



## Leaving a Dream Job as a Sportscaster to Find More Joy

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**Guest:** Rachel Joy Baribeau

**Shelley:** You're listening to the *Faithful Career Moves* podcast. I'm your host, Shelley Hunter. This is where we talk to people who have seen the hand of God in their lives and particularly, in their careers. Welcome to Episode 40 of the *Faithful Career Moves* podcast.

Today, I'm excited to share an interview with Rachel Baribeau. For many people, my sons included, Rachel had the ideal job. She worked for 17 years as a sportscaster covering primarily college football. What a dream. For those of us who love sports, she really had an ideal position. One that she worked incredibly hard to get, complete with access and sideline seats to some of the biggest shows in the country, plus a radio show and more.

In 2016, the news she covered turned overwhelmingly from the inspiring stuff that sports are supposed to be made of, to the dark stories of scandals, violence and assault by players on campuses all across the country and more. In response, she wrote an article entitled *College Football is Breaking My Heart*. The article went viral and more importantly, led to Rachel deciding she needed to leave the dream job and fight for change. I'll let Rachel tell the rest of the story.

Stick around to the end or read the show notes to get details on Rachel's upcoming book, *Relentless Joy*, plus info on other great projects she has in the works.

Now pun intended, I'm going to let Rachel kick-off.

Rachel, let's just start. Tell me what it is you do for a living.

**Rachel:** Oh, I'm called-- It's funny. I'm called the motivational speaker and that is great, but I also feel there's so much more than that. I'm a mentor, I'm a coach at times, I am an upcoming author. I've done an e-book before but now, I have a published book coming out in June. I am also a speaker. I'm a teacher, I'm a former sportscaster of 17 years. I quit that, I walked away, and fall of 2019 to do this

movement that I created full-time. I'm a bonus mom, I'm a wife, I'm a firm momma. Yes, I'm a lot of things. [laughs]

**Shelley:** You're doing it all.

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Shelley:** I'm glad you said that because when I think of motivational speaker, I think we all get this picture of a keynote that comes to your work conference and just pumps everybody up, and then they're gone but it's so much more than that. How did you get started in this?

**Rachel:** You make a great point, first of all. It's that I don't want to be that. That's no disrespect to anybody who does those things. I am a relationship builder, I am a connector. I say to people my currency is human beings. Therefore, I'm a billionaire because of the relationships that I have and the people that love me and I love them, and the people that I may never see again after a talk but I embrace them afterwards and they tell me, "You touched my life." This was with Border Patrol last week in Edinburgh, many different sectors and I did three different sessions.

One girl comes up and says, "You gave me permission to be me. My ex-wife beat me down and told me I was too much. Today, you gave me permission to be me. I'm going to go be me in all my glory." Another person walks up and says, "You told me that kings and queens and royals do hard things. I just texted the mother of my children that I have not really been in contact with hardly in 15 years and told her, I'm sorry."

I told him I put my hand on his heart and I said, "You will sleep better tonight. You will do your job better. You will love better."

I had a long career in broadcasting and I always thought I'd be a sportscaster. There was never a moment where I did not think that.

Back in 2016, I saw a problem in college athletics. I was just bold enough and crazy enough and God's girl enough to do something about it. I created a simple curriculum. It was who are you when you're away from the field? What makes your heart beat faster? What were you born for? Do you think you were just born to play a sport and die? Then what a shame that is. I created that back in 2016, always thinking that I'd be a sportscaster on the side.

It got so big, so large and so amazing that in 2019, I decided after hosting the first-ever mental health game between two big 10 teams, so I decided to retire. I've been leading this movement ever since. I finished a book recently and it's coming out in June. This is how I got here. It's been a long beautiful crazy ride.

**Shelley:** That's amazing. Do you know what's interesting is I know a number of people who would think being a sports broadcaster is the pinnacle of your career. Was it hard to walk away from that?

**Rachel:** You make a great point. It was for me. For my whole life, my whole professional life, I was Rachel the sportscaster. I was Rachel the chick that covered NFL and NASCAR and college football, and knew Nick Saban and Urban Meyer and Bill Snyder. I slowly did not realize, but it would become my identity. When I was contemplating leaving, which I knew that's what God wanted me to do, I was so terrified. I remember having a conversation with one of my girlfriends who now works in NCAA and she said, "You're out there teaching others that your sport is not your identity, your job is not your identity and here you are. I'm telling you, you are not just a sportscaster.

