

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

C. René Washington

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“When women support each other, incredible things happen,” author, unknown.

Welcome to *Midlife Woman Redefined*, a podcast for women near retirement who are ready to step into a new chapter of freedom, travel, and fulfillment. If you're ready to focus on figuring out who you are and what you really want, this is the place for you. Here's your host, master certified life coach, travel addict, and midlife maven, René Washington.

Hello, hello, mavens. I am C. René Washington, and this is episode 18 of *Midlife Woman Redefined*. And as you know, we always start out with a celebration, and today we have a huge celebration because this is the first interview for *Midlife Woman Redefined* and I am so thrilled that I am about to let you hear the amazing Mary Rogers.

She is the host of the podcast Experience 50 Podcast for Midlife, and she's the host of the highest-ranking midlife podcast. How exciting is that? Because if you're not familiar with the podcast world, there are zillions of podcasts out there and she is number 266 of all US podcasts and she's number 17 in her category, personal journals, through Apple Podcasts.

So, she is big shit, y'all, I just want you to know. And I am so grateful because she doesn't know me from Jack. And she is known as the virtual best friend and big sister to listeners around the world. And I can tell you that this is true because she volunteered to let me interview her. And she does not have any connection to me, she just chose to do that.

And so we are about to be really gifted and blessed by this conversation, so be sure that you take the time to let yourself really dig in and listen to this because Mary's podcast is exactly what we talk about every week; figuring out who you are and how you want to show up for this stage of life.

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René: Welcome, Mary.

Mary: René, it's a thrill. I am so happy to be here and I love your show. I mean, this is episode 18, but I've listened to a bunch of them. When you

[Midlife Woman Redefined](#) with C. René Washington

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

reached out and introduced yourself to me and I took a listen, I was really impressed. And I'm not just saying that to be nice. You have this generous spirit and you have that same high energy that I look for in female podcasters, and you have a voice that I can listen to.

There are a lot of female podcasters whose voices are so high and kind of squeaky and maybe they giggle, and I can't even listen. So I want to be supportive of female podcasters, and you check every box that I look for in what do I want to have be a part of my week, what voices do I want in my head to counter all of the nasty awful messages that are coming at us. So, I love what you're doing and I'm a little jealous because your audience is women, and I talk to probably 40% men. Oh yeah, it's a show by a female, but it is not a show just for females.

René: Yes, but you know what, I love that about your show because – you know, I pitch everything to women and I talk to women, however, having listened to many of your episodes, I've learned a lot from those men. So yes, and we do love men. We do, we love men here too, and so I strongly encourage the women that are listening to check out Mary's podcast because yes, she talks to some very interesting people. And I love that they're people that I would have never known if I hadn't listened to them on your show.

So yes, you cover everybody and you do it so well. And I just have to share with the listeners that when we were prepping for the show, so many different things happened. A storm knocked out the power, and then I couldn't hear her, just all these technical difficulties. But a testament to Mary is, and again, as we talk about it on the show, when you're figuring out what you want and who you want to be at this stage life, shit is going to happen.

You know, the mantra for the show is, "Let that shit go," and Mary rolls right into that because she never got fazed, she kept me calm. It's all going to be alright and here we are. And I want to start this conversation for the listeners because, Mary, your journey to the 50s is just so interesting and so incredible. And I'm going to take you all the way back to high school

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

because, in looking at your bio and seeing that you received a pretty awesome gift in high school. And I want you to share that with the listeners and, one, how did you even wrap your mind around that, and then to just tell them how that propelled you into the life that you've led.

Mary: Sure. I was very lucky. Well I graduated from high school early because I just wanted to get the hell out of there. I was way too mature for my age. And so I graduated early with a – this was before they even did that – with an agreement between a college that was in our town, with my high school counselor of, we'll let you out of here if you four-point your first semester, which I'd never done in my whole life, and you agree to enroll in college fulltime.

And I cut that deal without my parents even being a part of the discussion, if that gives you a sense of who I was. And so when I officially graduated from high school, my parents gave me 25% interest in a new business. I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs, so they were starting a company that would be a travel agency. And I'd grown up with my mom in and out of the travel industry, so I'd been going on FAM trips and looking at hotel rooms and all kinds of nonsense my entire life.

