Molly Fletcher: Welcome to Game Changers with Molly Fletcher, where we take you behind the scenes with peak performers to learn what makes them tick and discover how you can apply their lessons to your life. I'm your host, Molly Fletcher. [00:00:30] Who were you before the world told you who to be? That's the underlying question behind Glennon Doyle's new memoir Untamed. Glennon is a speaker activist and New York Times bestselling author. Her two previous books, Love Warrior and Carry On, Warrior were both number one New York Times bestsellers. Glennon is the founder of Together Rising, an all woman led nonprofit that has raised over $20 million for women, families, and children in crisis. She's [00:01:00] been featured on Oprah Super Soul Sunday, and Love where was on Oprah's Bookclub Selection. Glennon lives in Florida with her wife, Abby Wambach, a retired soccer star and three children.

No topic is off limits to Glennon. She's written about addiction, recovery, marriage, and faith with no holds barred. In today's conversation we dig into becoming attuned to our discontent, abandoning expectations, and learning to trust yourself. It's about how sometimes we forget who [00:01:30] we are and how we find ourselves again. Let's get right to it. Here's my conversation with Glennon Doyle. Glennon Doyle, it is an absolute honor to have you on. We're going to have fun and we're going to keep it real. Does that sound good?

Glennon Doyle: I mean, that sounds like my jam. Let's do that.

Molly Fletcher: I know it's your jam. So we have to start here. Your previous memoir, Love Warrior, is the story [00:02:00] of redemption of your marriage to your husband at the time. And then in the midst of that, of you're promoting it, right? You meet Abby Wambach. And so let's start there because... Tell me a little bit about that window of time. It's a lot to unpack I know, but let's start there.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. So I think the best way to describe it is that I was in bad marriage with a good man. And that is an interesting place for women to be because I had the kind of life that women are trained [00:02:30] to be grateful for, right? The kind of marriage that you're just supposed to say, this is good enough. But I don't know. I just always had this thing inside of me that was just questioning, "Is this good as it gets?" And just always felt like... It was this whisper that was like, "Isn't it supposed to be more beautiful than this?" Right? And I felt angry all the time. I was just this little level river of rage. And then I was on the road promoting the book, Love Warrior, which was [00:03:00] by the way Oprah's book [crosstalk 00:03:04].

Molly Fletcher: Right.

Glennon Doyle: It was freaking all over the world, just like, "This is the epic marriage redemption story," right?

Molly Fletcher: Sure.

Glennon Doyle: So of course, everybody in my sphere, many people's work was connected to the success of that book. And the general idea was, okay, people will buy this book because they will want to save their own marriages, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: So [00:03:30] I'm at a event to promote Love Warrior and Abby walks in the room. And it's so freaking cheesy. But the only way I know how to describe it is the truth, which is that I felt these three words rise inside me and they were there, "She is." And I thought, "Okay, these words are coming to be from on high," right? "I'm in the middle of some kind of [00:04:00] fricking Disney moment." But I have come to know that those words were clearly from within, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: That I was just finally hearing loud and clear the voice of the girl I was before the world told me who to be, right? Before I started trying to contort myself to fit inside all of these boxes, like here's what a good girl does, here's what a good Christian does, here's what a good woman does, here's what a good mother does. [00:04:30] So the next few months were scary and hard. But they were a journey, trying to answer the questions like, "Okay, now that I've finally heard from myself, am I going to abandon myself again, or am I going to finally abandon the world's expectations of me?" It was really the difference between am I going to keep being a good girl and slowly dying, or am I [00:05:00] going to be a free woman and just let it all burn. Let the world freaking deal and adjust.

Molly Fletcher: But I love what you say, which is, when you tell the truth, it always works. And it's worked for you. I mean, you told the truth, you leaned into that.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: And it's worked.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. I mean, worked is something that usually you can look back on and say in the end it all worked. But it doesn't always feel that way when you're going [crosstalk 00:05:28].

Molly Fletcher: Oh my [00:05:30] gosh, I sure.

Glennon Doyle: And no morning did I wake up during that time and say, "This is just really working beautifully," right?

Molly Fletcher: Sure, I can...

Glennon Doyle: This is easy cheesy. People are just loving this, right? It was hard and people were upset and scared. And I broke a lot of people's hearts. I mean, I was taught that a good mother doesn't break her children's hearts, right?

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, you talk of them.

Glennon Doyle: [00:06:00] I stayed in a less than healthy marriage for a long time because I thought I don't... He's a good dad. And my kids... I just can't break their hearts. And then one day I was braiding one of my daughter's hair, and we were looking at each other in the mirror and I thought, "Oh, I am staying in this marriage for her. But I want this marriage for her," right?. "And [00:06:30] if I would not want this marriage for her, then why am I modeling that love and calling that good motherhood?"

Molly Fletcher: That's a lot.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. So it was the shift of like, "Oh, I know why, because I have been trained, I've been tamed to believe that good mothers are mothers," right?

Molly Fletcher: Sure.

Glennon Doyle: That we just solely disappear. We just bury ourselves, our desires, our emotions, our feel, everything. We bury it all and we call that love. And that [00:07:00] is just some crap that's been fed to us by the status quo forever because every message to every woman in every arena is just slowly disappear. That's how you earn your worthiness. So what I figured out is, okay, it's good to want to be a good mother. Being a good mother, being a good friend, all these things. I want to be those things, but I just better define good for myself.

Molly Fletcher: Sure. Absolutely.

Glennon Doyle: Because if I keep swallowing status quo definition of good, if I keep chasing that dirty thing funny, [00:07:30] I will succeed. But success for a woman inside of culture is disappear, become smaller and smaller in body, mind, spirit, ambition. So yes, it was hard, but there was... Yes, it all worked in the end, because when we are true to ourselves, our outer world slowly transform to become exactly what they're supposed to be. But it sure as hell, wasn't easy. There was a lot of pain and fear and loss. Yeah. But [00:08:00] I lost everything I was supposed to lose.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah.

