

**An Interview with Julie Zeff, MSW, CPTC**  
**Author of *Vivid Living for Busy Moms: Coach Yourself to an Extraordinary Life***

**Q: Why did you write *Vivid Living for Busy Moms*?**

*A: I am a busy, working mom. I have three children under the age of seven and am very involved in my children's schools and our community. All of what I do feeds me. But, it definitely is a juggling act. Sometimes it feels like there are way more balls in the air than I can keep afloat with just my two hands. I know this feeling isn't unique to me.*

*Over the past decade of working as life coach and yoga instructor, I've coached many busy moms and have collected an array of practical and powerful tools that help me and my clients to make decisions with clarity, and to stay focused on what is most important, enlivening, and deeply fulfilling in any given moment. These tools help working and busy moms to keep those balls up in the air with more ease and grace.*

*My mission is to share these tools and the belief that everyone – especially every mom - can live a vivid and extraordinary life they love – around the globe. None of us has to live a life run by fear, guilt, overwhelm, isolation and uninspired living. *Vivid Living* is possible for everyone!*

**Q: What is Vivid Living?**

*A: I will tell you one thing; it is not perfect living or having a perfect life. After working for over 10 years as a Life Coach and in the mental health field, I can say with certainty that no one has a perfect life. It just doesn't exist. So, you can stop trying to create one for yourself right now.*

*Vivid living is living a life YOU love. Not a life your friends, spouse, parents, or colleagues would love, but a vivid life YOU love. It is a life that you live by choice not by fear. It is a life where you have the tools to create your own unique style of balance. It is a life where you tap into the innate language and wisdom of your body and you know who you are at your core - honoring the things that make you the real YOU. It is a life that you live with purpose and passion. It is a life where you are clear about how you limit yourself so you can leap over sabotaging land mines or free yourself up when you happen to get tangled. It is a life where you have the tools to wake up excited every morning and you know and trust yourself to your core.*

**Q: What can a reader expect from your book *Vivid Living for Busy Moms*?**

*A: It is a very interactive book. It is like I'm sitting right with you taking you through coaching sessions just as I do with my clients over the phone. You'll feel empowered, encouraged, and supported as you make your way along your own unique Vivid Living journey.*

*I begin each session by introducing a new concept. I define and describe it and then I share client and personal examples of challenges and successes to help illuminate the way, clarify new concepts, and inspire readers.*

*At the end of each session I offer an array of Journal and Action exercises to practice or explore between sessions. This helps you to deepen your learning and forward your action.*

*At the end of each session I offer resources to support your new learning and exploration. For some sessions I offer free audio downloads of visualizations that I describe in the book. For other sessions I offer downloadable copies of specific tools, charts, references and inspiring tidbits that will make your Vivid Living Journey come alive.*

*Each session in this book builds on the next just as it does with my clients. You can take yourself through this book on your own or create a Vivid Living Group to share with. Going on your Vivid Living journey with others can be amazingly powerful, inspiring, and supportive. I take you through the steps to create your own group in the book.*

*I encourage you to be brave and bold, to explore, play, and to challenge your edges. And, by the end of the book you'll have a tool-box full of new tools that will get you embracing what excites and enlivens you most in each and every moment and will get you living your most extraordinary and vivid life.*

**Q: How long does it take to go through/complete your book?**

*A: This book is an interactive guide and there are tools in it that I still come back to in my journey as a mom and vibrant woman. It will never get stale. You can go thorough it now and pick it up again in six months, two years, or 10 years and still find new nuggets that resonate and speak to where you are in those moments.*

*If you want to read it through from cover to cover and do a couple of exercises it will spark some interesting thoughts and experiences in your life and body, for sure. And, if you take 6 weeks or even 6 months to go through it (by yourself or with a Vivid Living Group that you create) then you'll have time to integrate the new learning into your cells and body fully. It is the integration of these tools over time through daily use and awareness that will change your life.*

**Q: What makes you different from other life coaches?**

*A: You know those times when you try to make a decision but you can't so you ask everyone around you for their opinion and still don't feel certain about the answer? By introducing my clients to the innate wisdom of their body and mind, I empower my clients to trust themselves wholly and find their own truth and answers within. My clients learn to release their old fears, stale patterns, and limiting beliefs, and replace them with empowering, passion-inspiring truth. By introducing clients to breath work, movement (sometimes gentle yoga), imagery, and writing I empower clients to live vivid and extraordinary lives that they love.*