This was a 17-year runway for you to do what you're doing now." That's exactly what it was. Relationships and meeting people and trusting people and getting in these programs.

I'm still in sports, I'm just in a different facet in sports. I would say to your listeners, don't be afraid and don't be surprised when you're staying changes. I think if we're looking at ourselves as the ultimate project and that's what I teach people to do, the ultimate experimentation for the rest of your life, you, then your purpose will often change. Your interests might change, your desires might change. Was it hard? Heck, yes.

It wasn't hard when I did it. When it became hard when the pandemic-- We would be here I am, I'm booked for all of 2020. All of 2020. I've taken this leap, and I've retired from Sirius, first female host on Sirius XM under collegiate channels. I've done the dang thing, I've made the proclamation, I've taken the leap of faith. Here comes the pandemic and \$30,000 worth the speaking engagements canceled in a week's time.

I was grounded, completely grounded. Everybody that would be my vendors or would pay me, all their budgets were frozen. I really had a choice. I had a good crisis of the soul where I was Lot's wife, basically. I would have turned into a pillar of salt later because I looked back so many times, "God, did I hear you right? Were these correct? Are you sure?" I was mad. I was like, "I'm going to quit. Here I am, I take a leap of faith. I follow you, God. I do this and then everything gets canceled. What am I supposed to do?"

I remember laying in bed for days. I remember hearing the Lord tell me in my heart, "Rachel, do you have something where you can help people if I have given you a story?"

"Yes, Lord."

"Do you have skills and talents to be able to help people?"

"Yes, Lord."

"Do people need you now?"

"Yes, Lord."

"Do they need you now more than ever?"

"Yes, Lord."

"Do you have the technology, i.e. Zoom, internet to be able to reach people right where they are?"

"Yes, Lord."

"Well, then you get up out of this bed and you go and you live to fight another day."

I did and because of it, when we were able to start traveling again, I came out like a cannon like I've shot out of a cannon. I was booked here and booked there and I encouraged countless people, including myself during the pandemic.

**Shelley:** Wow. I have a million questions, but let me ask a couple. I have to go back one, if you don't mind just because it's bugging me and I imagine people are thinking that also. What was bothering you about college football?

**Rachel:** In 2016, I wrote an article called, *College Football is Breaking My Heart*, because it was right around that time we're on the heels of Penn State, we're in the thick of Baylor. There were domestic violence, sexual violence, guys getting in trouble left and right. Now, I would go to these shows at Sirius and I would during the breaks back up and cry because all the news was negative. When I would go to prep for my shows, I would prep two or three hours ahead of time. I would look at the news, it was negative, negative, negative, negative, negative, negative, negative, that, scandal and I was like, "What has happened to this game that I've given my life to? What has happened? What the what?"

That's what spurred, I'm Changing The Narrative. I teach people all over the country, if you will take a step back from your pain, the thing that was meant to break you but didn't traumatic or non-traumatic, if you'll step back from it and you'll use and look at your pain, use your pain for purpose. Now, my shirt says, "Bitter or better." You'll say, "Bitter or better oftentimes from your pain can be born into something beautiful where you can help other people." That's where I'm Changing the Narrative was born from because years before, I was dragged across the house by my hair by somebody who claimed to love me. There were other men in the house that night, no one came to help me.

I began to start speaking on purpose and passion and your heart beating outside your sport or your job, but I also spoke about the night that I was dragged across the house. I asked men, "If you were in the house that night, would you have helped me?" They would stand up and scream, they will yell, they will say yes, they will cry, they will hug me afterwards and say, "I watched my momma get beaten growing up. I was 10 years old, eight years old, stepping in for my mom and taking a beating," just the craziest stories you'll hear. Really, I call that process of doing that, I teach you a radical vulnerability.

When you're radically vulnerable with people and I'm not saying go on the street corner and scream all your junk, rather you've got to know whether somebody's a dream killer or a dream builder. When you're radically vulnerable with people, then it gives them permission to be radically vulnerable with themselves and with the world. I think that authenticity is what draws people in like a moth.

**Shelley:** Let's talk about that runway because I love that idea. I feel like I might think I've taken off like your sports career. I took off but it turns out, "Oh no, you're still on the runway," because there's something even better coming. Take me to the beginning of your runway. What did you study in school and things like that?

