

FINDING BRAVE

with Kathy Caprino

Transcript

Finding Brave Episode #17

Expanding Your Power and Leadership as An Introvert, With Jennifer Kahnweiler

Kathy Caprino: Hello, everyone. This is Kathy Caprino, and welcome to my podcast, *Finding Brave*. I've created this show for everyone who longs to create something bold and brave in their life. To rise up, speak up, and stand up for who they are and to reach their highest and biggest visions. Each week I'll be speaking with inspiring guests from all walks of business, leadership, entertainment, the creative arts, and the entrepreneurial world, and they'll be sharing their intimate stories of Finding Brave and offer their best strategies for building your most rewarding, joyful, and meaningful life, business, and career.

Kathy Caprino: Hello, everybody. This is Kathy Caprino and welcome to another round of *Finding Brave*. Today, well first of all, I want to tell you I'm a little jet-lagged and a little heartsick, being back from Ireland and feeling like, have you ever been to a place where you actually feel like it's more home than your own home? And you've only been there once? So maybe I'll do an episode on something like that at some point. Finding Brave and visiting a place that calls to you.

Kathy Caprino: So anyway, that's where my mind is, except that my mind is also on introversion and harnessing the power of introversion and I'm so blessed and excited to have as our guest, Jennifer Kahnweiler. Hi Jennifer, thanks for being here.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Hey Kathy Caprino, it's lovely to hear your energetic, extroverted, somewhat introverted voice, right?

Kathy Caprino: You got ambivert, somewhere in between, but mostly extroverted.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Welcome home, welcome home from Ireland.

Kathy Caprino: Thank you, my dear. So folks, I've got to tell you about Jennifer. She is so astounding and inspiring, so here's just a quick bio. Jennifer Kahnweiler is an author, global speaker, and thought leader, hailed as a champion for introverts. Her best-selling books, *The Introverted Leader* and *Quiet Influence*, as well as the, what's your latest book that we're talking about today?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well, *The Introvert*, did you mention *Genius of Opposites*?

Kathy Caprino: That's what I didn't mention—

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That was the one before the latest, that's actually not the latest, the latest one is the second edition of *The Introverted Leader*, which just came out in March.

Kathy Caprino: Oh wow.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So *Genius of Opposites* was two years ago.

Kathy Caprino: Wow. Offline I have to talk about how you're so prolific, I'm really admiring that. But folks, you have to know, these books have been translated into 14 languages and Jennifer's career includes jobs as an elementary school counselor, university administrator, federal government program director, and career coach. She deepened her knowledge and appreciation for introverts through her work as a learning and development professional in leading organizations such as GE, Freddie Mac, NASA, Turner Broadcasting, and the US Centers for Disease Control.

Kathy Caprino: Wow, Jennifer. Thank you for taking time.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Oh, it's my total pleasure. I've known you a while, Kathy, and followed your work and I love how you keep evolving.

Kathy Caprino: Oh, thank you so much, and you know, folks, we met through knowing each other through Berrett-Koehler, which was my first publisher and, Jennifer, your three books are with Berrett-Koehler, right?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's right. Now my fourth book, yeah. Yeah, they're a great partner, and Kathy I was blessed to be able to meet you through that community. It's a very strong author community.

Kathy Caprino: Isn't it? Very generous people.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Absolutely.

Kathy Caprino: It's really a tribe of people that want to help other people. So there we are. So I have to start with this question, well I want to tell everyone this, because I'm an extrovert and I wrote, some of you might have seen it, a Forbes post, about how I'm sick of our culture's bias against introverts, and I'm ashamed to admit I have shared in it.

Kathy Caprino: And one thing I just want to throw out there, folks, whether you're in one camp or another, introvert, extrovert, somewhere in between, what I really think is critical today is that we, as Brene Brown puts it, stop hiding in the bunker of the ideological, or personality, or whatever bunker it is, where we're only with people who are exactly like ourselves. Right? Because it blinds us, and I have to say I was a bit blinded when I was in corporate life. I didn't understand that when my introverted staff would be at a meeting where we were brainstorming or all talking at once, and they would be quiet, or they wouldn't contribute in the moment. I misread it.