*If you want a coach whose going to tell you what to do, or whose going to make a list for you to check off in order to reach your goals, I'm NOT the coach for you.*

*If you want a coach whose going to be stand right beside you as you courageously dig deep to uncover what is most important to you at your core, whose going to guide you to trust yourself deeply from the inside-out, whose going to cheer you on as you create your dreams, intentions and goals from a place of inspired-truth, and whose going to hold you accountable to following your unique path and being the most amazing you possible, then I'm your gal.*

**Q: What are some things your clients have learned or achieved from working with you?**

**A:** *Through coaching with me, my clients have done the following:*

- *learned to tap into the unique wisdom and language of their bodies and minds;*
- *built trust in themselves to make decisions with confidence and clarity;*
- *uncovered their true Life Purpose and Essences – who they are at their core; and*
- *lived in extraordinary ways they once thought impossible.*

*Here are just a few examples of specific client successes as a result of our coaching together.*

- *Shari left the stability of a high-paying job and a city she once loved to live more passionately and create work-life balance.*
- *Sheryl found her soul mate and married him.*
- *Liz realized that she did, indeed, want to have another child.*
- *Jeffrey left a secure work situation and started his own company.*
- *Laurie decided to have another baby and go back to work full-time with confidence and guilt-free ease. Lisa put clear limits on her work and family time. She learned how to prioritize from her core and to say “no” to her Blackberry, work expectations, and family obligations that weighed her down.*
- *Erica repaired damaged relationships with parents and siblings.*
- *Pam let go of stale friendships and created ones that energized her.*
- *Andre found the courage to move halfway around the globe to honor his dream of living abroad and starting his own company.*
- *Molly negotiated more “me-time” into her week – time away from her kids, family and work – and finally felt that guilt-free balance she had been craving.*

**Q: There are many weary, guilt-ridden, unbalanced moms out there. If you were share four quick tidbits to help what would they be?**

**A:**

1. **Sit, be and breathe.** *Take time to sit and be with yourself (even just for 30 seconds – really that's all it has to take). Take a few deep, relaxing breaths to break the stress cycle. Take this time to tune into the sensations in your body, or the sights, sounds, smells or temperature in your environment. Even just to look out the window at a leaf, a flower, a bird and letting yourself feel it (breathe it in) on the inside can change your whole mood and perspective.*
2. **Treat yourself!** *Do one thing that excites or enlivens you every single day. Plan it ahead of time and do it! Imagine it is just as important as your children's*

*homework or getting them to a doctor's appointment. It could be reading a book or magazine for even 5 minutes, calling a friend, going for a walk, working out, daydreaming, journaling, treating yourself to a delicious cup of tea, getting a manicure, a massage, or even just sitting, breathing and being for 2 minutes.*

- 3. Remember YOU!** *Remember the beauty and wisdom of who you are deep at your core. Breathe in and keep close the thoughts, people, and activities that bring out the best in you – the YOU that is the most inspired, amazing, and extraordinary. Even when you “lose it” with your kids, your husband or the grocery store clerk, you are still that radiant, and amazing YOU. We all need reminders of who we truly are at our core sometimes. And, if you aren't sure of who you are in there, then seek out some coaching. The amazing YOU is in there, waiting to shine!*
- 4. Find the “should's, have to's, must's”.** *Start to notice all of those limiting thoughts, beliefs and patterns that you live by unconsciously. A good place to start is to notice your language and notice any time you use the words “should, have to, must, or need.” Challenge yourself to replace those words with the word “want” and see if the sentence still rings true. If not, challenge yourself to be creative and explore all of your options. You ALWAYS have options and choices.*

**Q: There is lots of talk about helping moms find balance these days and about whether true balance is possible or not? What do you think?**

**A:** *There is no such thing as “perfect balance,” but we can all create our own “unique balance.” This is balance that you create from the inside-out by staying present in your life and body (not just reacting on automatic pilot) and giving yourself the space and freedom to recalibrate from minute to minute. This kind of balance comes from knowing who you are at your core, what is most important to you and your family, trusting your inner wisdom, and having the courage to honor it.*

**Q: What is most fulfilling about being a life coach for working and busy moms?**

**A:** *I have the best job in the world. I am inspired by and get to inspire amazing moms all day long. I love watching my clients grow, change, and live lives they once only dreamed about. I love that I get to practice what I preach and am constantly reminded to be the most amazing ME I can be. I love playing big and bold in the world and empowering others to do the same. It doesn't get better than this!*