

LOVE PERIOD.

WITH REV. DR.
JACQUI LEWIS

**Mindful Living and Conscious Capitalism
with Kerry Docherty**

Jacqui: Hey everyone. I'm Jacqui Lewis. Welcome to the third season of Love Period. In this season we are exploring what fierce love looks like at a time of trauma. When all around the globe folks are trying to figure out how to be the best version of human they can be in these difficult and traumatic times.

Jacqui: Today my guest on Love Period is Kerry Docherty. Kerry , along with her husband Alex and his twin brother Mike, are the founders of Faherty Brand. It's a conscious clothing company. Conscious of the environment, about what it means to be sustainable, about what it means to wear beautiful outdoor clothing that keeps you in touch with the earth. Kerry is a mindfulness coach, an attorney, a mom and my friend. Welcome Kerry.

Jacqui: Hey Kerry Docherty. How are you?

Kerry: You know, I'm good. I'm as good as we can be.

Jacqui: Guys, we're doing this on the podcast, but we get to see each other and I have not seen Kerry in so long, it feels like a drink of water to see her.

Kerry: Same.

Jacqui: Same. I married Kerry. Let's just start right there.

Kerry: Married, baptize my baby.

Jacqui: And she's still married. I'm married. I baptize your baby. Still married. I'm so glad to see you all thriving in the world. When we met this company, Faherty was maybe a thought about to be. It was a thought. Can you just talk a little bit about you and Alex and Mike and how you decided to walk away from parts of your life and make this new thing? That to me is a story of resilience and splendidness. Tell me about that.

Kerry: We have a family run clothing company called Faherty Brand named after my husband and his identical twin brother. This has been their dream since they were a kid. They grew up surfing in the Jersey Shore. They loved beach culture, but they felt like the clothes didn't keep up with them as they evolved, the quality didn't. In 2013 we all quit our jobs to start the company. I had been a lawyer focused on human rights and mindfulness, so really had no plans to get into retail, but it was like, you know what, all hands on deck. My brother-in-law Mike, who's our creative director, left Ralph Lauren after 10 years and then my husband Alex, who really runs the business, had been in finance and my mother-in-law, their mom, was an interior designer. She came on board and helps open up all of our stores.

Kerry: We're about 10 years in now. It feels about 50 years, I'm so tired, but it also has grown. We have 150 people at our headquarters. We have over 37 stores. We'll have 50 by the end of the year. 400 employees. It's been a real journey and I think anyone who has a business can attest to, I mean, even running a church, there are so many components that happen behind the scenes and people are so important who you have on your team. What leadership looks like, how you deal with conflict. Our lives are not compartmentalized between who we are at home and how we show up at work and so that's been a real journey for us, which is how can we be good leaders?

Jacqui: I want to go into that space, but I think first of all, the magic Kerry, of three young people deciding to let go and swing out into the world. Kerry, folks dream about, thinking about it, it just doesn't happen that often. I remember the first store, I cannot believe 37 stores, how did you do it? What's the two or three things you would say have helped you and Alex and Mike and all your team make this happen? What is it? What's the magic?

Kerry: It's really just step by step. there's so much we didn't know and so every six months I felt like we were a new company, with new problems, with new things to overcome, with new things to learn and you just have to put your head down and keep learning them. Starting a company can be very isolating. So it was really important to us that we talked to people who had done it before, who could give us advice. I think because we were a family and we had all quit our jobs to do this, there was a sense of urgency. I couldn't depend on Alex to pay the bills if we weren't doing well and vice versa and so I think one of our strengths is we all came from such different backgrounds because my Mike had a background design because Alex knew how to run a business because I was focused on people and community and events. I joke we each only have a third of a brain, but together it made a good recipe for accelerating the process of building the brand because each of us knew what we had to focus on on a day to day basis.

Jacqui: Something about knowing what you need to do and knowing that you have the capacity to do that thing. I'm wanting to say that two more times to our senators and electeds. Okay. We'll come back to that. Kerry, your title in your business is so cool. Just say it.

Kerry: Chief Impact Officer.

Jacqui: I love that. Chief Impact Officer. The lawyer who is a mindfulness yogi person. Why that title and how have you been leaning into your role as impact officer in this new company?