Glennon Doyle: When you're being honest, you always lose the people and the things you are supposed to lose so you can step into the next version of yourself.

Molly Fletcher: Glennon, one of the things I wanted to ask you is you've written about addiction. You've written about infidelity, about your marriage, right? You just talked about that, about falling in love with a woman. And one of the things that came up for me is, what was the hardest thing for you to put out into the world? Because you put it out there, right? I mean, you are real girl. [00:08:30] What was the hardest though?

Glennon Doyle: Okay. So I've done a lot of interviews about this, and this is the first time I've talked about this concept. I'm so excited you asked me that, and also sweating that you asked me that, because... So there's this story of Untamed that I have never told anyone on earth except for Abby, okay? Not my sister, not my kids, not my ex husband. Nobody, okay? And it is the cheesiest. Okay, so when I was in high school, I so badly [00:09:00] wanted to be a popular girl. Okay, I just wanted to belong. I wanted to belong so badly. And there was this thing called homecoming court in high school, where you could make it onto homecoming court. This is ridiculous proof of belonging, proof of coolness, right? If you made it onto this homecoming court. And I was in the room counting votes for homecoming court. And Molly, I added two tick marks [00:09:30] next to my name and cheated my way onto homecoming court, to be nominated for homecoming court. Okay.

Molly Fletcher: Wow.

Glennon Doyle: I did that, Molly. I was so desperate to belong. So desperate to be cool that I committed voter fraud to be on freaking homecoming court. And this story... My wife, Abby, when I told her that I was going to include this story, she was like, "Oh babe, you can't tell that one. You can't." I'm like, "Honey, I've [00:10:00] written about my abortion. I've written about my divorce. I've written about my addiction to drugs and alcohol. This is the thing that I can't write about?" And we figured out it is just so unacceptable to desperately want to be cool and not to be cool, because all of these other things like, "Yeah, I've been to jail. Yeah, I've been to blah-blah-blah. I have." But those things have a level of cool.

Molly Fletcher: [00:10:30] Sure. Right.

Glennon Doyle: What you can't admit to is being terribly uncool. What I do know is that I'm a good leader, and I'm a good activist, and I'm a really good writer, and I'm incredibly uncool. But I-

Molly Fletcher: I would argue that you're pretty cool, girl.

Glennon Doyle: Thank you. I'm hot. I'm sweaty. I care too much. I care the most amount. And [00:11:00] so I've just embraced my lack of cool. And I've thought, "No, you have to tell the story you cannot tell," right? Because that's what keeps us caged.

Molly Fletcher: No question.

Glennon Doyle: It's those little shameful things.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah.

Glennon Doyle: So there you have it.

Molly Fletcher: No question.

Glennon Doyle: I committed voter fraud and got myself nominated to homecoming court. That is my greatest shame.

Molly Fletcher: Oh my gosh. Well, and that's incredible because you have shared and you are so forthright in the things that you share, [00:11:30] that helps so many people, which is fantastic. Tell me this. I mean, you talked a little bit about addiction just now, and recovery obviously was a part of that for you. What has that taught you about honesty?

Glennon Doyle: Well, recovery is completely about honesty, right? All of my art, everything I do, the way that I parent, the way that I show up in my marriage, the [00:12:00] way that I lead, the way that I run Together Rising, all of it I learned in early sobriety, okay? Because staying sober, being sober is my one thing, right? There's nothing else that matters. Everything beautiful in my life, all of it stems from my sobriety, because... And I actually think that in lots of ways we addicts are unlucky, and in lots of ways we are really lucky because many of us hit rock bottom. And so we are forced to go through this spiritual process, which is recovery. And [00:12:30] recovery is just the process of recovering your true self, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: And that is why a lot of people who have gone through sobriety and early recovery have a real sense of self, right? We are forced to go through that process where a lot of people don't have to. So what I learned in early sobriety is that all that matters is integrity, right? And integrity does not mean to me doing the right thing, because the right thing is relative and planted, whatever. It's different for [00:13:00] everybody.

Molly Fletcher: Sure. Right.

Glennon Doyle: What integrity means is being integrated, which means that your beliefs, your emotions, your imagination, your inner self, what I would call your untamed self, right? On the inside, aligns with your outer self, right? So your words, and your actions, and your way you are in the world matches is integrated with your inner self. That's what integrity [00:13:30] means, right? Integrated. So I would use the word maybe integrity instead of honesty, but they're the same. It just means that we are constantly doing our best to bring our inner self to do the next right thing, one thing at a time and letting circumstances to whatever they.

I'm not trying to keep the peace, right? I'm not trying to not say this or do not be myself or not... [00:14:00] so that everything can stay the same on the outside. I'm completely fine with bringing my true self to any situation and just letting the outer world reorganize itself and adjust based on what I've just brought. And I think that's the future of... That's what an untamed woman is. That's what our corporations and our churches and our families need to be encouraging, is this idea now that community is no longer about being quiet [00:14:30] so that you don't rock the boat, right? Community now belonging has to be this idea that, no, when we come to the table, we bring our full selves to the table. Trusting that when we do, we will be held by the group, but also free to be our individual selves.

Molly Fletcher: What an Untamed it's about, you talk about finding your brave, right? And you define courage and freedom. Can you talk about how you define courage and how [00:15:00] you define freedom a little bit?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. So, I mean, I do think that brave is a buzzword for us. And we say be brave all the time. We tell ourselves to be brave, we tell our friends to be brave, we tell our kids to be brave, and then we have no freaking idea what brave means, right?

Molly Fletcher: Right.

