

## **Jenn T. Grace – Episode 92 – Build Your Brand by Following Your Intuition with Rick Clemons**

*Jenn T Grace:* You are listening to the Personal Branding for the LGBTQ Professional Podcast, episode 92.

*Introduction:* Welcome to the Personal Branding for the LGBTQ Professional Podcast; the podcast dedicated to helping LGBTQ professionals and business owners grow their business and careers through the power of leveraging their LGBTQ identities in their personal brand. You'll learn how to market your products and services both broadly, and within the LGBTQ community. You'll hear from incredible guests who are leveraging the power of their identity for good, as well as those who haven't yet started, and everyone in between. And now your host. She teaches straight people how to market to gay people, and gay people how to market themselves. Your professional lesbian, Jenn - with two N's - T Grace.

*Jenn T Grace:* Well hello and welcome to episode number 92 of the podcast. I am your host, Jenn Grace, and today marks I believe the twelfth episode in a row of interviews. So here we are, yet again having another interview. I believe the record started in February of this year, and now we're already into September, and we're still going strong with interviews.

Today's guest is Rick Clemons who is the coming out coach. He is a speaker, he is an author, he has his own podcast, he's really kind of made a mark in this world around helping people come out for whatever reason that may be, which isn't necessarily LGBT, which he talks about in our time together. Also one of the things that is interesting is that in the 92 episodes of this podcast, I don't think I've ever talked in detail about intuition, following your gut, understanding your soul's purpose or your journey in life, and all of that kind of stuff. And it's really great to take I guess 92 episodes to finally get here, but Rick shares such incredible wisdom, and guidance, and you could totally tell that he's a coach just the ways in which he articulates things in such a clear way for people to understand. I feel certain that you are going to really, really enjoy what Rick talks about. So I hope you enjoy the interview for sure,

and as always if you're looking for links to today's episode you can go to [www.JennTGrace.com/92](http://www.JennTGrace.com/92) for episode number 92, and there you'll find the transcript, any links we talk about, ways to contact Rick, all that great stuff. It will all be there and accessible to you. So without further ado, let's just dive right into today's conversation with Rick Clemons.

So I am thrilled that you're on the show, so if you can just give a high level overview of who you are and what you do for the listeners?

*Rick Clemons:* Well my name is Rick Clemons and I'm a lot of different things, but I think the thing that I'm most aligned with in my current work is I'm a coming out coach. And of course the assumption that's going to first be made by most people that hear that is, 'Oh he works with gays and lesbians, helping them coming out of the closet.' And that is true, but it is also true that we all have challenges in life, and things that we're hiding from that we're all coming out of. And I feel very blessed that I've found the parallels here to not only doing the beautiful work that I've been blessed to do with individuals who are coming out of the closet in their sexual orientation, but to also now have found a parallel path to working with entrepreneurs who are trying to escape cubicle nation and be their own thing, or working with someone who's in a relationship that's very challenging and helping them to come out to the truth of, 'I don't need to be in this kind of relationship.' Or it could be, 'I want to be a stay-at-home mom and I want to come out of feeling guilty for wanting to be a stay-at-home mom and not contributing to my family's 'income' in the traditional manner.' And I feel really excited that every day I get to wake up and help someone come out, own their confidence, see their unique space in the world, and do something that I call make their quirks work, whatever that quirk is. Your quirk could be your beautiful talent, or that thing that other people tell you you can't do, and I love helping them come out to be themselves and make their quirks work.

*Jenn T Grace:* And how did you figure out that this was kind of your calling? Like how does one decide one day that they want to help people come out? Where did that stem from?

*Rick Clemons:* Well it came from my own journey. I was 36 when I really faced my truth. I had been looking at it for numerous years, I had come out to my family- or at least my parents, not everyone. I had come out to my parents when I was 19 years old in college, and I wouldn't say we were ultra-religious but there was a religious element to them saying, "No you can't be that, that's not who you're supposed to be," and I went back in the closet. And I went- so without a lot of kicking and screaming so to speak I went and said, "Okay well maybe this isn't who I am." And even from that moment that I stepped back in, I knew I was in denial. I didn't realize the magnitude of the denial because it was more self-preservation to step back in, and then as each day moved, and then life became what I thought I was supposed to be; get married, have kids, have a successful thriving career. I worked all over the globe for a software company for six years and then I started working for a startup, and it was in those critical years of those two positions that I got laid off, and the second layoff was really the opening of the new closet door. I'd already come out of the closet as a gay man, been through a divorce, become a single parent, I'm getting used to that with two very young ladies; my kids were eighteen months and six years old when I came out. And then suddenly here I find myself laid off right in the midst of my divorce, and no real possibilities of what I needed to be doing in sight for a career, but I knew one thing. I knew I was done building other people's businesses. I was going to go find something and I was going to make it mine, and that was the beginning of the calling Jenn, that was really when I was like, 'Hm something's happening here, and I'm going to pay attention to it.'