Kerry: When we first started, it was all hands on deck. I was fit model, marketer, salesperson, head of HR, lawyer. I mean, you just wear any hat that you can wear, but then as we started to grow, as we started to hire more people, I was able to really focus on my passion, which is really using our platform. Yes, we sell clothing, but how can we use our platform for a greater good? I think with my backgrounds in human rights, I became really cognizant of the importance of working with native artists to use our platform for them to sell their own designs. So many clothing companies appropriate native art and we had done that initially as well. I always say, if you're a white run brand and you are using like native inspired or prints that don't come from your culture and you are not somehow benefiting where that art is coming from, it's pure exploitation. It's like saying that you're throwing a birthday party, but the people aren't invited to the party.

Kerry: For me that was a huge turning point for us, which is so many brands out there use native prints. How can we actually work with native designers and have a 360 approach? It's also tied to intersectional justice, tied to sustainability, it's tied to community building. Those are the things that I focus on on a day to day basis because businesses can't afford, given that the stakes are so high right now with what's happening in the world, businesses cannot afford to only be focusing on profit. It just doesn't work. Also, the consumers are demanding. The cost of doing business right now is you have to be focused on sustainability. Consumers won't have it any other way, which for me is so hopeful because I do think consciousness is shifting

and shifting very quickly.

Jacqui: What's center to your brand is mother earth, right? The ecology and sustainability and giving back. What advice, coaching, would you give? Not just to entrepreneurs, Kerry, but to all of us working in the world right now, about how important that is?

Kerry: We think about it probably similar to how a lot of your listeners think about it and I often give the example of we go into a grocery store and we see plastic everywhere. We're trying to make the best decisions. I want to buy the kale. The organic kale is a little bit more expensive, but I know it's better for the environment and then do I buy the kale that's loose leaf or do I buy the kale that's in the plastic container? It's just endless and I think it can be very overwhelming for individuals to figure out how to navigate their life in a way that isn't as harmful to the environment. I do think that's where companies have to step it up. We have to be making the right decisions, such that customers, our community can just trust us. To put everything back on the individual, I think, is not fair. The system, capitalism, it has to change towards conscious capitalism because the consumer's just trying to do the best that they can.

Jacqui: It's the responsibility of industry. It's the responsibility-

Kerry: I think it's the responsibility of industry, yeah.

Jacqui: Yeah. I agree with that, love. I really, really do. Do you remember Trish Sheffield who was an intern at Middle, right? I remember her research as a PhD student about conscious capitalism. I remember then thinking, wow, that is so avant garde, but it's so embedded in so many places in our culture now. The choice you make and how it impacts those around us and the system that is our environment.

Jacqui: You have not only created a brand of clothing that is conscious, but Kerry, you have leveraged your platform in the most vulnerable ways. I'm Kerry's pastor y'all, let me just come straight out with that. I married her, I married her to her husband. Baptized a baby, another one to be baptized still, thanks to COVID, but Kerry I'm so proud of you the way you used your social media to be vulnerable in the world about what you were learning in these times of racial, crazy tension, violence, anger. Not new, but showing itself more in the media and therefore calling us all in.

Jacqui: Kerry, you went in. Let's just talk about that for a minute. You made some really powerful choices to take your followers on a journey with you. I was very proud of that.

Kerry: Well, I mean huge credit to you and Middle Church and Middle Project because we were talking about racial reckoning in 2010, 2011, in the basement of the church and bringing in leaders. I think what made me want to go to Middle was the diversity in the congregation. I'm someone that probably would've just left the church. I was discouraged. I was defeated. When I found Middle in New York City, I was like, oh wow, this is a place that I could go to and have a spiritual drink from on Sundays and then it was so much more than that. It was about community building and talking about difficult things and I think that really gave me language and the bravery of leadership to be able to put a stake in the ground.

Kerry: With everything that happened with George Floyd and the racial reckoning that we are still in, for me, it wasn't even an option. I think that's what differentiates us from a lot of different brands. We are a family and we do have values and to say that politics has no place in business, I don't even know what that means. We have a team to protect, we have values we care about and we're going to talk about them. If you don't want to buy from us because of that, I think that even of it in itself is showing a shift in consciousness. People should buy from brands whose values they align with. If it's not us, that's okay.