Glennon Doyle: And it's probably as a word, it's super important to me to define what we're talking about, right? So I had this interesting experience where I was playing with what brave means in my head, because I kept seeing, well, mostly [00:15:30] on memes, which is now where we get most of our important [crosstalk 00:15:33].

Molly Fletcher: Yes.

Glennon Doyle: I kept seeing this line that said brave is being afraid and doing it anyway, right? Which just didn't exactly feel right to me. So I'm at the... Kids are getting their ears pierced, right? I've got two daughters. Until they tell me otherwise, but for now they're still two daughters. And one of them is... Also the first one, the older one, I raised her when I still cared about parenting, [00:16:00] right? I was just really still had a lot of energy. With the last one, I just was like, "Oh my God, you're on your own," right? I just gave her an iPad and just said godspeed, right?

Molly Fletcher: How old are your kids?

Glennon Doyle: Chase is 17. Tish is 14. And Amma is 11.

Molly Fletcher: Got it. Okay.

Glennon Doyle: So I take them to get their ears pierced. And the older one she's hanging back as she often does, she's more cautious. The younger one just runs up to the kiosk and jumps in the chair. And I finally [00:16:30] make it there, and the woman turns to me, the piercer, and she says, "Are you her mother?" And I said, "Yeah, I'm trying to be. I've been trying to be for a very long time." Amma just looks through it and said, "Do it." So the lady shot her ears up. Tish is watching this, the older one. And she turns to me and she says, "Mom, no. I'm not ready. I changed my mind. I'm not ready to do this." And I said, "Are you certain?" She said, "Yes." And I said, "Okay, wonderful. Tell the lady you're not going to go." So she told [00:17:00] her. And an interesting thing happened, which is that the woman turned to Tish and she said, "Oh, come on honey, be brave. Be brave like your sister. Look at your sister, she's so brave."

And then a couple of the other mothers there well-meaning told Tish the same thing, "Oh, come on, you can be brave. You can be brave like your sister." And Tish got a little bit... you could see her deflate. And I knew something was off, but of course I could not put my finger on it in the moment. So I [00:17:30] said nothing except, "No, we're fine. We're going to go." This is what I realized later, and what I said to my daughter, brave is not what we've been saying brave is. Brave is not being afraid and doing it anyway. Because by the way, if we tell our nine-year-olds that, then can we tell our 16 year olds that? So when our 16 year olds get in the car, they tell us they're going to a movie, right? But they're really going to the kegger down the street. Are we going to say, "Okay kido, I want you to be brave tonight. [00:18:00] And what I mean by that is, if anyone's doing anything scary and you have a gut instinct that says no, I want you to just plow through that and just do the thing, because that's brave," right? No.

Molly Fletcher: Wow. That's so cool. Yes.

Glennon Doyle: That's not brave.

Molly Fletcher: No question. Yes.

Glennon Doyle: And when we're throwing that definition of brave around, we are only honoring one kind of brave, which is this loud, bold, daring, sometimes reckless brave. But in [00:18:30] that situation, what I would say is that both girls, Amma and Tish were incredibly brave, because Amma looked inside herself, wanted something desperately, and did what it took. Used her voice on the outside, did what it took to get the things she wanted. Tish looked inside herself, found a voice that said "No I'm not ready," then was brave enough to use that voice on the outside to get what she wanted. And I would suggest that Tish was braver in that situation because [00:19:00] sometimes it takes even more courage to say the thing that's not going to get you the applause and the approval on the outside.

Molly Fletcher: Absolutely. Sure. No question. Particularly that moment when all these other moms are saying, "Come on, you got it. Do it."

Glennon Doyle: And that happens to us so often.

Molly Fletcher: All the time.

Glennon Doyle: Within Love Warrior, when I found out about Craig's infidelity in my marriage, I always had a fierce feminist. I'm a woman who's out there leading women. There were so many voices coming [00:19:30] at me saying, "The only thing that you should do as a feminist leader is to leave." I had this knowing inside of myself that it wasn't time, that we had some unfinished business. To take care of that, we had to work for me. My knowing that I need to figure out how to forgive this man, because I cannot spend the rest of my life hating him because we have these children together. Now, we did that work. We did it not to stay [00:20:00] together happily ever after, it ends up we did it so that we could part and raise our children respectfully ever after, right?

Molly Fletcher: Yes.

Glennon Doyle: But I had to allow myself to be called a coward on the outside. However, I was doing the brave thing because I had a knowing inside and I was following that on the outside regardless of what everybody else told me. So what I told Tish that night when we talked about what had happened at that ear piercing kiosk is that, what [00:20:30] I want her to think about every day is the word confidence, right? Everybody will have a different definition of brave. Our family has one, which is brave is listening to the knowing on the inside, and speaking that knowing, and acting that knowing on the outside. But I also love the word confidence. Confidence comes from two Greek... The Latin origins of those words are with fidelity, confide, with fidelity.

Molly Fletcher: Oh, wow.

Glennon Doyle: And so what I think a confident person [00:21:00] does is they live their lives one next right thing at a time with fidelity to self, right? They abandon else's expectations of them so that they never have to abandon themselves.

Molly Fletcher: That's a lot.

Glennon Doyle: It is a lot. It's hard, but it's simple.

Molly Fletcher: Right. And I love how you've broken down brave. And my husband and I have three daughters. And so the way that you just broke that down and made it so real, connecting [00:21:30] it to confidence, I love it. let me ask you this. So there may be people listening, right? How can you become a tune to our discontent? You know what I mean? I think sometimes it's hard to know... Some people could be listening going, "But I'm happy. I feel good. I'm not sure what you're doing." How do you uncover that? And how do you coach people to do that?

Glennon Doyle: Well, first of all, if people are listening and they're like, "What are you talking about? Everything's amazing. I [00:22:00] feel great. I have no discontent," I mean, awesome to you. Carry on, right?