*Jenn T Grace:* And now how did you know what things to pay attention to? Like you felt that entrepreneurial itch and recognized that working for someone else was not your path, but you definitely felt this calling. Was it small kind of breadcrumbs that led you to your direction? Or was it more of a big kind of like hitting you in the face type of obvious things?

*Rick Clemons:* I think it was a mixture of both. There was definite small breadcrumbs where as soon as I got laid off from the last position I

thought, 'Okay well I'm just going to start doing some consulting type work.' I'd been a marketing guy, I'd been branding, I've helped develop brands, and so I started doing that. And this was in 2005-2006 so the age of the Internet was really just beginning to take off, social media was becoming the thing, so I followed what I knew how to do. But what was so interesting, and this was probably the first big like whack upside the head, was as soon as I started doing that I could feel the just- this isn't what I'm supposed to be doing. I'm tired of writing copy, I'm tired of designing brochures, I'm over hiring PR agencies. And of course by then I'm working for very small businesses, and I mean small like mom and pops on up to maybe businesses with maybe 100 to 200 employees at the most, just helping them as an ad hoc marketing person. And I was just- I was getting internally frustrated and it made me realize something was missing. And at that moment, as I'm kind of knocking on the door going, 'Okay universe, God, my lovely gay angel, somebody tell me what I'm supposed to be doing here.' At the same time I became surrounded by other individuals- mostly men, a few women, who were coming out, who had been married, most of them had kids, but they were surrounding me, coming to me and saying, "Hey you've done this pretty well. You seem to have a decent relationship with your ex-wife, and you have a relationship with your kids. What's the secret sauce so to speak?" And the more I was surrounded by those people the more I started going, 'Well this is interesting. Everybody seems to come to me and I enjoy giving them advice, asking them questions,' and then the next thing I knew in my practice- or in my consulting practice, I started getting quite a few coaches; life coaches, business coaches, and I saw the light. Like wow, I like what these people are doing. And it was ironic because back in 1996 when I went to work for the software company I had actually been integral in working with a coach in our organization because we were going through a triple merger, so we had purchased two other companies and there was a lot of egos in the room so to speak, and so we brought in an executive coach and I was pretty integral in having her work with her teams. And I thought, 'Wow I really like what she's doing, that would be really cool, I wish I could do something like that.' And I even talked to her about it but I'm like, 'Wait you just got hired on here, you're just getting going, you're going to go screw everything up and jump ship?' And so it's interesting how the universe kind of delivers that stuff. And then literally five years later when I got laid off from that job, ironically one of the first things that I got in my

email was an invitation to check out a coaching program. I'm like, 'Wow this is kind of ironic.' And I looked at it, and of course when you're laid off and no sign of income coming in, and you're trying to pinch pennies and make sure money isn't just floating out the door, and you're in the middle of a divorce and learning to have to pay child support and alimony, I just kind of looked at it and said, 'Yeah that's a nice thing but I can't do that right now.' So the universe heard me and took it away. But then suddenly here we are now, 2006 - 2007, all these people are surrounding me wanting help, and all of a sudden I have clients that are coaches, and my clients started saying, "You're so much different than a consultant. Yes you do that sort of thing, and you help guide it, but you're asking us questions that make us really think deeply about our businesses. You really need to think about becoming a coach." And that was when the lightbulb went off.

*Jenn T Grace:* Interesting. So that's awesome that the universe- like you were saying kind of took it away and then brought it back when it was the right time to be brought back.

*Rick Clemons:* Well I think there's that phrase the universe is going to keep teaching you the same lesson until you finally listen. It's going to keep showing up and I actually now believe- wholeheartedly believe in that. Even as I'm doing this podcast with you there's stuff going on in my life right now that are lessons that I've been hearing and listening to, and it's almost a daily, 'Okay are you going to finally step in and listen to that message?' And when I- typically when I do that, I mean it's a rare, rare occasion that if I do that then it doesn't work. But when I fully align and step into that, that's when really amazing stuff happens in my life.

*Jenn T Grace:* And is that something that you feel can be taught to people? So I absolutely listen to my intuition, and I firmly believe everything happens for a reason, that the universe gives us signs. And I've kind of always felt that way but I've been on more of a path to really kind of hone in on that even more specifically, but I feel like a lot of people think it's all like woo woo and none of it really makes an impact. For you, was that always kind of the case for you,

that you recognized that the universe was telling you these things? Because I feel like this is in so much alignment with running businesses, like having clear goals, and having very specific things that we're trying to achieve, and if we're not- if it's in any type of misalignment then it's not going to happen. But how did that kind of evolve for you, or was it just always there?

*Rick Clemons:* Well I fully and 100% believe it's always there. What I know now, and I'm not saying I'm some guru who is the end all be all, but what I do know for myself now is- it's always been there but what I was incapable of was accessing it in the way to really appreciate it. And now I realize when I access that energy, and when I access that intuition, and I act on that intuition- and I know this to be true not just for me. I have good friends, I have mentors, I have clients that I've watched this occur with. When we trust our gut intuition, almost 100% of the time- I'm going to say 100% of the time that's when what we need most actually happens. That's when the success steps in, that's when the relationship shows up, that's when we quit living in doubt and in fear, is when we trust our intuition. Our intuition to me- again this is just my perspective, is our greatest guide to being fully in alignment with our soul and our purpose here on this planet. And that can be in love, it can be in business, it can be in relationships, it can be in your calling, but when you are in that kind of alignment, anything becomes possible.