**Rachel:** I studied RTVF, which is radio, television, film. I always knew that I was going to do something public. I just didn't know what it was. I thought I was going to do general assignment reporting. Then I realized I can't do house fires and car wrecks. I'm just too sensitive, I wear my emotions on my sleeve. You could ask my husband. He's like, "That right there is the most emotional human being." [chuckles] It can be good and it can also be bad. I'm an empath and all of those things. I recognize quickly that I could not do that. I got sent out, it was definitely God wink to cover the Auburn football game at the campus TV station and the speed of the game, the crunch of the helmets, all of it.

I loved football growing up and I was like, "Wow, yes, this is what I want to do with my life." So began a love affair with sports and I did it for 17 years and never set out to really break barriers. I had goals and dreams and those things, but I did along the way. I remember there were times where I thought about quitting and I was telling a young woman that I was coaching at the time that I was thinking about quitting Sirius.

She said, "But if you quit, what will I do?" That I didn't get it till that conversation. It really sunk in that I truly was breaking barriers for young women and for older women. Doesn't matter what age you are. I look back now, first female host on Sirius XM, first host of a college football playoff, Heisman voter, very few women there. I had a beautiful career and people asked me so many times when I decided to retire, "Are you sure? Are you sure? Are you sure? Are you sure?" I said, "I am sure, I am sure."

**Shelley:** Well, in 17 years you answered it already, but I was thinking surely people didn't just welcome you to the club. [chuckles]

**Rachel:** No. [laughs]

**Shelley:** Right. [laughs].

**Rachel:** As a matter of fact, there were some that tried to kick me out of the club. There were situations where sexually harassed and things like that, the workplace. I share this now, I was just sharing it with somebody the other day. At that time, I remember going to three very, very prominent sports male mentors that I had and telling them this thing that was going on and how his person was acting inappropriate, my boss. They all three cried and said, "We wish that we could say,

tell everybody, do it." The nature of sports before "me too" was, if you're the whistleblower, you'll never work again.

I recently had somebody to say to me, "What I wish they would have said was, we'll support you though." There's never been anybody to whistle blow and still work, but hey, you can be the first. That would've been a first. I'm proud of all my first, but that would've been a first that would've affected so many people's lives if these very prominent men had gotten behind me and said, "We won't let you get excommunicated."

That's neither here nor there, I've forgiven and I moved on. For all the wonderful people, there were hard people and they were-- If you get down to the root of it, we talked about this before the show started.

If you get down to the root of it, anybody who's hurting, there's an analogy, you come across a dog in the woods and the dog is snarling and just frothing at the mouth and you're going to eat your arm off. Upon closer inspection, that dog actually has its leg in a trap. It's very hard to do being a human being. If we're in our God-centered self, that we were just sitting like God, we would be able to understand, do it every time. If you could show that grace to people and say, "Okay, that person's snarling and barking and being a real jerk, what part of them is in a trap? What part of them is hurt?" Because hurt people, hurt people and healed people, heal people.

**Shelley:** I love that. I hate to say it, but they're part of your runway.

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Shelley:** Even what you said earlier of, "I can't do the car wrecks and the hurt, taking the safe route, I'm putting air quotes of going into sports," actually took you to a real pain.

**Rachel:** I have not even thought about it that way, but it's so true. I had my own pain and my own battles to fight and my own things to do. I say this, I was just saying at the Border Patrol. I've said, "Wherever I go, I'm grateful for every hard thing that's happened in my life." Would I like to have my parents back? Absolutely. I know I'll see them again, faith tells me that. I've battled through addiction before. I'd like to have back the people that I hurt.

Now having gone through that, I can stand in front of a room of women or people that are battling addiction. I can say, "Me too. I've been there and there's hope on the other side. There's reunification and families and forgiveness and grace and love and peace and joy and all of those things." I don't regret the hard times. That's a great point you make.

**Shelley:** Before I get to the questions that I ask all of my guests, you have I'm Changing the Narrative, but tell me about your book. Tell me about the couple of different things you have going on.