Jacqui: I think I was deeply moved by... I'm new, I'm a goober about tech. I'm learning, but I was deeply moved by the conversations you had on Instagram and deeply moved by the reaction you got both the feeling of support. I thought young people, younger than me people want to have conversations, want to learn and also the little pushback, I saw that too. I think to myself and I'm going to say this really crazy thing, what kind of people, how is it still today in 2022, that some people think they can avoid conversations about race and gender and class and sexuality? What's the naivete in there? What is that? You can see I'm calling it naivete because I want to believe that. Do people really think they can just not have to talk about it?

Kerry: Well, I think what was so confronting to people is they realized they couldn't avoid it and I think that's why you saw the fear and backlash because people didn't know how to have that conversation. They're so desperate to be good and when someone has a conversation around something that they don't know about or that maybe sheds a light on them and they don't have the strength to look inside and wonder if maybe they too have bias, the reaction you get is one of fear and bigotry. I think I like to use the word, I know you said naivety, like just a lack of consciousness and I think we're getting to the world where you're very clearly seeing people who are progressing in consciousness and those who are not. I think when we see what's happening in politics, it's very clear who is moving forward and who is going to be left behind. I don't want to gaslight those white male politicians. They are losing power and they are desperate to hold onto it and so it makes sense that they are acting the way that they are acting, given the consciousness of where they are at, that they are freaking out because it is changing and they are losing power. If they're not on the ship, they're going to be left behind and I think they feel that.

Jacqui: That I'm so glad you said that in such a straightforward way. There's two kinds of desperations you're talking about. One is the desperate ways that we want to be perceived as good. I'm nuancing that a little bit. People desperately don't want to be bad, right? They don't want to be seen as bad. They don't want to be seen as racist or classist are not in the good space. That's one kind. There's this other desperate closed fist, clinging to power, almost like death throws of the power that exists in patriarchy, that is dying.

Kerry: Yeah, it's dying. Again, it's the way that patriarchy sees power as power over, not power with and so when people are talking about all this talk about race and all this talk about gender, is dividing us more. My response is, wow, that's so interesting. You say that because I actually feel more in community with more people than I ever have before. I don't think it's dividing us. I think it's uniting us, but there's a group of

people who are being left behind in that.

Jacqui: They feel isolated in a way.

Kerry: They feel isolated.

Jacqui: By their choices or their worldview.

Kerry: By their choices, yeah.

Jacqui: Yep. That's good.

Jacqui: You've got little people in your life. Mike has a baby too, right? What's it like being a working mom? What's it like being a mom who runs a business? How are the kids doing in this time?

Kerry: I think being a mom in general is hard. I think being a mom and staying home is so hard. I think being a mom that works is so hard, which doesn't mean that it's not super gratifying. I have to always manage my energy. Every hour of my day is planned. I know exactly where I'm going to be when I wake up. I know exactly when I get home. I have a Bohemian spirit and I'm like, I am hostage to the schedule. It's just a time in our life when that's the reality and for me who tries to have a mindfulness practice, who I am someone who loves my alone time. I love solitude. I love being by myself. I've really had to switch how I view my spiritual practice because I rarely get that alone time.

Kerry: For me it's like, okay, I'm in the bath. I'm in the bath filled with pee and luke warm water and plastic hippos and this is my practice. This is my practice in being present. This is my practice in not wanting to escape. Presence is not preferential. If you want to be present, you have to be present wherever you are. That's something I try to think about a lot.

Jacqui: Okay. I just have to slow you down there. You're in the bathtub with the pee. Is that what you're saying?

Kerry: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jacqui: To being playful. Present, no matter where. How did you make a switch inside yourself? What did you curate inside yourself to be able to adapt your practice in the midst of intense mommying, I'm going to say because I think people would really want to know more about that?

Kerry: For me, it just the constant reminders. I have to remind myself all the time and I think that's why people practice meditation or they practice mindfulness or they have some type of contemplative practice because you have to, in order to get better at it, you have to keep practicing it. I really don't like to suffer. Suffering is so annoying.

Jacqui: It's overrated.