*Jenn T Grace:* I totally, totally agree on all of those fronts. Is this part of what you are sharing with your clients, this type of stuff?

*Rick Clemons:* Absolutely.

*Jenn T Grace:* Yeah.

*Rick Clemons:* Oh yeah, absolutely. Because what I've found through the coming out process- and mine was a long journey and everybody's is different, but through- and none of us ever stops coming out, so I

want to really caveat that because there are still moments that as a gay man I'm coming out every day in different ways, in different groups, in different things, and so it's a very interesting journey. But as I have gone through this, there's a couple things that I have learned. Number one, I am who I am, and that's what makes me unique in the world. Now some would say, "Yeah you're not the only gay person." I realize that, but being gay the way I'm gay and how I make it a part of my life is my unique way of doing it. Secondly there's this beautiful piece of owning that uniqueness in the world. And it's not that I'm unique because I'm gay, there's a lot of things that I'm unique. I'm unique because like you I can do a podcast and it's just a flawless thing I can do. I can put myself behind that microphone and I can just go. I can go stand up on a stage if somebody were to knock on my door right now after we do this podcast and said, "You're needed on a stage in twenty minutes to give a speech," I could go do it because I just know that this is some of my innate uniqueness that I need to tap into that power and go with. The third thing I know is confidence resides within each of us. How we access that confidence, and how we use it is the key critical piece. And when you put all those magical things together- so knowing that you're always going to be good at something, that you have a unique space that you take up on the planet in a very beautiful way, and that confidence is at your disposal any time you want to access it. It becomes pretty powerful that then is when you can stand in your own beautiful space and are capable of doing whatever you set your mind to.

*Jenn T Grace:*

So how do you get somebody out of that they've never kind of operated like this? Like what is your first point of recommendation to them to kind of push them out of that comfort zone and into a space that they've never really operated in before?

*Rick Clemons:*

Well the first question I ask someone is what is it you most want, and why? And the why is very important. I mean one of my favorite authors and guy that just has always inspired me is Simon Sinek and his book, 'Start With Why.' To me the 'why' is the key critical piece. The 'how' you can figure out, the 'when' you can figure out, the 'what' you can figure out, but if you're not clear on the 'why.' I know why I do what I do. I do this work because I love the feeling

of watching someone else step into who they truly are without guilt and shame, and it brings me pure joy and happiness when you can see someone do that because it reminds me of the reflection in the mirror of what I'm meant to be doing in my own life each and every day, being exactly who I am, and that's why I do it.

*Jenn T Grace:* Absolutely.

*Rick Clemons:* There's too many people on our planet walking around not doing what they're meant to be doing and being what they're not meant to be because they bought into everybody else's idea of, 'Well you need to be this way, or you need to be that way.' I want everyone to just be themselves. That doesn't mean- that doesn't mean we're all going to like what each other is, but that's okay.

*Jenn T Grace:* That's what makes it great.

*Rick Clemons:* Yes, absolutely. But the first step is that 'why.' Really get clear on that 'why' because I think too often- and I know you've probably seen this Jenn yourself in the work that you do, the first question most people face is, 'Okay well what should I do? Or what should I be? Or how am I going to do that if I decide that's what I am?' We can get really caught up in those questions but then when you turn and ask someone the question, "Okay the 'what' and the 'how,' but why are you doing this? Why do you want to be that? Why is this important to you?" Those are the really big questions.

*Jenn T Grace:* Yeah and all the details that can be completely sorted out later. And I like that the 'why' is the first thing that you talk about because one of my keynotes is about 'why.' You know really trying to get to the crux of why you're doing what you're doing, and I ask it regardless of who my audience is. So I have my straight audience and I have my LGBT audience, and it's still always the same question. So for the straight audience any time I'm in any type of consulting capacity, or a sales- like a prospect meeting or anything

like that, my first question is, 'Well why do you care? Why the LGBT community? You could be marketing to any other community, why this?' And that's my way of weeding out if I'm going to work with a company or not, because if their 'why' is really crappy and it's not genuine, then I'm not putting my name and my reputation on the line to help somebody that has that inauthentic approach. Versus the company that is coming from a really great place with good intentions.