**Rachel:** Absolutely. I have a book coming out called *Relentless Joy* and it's coming out on June 20th. For those that have ever been curious about writing a book or any of those things, it was hard. [laughter] It was very hard and very lonely. There's a lot of days where I said, "I wish I just would have wrote a novel, like a fiction novel not part autobiographical, part memoir, part self-help, part faith." It was hard, but it was so worth it. I know that it's going to touch a lot of lives. It comes out June 20th, but pre-sales are a huge, huge thing. If you just go to Baker Book House and put in *Relentless Joy* or put in *Relentless Joy* in my name, I know you'll probably hit some links in those show notes.

Pre-sales really matter when it's on sale and it's free shipping and it helps me tremendously. Then we created a club because who doesn't want to be in a cool club? We created the Joystarters Club, and it's the cost of a cup of coffee a month. We get these awesome messages that are curated, that get sent straight to your phone. There's monthly challenges. We have a subscriber chat. We have monthly meetings, where we talk about our joys and hopes and plans. It's basically this idea that what you focus on is what you notice in the world. There is psychological studies and there's studies that tell us that if you focus on anger and mad and bitter and all, you're going to see the more negative things in the world.

If you are joyful and happy and grateful, that is what you're going to see more of in the world. You are literally rewriting neural pathways. We're teaching people, just like you need a jumpstart for your car, sometimes you need a joy start for your soul. It lines up great with the book. We actually have our first meeting this month coming up. I get to help people tap into their joy, notice joy, spread joy, journal about it. We have a journal that goes with it. I think it's really neat because if we are not careful, our kids and our grandkids when we pass away and leave this earth are going to get a cell phone. That's all they're going to get from us.

They're not going to get old-timey pictures at our grandmas that we used to print, they're not going to get our journals. We need to be intentional, as Bob Goff says, about writing down our life, writing down the happy things. Oh, I saw a girl and helped her translate in Lululemon yesterday. The lady on the plane was really kind to me. Write those things down and print your pictures for Pete's sake. Your kids [laughter]-- Wait what, you remember being at your grandma's and going through the pictures, we don't have that these days.

**Shelley:** Give me a little tip. Let's say I want to have a more joyful life. I've decided I want to see the good, but maybe the people I'm around are conditioned to seeing the bad or the negative, what's that transition point? If somebody starts talking about something negative, you don't want to talk about it, what would you say?

**Rachel:** I would say, you have to identify in your life the difference between a dream builder and a dream killer. Somebody will say to me, "Well, the dream killers are my family." Then help them understand that their negativity is contagious, just like joy is contagious, just like germs are contagious. The next time they are negative, you can stop them in their tracks and say, "Well, uncle Fred, you said that this has happened and you're just so down on your luck, but you know what? You got a roof over your



head, uncle Fred. You've got running water, you've got clean sheets, you woke up today. This day will never come again, uncle Fred."

You can help uncle Fred get out of the rut. I was just working with somebody in Texas and they said, "We stopped going to lunch with this person because they just tell the same old sad stories." I said, "They're stuck in a rut, help them out of the rut." You could abandon them and lead them in the ditch, but help them out of the rut. You can lovingly show them where their stories are repetitive and negative. I would say that. I would say if those people are your friends, maybe you need new friends.

I learn a lot from plants. I'm a big plant nerd. I was just talking about a plant last night where I said, "Sometimes maybe you need to be repotted."

Sometimes all that's wrong is you need to be repotted. Maybe you need more sunshine or you need to go inward and have some more solitude. You need good draining soil because what goes in, you needs to drain out. You need to be able to process it because if it stays in you, it rots. It rots. Identify who those people are in your life and see if you can help them out of their rut, or maybe you need to take a break from them.

Maybe it's just time to take a little break, go inward, do your thing. I'm telling you, there are so many studies out there where talks about what you focus on. I've just met a woman in an Uber recently and I love my Uber conversations that said, "I was a pessimist my entire life. Then about three years ago," I think she said, "I got sick and tired of me. [laughter] I was sick and tired of how negative I was." She said, "I set out to change it. I started reading books on joy and psychology and peace and love and whimsy and all the things." Yes, you can change it and you can be like the woman in Uber that said, "I got sick and tired of me and I want to change it." [laughs]

**Shelley:** You know what's so interesting is obviously we're just getting a little snippet of your life, but you've been through some hard things, I can tell, but you do absolutely radiate joy. I can feel it. It's awesome.

