

When God Transforms Pain Into Purpose and Mess Into Ministry with Marilou Braswell

Warrior Arise! Podcast [Show Notes]

The mission of the Warrior Arise! Podcast is to inspire, empower, and equip you to think, feel, and act like the powerful Warrior you are so you can Live and Lead bravely, freely, and authentically in your unique purpose and destiny. In each episode, I'll impart hope, passion, and wisdom from my own journey from struggling, striving, and surviving to thriving. You will glean my expertise as a highly sought-after therapist and coach for more than a decade. You'll also hear vulnerable, authentic conversations with fellow Warriors who will share their stories of living in and leading with courage, freedom, and authenticity in a passion fueled and purpose centered life.

As a result, you will awaken to your true essence and power and uncage from patterns of thinking and behaving that hinder you so you can live in deeper satisfaction and soar to next level success in life, work, and business! Victory and prosperity are our inheritance. Promised land living is your birthright. As Warriors, we must claim ownership and step into what is ours to possess.

Marilou Braswell knows pain and struggle, and in this episode, she shares it candidly and authentically. From the devastating betrayal she experienced in her marriage of 39 years that ended in a painful divorce, to the loss of her beloved career as Head Cheerleading Coach at The University of Georgia when she was suddenly fired, Marilou had every reason to feel discouraged and defeated. And some days, she did. But she didn't stay there. With supernatural courage and strength from God, she endured. She healed. She grew, and she overcame. A true Warrior, Marilou allowed God to transform her pain into her purpose and her mess into her ministry. Her story is inspiring and her faith is contagious. You will be encouraged!

During our conversation, Marilou:

- Walks us through her life story from the time she didn't make it to cheerleading to becoming a college cheerleader captain and then a college coach.
- Shares the most impactful times of struggle throughout her marriage and how that has shaped who she is today.
- Discuss how her struggles and painful life experiences help her counsel and minister to young women.
- Shares how her pain has led her to discover her passion and purpose in life.
- Discusses her thoughts about why people choose to stay in the struggle, striving and surviving rather than to do the work to live wholeheartedly and in freedom.

Raised in the beautiful New England town of Bethel, Connecticut, Marilou's family moved to Athens, GA for her teenage years. There she quickly acquired a southern drawl and although she played softball, basketball, and soccer up north, the only thing offered at her school was cheerleading.

After cheering in high school, she became a physical education and health education major at UGA where she was on the gymnastics team her first two years of college. The next 3 years, Marilou cheered for the Dawgs and was a two-year captain and NCA College All-American her senior year.

After coaching high school cheerleaders and teaching physical education and health at The Lovett School in Atlanta, Marilou was hired to return to her alma mater, the University of Georgia, as the Head Cheerleading coach. She coached at UGA from 1993 until 2004 and then went on to be the Dean of Women at Whitefield Academy in Atlanta. She is currently the National Director for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Cheerleading ministry since 2007.

Marilou and her ex-husband Matt have 2 children. Laci Ann was born August 23, 1981, in Denver and two years later in Athens, their son Beau Matthew arrived on August 2, 1983. Laci is a graduate of UGA and the University of Virginia School of Law. School. She is married to Adam Nelson, a three-time Olympian in the shot put who won a silver medal, a gold medal and is also a former USA World Champion. Adam now is the Athletic Director at the Lovett School in Atlanta. Their son Beau went to Wheaton College and graduated from UGA and then attended law school in Washington DC at George Washington University. He currently works for the justice Department in DC. The highlight of Marilou's life is her grandchildren, Caroline Grace Nelson -13 and Lauren Olivia Nelson -10.

Marilou lives in her hometown of Athens, GA and her hobbies are competing in triathlons, playing tennis, doing jig saw puzzles, and anything outdoors! She has small groups that she mentors from her church, neighborhood, and FCA. Over 747 Cheerleaders have accepted Christ since she started FCA Cheer.

Quotes from this Episode:

“God gives you a lot of experiences, and with those experiences comes His wisdom, not ours.” — Marilou Braswell

“He wanted me to help kids find Christ through cheerleading throughout my life.” — Marilou Braswell

“I found myself confused and just really leaning into God, and it was amazing to me how he answered that cry of mine.” — Marilou Braswell

“I deserve better than this. I am worthy in God's eyes.” — Marilou Braswell

“I felt like God was always saying, I got this, I got this, I got this over and over.” — Marilou Braswell

Resources:

Website: <https://www.fcacheer.org/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marilou-braswell-4ba117203/>

Golden Timestamp:

6:46-7:56 - The biggest blessing that God put together in her life.

11:28-12:10 - Talks about how Jesus showed his strength to Marilou when she was struggling in her marriage.

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