*Rick Clemons:*

Yeah I had the really beautiful opportunity last evening to attend a movie premier for a friend of mine who his film just premiered here in Los Angeles at a film festival. And I knew the name of the movie, I knew he was the producer of it, and so we get there and the movie gets ready to start, and then lo and behold he's actually one of the actors in the movie. I didn't know this. And as I watched him perform- and we're not super good friends, we go to a networking event together once a month and so we've become casual acquaintances, and as I watched this person that I've had really cool conversations with portray this character, and knowing that he was the producer, and he was the writer, and played a lot of roles in this film, it just really brought the question forward of 'why.' Why did you step into the role of acting? So the movie ends and as they do at film festivals they bring the directors, and the producers, and the cinematographers, and some of the actors up and they have the Q&A. And the first question that somebody asked is, "So why did you do the acting in the movie?" And it was so beautiful because he wasn't intending to be in the movie. They kept trying to cast- they shot the movie in Brazil and they kept trying to find the right person to cast in that role, and they just couldn't find the person that they thought would really, really, really fit. Now they're already in the whole production crew, and it's a small production crew but it's an hour long short film so it's a rather- it's a pretty big thing for them to have flown people to Brazil, and they've got a cinematographer, and different people. They've probably got a crew of about fifteen people just waiting around, but they don't have this character. And he stepped into it and when somebody said, "Why-" when that question got asked he said, "Because this is what you do to get the movie made." I thought that was such a beautiful response. It was just wow, this is what you've got to do to get this made. Now of course as he talked more he goes, "And I realized I'm a piece of each of these

characters. I'm a piece of this character here," and there's only four characters in the movie, and he talked about how there was a piece of him in each of the characters, but the one character that was missing was the piece of himself that was the most himself. And it was just ironic to hear him say that, and the 'why' was not only to get the movie made, but it was kind of to bring full circle who he was in all four of these characters in the movie so that (I loved his 'so that')- so that everyone who ever watches this movie can somehow truly relate to all the pieces of themselves that may be showing up in two people, three people, four people, ten people. But so they can see the complete essence of themselves in others.

*Jenn T Grace:* That's brilliant. That's so awesome. And it kind of shows that entrepreneurial spirit too of you have to do what you have to do to get the job done, and sometimes that's pushing your own limits and putting yourself in a role where it wasn't really your intention but to get the show to go on you had no choice.

*Rick Clemons:* Yeah. Amazing stuff.

*Jenn T Grace:* So in terms of kind of what you were just saying of people showing up as one person, two, three, four; I find that to be very common in the Internet marketing space, online marketing, even people who do speaking. So how do you- especially doing something so significant that you're doing, how can you or do you see people showing up differently? Because I think one of the things, especially because you have an online presence, you have a podcast, you have a following, you're out speaking in places; how do you stay grounded I guess maybe is the question. How do you stay grounded and make sure that you're always kind of representing your true authentic self, whether that is on your own podcast, on this podcast, on a stage, at a networking event? Because I think that is a very hard balance for a lot of people, and it's even more so when you're more in the public eye. So how does that look in your world?

*Rick Clemons:* Well it's all based in my journey. It all stems from the 36 years that I wasn't myself. That I hid and couldn't seem to get beyond what other people expected from me. And I remember the day that I first came upon one of my own personal mantras that really sums up the answer to your question. And my mantra is this; trust in yourself to be yourself is the greatest gift you can give yourself. And as long as I stand in that phrase to the best of my ability- and I always caveat it with that because nobody's perfect, but as long as I can trust myself to be myself in every way, every day, and give myself that gift, then that's what people are going to get. Whether it's this podcast, my podcast, whether I'm writing an article, whether I'm doing an interview, whether I'm standing on a stage; as long as I can trust myself to be exactly who I am, then there's really nothing to worry about. Now others could say, "But what about what other people think?" Well I trust myself to not worry about what other people think. "Well what about if you screw up?" Well I trust myself that if I screwed up on something then that's exactly what I'm supposed to be doing in that moment. Is it easy to stay in this space? Hell no, it's not easy because we all get faced with challenges. But that became the key mantra for me is I lived for 36 years not trusting myself to be who I was. I trusted myself to be everything that everybody else wanted me to be, but I didn't trust myself enough to take a stand and to say, "This is me and you can either be with me or you can not be with me, and that's okay." I think that's a big thing too, is to realize as someone- and I know you've written books Jenn, and all of us approach this differently. I personally will read my reviews, I won't react to most of them because I don't see the point in it, and I had to really learn to trust that I'm not going to be everybody's cup of tea and that's absolutely okay. It's okay to not be the end-all, be-all, the Holy Grail for everyone, but be who you need to be first and foremost for yourself, because when you are who you are for yourself, your energy reflects that you're okay with everyone else being who they are for themselves, and the right people that are supposed to come into your world whether it's your friendships, whether it's your relationships, a working relationship, your followers; then those are exactly the people who are supposed to be there. Where we get hung up is when we try to bring everybody into being who we want in our life and then suddenly it's like it becomes that, 'I need, and I compare, and I've got to be like such-and-such,' and man, in my opinion that's when everything crumbles.