**Rachel:** In me, thanks.

**Shelley:** Is Changing the Narrative, is that runway for joy or are they just two different things you're working on?

**Rachel:** It's such a great question, it really is. It tells, obviously, as being a former reporter myself, that you've done your homework. I'm Changing the Narrative is a movement that I created. Then it focuses on good love for yourself and others, interpersonal relationships, mental health, purpose beyond your job or athletics. Joystarters and *Relentless Joy* is really an RJB thing, like underneath Rachel Baribeau. Joystarters and *Relentless Joy* are openly faith-based, openly saying, "I love Jesus." Changing the Narrative, I have to go into schools and different things. It is not faith-based.

A lot of the principles, if you're a Bible reader, you'll grab the principles. They're right out of the Bible, but it's like my friend Bobby Bowden said, "Shook, you there you



preaching the Bible without ever preaching the Bible." I said, "Yes sir, I do." They're interchangeable because right now I'm the face of I'm Changing the Narrative. Now what we're doing in 2023 and we're working towards, is starting a speaker bureau.

I've already done this, training other speakers to send them out to help them use the principles of I'm Changing the Narrative, married with their own story and spreading them out to create a larger ripple on the pond. Because I will die one day, I will go be reunited with my mom and Jesus and all my people and live for eternity, and I want this movement to go on when I pass.

**Shelley:** I love that. What advice would you give to somebody who is just trying to figure out where they belong, what their message is in the world?

**Rachel:** Two things. One, early on in my career they told me to be less colorful, less loud, wear more beige. [laughter] I'm a colorful, loud Latina and so that was just not on my bingo card. What I've learned from that is, the world needs you to show up as your authentic self. There's nobody else in the world that has your fingerprint, there's nobody else in the world that has your DNA. I was specifically sent to do this thing and write this book and marry this man and bonus mom these kids.

I had a path that was preordained just like you do, just like the next person is. If you're over here busy comparing yourself and trying to be like somebody else and fit in some little hole that you were never supposed to fit in and dumbing yourself down and trying to be less done, because I did it for many years of my life, try to be less quiet, less loud, less all these things. I'm like, "No, now I'm myself in all my unapologetic glory." I'm like, "I am extra like guacamole."

I would tell people to be your authentic self. I would also tell people, you can take breaks, you can pause, and they are absolutely necessary to care for your own soul, but just don't quit. Just don't quit. I paused, oh, I spent many times in my prayer closet, I wanted to quit, I called, I cried, I took trips, I did soul search, I did all these things, I just never quit until I really knew from God it was time to quit and chase something else.

**Shelley:** Early in your career, sometimes what you are building is just that ability like it's true skills. Being in front of the camera, being able to talk, listen to that advice to be more beige and deciding, "No, that's not me." We have to develop the skills so that when we are ready to actually share the message, I think, when we get really clear on what our message is, it dovetails at the right moment. You had the skills and you had the message, and you had the drive, so it all came together when it needed to.

**Rachel:** Yes. My business manager has a famous saying, "Yes, and." There will be so many times in life where you're terrified. Courage is not the absence of fear, it is moving in the face of fear. I was terrified when I retired from Sportscasting. I was terrified many times going covering basketball games and going on Media Row and knowing where to sit and I would just put my chin up, "You don't fake it till you make it," terrified and fighting in the back of the room to make sure Nick Saban saw my hand to get my question answered, but I did it. I did it afraid.

I think sometimes or some people that's listening to this or somebody that's listening to this, the thing that we tell ourselves is, "I'll start when, I'll start when. I'll be happy when." T.D. Jakes talks about it, "I'll be happy when." Baby you're living right in the middle of a memory right now. I have a girlfriend, her name's Holly, and she just posted this amazing piece of content that really got me thinking. She said, "I'm 43," and she said, "If I live till I think 80 something, I did the math and I only have 1,800 and so and so Mondays left." This was on a Monday. She said, "How dare I curse this Monday?"

**Shelley:** Dang it.

**Rachel:** How dare you.

**Shelley:** [laughs] That's hitting a nerve.

**Rachel:** Perfect. Mind blown like whoa, and I just saw another person do it. They did it where they said average life expectancy for a man, and here's my age, and his was 18,000 days. Every day one number gets taken off of that. That's if we live a long life best case scenario. I teach people to live right now, live right now. You would be surprised last year I was traveling and speaking during training camp. I had a number of coaches call me and tell me, "Will you come speak on joy? I see you talk about joy." I'm like, "Joy to football players?" They're like, "Yes."