Molly Fletcher: Carry on [crosstalk 00:22:07].

Glennon Doyle: Exactly. I believe that discontent, which can be called anything inside of women. I mean, you could call anger, discontent. You could call sadness, discontent. You can call envy discontent. What I believe is that discontent inside of women, we have been tamed by our culture [00:22:30] to be ashamed of it, okay? So that is the case for all marginalized groups, right? So we look at anger. It is very important for status quo to attain every marginalized group into being ashamed of our anger, right? It's very important for women say, use women as an example, we have been tamed into every time we feel angry, we think there is something wrong with us, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Glennon Doyle: Instead [00:23:00] of considering that maybe we're angry because there's just something wrong out there, right?

Molly Fletcher: Right.

Glennon Doyle: That we might be able to show up and change, okay? Whether that thing is in our relationship, whether that thing is in our family, whether it's in our community, whether it's in our nation, right? So the reason why we are tamed in to being ashamed of our anger is because angry people demand change. So any group who has ever made any change in the world is [00:23:30] because they were pissed first.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative). They were angry. Sure.

Glennon Doyle: Of course. Right. And this taming comes from every place. It's, "Oh, girls shouldn't be angry. Smile more." All of the things that we are taught that girls should be pleasant, the girls should be grateful. I mean, we are not allowed to admit our discontent because a good girl's grateful, right? Be grateful for what you have. I mean, the first lesson I ever learned about women was Adam and Eve. [00:24:00] You'd be grateful for what you have. If you go for more, you will destroy the world, and all of your descendants will suffer forever. Amen. Go with God girls, right? I think that if everything is awesome for you, fantastic, carry on. If you do have anger, if you do have discontent, if you do want more, consider who's benefiting from you being ashamed of those feelings instead of being motivated by those feelings. And the people who benefit from women being ashamed [00:24:30] of their ambition, and ashamed of their anger, and ashamed of their discontent is always power.

Molly Fletcher: Well, and if you're staying in it, right? I've always told people, it's serving you somehow, right? If you're staying in something, if you're staying in that anger, it's serving you because maybe you're not having to have the courage, have the freedom, lean into the confidence that probably is inside of and hope is inside of all of us, finding it, unlocking it.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah, and it's scary.

Molly Fletcher: No question.

Glennon Doyle: It is scary. And once [00:25:00] you admit that you're discontent... It's very hard to even to admit to ourselves that we're discontent, because then it's admitting that we can imagine more for ourselves. And that's terrifying because then we have to say things that might make people uncomfortable. Might challenge the status quo of our relationships, of our marriages, of our families. It's scary to admit that we want more.

Molly Fletcher: We'll [00:25:30] get right back to the show. But first I want to share with you a free video series that I created just for you. Too often we assume that our potential is some lofty vision hanging over our heads but never quite attainable. But in reality, our potential is built in small moments. A pro athlete delivers a clutch performance in the biggest games because he executed it a thousand times in practice. The same goes for you, master the little moments so you're ready [00:26:00] for the big moments. My free Unleash Your Potential video series walks you through three simple steps to move closer to what you really are capable of. To get free access, visit fiveminutepotential.com. That's five, the number five, minutepotential.com. One of the themes I noticed you talk about a lot in Untamed or it was threaded through is, [00:26:30] and you talk about the fear of being too much. Talk to me a little bit about that. Talk about that.

Glennon Doyle: I mean, the amount of women that tell me that this is what they fear, what they've been told that they're too much is so incredible. It's so many women, of course, because all the women have to be too much or not enough, right?

Molly Fletcher: It's one or the other.

Glennon Doyle: What the hell does that even mean? What does that mean? What is this muchness by which we are all being graded? What is the appropriate amount of [00:27:00] muchness for a woman? Is it 60 kilograms of muchness? What's the appropriate amount? It's so ridiculous. I believe this. As a kid, I was super sensitive kid and I had big feelings, and big anger, big questions, big doubt, and I just was tamed by my culture, my family, everybody into just, this is too much. And that's why I started then [00:27:30] chiding, and became addicted to food as a numbing agent. And that turned into alcoholism, and that turned into everything else. And my life for 25 years became doctors, and therapists, and diagnoses, and medicine, and a mental hospital once. My underlying belief about myself became, I'm crazy. And so I stopped trusting myself because, how can a crazy [00:28:00] person be trusted to not sabotage her life and her people?

But I am now raising a little girl, Tish, who is super sensitive. She has big feelings and big anger, big all the things, because of karma, Molly.

Molly Fletcher: Sure. Right. Karma is real girl.

Glennon Doyle: Yes, it is. Hard and freaking beautiful to raise this kid. And I look at her all the time [00:28:30] and she's so amazing. I think she cares so much about everything and she feels deeply. She's a little closet, she feels things that other people aren't willing to feel, and she can see things and hear things that other people can't. It makes her life a little bit hard, but it makes her really special. And I look at her and I think, "Oh, not in a million years should I ever call her crazy or broken." She is sensitive and that's her super power, right? And she's [00:29:00] prophetic.

It just has helped me revise my own ideas about myself as a child, right? Of course I wasn't broken, of course I wasn't too much, of course I wasn't crazy, I was just a highly sensitive kid who didn't have the tools that she needed to deal with her sensitivity. And now look, the sensitivity that led me to numb myself instead of food is the exact same sensitivity that I use now to be a really good writer. [00:29:30] And that anxiety, well, I call it my fire, but my therapist calls it my anxiety, whatever, but...

Molly Fletcher: I like that pivot. That's a nice pivot.