When I was 13 years old, I was doing the books for my dad's business. It was just like it ran in my blood, running businesses. We answered our home phone the name of my dad's business. His office was in our house, which was not very common back then. And when times were good, it was great. When times were bad, I could handle calls from collection agencies, you know. I knew when the power was going to get turned off and, "Dad, you've got to get your ass down to the bank and let's get that check that General Motors owes us." I mean, that was who I was. So this wasn't totally freakish.

So my mom decided to start an agency, a real travel agency. And I came in and learned that business. I was managing a group of, like, 12 travel agents who were all in their 40s and 50s. And I look back now and think, these women must have wanted to just string me up. Who the hell did I think I was?

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

I loved it. I loved that job. I was there for seven or eight years. And then my mom really fell apart. She was an alcoholic and it just got worse and worse and worse. And I couldn't run the business with an alcoholic figurehead, if you see what I mean.

René: I do.

Mary: And so I was really active with our chamber of commerce in the Detroit area, and so I – you know what, I wish I could bottle this to give to young women. I'm not saying I was conceited, but I just expected to be able to walk into any room and run things. And I was like 23. I became the executive director of the chamber of commerce in my town. I was like 26, I guess. And when I left that, I went on to be executive director of the National Association of Women Business Owners. I worked for another chamber, another civic league. And I always just thought I was in charge, or I should be.

And that's, you know, a double-edged sword, but I was so, so lucky. I got to work with the Clinton administration. I got to work with bringing Soviet women over to the United States to teach them what capitalism meant. I went on and started my own female entrepreneurship company that turned into a morning drive radio show for five years. I was interviewing James Woolsey, the head of the CIA, and complaining to my husband that night, "I just couldn't get him to break." Not on anything juicy, just like a personal connection. I had Paula Poundstone fall asleep talking to me from LA....

René: I have to stop you right there because she always sounds asleep to me whenever I hear her voice.

Mary: Well, you know, it was six in the morning my time on the East Coast and she's on the West Coast, but I have been charmed and blessed with having big enough balls to walk into so many situations and just be like, "Alright, what do we need to do here? I'd like to be in charge." And I don't know why, but everybody said okay, because I was just so confident.

René: Well, okay, I'm so glad you said you expected, you expected things, and that you had this confidence. However, when women hear this, and I

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

talk to women, so when women hear this, some women can use that as an excuse to take themselves out of the game because, “Oh I’m not like Mary. I’m not confident. I didn’t have parents that gave me this. I didn’t get this opportunity.”

So tell me, on the dark days when, even with all of the confidence that you had at an early age, even maturing early – because a lot of us are given opportunities that we just let slide by us. So in those days when things went awry or when it didn’t go as you expected it to go, how did you reel yourself back to that point of confidence? Because I’m going to guess you didn’t always just live every step confidently. Did you have moments where you did question yourself? You know, you talked about your mom, dealing with your mom. And I’m sure it wasn’t always easy, Mary, so tell us how you could reel yourself back to, “Okay but I’ve got to keep moving forward?”

Mary: I probably deal with those types of feelings more now than I did then.

René: Really?

Mary: Oh yes. I mean, it’s kind of crazy. You would think, oh my god, she’s on top of the world and blah, blah, blah. I found that when I turned 50 – and I say that people at 50 either get kicked in the ass or kicked in the teeth. And the ass is the good one. You want the kick in the ass that says, time is short and why am I messing around? Why am I holding myself back? All that. But for a lot of us, we get a kick in the teeth and some of us get about 10 good kicks in the teeth and they all come at the same time.

Mom dies, dad decides he wants a divorce, one of my kids is now a drug addict, and my health is going, and maybe I get looked over for a promotion at work and it’s been made clear, you’re done. You can stay in that job but you’re not going anywhere. At 50, all this stuff, that we may have been on the top of our game.

I feel sorry for – I should say, I’m concerned for the people who have had a rough time until 50 and then that happens. So I feel like I led this charmed life which certainly, make no mistake, it did have its horrible moments, I

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

mean, truly horrible. But I think, at 50, I have more self-doubt – maybe this isn't what you want your folks to hear but...