Kerry: It's overrated. When I'm in the bath and I'm starting to feel like I'm suffering, I'm like I don't have enough alone time. I'd rather be writing my poetry. I'd rather be working on my book. I'd rather be working out. When I start to have that narrative, I notice how it feels in

my body and I don't like it. If I can reframe that way of thinking into and here I am with my kids and there's nowhere else I need to be and I'm just going to be in the moment, I can show up for them better and I feel better about myself, but I have to remind myself about this time and time and time again.

Jacqui: That's just so good. That's worth a book. Is that in your book?

Kerry: I wrote a kid's book during COVID called Somewhere Right Now.

Jacqui: Somewhere Right Now. By the way, that is the most beautiful book cover. Kerry, it's just gorgeous.

Kerry: Shout out to Susie Mason, my illustrator. I know.

Jacqui: Tell us about this book.

Kerry: I wrote the book during COVID when we were all inside all day, having hard feelings and I wanted to write a children's book that had a family, that each had a different hard feeling and the family acknowledged it and then they also realized that somewhere right now, something beautiful is still unfolding and that could be in nature or that could be in the comforts of our own home, but I also wanted to write a book where the adults shared their emotions. In the book I have a dad that's sad because he misses his mom who's passed away and a mom that is exhausted because she looks around her home and it just feels like too much.

Kerry: It's interesting because a lot of people who have read the book is particularly moms. At the end, they're like, I cried in that because there are not a lot of kids book that acknowledge that parents have hard feelings and that's just something I wanted to address. It's not in a super serious way, but it's just to acknowledge to our kids, I'm human too. We have to normalize all feelings.

Jacqui: You've curated these sun sessions where you've had speaking and talking and good food. Are you finding a way to still do that with COVID crazy? Are you back at that? Are you hoping to get back at that? Say a little bit about those.

Kerry: Sun sessions start in my living room, even before we started the brand actually and it was evenings of mindfulness and then good conversation, good food, good people. Then when we started Faherty Brand, I was like, well let's just incorporate this into the brand. We've been doing them for the past eight years and sometimes they're workshops, sometimes they're retreats, sometimes they're dinners, but it's an opportunity to just bring people together. A lot of it's around music. We have a lot of friends who are musicians. A lot of friends are chefs. You, I think you came to one where we had both a delicious dinner and the opening grace and music after and so we are starting them up again. Albeit, not like we did before, but I will. I definitely will.

Jacqui: I can't wait. There is something about you, Kerry. To me, it's obvious, so I'm not acting like I'm having an insight, but you really do have a beautiful way of setting a table. I don't mean just the table of food, which you do beautifully, but setting a table for people to be welcomed and feel welcomed and loved and seen. It's a gentle table. It's a non-judgment beautiful space that I think you carry with you inside you, is what I would want to say and it

shows and you're smiling a kind of smile of like, I see you, don't I? I see you when I say that.

Kerry: Thank you. Yeah. It really nourishes me. The world is very exhausting to me and if I don't have that access to a group of beautiful people around me who can be honest and we can talk about hard things and really see each other, I get deflated very quickly. I do it selfishly, but I think I also know that's what other people need too and I know that because I know I need it and we're all the same.

Jacqui: The reason I wanted to lift that up love is, I think I'm... You know I'm a few years older than you are. I'm so weary of the current toxic, angry, violent political structure, that is the container, let's use that word, the container in which we find ourselves. The fire at Middle Church, the fire that is George Floyd's murder, that is just a part of a series of crazy horrific killing, but all these fires burning, literally also on our land. I'm so over it. I'm just so bereft. I'm so sad and hurt. I think it really described it more. Middle Church to me is the kind of table like that, right? I'm always wondering and is my question for you, could we do more of that, Kerry? Could there be more people who knew that they'd be deflated if they didn't engage people in a beautiful way and bring beauty to themselves? Can we help people learn how to lean into joy, to create pockets of love in their lives, pockets of fierce love, at a cellular level Kerry? If we don't do it, we're going to die. At a family level, if we don't do it, we're going to die. If we don't get it in our neighborhoods... What would you say to people listening? If you need it, do it. That's what you're saying. How? What? How to get started making a bubble of community and love in this crazy world?