Glennon Doyle: Yes. But that fire that led me into being a really fearful person is the same fire that makes me really good activist. So it's this too muchness, whatever this thing is that women are so afraid we have, that's the gift, right? That's not what you numb, that's not what you hide, that's what you lean into. [00:30:00] That's what you bring to the world. That's your magic.

Molly Fletcher: Well, and you say in the book I love, that you steal permission from women to exist fully, right? When we pretend to be less than.

Glennon Doyle: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Molly Fletcher: I mean, I tell you, Tish is one lucky girl, blessed girl to have. I mean, because obviously you are positioned incredibly well to help her navigate her sensitivity. There's no doubt about that. That's awesome.

Glennon Doyle: Molly, don't you think we just pendulum parent though. I feel like I've overdone it. Sometimes Tish is on her sixth hour of telling me how she [00:30:30] feels and I'm like, "You know what? Maybe I forgot to tell you about the gifts of suffering silently sister."

Molly Fletcher: Mama is tired.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: Oh, that's awesome. One of the things, you talk about motherhood. And you talk about how we identify ourselves in our roles in life, right? Like mother and wife, or sister, or friend, or activist, right? But you talk about how when we do that, that who we are can be taken [00:31:00] from us. And how we can think about identity. So, because we play these "roles", right? I mean, in our lives at some level, right? I mean, how can we delineate that and think about these in a healthy way?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. I mean, it's so interesting. This is so weird, this analogy that I just thought of. But when you were talking, I was thinking about, have you seen the movie, A League of Their Own, of course?

Molly Fletcher: Yes. Sure.

Glennon Doyle: [00:31:30] When the sisters are standing on the platform at the train station and they don't know how to get on the train, and Tom Hanks is like, "See the way..." Oh no, it's the manager guy. He goes, "See, the way it works is the train moves, not the station." That is how I think about women in our roles. It's like we are taught to define ourselves by these roles. So you ask a woman who she is and she will say, "I am a mother. I am a wife. I am a..." And the thing is that these roles change and they can be taken [00:32:00] from us. And so if we put our entire identity in mother, what happens when they go to college? Or if we put our identity in wife, what happens when the marriage ends? It's like how it works is the train moves, not station. We have to find identity in our souls instead of the roles. Which sounds nice because it rhymes, but it's hard.

And I think that's one of the reasons why I love writing so much, because when I write words on a blank page, I [00:32:30] look at that and it feels more to me like I'm looking in a mirror than even when I'm looking at mirror.

Molly Fletcher: Wow.

Glennon Doyle: Right? There she is for me, right? From the book always to me in the end means that there she is with me, right? The self-rising up inside of me that I could finally hear from that, there she is with me. At different points in women's lives it's so hard to find any time to do that, to have a [00:33:00] moment. Virginia Woolf said that every woman needs a room of her own, but I write in the closet. I feel like what women need is an hour of their own, just some place or some time or somebody with whom you can just be your full self, when you just stop feeling like you're onstage and you're backstage, where you can just say, "Oh, there she is."

Molly Fletcher: And would you say [00:33:30] for some women it's an hour, but for some it could be two and it could be... I mean, it's different for everybody though, right?

Glennon Doyle: Absolutely. It can be five minutes, it can be eight hours, it can be whatever. I don't know what it... I don't know. When I was just [inaudible 00:33:47] children, I had barely a minute. I felt like I was just so overwhelmed with touch and presence. And I'm a major introvert and it was a really hard time for me. [00:34:00] And I just remember the only minutes I had was just sneaking into the bathroom.

Molly Fletcher: Oh, dude, it's the shower. I mean, my husband and I had... Dude, we had three kids in 12 months.

Glennon Doyle: Oh, I'm sorry. What?

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, exactly. So we had one and then 12 months later I had twins. And so I would find myself taking like three showers a day because it was the only thing I could do and be alone by myself, without somebody clawing at the shower door though.

Glennon Doyle: Of course.

Molly Fletcher: Sometimes [00:34:30] they would find themselves there, but you know that story.

Glennon Doyle: Oh, I should do. And Molly, you know what? My kids think that the shower is a magical place. My kids... Which one? One of them, I don't remember, came to me and said, "Mommy, this crazy thing happens to me in the shower. I have so many ideas there. It's like this magical place where I have so many ideas." And I said, "Honey, the shower is not magic. It's just the only place where you're not freaking looking at a screen."

Molly Fletcher: Exactly.

Glennon Doyle: Right?

Molly Fletcher: Sounds real.

Glennon Doyle: It's this crazy thing happens in the shower, [00:35:00] it's called thinking. Is what we had before Google.

Molly Fletcher: Right. Oh, amen, girl. That is so true. So you talk a lot about... And then we come back to this knowing, right? Knowing with a capital K, right? So learning to trust your own intuition, and not just you but all of us, right? Is so hard. But how did you learn to do that? Because you clearly trust your intuition and you're raising your children [00:35:30] to trust their intuition, and you...

Glennon Doyle: I do.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah. How did you get that and how do you teach people to get that?

Glennon Doyle: Well, I mean, first of all you have to get on an intellectual level that if you don't trust you, you're always trusting somebody's intuition.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, that's true. Yeah, sure.

Glennon Doyle: You're either trusting your own or somebody else. Because you're either doing what you know to do, or you are outsourcing your decisions to somebody else, right? So there's a choice either way. And I think [00:36:00] you have to intellectually understand on a certain level that if you're not trusting your intuition, then most likely you're trusting cultural's directives, okay? Because when you think about what you should do or what you're supposed to do, for... Okay, here's an example, when I gave you the story about the infidelity, what should I do? Okay, well, back then I was a feminist and I was in the Christian space, okay? These are two tricky Venn diagram there, okay? So [00:36:30] all of the Christian world would have told me, "You should stay." Back then that was like a good woman should stay.