Kathy Caprino: And I thought, Wow! They don't really have any ideas to share, and I was disappointed. I'm so ashamed to admit it. And it was only until something happened to my son, who is an introvert, in college, and you can read about that in my Forbes post below, that it really rankled me. And I really saw the injustice of that, how unfair it is to make one human being do the exact same thing as another human being, in the exact same way in order to get a certain grade.

Kathy Caprino: So I know you know all about this, Jennifer. Can you tell me, you said you're not an introvert, yet you're championing for introverts, how did that come about?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Yes. Well, Kathy, you know a lot of other interest areas that we have, it's when it hits us close to home, and I had a very similar experience, only with my husband, my new husband. In my early 20s, we were coming home from a dinner party, our first one as a married couple, and I was so excited and bubbling over with enthusiasm because we had met some really cool people, and I was going on and on. And I noticed after a few minutes of talking that there was absolutely no response from the person in the car with me, who happened to be Bill, and this went on, and I asked the typical things that you ask introverts, which I later learned that he was.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: What's wrong? What's the matter? Probably the worst questions you could ask, right? Because nothing was, and I was fortunate enough a few months later to take a Myers-Briggs, which was back, you know a long time ago, that wasn't very popular, but I was fortunate enough to then have the insight as the instructor was reading through the qualities of an introvert, that I had my a-ha experience.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And I said she's talking about Bill. That's Bill. And so that veil of judgment and confusion and frustration was really starting to lift then. And as I got into the world, you know it helped our relationship, we're still married, I'm not sure if that's the only reason but it definitely helped.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It definitely helped my relationship, which is still working out most days, with my introverted spouse. And you know having been married a long time, but as I transitioned working into more organizations, I was doing the kind of things you were describing in my bio. I found that I kept, in trying to support people who were frustrated, because they were not able to get the opportunities that they wanted, they were passed over in not just promotions, but being heard in meetings, you know the old drill about introverts not being recognized in so many ways.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Either overtly or more subtly. In terms of interviewing, in terms of all aspects of invisibility in an organization. So I kept coming up against this, and I was trying to support my internal clients, and realized that there were very few resources at the time, other than some clinical books.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So that's when I began my journey of deciding to offer, to write. I thought about writing a book and that's how my very first book came to be, based on that.

Kathy Caprino: Do you think, I'm even thinking now, actually not being an introvert, but yet being an expert in what it means, is a fascinating perspective. I mean we were mentioning the wonderful Susan Kane, she's an introvert, most people who write about it come from the place of having lived the discrimination. But it's a wonderful perspective to be on the outside of it, writing about it. Right?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It is. And I always have to keep in mind that I will never know, Kathy.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: What it truly feels, to feel like my husband or your son or Susan truly in the sense of being more introvert. I know what it feels like to be an extrovert. Now that said, it is quite interesting. So I think all of us extroverts who think, you know it's just like with any diversity issue, if we think we know what it's like to be somebody different than us, we're fooling ourselves. However, you know, we can still be very empathic and continue to learn, and so the best compliment I can get, well people read the books and tell me positive things, they say, well you seem to get me. You know, you get me. So I was like, Oh if I get you—

Kathy Caprino: That's the highest praise.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It is, it is. And I just feel like we have to all get each other. We all have to, because the introverts have been making so many adjustments, and it's like with any ... what the cool thing is now, I was sharing with you before the podcast, is that now in writing the second edition of the book, almost 10 years later, almost a decade later that it's coming out, almost quite a decade. It's been really cool to see the evolution, what I call the "Rise of the Introverts".

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It is on the consciousness of people, so if you were in that job, Kathy, you know now, you would probably as a more progressive, aware, I'm not sure what your role was, you would definitely be more cognizant and aware. And it's kind of the, somebody has used the framework of an iceberg, so it's an element of diversity that you don't always see, but it's always there.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And so we are starting to now, very thankfully to me, I'm full of gratitude, that this is becoming more of the zeitgeist.