Kerry: I think the good news is, number one, things that are not working are breaking down and we're seeing that. When things break down, that means there's fertility in what we can create. We don't have the time to brick by brick undo these structures that are hurting us. We have to overlay and we have to be focused on what we can create. I think for people to know that they have agency in their life and they're always getting information. We know when things are working for us internally and when they're not. If we are feeling defeated and sad and angry, that information is helpful for us to be able to figure out where we're of balance. I think a lot about nature. Nature only ever wants to be in balance and when it's not in balance, it corrects itself, which is why we're seeing global warming, like the effects of fire. It is just trying to get in balance, so on a day to day basis, it's like, where can we cultivate small pockets to bring us joy? Maybe for some people that is community. Maybe for some people that is play. Maybe that is writing. Maybe that's walks in nature. I think the more time we spend in nature and in community, the better we will feel. It's like free medicine.

Jacqui: Free medicine.

Kerry: Yeah, free medicine.

Jacqui: I love it. The beach, the beach, I want the beach. John doesn't think I'm serious, but I'm about to get a beach house.

Kerry: Yeah, I get it. I get it.

Jacqui: I need it. I need it. Kerry, you have an opportunity to look in many directions in your life, to your husband and his twin, to your mother-in-law, to your kids, to yourself and also across the planet. You have really good eyes that see somewhere right now, what gives you hope? Somewhere right now, where is it?

Kerry: I think I'm always overwhelmed by the amount of people doing good work and I think there are a lot of lighthouses out there. At different times these lighthouses get dim and then another lighthouse pops up. Anytime I'm like, what the heck is happening with this world, but when we stop and

listen to the people who are listening to this podcast, you Jacqui, environmentalists, activists, there are so many people who are realizing, oh, I can't wait for anyone else to help fix the world. I have to stand up. I think we're seeing a mass rise in people who are taking ownership of certain parts of where they're passionate about and again, everyone's different. I'm in clothing, but I'm like, well, I'm going to use this fricking platform to make a difference in this space. Whenever I get disheartened, I just look around the people around me and I'm like, there are so many of us and consciousness is shifting. It's just so clear. Where we were 50 years ago, now people are trying to send us back, but they're just not going to be able to because the tides are changing so quickly.

Jacqui: Yeah, that's right. I do think that there is hope in the uprising and it is artistic and it is ethical. There are ways that people are imagining the world that has a strong center, I think, of an ethic of love in it. When I'm talking to you right now I'm thinking of Christmas presents I got from you, this incredibly beautiful sweater that I wrapped myself in so many times in my house. Writing this last half a year and you gave me also a beautiful blanket that is sandy colored and John steals it often. In a really practical, bottom line, way, your values, your ethics, your hope, is on the bodies of lots of people and that makes me sort of teary like a big sister with pride in all of you.

Jacqui: If someone who's wearing a Faherty Brand anything, beautiful shorts, shirt, blouse, blanket, what's your blessing or your benediction, your calling, something you want to share? As you touch these beautiful clothes, what else do you want them to do?

Kerry: I think the word that comes to mind a lot is ease. Our clothes are designed to feel soft. They're not frilly, they're comfortable, but it's also a mantra that we say to our team every week, which is we have a lot in our plate and it's fast paced. It's hard to have a job and be human. The mantra is, I know what to do and I do it with ease. I think if we can bring ease into these really hard moments, whether it's activism or spirituality or motherhood, we can reframe what we're doing and showing up for and invite that in, I think we'll have more energy to keep up the good fight. I know what to do and I do it with ease.

Jacqui: I know what to do and I do it with ease. My staff wants that mantra.

Kerry: You can have it. I don't think I invented it.

Jacqui: Kerry Docherty, I'm so glad to see you and so glad for this conversation. Thank you.

Kerry: Thanks Jacqui. Love you.

Jacqui: Love you too, sweetie.

Jacqui: Thank you for listening today. One of the things that is so beautiful to me about Kerry, Alex and Mike, are these young adults paying attention to how they show up in the world. As people driven by kindness, the consciousness of the other. How can you and I, in our everyday lives, practice mindfulness, that we're part of a community and we're responsible to care for one another?