Feminist would tell me the right thing to do is to go, okay? This is important to have an experience like that, where you realize you cannot make everybody happy. And in a situation like that, you learned that, right? The right thing and the should thing are always relative. There is no [00:37:00] right thing. There is no should. These are all culturally constructed ideas by certain groups to keep people in the herd, to keep people in line. So they're not pure, right? If you are not following your own instincts, you are following someone else's should, okay? You are following somebody else's map. But there is no map, we are all pioneers, right? So no one's ever lived the particular life that I'm living with my gifts, [00:37:30] my past, my pain, my people, right? Every life is an unprecedented experiment. So if you want to live the one wild and precious life that you were meant to live, the only way to do it is one step at a time, leaning on your intuition instead of other people's maps.

And what happens is after a while, it feels scary, but it's not. It's much less scary than outsourcing your life to other people, many [00:38:00] of whom are just trying to control you. And it's a practice of giving yourself some time to shut out all the other voices, outside and the exterior and practicing... I don't have a better word for less than listening, but it's not a voice for me, it's more like feeling around for the intuition. It feels like a nudge toward one thing or another. I have a friend who describes [00:38:30] it as what feels warm, what feels cold.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: It's getting back to that instinctual part of ourselves, but it's also highly spiritual, depending on your imagination, your emotion, all of these things that women have been shamed out of, and it's using what's inside as a blueprint for what's you're building outside.

Molly Fletcher: And the more you practiced it, did you get [00:39:00] better at trusting it?

Glennon Doyle: Yes.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah. Okay. Right.

Glennon Doyle: Absolutely. I mean, listen, I'm a person who... I started practicing this because I found myself at 3:00 AM sitting in bed with a pint of half-baked Ben & Jerry's, an open computer Googling, what do I do if my husband cheats on me, but is a good dad? Okay? Molly, I was Googling my one wild and precious life, okay?

Molly Fletcher: Oh, man.

Glennon Doyle: That is [00:39:30] rock bottom.

Molly Fletcher: Sure. Yeah.

Glennon Doyle: That is rock bottom of trusting yourself, right? I would outsource my life to a bunch of bots and trolls instead of going inside and trusting myself.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: So when I tell you you can start from anywhere...

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, you can start from bed with a half baked and a Google, man, and you can go from there.

Glennon Doyle: That's right.

Molly Fletcher: Wow. That's awesome. Let me ask you, what have you learned about forgiveness over the years in all that you've done [00:40:00] and experienced?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. I mean, first of all, I would say that forgiveness is real tricky for me. It's not like a biff, it's circular. It's not linear. It's not, yes I do all of these things and I am done with forgiveness now, and I have forgiven this person and now it's over, and... It's a spiral staircase for me. It's a decision over and over again. And I keep coming back to it. And sometimes I feel unforgiveness again, [00:40:30] and that's okay.

I have learned that forgiveness does not mean access, right? So with my ex husband, I felt like I was waiting for forgiveness. I was doing all the right things, I was going to therapy, I was trying, I was showing up, I was... And it just didn't come. And it was like I was waiting for forgiveness to be bestowed upon me from on high. And we both were. And [00:41:00] what I realized was that what I really needed to do in order to raise my children with Craig for the rest of our lives was to forgive Craig. And what I really needed to do to forgive Craig was to get divorced, because I did not feel safe, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: I could not forgive Craig because I had not done the hard work of restoring boundaries that had been broken, of making [00:41:30] myself feel safe again. That is what I needed to do. And so a very interesting thing that happened to me is, after we signed our divorce papers, we were going up an elevator together from the mediator person's office. And I looked over at Craig and it was the first time that I felt true tenderness, love, friendship in years. And I realized, "Oh, I forgive him now because [00:42:00] I have made myself safe again."

Molly Fletcher: Wow. Interesting. Sure. And so, when you say it's circular... So in that elevator you felt that way, but it sounds like from what I've read, you still feel that way, right? Because you're still in this safe place. And is that how you do that in life, where you get yourself to a safe place that allows you to let go?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. I think you restore your boundary. You do what it takes to honor [00:42:30] yourself. I remember thinking, "Oh, my problem is not that you abandoned me, Craig, my problem is that I keep abandoning myself."

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: Because I'm not doing what I need to do to honor myself and to make myself feel safe now. Having said that, I can give you that definition of forgiveness. I can tell you I had that elevator moment. And I can also tell you that every once in a while, Craig and I want to stab each other.

Molly Fletcher: Right.

Glennon Doyle: Okay?

Molly Fletcher: Sure.

Glennon Doyle: Okay?

Molly Fletcher: Right.

Glennon Doyle: We're not in constant kumbaya. It's not like [00:43:00] that elevator moment is the nirvana that we have now live inside of. That's what I mean by circular.

Molly Fletcher: Right. Got it.

Glennon Doyle: The spiral staircase. It's that we will keep forever running into unforgiveness.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: And we will keep going, and we will work our way back to forgiveness, and then unforgiveness, and then back to forgiveness. And I can tell you right now that we spend a lot more time in forgiveness than we did in the beginning. I think that spiral staircase gets wider and wider and wider.

Molly Fletcher: It's one thing, right? [00:43:30] To face public commentary about our decisions. But it's a real different thing, I think, when we're afraid to disappoint the people that we love.