Kathy Caprino: Wow. So, oh that's fascinating. So do this for us if you were, Jennifer. You know how you said, your husband, you said, well what did you think? And there wasn't much coming back, and then we worry what's the matter, because something seems wrong. What

would be ten or five, whatever the number is, hallmarks that you're dealing with an introvert? And we're going to talk later about leadership, particularly, not just talking in general, but I didn't even know. I didn't even know I was living with an introvert. Yeah, how do you spot them?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: What's so interesting, yeah, what's interesting too is I'm happy to share with you a couple of characteristics. But a lot of people don't present as introverts, because they've become so ... keep that in mind too, that people are really, once they start becoming aware, or they even are aware, that they are having to flex a lot.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So a couple of the characteristics. Introverts think before they talk, they're very reflective. The key differentiator, Kathy, between introverts and extroverts is really where you get your energy, and introverts get their energy from within, as we know, and extroverts through other people. And what I found is a great marker, or a way to decide whether or not you're an ... you know what side of the spectrum you're on. Tends to be if you ask the question, "Do you need time after being in an activity, or with people all day, to relax and decompress?"

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And a true introvert will tell you, that is a must have. Like absolutely must have. I must go to my room after the training conference, I must take a break after interviews all day, I must do that. Now the extrovert, it's a scale. The extrovert will say yes, it really is helpful for me to do that. But they don't need it. They're not going to get completely stressed out.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah, what would happen if the introvert, and I've got to say, I'm going to talk about my son, because he is one. He would come home from school and go into his corner in the house, where he had toys, and there he would be for a half hour, by himself. Making noise with the trucks, whereas the rest of us, you know he really needed to retreat into that quiet alone space. But what happens to the introvert when they don't? What would happen?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: When they don't, they feel, first of all, there's a lot of pressure, you're talking about kids. When parents and teachers don't know their kids need this, they're seen as shy and anti-social and judged. So kids feel like they ... it's really difficult, a lot of the adults that I see in coaching, and training. When they weren't accepted, when that wasn't accepted. So to be alone. So that's the impact of not having that, is or we can talk about the stress that they have. They get very tired, they call 90% of introverts in survey that I did of 100 introverts, said that they suffer from people exhaustion. They used the word suffer.

Kathy Caprino: People exhaustion.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That people exhaust them.

Kathy Caprino: My God.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So you can see the antidote to that, is if you're an extrovert, and you're dealing with introverts, and you're sensing that, you just need to, and I tell myself this every day, don't talk so much. Right? Pause.

Kathy Caprino: And here's—

Jennifer Kahnweiler: You and I have trouble with that right?

Kathy Caprino: Oh totally. It's a constant stream. I'll notice too, the way I ask questions of my son. Well why do you say you're not compatible with this person? I don't know. We don't like I don't know, so I push. Because I think that that's a lazy answer. But literally in that moment he doesn't know. And the more I push, the more I exhaust and stress him. You know?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Exactly. Now one technique that may work with your son, and you have probably seen this, well there's two things. One is the parallel talk. So if you're face to face with him, it's probably more difficult. If you're in the car, sometimes he'll open up on his own, if you just pause.

Kathy Caprino: Every mother who's ever driven their kid to soccer or hockey knows this, that when they're sitting in the back, and there's, "Oh hang on, Honey, I'm turning," you know. There's natural pauses because you're driving, they're so forthcoming. Well we didn't probably realize there might be some introversion that—

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's going on.

Kathy Caprino: That just helps every mother who's ever driven in the car. Or father. All right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Oh I'm so glad, I'm so glad. But so that is a part of it, is yeah, the pausing. And also paraphrasing. So getting back to the, just saying that with your son, if you wanted to paraphrase, and then just stop talking, sometimes he'll continue, or he won't. So those are some fixes. So other characteristics, a calmness, a general calmness, they tend to not show a lot of affect on their faces. A lot of emotion, facial ... the extroverts will show more transparency to what they're thinking and feeling, with their facial expressions. Whereas there's more of a what we used to call in counseling, a flat affect.