I told them, I said, "You're over here--" First of all, we don't talk enough to men about their mental health, but I said, "You're over here and you're waiting to be happy when you score the touchdown or waiting to be happy when you get the girl or waiting to be happy when you break the record. Listen to me, 40 years from now, 30 years from now, you're going to be saying, "I remember when I was in camp at West Virginia and da, da, da, da, da, da, you're living right in the middle of a memory."

**Shelley:** A dream that many people have, right?

**Rachel:** Yes.

**Shelley:** Can you tell me about a leap of faith you had to take to get where you are now?

**Rachel:** We've talked about it throughout the entire podcast, but it was retiring from sportscasting and from a faith perspective, I had been running from God for about a year. It was the next day after I hosted that mental health game. I was 33,000 feet in the air and I wrote my retirement letter. It just said, "I love sportscasting. It was my thing for all these years, and then I found what truly, truly sets my soul on fire." I wrote it. I remember the person next to me. I was bawling, tears. I mean bawling, bawling. The person next to me is just like, "You can't see my face," but they're like, "What is going on with this woman?"

They were like, "Maybe I need to ring my flight attendant bell. Anyway, I wrote it and then I went to one of the last places that my mom and I took a mother-daughter trip to in Mexico and stayed in the same room where Mayan and so went to the Mayan

cenotes. I swam in them, I did one of those photo sessions where they put your deceased loved one in it if they fade them out. There's pictures of me blowing a kiss to my mom and my mom's sitting on the edge of the cenote where my ancestors swam. Excuse me. I don't apologize for my emotions.

I'll say to your listeners, we have this shirt and this idea that would come across recently. We have a shirt that comes out and it says, "I'm the product of all my ancestors' hopes and dreams and prayers. "How dare you not go for it. How dare you not take the leap of faith? If you think about it, what your ancestors probably went through to even be alive, for you to be alive today, they likely went through famine. They likely went through war, displacement of their land, they may have been in slavery and in bondage. Think of all the things your ancestors, how many times back went through for you to even be alive. How dare you not go for it? How dare you not go for it, take that leap of faith.

**Shelley:** What's an unexpected blessing? Something you just could not see for yourself in making this move?

**Rachel:** The feedback, and I shared it with you a little bit at the beginning of the podcast. I truly, yes, I would like to earn more, to be able to take care of my family more and to scale the business and grow bigger. I'm not ashamed of that because it's like my friend Britney Turner says, "The more money I make, the more people I can help." However, that being said, I am not driven by money. I'm just not. I'm driven by connection to human beings. I'm driven by life change, I'm driven by holding somebody in my arms. There's just something about being cheek to cheek with somebody in their tears co-mingling with yours, it's just incredibly powerful.

That's the blessing. It's just knowing that when I get to heaven, I believe that I will meet people whose lives I've been able to impact, because I've walked out my purpose. I believe that each one of us have that opportunity, one, to know Jesus, but two, to go to heaven and to meet the people that you never knew you affected with your kindness at Starbucks, or you're paying for somebody behind you, their coffee in the line, or complimenting somebody or intervening in that domestic violence situation. You never know what your simple just being alive or your comment or your compliment can do for somebody that might be hanging by a thread.

**Shelley:** I love it. How have you seen the hand of God in your career?

**Rachel:** Oh my gracious. Every day, every day God's-- Every day. When you're in love with God and Jesus freak whatever you want to call me like he's your best friend, your provider, you're Abba father, you're all the things, I see him every day. There are speaking engagements that happen, big deals I'll tell you a crazy great story. Pastor Darwin Gray, I did his podcast about two and a half years ago, and I had tried to write a book before. I had been introduced to the book editor, or the book agent that did *Left Behind in Heaven is For Real*, so obviously very, very successful. We worked for three months and it was called *Calling on the Hearts of Kings*. She was amazing. She said, "I think you're going to get this many offers and this is going to happen. This is my professional advice and I think this is what's going to happen."

I said, "Okay." Comes to it. I didn't get one offer. I didn't even get a callback, and it crushed me.

