe, that trans people are different, but that's not how we were raised in.

[00:34:41] **Jodie Patterson:** And I actually I've always thought that I I've been sick. I am central, I'm a central force. And so. The world will tell us that there's only one trans kid and it's yours and he's doomed, or that there are only a few by people and they're not real. But if you place yourself and your children in the center and you create a world where you are central, it feels better.

[00:35:03] **Jodie Patterson:** I promise you if you don't feel like the world is ending, you actually feel that you are central to this world and your child is central to this world. And then what comes from that is you start to see. Where and how the LGBTQ plus community has actually contributed to culture, contributed to society, contributed to innovation, contributed to family and family values.

[00:35:27] **Jodie Patterson:** We actually flipped the whole scenario instead of us being weird and atypical. You actually see the benefit of being trans. I'm excited that my kid is trans trans can be as delivered some great gyms to our culture.

[00:35:43] **Molly Carroll:** Okay. Jodie, I've heard so many. That is brilliant. I want everyone to really take that in really taking moment to take that.

[00:35:50] **Molly Carroll:** And because it's not just, it is like, what you say is something that is so powerful, but think about anything if you wake up and you're worried about something, whatever that is, put yourself in the central and reframe it to be like, this is what's going to make me create it. This is what's going to make me unique and love the quote.

[00:36:07] **Molly Carroll:** You said about Pinel in the book. If I don't know my own child was a boy, what else in the world? I do not know. Yeah, like a bout of

say, quiet or blind, whatever we need to fucking wake up to so much, so much. And we're so scared and I get it. I get scared of really two. And when do I have to wake up to my own shit?

[00:36:28] **Molly Carroll:** Everyone else, shit, my kids stuff, you know, but it's like, If we don't know and open right to that, what else? We closing our eyes, our light and our solicitor.

[00:36:36] **Jodie Patterson:** It was like mind blowing. I thought, because I, it took me a long time to really understand Pinellas boy, you know, and that's years it's in the beginning, you think, okay girl, who wants to be tough or some sort of hybrid or, and you, it's not a quick process.

[00:36:50] **Jodie Patterson:** But when I finally got there that the brain and the soul actually dictate who we are and landed on Nellis. And then I thought, what a mind fuck. Right. I mean, if my daughter was actually my son and I didn't even know that they're probably all these great things in this world that I don't know, I haven't understood.

[00:37:13] **Jodie Patterson:** And I might not ever understand them fully, scientifically, but then they will blow my mind once I need an open to the concept. So I, now I look for the things that are mindblowing. I look for the things. Stand out as slightly different or awkward or weird. And I go into those because that is where artists dwell.

[00:37:36] **Jodie Patterson:** When you talk about creativity, like artists are in those strange places and they're pulling out things that people have not seen before, and then they become gems to society. So go try to find out what don't we know in this world. Right? A lot of this stuff about people we don't. And so that's, that to me was just interesting.

[00:37:58] **Molly Carroll:** You sound like to me, like my husband is a scientist. She's not like a creative scientist, creative scientist. You go in and I wanted to, I hadn't heard that part of you, Jody, then as the creative Nanshan manure and the artists, how are you cultivating that now? What are you doing now? In regards to

[00:38:13] **Jodie Patterson:** my creativity I've written, the first book was the bold world that then I wrote with my children a children's.

[00:38:20] **Jodie Patterson:** Which is their perception of all of this around gender and understanding and accepting Penelope and supporting now they, and

that's called born ready, the true story of a boy named Penelope. And I'm writing a third book, which is so hard. Um, and it's on radical parenting. Yeah. And I just adore the concept, but in a nutshell, I've been thinking about mothers.

[00:38:47] **Jodie Patterson:** And the mothering that I'm talking about is not the hugs and kisses and the affirmations and the, um, snuggle time. That is something beautiful, but that's not what I'm talking about. When I talk about mothering, I'm talking about building of communities. So intentionally building up people, and that could be a genderless mothers or genderless to me, I've seen some of the best mothering done in the queer community.

[00:39:09] **Jodie Patterson:** I've seen Pinel mother, his brothers. So I'm writing a book around his concept. Looking at people who have intentionally built community and I'm calling those people mothers. And so it's again, flipping the, the scenario because I think the last book that we really looked at on mothering was tiger mom, as a philosophy where you, you know, you work, work, work, and you require the highest return on investment from your child, from the land, from everything.