*Jenn T Grace:* I just genuinely love what you're saying because I feel like these are all things that I think about, and I to some degree follow in my mind, but you're articulating them so clearly that I am loving it right now. This is awesome. So as we're talking about personal branding, because this is what this podcast is about, is really personal branding for LGBTQ professionals, or business owners, or whatever they might be doing. I find that it can be really challenging for people to really kind of understand what their personal brand stands for. What is that meaning that they're associating with themselves that they're going to go out there and market, and sell, and get people to follow them? Obviously when people are in alignment with their soul's journey even, when you're really aligned with what you're supposed to be doing in life, it makes things so much easier. But I find that most people are not that aligned. So from a personal branding standpoint, if there's somebody who's listening to this and they're like, "I can't even begin to follow what Rick and Jenn are saying right now. I'm just not there." Do you have any thoughts for them in terms of helping them kind of build and grow their personal brand from that place of authenticity? Because I think that's so incredibly important, is the authenticity for anybody, but it feels even more so when we're relating that back to the LGBT community.

*Rick Clemons:* I love to have people start with something- it's going to sound really funny, but I do what I call the Do You Like Cookies exercise.

*Jenn T Grace:* Okay.

*Rick Clemons:* And what that is, is 'do you like cookies? Yes or no?' 'No.' 'Okay do you like ice cream? Yes or no?' 'Yes.' 'Really? What kind of ice cream do you like?' They tell me. 'What is it that you like about that ice cream?' They'll tell me. 'And if you could have all that ice cream that you wanted, what would that make you feel?' And then they tell me. Same thing could happen with the cookies. When they get done they're kind of looking at me like, 'Okay what does this have to do with me and my personal brand or how I show up?' I said,

'Because what you just did is you were completely authentic about what you liked. So why aren't you doing this in everything you're doing about what you do in your work, and what you want to be doing? Why aren't you being really honest with yourself about what you like and how you like to show up? So now let's do the exercise a different way. What do you like to do for work? What is it that really turns you on? What is that you go to work and you get lost in that you go, 'I could do this all day long.' Because that's the stuff you need to be paying attention to. I know for me if I could wake up every morning and do exactly what we're doing here all day long; the podcast, and radio show, and talk, and do talk interviews, and show up this way and then go hop on a stage and talk- if I could do that all day long, man I'm in my bliss point. Now that doesn't mean I don't get to do that, but there's a lot of things that come along with that, and that come along with my personal brand. But what I had to get used to doing is saying, "Yes I accept this is what I really like." This is what I really enjoy doing because when I'm dialed in to what I really enjoy doing, and I go do it, guess what starts to happen? Knock, knock, knock; opportunity shows up. And I think that's what a lot of people miss.

*Jenn T Grace:*

I totally agree. Do you know of any particular assessments or tools that have helped clients of yours kind of identify their likes? Because I think that's another thing, is that not everyone even truly knows at the root of their being what they like and don't like because they've been so pre-programmed in so many ways to kind of be somewhat of a lemming and just following everyone else's path and not really paying attention to their own.

*Rick Clemons:*

Sure there's a friend of mine who is now deceased but he has a beautiful brand that his wife has continued to carry forward now, and this is just recent, he just passed in the last year. But his brand is called Live Your Legend, and if you go to I believe [www.LiveYourLegend.net](http://www.LiveYourLegend.net), I don't believe it's a .com. But Live Your Legend, just Google it, you'll find it because he's done a Ted Talk and all these things. But he has this really beautiful passion exercise, and I remember doing that, and that was something that really helped me when I was doing some shifting within my brand trying to find some things. It helped really get pinpointed. The

other thing that I have found- and this is a tool that I use for my coach's training, is an assessment- it's an energy assessment, it's called the Energy Leadership Assessment. I know people listening will go, 'Well what does that have to do with finding stuff?' Well what it does is it pinpoints how you show up in the world, your beliefs, your values, your purview, your lens that you're looking at things through so that we can see where the hidden roadblocks are. Because until we know what the hidden roadblocks are, we can't start to get them out of the way. But if you can get the roadblocks out of the way, then you start to move closer towards what you really are meant to be. So let's just take kind of the setup you just gave me, Jenn. Let's say someone shows up and says, "I'm really- I just don't know what my passion is, and I don't know how to even put a finger on it." Well I would do the assessment with them because I want to see what belief systems are they holding onto? How do they see the world? How are they approaching things in life? So one of the statements that they rank- and you rank these statements from totally agree to totally disagree, and everything kind of in between, but there's about six marks between there that you can rank things. So one of the statements is, 'The world is perfect just the way it is.' Now one person might say, "Hey that sounds great, I'm going to say I totally agree." Another person might say, "Oh no, I totally disagree." And another person might say, "Well I somewhat agree." But when you can see how somebody ranks that and you can dial in and let's go back to the person who says, "I totally disagree." What is it with the world that you see the world in this way, that it's keeping you from seeing it as perfect? Well they may have a belief system that says nothing can be perfect. They may have had a situation in their life where someone that they loved dearly was taken away from them, and their view is this is unfair, this is not the way the world's supposed to be. But then you take the person who says, "I totally agree that the world is perfect just the way it is," and you start to ask them the questions, "Explain to me why you have that outlook on the world." "Well because I have a belief system that says everything happens for a purpose. And everything we get to encounter in this world is for our best interest." So when you can start to see these things in individuals, you can start to help them go, "Okay based on that outlook, now if you believe everything happens in the world for a purpose, then how does that affect your view of you not being able to land on your passion? There may be a disconnect right there." If they believe everything happens for a