Glennon Doyle: Oh, of course. That's it.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah. And so, what has been your experience with that? Because, I mean, you've been there, right? As far as navigating that. What's been that for you?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. Well, I mean, I told you about Tish. I mean, my kids, having to disappoint them in order [00:44:00] to not abandon myself, that was a toughie. My parents. I mean, listen, you can think you're a bad-ass, you can think you're untamed until you got to call your mama, right? And tell her that you're divorcing your... I mean, good God. So no, that's what mattered to me. And the world will do. Well, I mean, a woman steps out of line like I do, I knew what the world was going to do. There was going to be some moments, and I was ready for that because I know what happens when women step outside of their cages. No, [00:44:30] what mattered was one at a time. Abandoning expectations of the people who love us is the hardest part. It's not the cruel criticism of people who hate us that shakes us from our knowing, it's always the quiet concern of this whoevers.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: So to trust yourself, to be a woman who trusts herself to lead her own life often means [00:45:00] abandoning the idea that your parents know best, that it's your job to protect everyone from discomfort, right? It's boldly deciding actually I trust myself to lead my own life. The best way to honor our parents is to trust completely the women they raised, ourselves. Every generation is made for a different world. If we're not doing anything our parents don't understand, then we are probably not stepping into the lives we're supposed to.

Molly Fletcher: Sure, we're not [00:45:30] evolving. We're not growing.

Glennon Doyle: Absolutely. And if our children are not doing anything that we don't understand, then they probably are not. We should. That conflict should rub up against each other.

Molly Fletcher: I've got to go to Together Rising. I mean, you've raised more than 25 million for people in need, right? I mean, it's awesome.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: Tell us a little bit about why it exists, right? And how can people support you on this mission?

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. I mean, Together Rising exists... It's a bridge between warriors in their homes who refuse to [00:46:00] succumb to apathy and despair about the pain in our communities, in our world. And it connects those people in their homes to the warriors on the ground who are serving, who are leading, who are in the fight, and have it forever to protect our most marginalized and vulnerable groups, women, children, all... It's the great honor of my life, the joy of my life. And the beauty of Together Rising is that we have... That $25 million [00:46:30] you mentioned, the average donation is $28.

Molly Fletcher: I've heard you say that, which is, "Yeah, grassroots."

Glennon Doyle: It's just wild. And it's just proof that we don't have to do big things. We just do small things connected with other people who care. I mean, Together Rising is the leading American organization for reuniting families at the border. Together Rising is one of the leading organizations in the Syrian refugee crisis. And the LGBTQ homos, just freaking mess [00:47:00] that we have in America, because of all of the shame that religious organizations are pumping into their families. And it's people care in their homes who are just doing their little part. It's the idea that we cannot allow the fact that we can't do everything keep us from doing what we can do, right? And so that's what it is. It's just warriors and warriors, level warriors, all connecting and just making a difference in the world.

Molly Fletcher: [00:47:30] And how do people find out about it and support you?

Glennon Doyle: So go to togetherrising.org, or go to my Glennon Doyle on Instagram. You can follow me on Twitter, but I suck at Twitter. So Instagram is...

Molly Fletcher: Well on your Instagram is just... I mean, there's nothing better than pouring a glass of wine and just jumping on your Instagram, girl.

Glennon Doyle: Instagram.

Molly Fletcher: I mean, it's pure entertainment.

Glennon Doyle: It's my home.

Molly Fletcher: I love it. It's good stuff. I know.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah. So hang out with us there.

Molly Fletcher: I will.

Glennon Doyle: I'll be right there being ridiculous.

Molly Fletcher: So one of your mantras is, and I love [00:48:00] this one, we can do hard things. How do you return to that in your own life, right? And you live this for sure. But I love this. We can do hard things. I've actually said this to my daughters several times and I just think it's a great line, I think it's a great belief.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah, that's been a mantra of mine since I was getting sober.

Molly Fletcher: Awesome.

Glennon Doyle: So that was 17 years ago and I was teaching and everything was terrible, and hard, and scary, and I used it. My friend Josie [00:48:30] cut next door to me. And she had a sign in her classroom that said, "We can do hard things." And I used to just stare at it every day. It's what got me through early sobriety. There's something about it that... To me, there's two important parts of that mantra. One is life is hard. Life is really hard for me. And I'm not even talking about when extra hard things happen, I'm just talking about just generally being human, [00:49:00] right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: And making it through an ordinary day with feelings, and people, and... And I don't like it when people try to pretend that it's easy, right?

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: There's something when it's suggested to us a million times a day from whether it's social media, or commercials, or whatever, that life is actually easy, and if you're experiencing pain, then you're just doing it wrong. It's not true, right? It's just how people sell things. It's not true. [00:49:30] Life is really hard for everybody. And what I've come to learn is that life is often hardest not for people who are doing it wrong, for people who are doing it really right, right? For people who are showing up and being vulnerable, and trying, and failing, and trying again. And so there's something in that mantra that it's not the idea of just suck it up, life is easy, it's just this idea of, no, it's all hard, and this idea of the we. Sometimes [00:50:00] will change it to, I can do hard things, and I'm always like, "Oh, [crosstalk 00:50:04]."

Molly Fletcher: Right. Because it's a weird thing. We need others to do it. Sure.

Glennon Doyle: Exactly.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah.

Glennon Doyle: And sometimes even when we're alone, even when we have to do that hard thing alone, the we has this idea that life can be a solo. It can be sometimes a solo experience. But it's collective also. We're doing our hard things individually alongside the rest of the world, who are all doing their hard things individually. So [00:50:30] it's this idea that even when we are alone, we are never alone, right? It's a we.

Molly Fletcher: Plus you have people that love you that are right there behind you supporting you.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, for sure. And I love how you talk about... We got to feel the pain. That pain isn't a bad thing. Feel it, stay in it, that's living, that's life, right?

Glennon Doyle: That's right. I am so over the whole be happy all the time thing. I don't know about that. I'm done. I just feel... I'm not trying to be happy [00:51:00] all the time, right? I just want to feel alive.

Molly Fletcher: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Glennon Doyle: I don't think life is about feeling happy, I think life is about feeling everything.

Molly Fletcher: I've heard you say that. I love that. Glennon, you have been so incredibly generous with your time. We end with rapid fire. So I am going to hit you with some quick questions and you just, "Great." You just go girl. Okay. So one word to describe yourself?