René: This is absolutely what we need to hear because what you're saying is, whenever it comes, it's going to come.

Mary: Oh yeah, absolutely. So for me, it's not – what I go through now is I overthink things ridiculously. In fact, just before you and I jumped on this call, I'm writing an email to my followers kind of saying, alright, I'm going to tell you guys the demons I've been dealing with. I am overthinking things and so hesitant to take first steps on the new opportunities that have presented themselves to Experience 50 that I'm not doing anything, and this isn't serving you or me.

And so I've decided I'm going to start rolling out a bunch of new things and I may do it with the wrong tools, I might trust the wrong people who have said they want to help me. I might make a number of mistakes and I've just had to decide that's okay. So you guys come along with me and I just need to ask for your patience and understanding and a really good sense of humor.

René: This is so interesting because, just having listened to you talk about the first half of your life, or the first two thirds of your life, and you're assigning a lot of that to being charmed, being lucky, and what I'm really hearing you say, Mary, is that you're not completely taking yourself out of it, but where you are now and questioning yourself and then when you go back and look at all that you have done, then my question is, what's the question, Mary? Why aren't you questioning yourself?

Mary: Well, I'll tell you what – and this may sound interesting to people, it may be helpful to some and others of you may just scratch your head and say, "What the hell is going on in her head?" When I'm having a particularly difficult day, if I'm getting down on myself, I look at my resume.

René: Yes.

Mary: And I'm like, hot damn, look at that. And then I'll say something like, "Mary, you are goddamn Mary Rogers. Now just stop this and pull your shit

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

together.” And another thing, I’m not saying every day I’m a disaster. I’m not. I’m having the time of my life right now. It’s like I’ve had so many big opportunities present themselves to me lately, that’s part of why I’m a little overwhelmed on this particular day.

I’ve been picked up by certain media outlets. I’m doing interviews a few times a week with national publications, and it’s awesome. But it’s like, I have to capture the moment. I have to capitalize on it financially so that I’m able to continue to do what I do. And so there’s just a lot of good around me. It’s my management skills of – you know, I’m the plumber with the leaky faucet, do you know what I mean?

René: I do.

Mary: If I were – and this is my new thing I’ve been doing for the last week – I’m pretending that I am my own client. I wrote a job description for myself.

René: I love that.

Mary: There’s a project I need to do, so I wrote it as an RFP assuming I was going to send it out to like a virtual assistant, people who do this kind of work. And when I finished the process of writing the scope of work, I was like, well shit, I just wrote myself my to-do list. I can do that. Why was I freaking out about this?

René: Yes, and we talk about resistance on the show, and that’s the thing, you know. When we uplevel, when we move to a new level in life or when we try something new or we go after something we’ve been wanting, resistance is going to come. And I love that you look at your resume. And my version of that is reminding myself of myself, you know.

Mary: That’s exactly what it is. So I’m just having too much fun with too many opportunities and I need to sit down and just get it figured out. So while I’m doing that, what I love, the juicy part of what I’m doing that I love is connecting with my listeners in whatever way that is, if it’s through the podcast or through my website, through the writing that I do, is I’m just

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

encountering these women at 50 who are miserable for a number of reasons, and they think the solution to this misery is to just get used to it.

René: Exactly.

Mary: They think this is the new normal and I'm fighting every day to make every day be, if not awesome in a, "Hey everyone, look at this, look how awesome I am," kind of way, I don't care about those. I care about the days where, like, what I've done has had impact. And for any woman, that how you spent that day improved someone else's life, that's number one for me, and that I've showed some compassion to other people who are struggling, because lord knows we're out there, and doing something to improve myself.

Either I learn something, I see something I haven't seen before. I sit under a tree and smell the dirt. I love the smell of dirt, do you know what I mean? That doesn't cost a dime.

René: Exactly, yes, and this is – so we talk about redefining yourself here, and everything you said speaks to that. you started out with a bang in your teens and you had this amazing 20s, 30s, 40s, and then you hit 50. And so I want you to share with the listeners, when it came time for 50 – because 50 for me, I had this perception of 50, okay, when I get to 50, I will have it all figured out. And if I don't have it all figured out, my life is over.