purpose but they're like, "I think it's unfair that I still haven't been able to figure out my passion," well there's a big disconnect between those two things, and that's where we would start to do the work. Because as soon as we can release that block and bring more of, 'I see the world, and it's happening, and everything being done for me,' then maybe not finding your passion is being done for you so that you will get to it when it's meant to show up in the world. And I've seen this happen with a couple of my clients that have kind of been in that scenario. One of them was very much, 'Oh yeah, everything happens for a very beautiful reason, but I'm just so frustrated I can't figure out what I'm supposed to be doing.' And then suddenly as soon as we started working in that arena and she started going, "Oh I see I have a really big disconnect in my belief system to what I'm actually in action doing," literally within a month she started to figure out what she really wanted to be doing because that block had been put in a light, the spotlight was shining on it and she saw the inconsistency between how she was showing up, and she started making a very conscious effort to go, 'Even in my pursuit of my passion, it's happening exactly the way it's supposed to be happening for me,' and it was amazing to watch her release and her energy just shift so much, and literally a month later she was like, "I think I'm going to pursue this thing in photography," because she had a huge passion for photography, "and I'm going to trust that by telling the universe I'm following this, that somehow the right thing is going to show up that I get to-" and she was very smart; MBA, very smart business person, high up in her corporate position. She trusted that somehow the photography was going to interact with her corporate position and the ironic thing was she started to create programs internally where she took people that were very business focused, very logical, just that whole almost type A, like everything has to happen this way, and she started doing some very beautiful creative programs within the organization to incorporate photography, and drawing, and poem writing, and all these things to kind of loosen up the environment, and it ended up raising not only the consciousness within the organization, but started destressing and getting more communication happening. But it took her starting to see her own possibility before any of this could begin to happen.

*Jenn T Grace:*

Wow, I feel like you just said a mouthful.

*Rick Clemons:* I did.

*Jenn T Grace:* Yeah, I feel like everyone needs to go check out those resources that you were mentioning, so I'll make sure that I put them in the show notes. Because I do think-

*Rick Clemons:* Yeah, absolutely. [www.LiveYourLegend.net](http://www.LiveYourLegend.net) is definitely- and then on my site you're going to see it's called the True You Process, and within the True You Process is that Energy Leadership Assessment that's just- it's so powerful. I've done it twice on myself, and it's amazing to see the shift you make. I do it with all my clients, that's the first thing we do. We do this assessment so I can see how do they think? How do they approach things? And whether they work with me a month, whether they work with me three months, six months, a year; somewhere along the way when I feel like the time's right, I do the assessment again and it's amazing to see the shifts in numbers because it gets them out of victim mentality, it helps them reduce conflict in their life, it guides them through the energy of just kind of settling and being okay, and being kind of, 'Things just happen because that's what's supposed to happen.' They don't make excuses any longer, and it moves them into a very conscious frame of mind of, 'I'm doing this and how can I do what I'm doing and making it a win-win, not only for me but for everyone else?'

*Jenn T Grace:* I love that. So your website is [www.RickClemons.com](http://www.RickClemons.com) and that's only with one M. So again, those will be in the show notes. And you said the Energy Assessment is on your website.

*Rick Clemons:* Yeah it's called the True You Process.

*Jenn T Grace:* True You Process.

*Rick Clemons:* So when you get to the services page it's called the True You Process and you can get a glimpse of what that's all about.

*Jenn T Grace:* Excellent, alright I'll make sure that that's linked up properly.

*Rick Clemons:* And for anyone who might be interested in doing this Jenn, I usually charge \$159 to do that assessment, but I would give them my friends and family discount on that one, and I would do it for \$99.

*Jenn T Grace:* Nice. It sounds so good because it really is an assessment, it's not just a 'Hey I took this online quiz that told me that I'm the yellow color.' It's more in depth and you're using it as a metric which I think is what most people are missing in their businesses generally, and even more so from a marketing side of things, is that they're not measuring anything that they're doing and then they're wondering why they're not seeing any type of needle moving.

*Rick Clemons:* Exactly.

*Jenn T Grace:* So as you were talking I pulled up your website, so now I'm going to derail us a little bit and ask you about your book. So I know that you've written a book and it's obviously in complete alignment with what you're doing. Can you just share with the listeners a little bit about that, and maybe about that process?

*Rick Clemons:* Sure, so it's been interesting. I tend to be somewhat of a spontaneous guy; ask my husband, he'll wake up on a Sunday morning and I'll have half the house torn apart with a hammer, "Guess what we're doing? We're remodelling this room today so go get recruits."

*Jenn T Grace:* I love it.