Kathy Caprino: That's it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: A flat affect.

Kathy Caprino: Are you in there?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And that creates discomfort which the extroverts need to learn how to get over, but the introverts have learned a very interesting technique, a very basic technique that they tell me they do a lot. Which is to smile once in a while. And that keeps extroverts kind of happy, it's like, okay.

Kathy Caprino: So they're working so hard to fit in, and give the extroverts what they want. Why are the extroverts not doing the same for introverts? Are they the dominant culture? Are there more?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: They're the dominant culture. That's the expectation. No, it's almost like we're almost even. But that's the prevailing western society expectation. That you emote, and that you talk, and that you express. Now if you go to Asia, it's very different. If you have a face

that's not showing emotion, that's seen as very positive. You're not smiling, you don't smile, but it's also flat is okay. Not talking is okay, so your culture will affect it too.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: But think about a typical corporate environment that you and I have worked in. You know people get labeled if they don't speak up, if they're not expressive, if they're not sharing, and they're not emoting a little, right? Showing a little

Kathy Caprino: And in certain roles, it's truly a detriment. Sales, if you're going for a sales job, and you have flat affect. You won't get it. You know.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well, yeah, you usually won't. And that's why I think a lot of introverts, while they would make good salespeople, and Daniel Pink wrote about this in his book *To Sell is Human*, he really said, the ambiverts make the best salespeople. Because they use the introvert tendency to listen and to be quiet, to not express a lot, and really understand what the customer needs, and then they use the extrovert quality to drive and to be out there.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So it's quite interesting to look at all of this through that lens. And then some other characteristics, they tend to really open up in one-on-one conversations or small groups. And I always smile because you and I both do a lot of training sessions and speeches. And you'll have a very quiet group for instance, and I mostly speak to introvert audiences. I absolutely love it, I love it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Because I find that it's always so much fun to get them to talk, and one thing I say to them, it seems to be a funny little thing that just came to me one day. I was like, how many of you hate when I say turn to your neighbor and talk about—

Kathy Caprino: Oh.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And they all raised their hand, and they go, "Yes." And I go, okay, now do that. Let's get that out of the way. And they do that, and then we start talking. But and then what you'll find, is that you can't get people to stop talking. Because they are engaged, they're going deeper, and that's another characteristic of introverts. They go for depth versus breadth, so you ask to consider a question, it might be a little slow going. You've probably seen that. You know things are real quiet for a while, and then you really engage.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And it's just like that in writing. That's another characteristic, if you want to identify if somebody's an introvert, check out your emails. Look at your emails over the last week, and see who they, even texts now I'm noticing. The longer texts, the longer emails, (laugh) you're looking at me.

Kathy Caprino: My eyes are bugging out of my head.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I can feel your eyes go bugging out.

Kathy Caprino: What are they, the longer texts are the extroverts?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: No, the introverts actually. The introverts take the time to express their thoughts and writing is a sweet spot. And one of the six key strengths that I came up with in my research for *Quiet Influence*, is the book that I wrote about introverts making a difference, and how they provoke new thought, how they create and inspire change. You know how they challenge the status quo. How do they make their case? How do they influence others and motivate others? A lot of times they'll do it through a very well-crafted, written document.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: A, they use writing also to think, first of all, where they are. Sometimes they're doing that when they write those emails. But B, they're using it to make their case in a logical way. That's always, it's always interesting and amusing to me to kind of say, okay, is that person introverted? That's a clue. Oftentimes, as well.

Kathy Caprino: I had no idea.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: See!

Kathy Caprino: So fascinating.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: We can keep learning, Kathy Caprino.