[00:39:41] **Jodie Patterson:** And I'm, I'm, I'm changing that this is about collaboration of a domination. This is about. Sort of working from the bottom up as you would build a building or you had built, you know, we're building people, we're building community. So that's my, my I'm putting a lot of creativity into a third book on parenting and money.

[00:39:58] **Jodie Patterson:** And I'm taking the first book to television. Oh,

[00:40:03] **Molly Carroll:** wait. It wasn't a book. You're going to be so excited. And one day I want to say before you tell me about the television show is you've turned mothering into a verb

[00:40:12] **Jodie Patterson:** and it's a power structure. It's an action. It is. And it is, um, it's social infrastructure.

[00:40:18] **Jodie Patterson:** And I was lucky, like I mentioned, museum in Switzerland and there was a display, an exhibit on city planning. And it talked about the cities that have failed. And the one that has succeeded, we fail when we add highways and we think efficiency is going to make a better life and we succeed and we have libraries and parks and squares, right?

[00:40:42] **Jodie Patterson:** Like times where I actually became a square to a certain point. And so I thought mothers are like city planners. It is our job to

bring lots of diverse people. Not to efficiency, but to humanity and to happiness. And so I started thinking of my own home, like this house that I live in as a city, Brittany gathering the people into the kitchen with lots of chargers and sell both things, but gathering them in the kitchen as opposed to locking ourselves off in our bedrooms is private.

[00:41:11] **Jodie Patterson:** So that concept started to make me think about mothering as building and mothers as social infrastructure, like how we really root the committee.

[00:41:21] **Molly Carroll:** Oh, honey, you're on south bay. I got a, B, I got, I kinda got a source on your it's big. It's going to be great. That is amazing. And I want to hear about the TV show, but before we leave, I just want to make sure I have times I'm gonna be respectful of your time.

[00:41:38] **Molly Carroll:** So the question, the ultimate question, I ask everyone, like you've had a lot of crack.

[00:41:43] **Molly Carroll:** You've been moments in your life

[00:41:45] **Molly Carroll:** sitting here today. This. If you had to think about one of the most pivotal cracking open moments of your life, and now it change Jody and you all, would that be for you?

[00:41:57] **Jodie Patterson:** So how it changed Jody?

[00:41:58] **Jodie Patterson:** That was the, that was the point of the question that changed my answer. So here's a strange thing. Everything I do is mothering. I talk about mothering. I'm known for my mothering, but the pivotal turning point for this mother, this woman was when I detached from my. And I'll explain that untethering is not something women are taught.

[00:42:21] **Jodie Patterson:** We're taught to tether to our families, to our parents, to our morals, stay close to home. Don't stray thought it a good school. Stay close to your job. We are anchored. Women are always in. Girls are always tied to anger. And so when I found myself in my mid forties with five children, I had been anchored to husbands, to children.

[00:42:44] **Jodie Patterson:** She my morals to my house. Right. And then I went through a divorce, right. Which can feel like a sinkhole. And my children left me every other week to go see their dad. I thought I was going to die. What

am I, who am I mothering? Who my wife is not, no one, the house was empty for a week and I sunk low. And then I rose so high.

[00:43:10] **Jodie Patterson:** It is imperative that when men experience. Being untethered because women need to experience freedom. And during the times when my kids aren't here, I have sex on the kitchen counter. I mean, it's unheard of for a mother, right? Don't make breakfast. I eat leftovers. I walk for hours, you know, if I have.

[00:43:35] **Jodie Patterson:** And I'll check in with anyone. I listen to rap music. I write down lyrics. I pretend that I'm the rapper. I find myself in places that no one else would see me in certain authors in certain musicians I get lost. And so untethering from my children for that week is pivotal. I came back to them when they came with more answers, better solutions, more creativity, fun year had experience freedom.

[00:44:05] **Jodie Patterson:** The point that I'm making is as women, we have to untether find places. It's if it's a day or a week. And I don't, I mean, untethering from like bad, I mean, untethered from the good stuff, untethered from your kids, it sounds scary. But I promise, I don't know the science of it, that it works. You come back to them and you always come back better, stronger, more creative, and a better leader.