And I celebrated turning 50 for 18 months because I'm like, I have arrived, this is it, you know, I've got it all together now... Not. And so you too hit 50 and had to deal with some major, major life changes and I would love to share that with the listeners.

Mary: Alright, so on paper, I was living the charmed life, absolutely. And I'm married, I have two kids at the time. One was grown and gone. One was a teenager, so even with that going on, I still had a really great life. I had the job in my city that was the only job I wanted, and went and got it when it became available. My husband and I, our relationship was awesome. We live a block from the beach, you know. You get the idea.

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

And one of the really important awesome parts of my life was my best friend. And my best friend's name was Brian and he lived four doors down from me. He was gay, lived with his partner, and my husband was famous for saying, "Dude, if I ever find out you are not gay, I will kill you," because Brian and I were soul mates, even though we had our own romantic situations, he and I – I mean, he would sit in his bed four doors down, I'd be in mine, we'd each have our partners next to us, and we would be texting back and forth just tears running down our faces laughing.

And he was kind of a god in my town. He had saved our downtown from disaster. I had chosen him as my best friend when I'd moved to this town 15 years ago and saw him in action as a community leader. I was like, there's my new best friend, I'm so glad I saw him, now I've just got to make that happen.

So, I turned 50 and, of course, Brian was there, everyone was there, huge party. And then his birthday came just a few weeks later, and I was planning his birthday party, and even though his birthday was Thursday, I couldn't pull off the party until Saturday. And he was like, Saturday? I could be dead by Saturday. Well, he did come Saturday night and left before the cake was even served, telling me, "Honey, I'm so tired. I'm so sorry."

And he folded me into his arms and gave me a kiss on the forehead and said, "Sweetie, I've got to leave my own birthday party." And the next day, I spoke to him in the morning and he was just going to kind of take it easy. And that night, I got into bed, I'm in my jammies, just about to fall asleep and I hear fire trucks. I knew. I knew. I knew. I knew. I knew. I knew.

I threw on a pair of jeans, ran down the street, and they were there and I watched the EMS workers – I'll tell you, it's not pretty what they do when someone's having a heart attack. And they took him to the hospital. We went. I'll make this part of the story short, otherwise I'll cry. We came home without Brian.

And I cleaned up all the syringes and medical equipment – I mean, they left his bedroom, it looked like a war scene – and planned his funeral. I was devastated. Three weeks later, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, which

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

killed my mother. And I went through that whole process. And keep in mind, Brian was such a big personality figure in this town.

The funeral was a major event. The movie theatre marquee in our downtown said, "Brian, when we look down the street, we'll always think of you." It was like the whole town was just – and I was the girl. So I got cancer, and again, little Mary Rogers just putting her paddle in the water, "I can handle this, I can do this, I can be in charge, I can run my cancer, I can run his death. I can do all this."

And it was a good year later when someone said to me, "Mary, you took like two weeks off of work. When are you going to actually have cancer, even though you've been through all the surgeries and treatments and all of that?" And one day – and ladies, I know we've all had this moment. I call this the Experience 50 moment.

I walked into a meeting. At that point, I was the regional director of a program of the US Small Business Administration. I had my whole staff in a meeting room. I walk in and they want to talk about how we are measuring the metrics of the success of the program in terms of jobs created, dollars invested, in capital improvements, and I just shut down, had this out of body experience and was like, "Are you people fucking kidding me? This is how we're going to spend Monday? I don't give a shit." And I quit.

I quit the best job I ever had with an employer who had been so kind, so understanding. I just walked away. I was totally completely burned out and I gave myself the gift – I didn't just walk out. I gave them six weeks to figure out this hot mess I was leaving them in. But I told my husband, I need to give myself a gift of, the day I walk out of there, I don't even think about what I'm doing next. Not that I don't start what I'm doing next, I don't even think about it.

While I finish up here at work, I'm not going to think about it. If someone asks me what are you going to do next, I'm going to say, "Call me in 12 weeks, I don't know." And it was honestly the best thing I ever did. And I know some people can't afford to do that. But for me, I needed to go deep

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

and be introspective about myself, not about my career, not about my strengths, not about how I make my money.