Kathy Caprino: Yes, of we course can. And so let's jump into leadership. So let's talk about, you know as you mentioned, that post I did was about my son in university. Most people listening will be working with or leading or managing or a team member with someone who is different in this way. Introvert, extrovert, or somewhere on the scale. What can quiet influencers do to really unlock even more success, Jennifer? What can they do?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: What can they do? They can use their other strengths, and I think that's the theme I have really come up with over this last decade, Kathy. More and more I'm convinced that it's very important to your point, it's very important that we not try to continually adapt to extroverts. It is the time for introverts. Let me just say each one of us has that within us, so it's in all of our best interests to tap into some of those strengths. And what are some of those strengths?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Let me share with you a couple that I have actually found so helpful to amplify in my own life, and one is to prepare. That's one of the biggest strengths that, well, I think they're all big, but it's a huge strength that introverts have. They prepare their questions, they think about what the agenda is, if there is an agenda, they ask about what is going to be talked about on the call. It gives them time to use their strength, which is like you said with your son, to reflect.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: To think. And because you will get a better response from anyone, if they have a chance. Now extroverts are great at winging it. And there is a place for winging it, you know, when the boss comes in and asks you for that quick response, you can, I'm sure you could do that when you were in corporate, right?

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Just come up with that answer. But was it always the best answer? They didn't necessarily always care, but it's important to also really have the people that we know are the contributors, and really make a difference in our companies, and on our teams, are the people who bring thoughtful, well-crafted responses or really have dug a little deeper, and looking at the data, connecting the dots. You don't just do that on the fly. You just don't.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So preparing, even if you take five minutes before a call that you're going to have, and you think, what's my purpose? Steve Piersanti is the CEO of Berrett Koehler, who you know, Kathy.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And he always does that, before a meeting he'll go, what am I going to learn from this meeting? What do I want to learn from this meeting? Or this call? What do I have to contribute? What are my questions that I still have? And he'll write them down. Now one time he forgot his questions, and he said he was really at a loss.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: He learned to keep them on all his devices, I think after that. Because the questions drove the focus, and now people appreciate that, right? They appreciate when we're organized. So preparation is key, taking quiet time is another one that we talked about that earlier in the podcast. How important it is to consciously carve that time out, not to always be rushing from here and there. People are always telling me, oh I'm so ... it's like a badge of honor today. Oh I had such a crazy day. You hear that all the time, I'm overwhelmed. Well that's not like so great to be overwhelmed is it?

Kathy Caprino: No. Can I just add one thing to that, Jennifer?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Absolutely.

Kathy Caprino: You know one of the huge epiphanies for me in Ireland, so I visited Lorna Byrne who is a best-selling author, five books. And she's dyslexic and illiterate.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Oh my God.

Kathy Caprino: So you can't reach her, I mean people ask how do you write a best-selling book, she dictates it. But you can't reach her. Because she can't read the emails. And I watched, I'm telling you, this was so inspiring that she changes so many people's lives, but she is not a slave to what you and I are a slave to. Or I am anyways. A constant social media, constant writing, constant responding. And I had an epiphany, that I have to create a boundary between me and the outside world, or I am going to crash and burn.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's right.

Kathy Caprino: So—

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I think we're seeing a healthy movement towards that, with the work by Ariana Huffington, with getting sleep, our work will thrive. More and more I'm hearing students in my classes, and coaching clients talk about the benefits their getting, both introverts and extroverts, from bringing more balance. I told you I ran from Yoga class. That seems like an oxymoron, but you know, you carve out space. Mediation, breathing.

Kathy Caprino: Don't eat at your desk. Get up, yeah. There's so many ways. I love it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Right.