[00:44:30] **Molly Carroll:** Okay. You are so funny. This is so beautiful. And I'm so glad that was your. You have no idea, but because I, I, somehow we get, you know, you started that in your therapy practice is like, I was kind of the child expert because I started the social, emotional learning program in San Francisco. And I was a teacher and I worked with families and children and blah, blah.

[00:44:47] **Molly Carroll:** So people started sending me their kids. Right. And then they started saying, Hey, can I come too? Hey, can my husband come too? Right? And then I practiced was women in transition. That's what I would call it. Women in transition, transition from jobs, transitions from the marriage. So I worked with a lot of women trying to get out of their marriage or thinking about leaving.

[00:45:03] **Molly Carroll:** So I coined this phrase when they were getting ready to get through a divorce

[00:45:07] **Molly Carroll:** and they were in the shit of it, you know, in the shitty, shitty parts.

[00:45:10] **Molly Carroll:** And I said, Hey, let me tell you, there's a little secret to divorce, secret to divorce.

[00:45:17] **Molly Carroll:** And they're like, you gotta be kidding me. This is hell, how am I going to leave my kid

[00:45:23] **Molly Carroll:** and I said, the secret's going to be this you're actually Emmy packing your kids out to go to their dads or their moms. And you're going to breathe and a deep breath of signed relief because you're going to really get the concept that your children were born from you, but they are not yours.

[00:45:42] **Jodie Patterson:** And you were not theirs

[00:45:43] **Molly Carroll:** and you learn not theirs and you will find you, you will come back to you. Right? So that was the most beautiful answer because I think the ultimate word, when I think about you, ultimate is freedom.

[00:46:00] **Molly Carroll:** You give people the commission to be free. It learned that color, their skin, sexual identity, mothering chill three. And that's all people want in the end. Whenever I asked him, like, what do you want your life? Two answers. Love and freedom. Well then three. Okay. You gave me one, not freedom and peace or condemn.

[00:46:22] **Molly Carroll:** Yeah. Never money. Never a big house. Never fancy Gar.

[00:46:27] **Jodie Patterson:** I learned the freedom for my kids when I was watching Pinel. I said, because this is the thing we oftentimes want more for our children. You know what we want. I was telling Penelope, be free, be yourself, be authentic, stand up to the world, tell them who you are.

[00:46:42] **Jodie Patterson:** But I wasn't doing the same thing. I was telling a three year old to take ownership of his life. And I wasn't as this 40 plus year old. And so dammit. I wanted the fit into, I wanted the very thing that Penelope was demanding, which was ownership of myself. And it took so much time. And of course, you know, life does not become like perfect.

[00:47:09] **Jodie Patterson:** I don't have a million dollars. I don't have, you know, but the joy and you can see in my face, cause I'm so excited. This conversation when it's direction, it is this feeling of starving. Oh, I'm touching

the world in a way I'd never done before. So I hope that freedom register Rez, resignates, no registers.

[00:47:32] **Molly Carroll:** There's a resonates. Well,

[00:47:34] **Jodie Patterson:** I'm putting them pouring out to the world. This concept of freedom, because that is the key. That is the key to it. All

[00:47:40] **Molly Carroll:** you are and you truly, truly were. And what to get this world is Tammy and Jody, I cannot begin to thank. For taking the time to, I was a stranger to jury Sheena.

[00:47:54] **Molly Carroll:** Why was she said, yes. She said yes to a brand of a brand of a connection of a connection. You know how that all goes, but I just want to say thank you for taking the time and the energy to show up as beautiful. You as freeing you and teaching us all, how do we start this and spread our, what are they like?

[00:48:16] **Jodie Patterson:** We'll call them arms, put them in, in human form, spread the arms. Well, this was a pleasure talking with you and I hope you stay in touch.

[00:48:27] **Molly Carroll:** For sure. You may not want to hear as much as I keep in touch with you, but yes, I will be reaching out to you. I will be reaching out to Jody. You are such a gift to,

[00:48:40] **Molly Carroll:** I cannot begin to thank you for listening to the cracky open podcast.

[00:48:44] **Molly Carroll:** If you want to hear more about what I do and how I work with women all over the world on finding right. Feeling not so alone and oh, so much more connected to themselves and others head over to my website, molly-carol.com for all my information and podcast, show notes, please remember to comment on your favorite.

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The Cracking Open Podcast with Molly Carroll

[00:49:32] **Molly Carroll:** You can become part of my cracking open community, and I cannot wait to hear from you. Let's get cracking.