I needed to just figure out who I was because the earth moved under my feet and everything changed and how I looked at everything changed, I didn't care. There were so many things I didn't care about anymore. It really was like a gift seeing what matters and what doesn't matter and that has not changed over the last four and a half years while I've been doing the show. And that is the spirit in which I do my show.

So I'm not selling unicorns and rainbows and let's be empowered and let's be awesome. A big part of what I talk about and why I think it resonates with people is I am not all happiness. I want to get down in the mud with people and talk about the pain of losing your parents. I want to talk about looking across the breakfast table at your husband and going, "I am not doing this for 20 more years." But not necessarily telling him, "I'm leaving you." But saying, "Can we renegotiate this whole thing? Can we pretend we aren't the people we've been hurting each other as for the last 25 years? Can we redo this?"

It's telling your teenage children, "I'm not putting up with your shit anymore." And it's learning to apologize for some of the awful things you've done. It's not like making the whole world around you change because you want something different. It's realizing, I've made mistakes, you've made mistakes, I would like a fresh start.

René: Yes, yes, yes. Oh my gosh, so much there. And two things – and like you said, how you do this – maybe you can't just walk away because yeah you've got to earn money and support yourself and all that, but I do believe that we get to this stage of life and that watershed moment is coming. It is coming. And that's why I so connected to your story.

And with me, it was my mom's death and career burnout. I did go through a divorce, but I agree, that renegotiation is a key word for me too. At this stage of life, we renegotiate our relationships. We don't necessarily have to lose them, but they have to be different. We can't keep doing the same old crap anymore. So I love how you share that and said that, start asking

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

questions, to start, go in, to really go in and start asking questions. And so, when you came out on the other side of all that, who was Mary?

Mary: Well, you're assuming I came out.

René: I was hoping you would say that because that's the other thing; we're in it until we're not. I mean, this is it. This is the way life is now, absolutely.

Mary: Well, let me share this. So I, being kind of a policy-wonky research kind of person, I research the hell out of things. So when I had that Experience 50 moment and I started talking to other people, like how were you doing when you turned 50? And it was a lot of people would kind of like take me by the collar and pull me into a back room and say, let me tell you, this is what's happening to me.

And no one was talking about it, so I realized, okay, I need to start doing a show about this because no one talks about these things. So, your question is, who am I on the other side of this? I have taken my listener by the hand for over four years saying, let's figure this out. You know, I'll be vulnerable, as you listen to what I'm saying, please put your preconceived notions about yourself and others in your world to the side and let's just explore this stuff.

So even though I may sound really smart – and I am only because I researched the heck out of this and I talk to so many people and I hear these themes that jump out at me that I'm able to share with people. It's not like I went to school and learned this stuff. I'm learning from everybody else.

So, here's the big change in me is that when I first started doing this show, I thought that there was like a bridge that you walked over sometime around 50 that, when you look at the happiness curve of life, that 50 was at the bottom. And I thought that my job with myself and my listeners was to help them go over that bridge at the bottom of the curve so they were then on the upward swing.

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

Here's what I have learned; it is not a single one-way trip on that bridge. It is, I believe – when you use the term on your show of being redefined, I think probably the most helpful self-definition that you can create for yourself is that you are comfortable going back and forth and back and forth between two key things.

The starting position is one of questioning; questioning yourself, questioning your world, questioning your relationships, your talents, your gifts, your weaknesses, your demons. But questioning, you know, is all of that true? Is what I have in my head even true?

And then the other side of the bridge is becoming, becoming that person that feels right. And the trick is, it is not this linear path where you question, find the answer, and then go, okay, I'm going to become that person now. It never ends. It's going back and forth and back and forth and back and forth. And when you become skilled and practiced at questioning and then kind of rehearsing and trying things on.

I think the sign of becoming a redefined woman is being comfortable with redefining yourself. And you gain these skills of being comfortable questioning what you're thinking and what you're doing and tweaking in little ways and living in the grey matter of between black and white. And you're okay with that and you just become a tweaker. I need a better word for that. But you just become closer and closer to what feels right for you at 55, at 58, at 60.

And I think that's why that curve starts going up, because we're okay with that. We're getting closer to who we want to be by questioning who we are that doesn't work for us anymore, not meaning it was a mistake back then. It was probably the perfect way to think, just not anymore.