Kathy Caprino: Being quiet.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So much of the data supports that, it is unequivocal that our creative thoughts come when we are not slaving away at the computer and answering emails. It's when we are doing, like you're doing, we take a trip to Ireland for a few days or I went to New York City and got out of my environment. Take a walk around the block and that is quiet time.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Because I found that the introverts who are very effective as influencers and leaders, they don't do it in the way you might think. Oh go to a mediation retreat. I mean they go, and they do their exercise or they go cook a meal or there's something that's going to get them out of that workflow, and into another part of their brain.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I have found, I was mentioning the things that were most helpful to me, that and preparation, taking quiet time, and preparation, are just two of the six key strengths that introverts use. But I think if we all can start leveraging them more, there's going to be more permission, Kathy, right? Just like with gender equity, as we all start saying it's okay to be this way, you know like a feminine style of leadership, or a female, then it's okay for men to be that way.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It's the same with extroverts. I think we have a ways to go, I still don't find the interest as much as I'd like for people who are extroverts, but I'm getting more positive responses. People like you, and others who have children, you know, spouses, realizing that, you know something's amiss here that we need to change.

Kathy Caprino: But I think to amplify that point, I want to adopt these behaviors for myself as well.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Exactly.

Kathy Caprino: I mean balance is what we're going for. Anytime where there's a scale, nobody wants ... we don't want to be on the one or the ten. We want to balance. Right?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's exactly right. That's exactly right. And actually the research says that most of us are on ... I'm drawing a bell curve here. Most of us are sort of towards the middle.

Kathy Caprino: Wow.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: You know people that go, there might be a slight introvert, or a slight extrovert. So we all have the potential to be both, it's just what we've been reinforced for, the kind of environments, and cultures we're adapting to, and what becomes habit.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So I think it's very encouraging to look at ... you know we have this possibility. In fact, Carl Jung who came up, as you know, with the whole typology, right, of that. He actually said something that's stuck with me years ago and that was, I mean he said it years ago and it stuck with me. And that was, that in the second half of life, we balance more. We go to the other side more.

Kathy Caprino: Wow.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And I'll never forget, I had a father-in-law, who passed away last year, and he was very, he was kind of tough, he was a very sort of a mushy inside, but outside he was very sort of to the point, very business-like. And then when he had his first grandchild, I'll never forget, we've probably all seen this, he just became a different person.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And Carl Jung's quote sort came through to me, like we all have the potential to be nurturing and empathic or whatever side we're not paying attention to. And you know in your coaching practice, but you know bringing that out, that's I guess a benefit of age, isn't it?

Kathy Caprino: That's beautiful. Oh I love it. All right, we are on ... you have four more strengths here you need to talk to us.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Oh yeah, yeah, well I should probably pull out my old book here, so that I don't forget what I actually said, right, or what I actually wrote. But I actually do remember. One of the other things we talked about, engaged listening is one I didn't mention. And that is, we talk about, a lot of people will when you ask them, who was your favorite boss? And they think about that, or your favorite team lead? They will mention oftentimes an introvert.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And what is it about that person that really, that they remember so well? And that is that they listened. They listened. That they actually let them be who they were, they guided them, they coached them, but engaged listening is, you might call it active listening, where you're not believing that you need to have all the answers. And I know, Kathy, you do that as a coach.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: How many of your clients—

Kathy Caprino: I'm feeling sad there for a minute because, no, there wasn't as much space, I'm guessing, in listening as there should have been.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well they always talk about 80/20, right? The 80/20 rule. You're doing a great job here.

Kathy Caprino: Thank you.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: You're definitely letting me have the spotlight here.

Kathy Caprino: Good to hear.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Yeah, well good. But if you are trying to, let's look at it in the context of influence, if you are trying to make a difference in your organization, let's say have a new proposal adopted. The best way to do that is not to force it, as we know, down people's throats. But to really understand how people are reacting. And particularly where the pain points are, where the resistance is. And you need to listen to be able to do that.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And the effective introverts do that. They go make sure they touch base with their stakeholders, and find out where they can address that resistance. And then they move into the next strength we've talked about, the quiet time preparation, listening. Then they have what I call focused conversations. And this is where they're not just so much listening, but there's a back and forth. It builds on what I was saying earlier, about one-on-one strength being a strength of theirs. Where they can go deeper, where they can ask questions, where they can float their proposal.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: We always talk about the meeting before the meeting.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's when that happens. Where they can get the buy-in. No matter what kind of an influencing stance they're trying to take. You know they're trying to get their employee on board. I mean I wish I knew this when I had my first direct repertoire and I just was throwing up all of my ideas all over her. How excited I was about this new initiative, and the more I talked, the more shut down Amy became. And it occurred to me later, I realized, like you are in hindsight, she was quite introverted. And I was just overwhelming her with enthusiasm.