The dream never left me, but it crushed me. Here I am, fast forward a couple of years, and I do his podcast and he stops in the middle of the podcast and he said, "First of all, I'm just prophesying over you. I see this for you. I see stadiums, I see your name being known." He said, "Why haven't you written a book?" I said, "Well, I tried and it didn't work." He said, "I'm going to connect you with my literary agent right after this." I'm like, "What?" Within 24 hours on the phone with his literary agent, within a week they had accepted me. Within the next six months, I wrote a book proposal that got picked up, and now it's my book. What? Crazy, crazy, beautiful story. What I say in the book too is that this book is for believers and non-believers.

Even if you're mad at God, by the end of it, I really hope you believe he was a really rad dude that lived, that historically we know lived and was crucified. Whether or not you are a believer or not, or you're mad at him there's something in this book for you. It's got some travel aspect, it's got all of those things. You're right, it's been a journey and I'm so excited for what the future holds because what I've just said to God is, "Here I am, Lord, send me."

**Shelley:** Thank you so much for sharing your story with us today.

**Rachel:** Thank you. Thank you for having me and wanting to share my story. I think there'll be a lot of people that are listening to this that see themselves in parts of me. That's the goal.

**Shelley:** I love a lot of what Rachael shared in this interview, but I'm thinking of the runway. So often I feel like I'm on a runway in a plane that never takes off, and that's not true at all. In those moments where I'm looking for change or I feel like I should do more, I want those front wheels to lift. Rachael's journey is evidence that we're always on the runway. Her first career as a sportscaster is the one dreams are made of. If you love sports as I do, how many times have you watched or listened to something and thought? How amazing it would be to talk sports for a living?

It'd be even better if I could play for a living. I know those careers are far more challenging than it appears when we're just watching it. In any case, it seems like a very idyllic career. Back to the runway. Rachael's runway was getting a degree in radio, TV, and broadcasting, getting those jobs, breaking down barriers for female sportscasters, and so forth. From that perspective, the plane is in the air at cruising altitude, but then she sees a problem. It turns out she's still on the runway to something more important or you can think of it as a layover.

The sports broadcasting plane landed. As she's back on the runway with I'm changing the narrative, an incredibly important movement to promote positive mental health for student-athletes and that plane has lift off. Meanwhile, there's the runway again when Rachael realizes that it's not just student-athletes who need to feel more joy in their lives. With the launch of her book, *Joy in the Joy Starter Program*, Rachael is on a quest to bring this faith-based program to anyone and everyone who wants to live a happier life. This is why that runway analogy is so powerful.

In the beginning of any journey, we have to develop our skills and abilities. We have to figure out how to share messages in ways that are authentic to each of us and aligned with what God wants us to share and the experiences we have are part of that runway too. The good, the bad, all of them, they're not detours. Way back in episode 4, Linda Evans reminded us that it's not selfish to develop our talents early in our careers. We have to develop our skills and get good at them. We can't bless others the way God needs us to if we hold back.

Then in episode 6, Jeffrey Thompson says that finding your calling in life sits at the intersection of passion, purpose, and place. It's the layering of the things you care about, your experiences, good and bad, and your sphere of influence. Now, most of us will never be holding a microphone up to some of the biggest sports stars in the world because that's not our runway. Can't you see that it was Rachael's? Her plane is taking off. I hope that those of you listening feel inspired to do the same and or you hear this message and realize that you too need to change the narrative and find more joy in your life. Please check out these resources or share them with someone who might need them.

It's relentless joy, finding freedom, passion, and happiness, even when you have to fight for it on Baker House Books or you can look for [joystarterclub.com](http://joystarterclub.com) if you want to join a movement and have access to resources that will help you find more joy. Finally, at [Imchangingthenarrative.org](http://Imchangingthenarrative.org), a place for improving mental health and the actions of student-athletes. Of course, you're going to find social media handles for all of those as well at each of those sites. Hopefully, you can find what you need there. You have access to information you can share with others.

Again, I want to thank Rachael for sharing her story with us. Thank you for listening.

Thank you for spending time with me on the *Faithful Career Moves* podcast. I hope you will discover one story at a time that God cares deeply about the details of our lives, especially something as important as using our talents and abilities to support our families, serve others, and build up his kingdom on this earth. If you are a stay-at-home mom who feels inspired to stretch yourself professionally, visit [faithfulcareermoves.com](http://faithfulcareermoves.com) to learn more.