René: Yes, and I actually love the word tweak because, so often, we look at other people and see people doing things and we see the end result of some actions someone's taken, and we think, oh well she started a podcast, I can't do that. And we don't see the little steps along the way that it took to get you wherever you have landed in this particular moment, like you said. And that we can continuously become who we want to be. We

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

can continuously redefine who we are. We're doing podcasts today. Next year, we may be doing something different. That's the other thing I tell women; a decision is not a life sentence.

Mary: I love that you say that. It's like, it's what I want to do until I don't want to do it anymore.

René: Absolutely, and that's okay. That's okay.

Mary: I love that you say that because it's even true about, like, people who – say you're going to move. Because a lot of people are like, alright I want to be with the grandkids or I want to be in a different city, whatever reason. And they picture themselves – let's say you're 48 when you're thinking about this or you're 56. Like, do I want to die in Phoenix? We're not talking about dying in Phoenix. Why don't you rent an apartment there for six months and check it out?

René: Absolutely, and yeah, I told this person that I was going to, "Okay, well tell them you changed your mind."

Mary: Yeah.

René: So women have this thing about this commitment, this commitment, "Oh my gosh, I said I was going to do it, I want to be a woman of my word." It's okay. It's okay, you know.

Mary: Yeah, we are so hard on ourselves. Isn't it ridiculous? And one of my fears – and I don't know if you feel the same way, but I will end up in a phone call with one of my listeners and they will tell me they feel like such failures because they don't know what this big next move is for them. They're finding their passion, "I don't know, I don't know, but I know that I should be doing something because I'm restless," whatever.

I'm like, honey, sit down, take a breath. You've got my message wrong or someone's message wrong. It's not like you are starting the rest of your life on Wednesday. You know, little teeny shifts can have huge returns in just your level of happiness. You know, learning to say yes a little more, learning to say no a little more, or recognizing the fact that let's say my 17-

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

year-old daughter is such a mess right now, this is not the time for me to make bold moves. I need to be an awesome mother right now. Or my dad is dying and I need to be an awesome daughter right now.

I don't want anyone sacrificing their lives for the care of someone else, however, let me say that care-giving or intense parenting of a teenager in trouble is some of the most rewarding time you will ever spend. It won't be pretty, but over the next 20 years when you look back, it's going to be awesome.

René: Yes, and that is so true, that drilling down into what's really important. So maybe you have to get off of the organization that you volunteered with for 20 years because something's going on in your family that requires your attention, or something's going on with you that requires your attention.

Mary: Yep, maybe it could be, you know what, everybody, I can't do the things that you're used to me doing because I'm going to write a book this year. You just don't know, but be open, be willing to make changes, be willing to see things that are not obvious. And that, for me, was why slowing down was so important. My world was spinning so fast. My brain was spinning so fast. I couldn't even think straight.

I couldn't come up with creative solutions to anything. I got so stuck in black and white, need to quit my job or stay in my job, you know. And I couldn't see – I love talking to people about how to, like you said, make the little changes. And that's what you're really good at, René, is this whole idea of redefining not just who you are, but redefining those external forces in your life, to just look at them differently. You are the queen of that.

René: Well, I don't know about that, about being the queen, but it definitely is my mission. Oh my gosh, it is my mission, and that's why I was so excited and I'm so happy to be connected to you and we've talked a lot about – you know, this is work, and I use that word with measure, but it is work. And like you said, I'm not trying to make this fluffy and, oh yes it's always going to be some big joyride, but I really am hugely about, yes, finding joy daily. But this is work.

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

This is an intention. This is a focus. This is a discipline. So I want to end our conversation with the fun side of things, because you just seem like someone that would be so great to hang out with and we can just have the best time. So, what if your sweet spot for fun? What do you love to do?

Mary: What do I love to do? So, you and I happen to be speaking on a Monday. I will tell you, the most fun thing that I did this weekend. I had two listeners of Experience 50 who wanted to spend their joint birthday, at least a little bit of it, with me. And I was like, oh my god, what an honor. I mean, that's just about the coolest thing.