Kathy Caprino: I tend to do that.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Right.

Kathy Caprino: Yes. And I think another part of that, is this a corollary? Because all the people that work with me, for me, are virtual. They don't feel me, and see me in the way they would if they were right here. And one thing I tend to do is, somebody works with me, that gives me an idea, I like to kind of get a lot of consensus and vet things, because I know a lot of people. And I made the mistake recently of vetting an idea with someone else, and cc'ing my staff member, but to her, it felt like I wasn't relying on her. That I, in some ways, needed to check in with five other people in order to take her. Is that something that relates to introversion, that—

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well, possibly.

Kathy Caprino: I need to touch everybody and get consensus, might be an extroverted thing.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Yeah, so you're saying you did not get consensus, or you did?

Kathy Caprino: I did. So she gave me one piece of advice, and I said, well, let me check with a few other people if they do this thing.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I see, I see. That could be. That could definitely be related to that. Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: All right. Well we'll figure that out later. All right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: It sounds to me maybe more like a leadership style issue, collaborative versus direct. But we can definitely think about that.

Kathy Caprino: Interesting.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Where you're trying to connect with everybody, whereas hers may have been a different style.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Based on the situation, it wasn't necessary to do that.

Kathy Caprino: Exactly.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Right.

Kathy Caprino: That's it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Right, right, right. Yeah, I've been there, Kathy, I've been there. Believe me. So, yeah, the focused conversations are very productive, and they usually end up in we reach a compromise. We either solve the conflict, we got the proposal adopted. I strengthened my relationship with new. And one of the things introverts have told me, they need some kind of structure. Us extroverts kind of do it naturally. We go into a room, and we can talk to different people because it's so painful for many introverts, they avoid it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And then what they find is, that the lack of those relationships, particularly with any kind of a system, whether it be a small company like yours or a larger one, really does not help when they're trying to get by. Or when they're trying to move things forward. So relationships we know, that's how work gets done. Right? Is through relationships. So we need sort of an introvert-friendly way to do that. And focused conversations, is just being more consistent about that, you know sometimes it's about, okay I'm going to force myself to have lunch or coffee with this person. Or just naturally have it happen.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Like Steve Jobs, I love this story that I heard about him when helped design, he probably spearheaded it, knowing Steve Jobs. Right? But there's Pixar studios, and the offices were designed so that you would have natural mingling. So that people who didn't work in the same departments would sort of have to move towards each other when they went to the restrooms, bathrooms.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: He and other people said that a lot of very good ideas emerged as people were washing their hands at the sink. It never would have happened. Right? So it's how you structure organizations to make those conversations happen. And either we structure the environment, or we ourselves make the commitment, as we're growing and developing, to say I'm going to reach out and I found a lot of introverts I work with are very open to that.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: They realize, I do tend to, one of my faults is I can overuse my strength of focusing and kind of getting my work done. But I do need to stretch the part that connects with people. So they do that as well. And the last thing, I've talked about writing, but the last one is you mentioned it too. Social media.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And it seems to be the love/hate thing that we all have, right? But the introverts that I did find that use it effectively are very purposeful and more disciplined than extroverts are. You know they think about the platform, where they're going to find their audience, or their community. They use it also as a chance to get some visibility. It's a great opportunity for introverts who don't want to network a lot in person. But yet, they can link it with people, they can be part of a group, they can share their point of view. You know, react to blog posts, write blog posts, it's a lot of not having to talk, but still become a visible person, you know, member of your profession or your field. Or even your company.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: So people used LinkedIn for that, and they follow people on Twitter too, to get that knowledge base. I thought that was interesting, and I think if I wrote that now, we'd probably have some new ideas about, in fact, that would be some research I could do. About how social media comes into play. Because don't we all feel sort of mixed about that now?