*Rick Clemons:*

Put junky stuff on and here we go. But I wouldn't say that the book was that much of a spontaneous thing, but I do remember sitting down one day and going, 'I'm going to start writing.' And I've always had a passion for writing ever since I was fairly young, and I knew this book was within me given my coming out journey, and also because I'd started doing this work with other people. And I just felt like there's things that I needed to say, and I wasn't just going to do 'Here's Rick's memoir of coming out.' I could have done that, nothing wrong with that, but I wanted to do something more. I wanted to do something that said, 'Okay here's a glimpse of my journey, and then based on that glimpse of the journey, in this next chapter here's how you can go through that yourself. Finding your own path through it, but here are some recommendations, here are some things to explore, and then now let's jump back into the journey.' So that's basically the format of the book; every other chapter is memoir, and then the other chapter is practical how-to's in that arena. What I'm most proud of with this book is I feel that I've taken a very heavy subject, it's not pretty, and I'm the first to admit I'm a jerk and I'm an ass for what I did to a very beautiful woman. I also caveat that with until you've stood in someone's shoes who was given the societal pressure that many of us have been to do the right thing and be the right person, and then you add the faith-based sort of stuff, and numerous other things. And some of you might think, 'Oh he's making excuses.' I'm not making excuses, I'm just stating the facts. Until you've lived in those shoes, be very careful how you start to ridicule or judge someone. But what I wanted to do was do this in a way that said, 'This is a really heavy subject but there can be some humor along the way in this.' And not making fun of the journey but having fun with it. I mean there's an alter ego to mine, her name is Lemonade Pop, she's my inner diva, and she shows up throughout the book. She has this sarcastic flair to her. If I could create her in real life- I'm a big guy, I'm 6'4" I'm almost 300 pounds, so I'm a big guy, I'm a big linebacker guy. She would be a big African American diva, probably with platinum blonde or bright pink hair or something like that, and she would be sassy but yet very forthright. She's a little mix of- if anybody knows who Iyanla Vanzant is from Oprah's 'Fix Your Life.' She's a little bit of Iyanla with a little bit of Oprah mixed in, but then a very quiet almost like serene piece of- I don't know, hard to say, maybe like that shy Barbara Streisand who

really doesn't like being on stage. There's that element to her as well. So she can be real sassy and out there, but then she can come to center really quickly. So that's what I brought into the book. A lot of my own experience, the laughter, the humor, the sadness, the authenticity- I feel like it's very authentic, and I'm just really proud of what I produced. And it wasn't like, 'Oh let's go do this' and it was done. It was done in like less than six months, I mean I wrote the book in less than six months. But then it sat there on the shelf for a couple years because I was in the midst, and for all you entrepreneurs out there, yes I was in the midst of chasing lots of bright, shiny objects trying to figure out who is Rick, and what is Rick's brand going to be? And I was trying to walk away from the coming out stuff because I'm like, 'I want to be more, I want to be doing something different,' and then it's so ironic to me that now- basically six years down the road from when I started as a coming out coach, and then kind of got derailed, and chased different things, and then the book was being written, and then a year ago I said, "I just want to get this book published." And now here we stand and I am fully embracing that I am the coming out coach, I help people come out of numerous things, I am an expert in that arena, and that the core of who I am is around uniqueness, and confidence, and making these quirky little things in our life work, which so aligns with coming through the closet doors and saying, "Frankly my dear, I'm gay." That was like the big impetus to everything. So in a weird way it all worked together. I feel really proud of it.

*Jenn T Grace:* And what did writing a book do for your business and for your speaking? What type of impact did you see once that was kind of out there in the world?

*Rick Clemons:* Well first of all for me personally, it was very cathartic. And there's even moments now when I will be at a book signing or a book reading and I'll read something and I'll kind of go, 'Wow I really wrote that. That's kind of scary that I put that out there in print the way I did.' But as far as for my business, what I've seen- and in fact this was really beautiful. I got to LA yesterday morning and there was a text on the app WhatsApp. I don't know if anybody's familiar with it, but WhatsApp is a beautiful texting tool you can use when

you're travelling, especially out of the US. It's free and it helps you text and stay in touch. And I noticed there was a text on my WhatsApp, and it was obviously from a foreign country, I could tell by the number, and the message was this. 'Hi Rick, I've received your book. I've been reading it profusely and I just need you to know that it's helped me see that everything I've been thinking and feeling is exactly okay to be thinking and feeling. I'm a father of two, I love my wife dearly, but I realize the rejection in myself has to quickly in the near future come to an end. I look forward to meeting you someday, and hopefully when I can do it, possibly working with you.' And this was from a man in Barcelona, Spain.

*Jenn T Grace:* Wow. That's amazing.

*Rick Clemons:* And those moments there, when you say, 'What does your book do for you and your business?' It's become the calling card in what I believe I was put here on the earth to do, which was be a support, be a warm embrace, be a different way of looking at things when you're deep in the heart of that thing that's got you in the clutches that you just believe you can't come out and say, 'This is who I am.' Again whether it's coming out to say you're gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender; I don't care what it is, or you're saying I need to escape cubicle nation and I need to go start my own business. All these things are the things that it's done for me in my business. It's helped me get really clear on how I go take this to the next level, and what the evergreen conversations are that I can now have because it's my calling card. It's the thing that says, 'This guy has some expertise in this arena and he's worth listening to.'