So these two awesome women who live in Toronto, we arranged to meet on a video conference call. And this is my sweet spot. This is what I like doing is, in a situation that could be just a normal situation, like these women want to talk to me on the phone, alright. Instead, I made sure I had my phone set to YouTube a birthday song, which was all cued up for me. I had birthday bows on my face and I turned on the video chat with them and it's like, major birthday party over here.

And the reason that I tell that is you can take really ordinary experiences, and just by giving a little thought ahead of time to, well, what would make this even a little bit more fun. So, it's just being a little bit creative, like my husband and I entertain a lot. And when I say entertain, I don't mean like that. This is in the back yard with a crazy mix of people, everybody brings the food, whatever.

So instead of just saying, you know, same old group – we call ourselves the rotten crowd – I said instead of everyone just coming over and bringing munchies, we made the rule of no chips and no dips. So all of a sudden, just a regular get together happy hour, everyone was like, a little challenge. Or we had a party and said, everyone wear a hat.

These are really stupid little inconsequential things, but it goes back to having the music cued up and having some birthday bows. My sweet spot is putting just a little extra effort into making things fun for myself, for my friends, for my daughter when she comes home from school, for my husband on the day that – on the anniversary of his dad dying – is thinking,

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

alright, I've got to think about this, what can I do to make this a little special?

So I make sure I find his dad's favorite movie, and that's what my husband and I are going to watch that night is his dad's favorite movie. I like putting in a little extra effort and I encourage people to do the same thing because you'll just see other people's eyes light up. You will have more fun and everything is more interesting with five minutes of thought beforehand.

René: Absolutely, I love that. Oh I love that so much. And again, because we do make things so big and then we take ourselves out of the game, and you are absolutely correct; just a little smidgen of creativity can change everything.

Mary: Yeah, so you started out by saying you're not an artist. I'm not sure if it was before we went on the air or not, but we share admiration of a woman who paints and is creative, and we both say, you know, René and I don't really have the artistic skills, but we are creative.

René: Absolutely. We are creative. We help people redesign their lives. That's creativity.

Mary: Yep, it really is. And it's something that you could meet someone who's a beautiful artist or they can draw or they can sing, but they can't do what you can do.

René: Exactly, and we do it for ourselves, so this is what we live. So yes, and this is why Mary Rogers is a redefined woman who we need to know and who you need to follow. And again, I'm so thankful and so grateful that we had this opportunity to have this conversation and it's going to just truly bless our listeners. And I want you to be sure to follow Mary's podcast, Experience 50, and all of the information on how to do that is going to be in the show notes. So is there one last thing that you'd like to share with the listeners before I let you go, Mary?

Mary: I'm going to say two things. One is, I created like a little special welcome page just for your listeners. So are you including that in the notes?

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

René: Yes, absolutely.

Mary: That's great, I can't wait to do that. I will also say, the next time you're having a down day and you just need some compassion for yourself, I heard someone suggest this one time and I thought it was so lovely that I'd like to pass it onto you. When you are feeling down and no one else is really paying attention to you, this is a visualization exercise of imagine yourself as a little baby. And hold that baby in your arms and just gush all the loving thoughts you have into yourself when you were an infant. Just like you have held your own children or your own grandchildren, that burst of love that just wants to come out of every pore, try doing that, imagining that the baby in your arms is you.

René: Wow, oh my gosh. And you know, that is one of – I don't have children, but I do know that holding a baby, a sweet baby, is one of the best things that you can do for yourself as far as just connecting to feeling the best that you can feel. I love that so much. What a wonderful visualization. Yes, I love ending the show with that.

Mary: Thank you so much for having me.

René: Thank, Mary, thank you so much for being here and for going through all that we had to go through to get here. Your patience is much appreciated, so thank you.

Mary: We did it. I'm your fan. Thank you very much for having me on your show, introducing me to your audience. They are very fortunate to have your words of wisdom.

René: Yes, so thank you, Mary. Thank you, listeners for listening in. And again, you know what to do; think about that one nugget, that one thing that you got from this fantabulous conversation we just had with Mary. And leave a review and a rating about what that was and how much you enjoyed it, and I'm always grateful to hear from you. Thank you so much for listening to *Midlife Woman Redefined*.

Ep #18: Changing After 50 with Mary Rogers

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