Kathy Caprino: Yes, and you know I understand that my extroversion has led me to respond to almost every single person who writes anything. Which is now hundreds of people a week.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I bet. Oh my God.

Kathy Caprino: But I'm not as purposeful and I'm not as disciplined as I need to be, and I'm crashing and burning. So I'm learning so much from this conversation.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Some systems, yeah. So maybe some systems in place.

Kathy Caprino: Systems, and I can't touch everybody who wants to reach out. I can't. I just can't.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: That's part of again, one of your strengths, Kathy, is your warmth and your connection, but just as we know, overuse of a strength is a weakness. So you have to, from both of us figuring out, what can we delegate? You have a team, I just did that with some of my social media, and I feel much better.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Like I'm having my assistant post a lot more, and I'm still engaged in my community, so kind of figuring out for all of us, what works in this crazy fast-paced landscape we're in. I loved talking to you, thank you.

Kathy Caprino: So *Introverted Leaders* second edition is the one that's out now.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Yes.

Kathy Caprino: What would be the one thing, that we were saying how difficult it is to entice folks to read full books now, we're really posts and tweets. But what's the one thing you want people to understand from this book? The one idea, I know that's hard, big idea. What do you think?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well I would like people to understand that you can build on your quiet strengths. That you don't have to become somebody you're not, become an extrovert to be successful. That you can actually become extremely successful, however you define success, by building on what you do beautifully already.

Kathy Caprino: Oh what beautiful idea. I love it.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Thank you, Kathy.

Kathy Caprino: I love that you're helping us, it's kind of what I believe is important in life, let's not twist ourselves into a knot, trying to be someone else. But let's understand what we can develop, and leverage what we already are to have more success, and more joy in what we're doing. I mean what could be better than that?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Well I agree, but I said it, so. Thank you so much, Kathy, thank you.

Kathy Caprino: Thank you, we'll talk another hour, so let me have you back, Jennifer, if you've got time.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Would love to.

Kathy Caprino: Wonderful. I can't thank you enough. And where can everybody learn more about you, where can we take advantage of your resources, where do we go?

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Kathy, people can go to my website to find about everything they need to about me and more probably. JenniferKahnweiler.com and you have the spelling, but I think if somebody's just listening, it's J-E-N-N-I-F-E-R K-A-H-N-W-E-I-L-E-R.com. And the books are all on there, I have excerpts, audio excerpts, and lots of articles. And I have three different quizzes people might want to take. They're very short. You mention people don't have a lot of time, you can take a quiz and find out how strong you are, or where are the areas you need to work on are. In the different aspects of introverted leadership.

Kathy Caprino: Wonderful. And I so want to feature you in Forbes on a particular angle that most people struggle with, so let's do, let's talk soon.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: I'd love to.

Kathy Caprino: Make that happen, Jennifer.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Thank you.

Kathy Caprino: Thank you.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: And thank you for the work you're doing, Kathy, in the world. I'm so impressed with how many people you help.

Kathy Caprino: Thank you.

Jennifer Kahnweiler: Your interest and your engagement in life. So thank you.

Kathy Caprino: Oh, thank you, my dear. I hope everyone has found this useful. Let us know. Jennifer and I would love to hear from you. And if you have questions about people you're dealing with or yourself, we'd love to know. Go to the [Finding Brave Today Facebook page](#), and leave us your questions, we'd be happy to answer them.

Kathy Caprino: I hope this has been helpful everyone, and have a wonderfully brave week, and weekend. And we will see you soon. Bye-bye.

Kathy Caprino: Thanks so much for joining us today, and please don't forget to check out [FindingBrave.org](#) for more programs, resources, and tips. And tune in next time for your weekly dose of Finding Brave.