Glennon Doyle: Alive.

Molly Fletcher: Alive and untamed maybe, [00:51:30] hence the new book title?

Glennon Doyle: But my [inaudible 00:51:33], she would be more happy if I said untamed. Yes.

Molly Fletcher: But we don't do what other people tell us to do. We do what we want to do.

Glennon Doyle: That's right. Damn it.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, girl. All right. So a book that changed your life?

Glennon Doyle: Probably Traveling Mercies early on helped me get sober, by Anne Lamott.

Molly Fletcher: Awesome. Person you would most like to meet?

Glennon Doyle: I'm just saying this to Abby. Who the hell is it? I feel like asking her right now. I'll say Michelle Obama. I'm looking forward to [00:52:00] meeting Michelle Obama.

Molly Fletcher: Are you meeting her soon?

Glennon Doyle: No.

Molly Fletcher: Okay.

Glennon Doyle: I just expect to.

Molly Fletcher: Got it.

Glennon Doyle: I just expect to [crosstalk 00:52:06] all the time.

Molly Fletcher: There you go. The last show you binge watch with a pine of half baked?

Glennon Doyle: Okay. So we just watched the Hillary documentary, one after another. It was fantastic. And then I'm super ashamed to tell you that we just binge watched all of Love is Blind.

Molly Fletcher: That's awesome.

Glennon Doyle: Because when we go low and we go high.

Molly Fletcher: I think I saw that on [00:52:30] your story or something. I think I saw that.

Glennon Doyle: Abby sold me out. [crosstalk 00:52:34].

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, you were snacking in the kitchen and she was summoning you to that. What's the last time you cried?

Glennon Doyle: Oh God, I was just from being in this review of Untamed on Amazon. And this woman that was writing about how the book had cracked her open and she was trying more, but she was laughing more. And she said that she started laughing [00:53:00] and her five-year-old had not heard her laugh for so long. And her five-year-old said, "Mommy, it's so good to hear you laugh. It's like getting a toy."

Molly Fletcher: Oh.

Glennon Doyle: And I just lost it.

Molly Fletcher: Wow.

Glennon Doyle: Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: That's awesome. That's why you do what you do right there, girl.

Glennon Doyle: Yes.

Molly Fletcher: What's your biggest fear?

Glennon Doyle: Oh God. Losing one of my kids.

Molly Fletcher: What's your greatest joy?

Glennon Doyle: My kids, and my wife, and [00:53:30] my sister. Just those fricking women that's around me.

Molly Fletcher: That's awesome.

Glennon Doyle: And Chase. Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: One thing you cannot live without?

Glennon Doyle: Books and coffee.

Molly Fletcher: Oh, yeah. One thing on your bucket list?

Glennon Doyle: Let me just tell you real quick. Somebody said recently, "What's your dream for Untamed?" I'm not good. I'm such a next right thing person, that I'm not good at this projection thing. I can't tell you, Molly. I am [00:54:00] a person who, less than a decade and a half ago, was almost dead, right? I was so sick and I was so addicted. And at my first book signing, a reporter came up to my dad, and this is in an article, she said, "Are you so proud of your daughter?" And he said, "We're just so happy she's not in jail."

Molly Fletcher: Wow.

Glennon Doyle: And that's how I feel every day. I can't believe that I have [00:54:30] this family, and this wife, and this community, and this writing career, and this world. I am living my bucket list right now. There's no other things. Finally in my life, I just want more of the same. I don't want anything different.

Molly Fletcher: Wow. Good for you. That's awesome. Congratulations. Okay. The show is called Game Changer, so one last question. What game changer... Who inspires [00:55:00] you and why?

Glennon Doyle: Okay. So I'm completely and fully obsessed with the women's national soccer team.

Molly Fletcher: I mean, this has nothing to do with who your wife is?

Glennon Doyle: Listen to me. It's not.

Molly Fletcher: Okay.

Glennon Doyle: I am way more obsessed with that team than obvious. I'm telling you, I did not have models like this growing up. And Abby introduced me to this team and I watched their ferocity, and their excellence, and their skill on [00:55:30] the field, and the way that the... to watch women using their bodies to compete instead of perform and pose. And then I started learning about their activism and the way that they are just challenging US soccer and challenging FIFA and taking on this huge mantle of women's equality. Abby... I was just doing my freak out one night, and I said to her, "I will do whatever it takes for the rest of my life to support this team. This is my new [00:56:00] goal. You don't understand." And Abby was like, "I feel like I do understand it."

Molly Fletcher: Yeah, exactly.

Glennon Doyle: She is like, "You know that I plead with them. I did the thing that you are discovering right now."

Molly Fletcher: And was pretty damn good.

Glennon Doyle: Pretty good. Yes.

Molly Fletcher: Yeah.

Glennon Doyle: I don't know.

Molly Fletcher: That's awesome.

Glennon Doyle: I'm so inspired by them. I just love them so much. And I just want them in front of everybody. I want them in front of every little girl and every little boy, and I want them to be the new [00:56:30] model of what's possible.

Molly Fletcher: Well, I was fortunate enough to have Carli Lloyd on, and what a class act. I mean, what a complete class act. Super cool.

Glennon Doyle: Super special. Yeah.

Molly Fletcher: Hey Glennon, keep doing what you're doing, girl. The world needs more of you. Thank you.

Glennon Doyle: Oh, same. Molly, thank you so much.

Molly Fletcher: Thanks as always for listening to Game Changers with Molly Fletcher. [00:57:00] If you like the show, be sure to subscribe on Apple Podcasts, there you can listen to previous episodes and leave us a review, which helps other people find out about the show. For more about me, visit mollyfletcher.com. Until next time, stay curious and be bold.