*Jenn T Grace:* That is so beautifully stated because that really I feel like is what it's all about. It's not about selling a million copies, it's about impacting the lives of individual people who need to hear your message to better their lives.

*Rick Clemons:* In fact I purposefully carry- you may do this too Jenn. All of us authors kind of tend to do this whether we're with a big publishing

house or not. I carry a box of books with me in my car wherever I go.

*Jenn T Grace:* I do the same.

*Rick Clemons:* And I find it really interesting- yes I have them available if somebody wants to buy them of course, but I've found it very interesting how many times I've been having a conversation with someone and I just feel compelled to say, "Excuse me a minute, I want to go get you something." Because I just feel like I want to hand them this book and just say, "I think this might help you in some way." And it's interesting because yes it's geared toward the late in life bloomer who's been married, coming out so to speak. But two things that have shocked me the most- or I shouldn't say shocked, I mean I guess I'm just in amazement is number one, the number of heterosexual friends and acquaintances of mine who have bought the book to support me, but then they have turned around and they've actually read it. I know that sounds really weird. It's like, "Yeah I know you're just buying the book to support me and you're never going to read this." But it's amazing that they have read the book, and they have come back to me, and a couple of them have even posted these reviews on Amazon unsolicited saying, 'I'm a heterosexual female, single mother of three, and I know this sounds weird that I would be reading this book, but this book opened my eyes to my own sexual orientation stuff as a heterosexual woman, that I didn't realize I'd never dealt with. All the stuff from teenage and puberty that I still have not really contended with, and Rick helped me see how beautiful it is to just be who I am.' Those are the ones that I get really blown away by. The second one that really surprises me is I intended this book to be the 35 on up crowd. I've had more young people- so now I'm really aging myself when I'm going to say, 'You know people in their twenties, young people,' who have come up to me and said- in fact the last networking event I was at, a young guy bought my book, he's 26 years old and he goes, "Yeah I think I really need to read this because I just came out last year and I'm kind of late to the game." And I'm looking at him going, "Hunny, 25 years old, to me you're kind of early to the game." But in his mind, many of his friends came out when they were fourteen, seventeen,

eighteen, twenty, so in his mind he's a late bloomer. And so I think that's just really powerful stuff to see how a book, no matter what you, the author- what frame you put it in, it has so many more different ways that it can reach out and really impact people.

*Jenn T Grace:*

And I think that books are amazing because they will stay around long after you're gone. So I think for me it's kind of knowing that my words will live on if I am not around; they're still impacting people, and that's really kind of the ultimate goal that many of us have, and I think that's why you and I connected so well when we did, was that we both have this much bigger purpose in life than just ourselves.

*Rick Clemons:*

And you know to that point Jenn, I wish people would embrace that to leave a legacy, whatever that is and however big or small it is, is part of your purpose here on earth. Every one of us has a legacy to leave. Even if your legacy is somebody saw you stop and pick a ladybug up in the middle of a sidewalk, and move it over onto a plant so that ladybug continued to have life. If that's the only legacy you ever leave on the planet is someone saw you do that, then own that, and be it, and let it be. And I think often we think we have to have these grandiose things we do. Yes I agree with you 100%, I know there's words that I have now written that are there. They're never going to die. Someone, somewhere- I mean how do we have all these beautiful works of the masters still that we can see and read? It's because someone said this was important enough to keep around. I think each of us has words, and pieces of ourselves that are important enough to keep around, and that's another reason why I do the work I do, is to help people realize you have something to leave, and you have an impact to have on this planet.

*Jenn T Grace:*

I love that. I feel like this is such a good way to end it. I feel like we could talk all day, and I feel like you have- and this is not a back-handed insult, you have the voice for radio. You have such a soothing quality to your voice that I feel like the listeners could probably listen to you all day as well.

*Rick Clemons:* Oh well thank you.

*Jenn T Grace:* So for those who want to get in touch with you, how- what is your preferred means of them doing so?

*Rick Clemons:* The best way is probably to literally either hop on my website, you can fill out a form on my contact page, but I really like the direct contact. You can email me at Rick@rickclemons.com, and again as Jenn said that's Clemons with one M, -ONS. So just think C and then lemons, that's the easiest way to always remember that Clemons. Rick@rickclemons.com. Shoot me and email and say, 'Hey I heard you on Jenn's podcast, and I just wanted to connect,' and especially if you want to do the True You Assessment make sure you say, 'I want to do the True You Assessment, I heard you on Jenn's podcast,' that way I can get you that \$99 rate to do that, and I'd love to be a part of that and bring that into your life to help you open up to all the beautiful possibilities of what it is for you to be truly you.

*Jenn T Grace:* Yeah this is amazing. Thank you so much for spending the time today. I feel certain that the listeners are going to love this.

*Rick Clemons:* Well thank you for having me, Jenn. It's always a pleasure and I look forward to many, many things we're going to do together.

*Jenn T Grace:* Oh you bet.

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