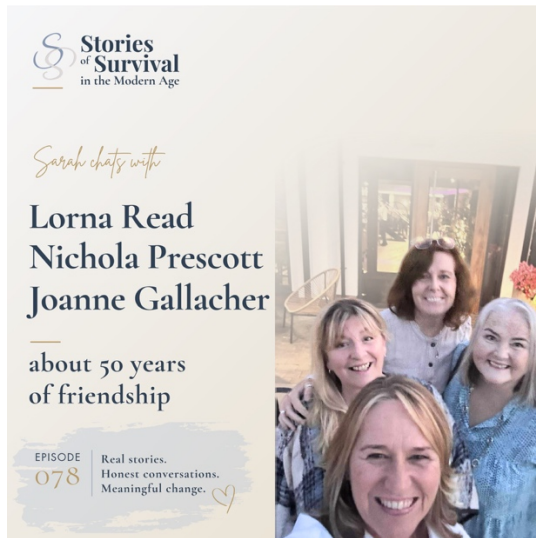




0:00: Hey, it's your friend Sarah, and welcome, welcome to Stories of Survival in the Modern Age.

0:14: So today I'm chatting with not 1, not 2, but 3 guests on the podcast, and here I've got 4 people, myself included, who started off as childhood friends.

0:30: And we're still sitting around the table together, all of these years later, trying to figure out why.

0:35: So ladies, welcome, welcome to Stories of Survival in the Modern Age.

0:38: I've got you, thank you.

0:41: So I'm your host Sarah Booth Henry, we've got Joanne, we've got Nichola, and we've got Lorna, who has been on the podcast, I think in season one.

0:49: Yeah, long time ago.

0:53: So we're just gonna freestyle it, we're just gonna chit chat and we're gonna just see where it goes, I've just got a couple of questions that I'm just to throw in just to keep conversation flowing.

1:03: So the first one is, we've all changed enormously from when we first started junior school at around the age of.

1:15: Oh well, 4 at nursery 7, would it be 7 I was because I, yeah, halfway through.

1:23: But you know, I'm curious about hearing your thoughts on what hasn't changed in those.

1:30: 50 years.

1:32: O, 50 years, isn't it?

1:35: Do you mean in, in for ourselves?

1:37: Yeah, cause I mean, individually, we've all changed a lot.

1:41: Two of us I know have lived overseas in that last 50 years.

1:46: Yeah, yeah.

1:47: But what's not changed, would you say?

1:51: I think probably her personalities cos like you said we still all get on since we've reconnected at the reunion we have not, we never struggle for conversation.

2:01: We still got those that have got us together now.

2:06: Yeah, we must still have some similar values as well, cos we've all sort of had similar upbringings.

2:13: Yeah, yeah, yeah, for sure, for sure.

2:18: Yeah, yeah.

2:19: And then, and I know we were just chatting about that.

2:21: Before we started recording is that that that sort of sense of upbringing and you know, the strong strong women as well.

2:31: I think so.

2:32: I think so.

2:33: Yeah, know her own mind she's not afraid to speak.

2:35: Yeah, you know.

2:37: And I don't think it and I don't, I wouldn't say I don't think that's to our detriment.

2:41: No, definitely not.

2:42: Depends, the modern world doesn't always as forgiving, I don't think you know.

2:46: I think I'm more diplomatic now than I used to be.

2:49: In my way I don't drink.

2:50: Yeah.

2:51: I know when you sort of, I don't, I think this is an age thing.

2:56: And again when we were younger we'd have felt similar, early young.

3:01: And you don't really care what people think they're saying, teenagers.

3:04: You care what your peers and what other people think.

3:07: The age we are now, I don't care what people think.

3:10: It's like full circle, I totally agree, and when you're like the menopause as well, you're like, you think, no, I really don't.

3:17: And but it's, it's trying to get younger people, like your children to be the same.

3:23: cos I said people are that wrapped up in their own lives, they're not even caring.

3:27: But you can't get that at that at that age, no, cos we, we did think, you know, you do care what other people think when you're in your early 20s, your late teens.

3:36: What was it you said earlier, young is wasted on the youth.

3:39: The youth youth is wasted on the young, that used to be a saying.

3:42: Cos it's true, because when you've got the money to do the things you wanted to do when you were young, you feel too old to do it and enjoy it.

3:50: I think though we, we are younger at our age than our parents 100%.

3:57: I am pleased about that we, we're still like, look at you, you're never in, you know, you've always got things that you're wanting to go out and do, and I love that.

4:04: And I think that.

4:06: Whereas our parents, I think, you know, it was much more of a, certainly older, whatever, yeah, you know, I mean we're knocking on the door of the next big number and it's not and yeah there's a picture well there's a picture of me and my mum.

4:22: And she, if I think about the age I was in the picture, she must have not even been 50.

4:27: Yeah.

4:28: And yet looking at the picture, she looks like way older than we are now.

4:34: Is that fashion though, or is it?

4:37: I think I think it's fashion and yeah, cos my mum always looked really well, attractive lady, but then.

4:46: Yeah, you know, that was, you know, but it's somehow.

4:50: the clothing.

4:50: My mum used to have the proper like Deirdre and so my mum looked older in her 40s than she did in her 60s in some ways, yeah.

5:02: Which like I said, a lot of it will be fashion though, won't it?

5:05: Yeah, I think so.

5:06: And I think, I think when we were young, 50s, people in the 50s like now were grannies.

5:12: They were all grandparents by now.

5:14: It was late if you weren't, and they did look and look at us, not one of them.

5:17: No, no, exactly, now temporarily by default I've got an 8 year old stepson, so his children call me granny, but yeah, my, but my daughters aren't even ready to have, and I'm, I'm glad for them because in a way they're just getting going.

5:34: Yeah, and that's it.

5:35: But it takes longer for that though as well.

5:37: Yeah, you know, my first house, I was 23, yeah, 24.

5:43: I was 24, well 2's 24.

5:46: No sign of us because of how expensive it is.

5:48: Yeah.

5:49: Yeah, no, for sure.

5:50: No way for them to be able to do what we did at that age without assistance, you know.

5:56: And if you can help them, great, but it's not that easy for people.

5:59: But it was, if you look at, and if you've got more than one, it's like.

6:03: Right, exactly.

6:04: If you go back to when we were buying our first houses, you needed X amount as a deposit and houses were, like my first house I think was 36,000.

6:15: Yeah, it was 36,000 pounds and I can't remember whether it was 5% deposit, I've no idea, I can't remember.

6:23: But wages haven't gone up in, in line with the houses.

6:26: That same house that I had then is probably about 180,000, 190,000 pounds.

6:32: When I've seen them similar on the same road.

6:34: Yeah.

6:35: It's, they can't afford that.

6:37: Wages haven't gone up incrementally with the house prices.

6:41: So it's no wonder the rent, but then when you rent, you can't afford to save.

6:47: So you still need a big deposit.

6:49: because they don't take a rental history as proof that you can pay a mortgage.

6:53: No they do not.

6:53: But more times than others, a mortgage payment is less than rental payments.

7:00: Yes it is.

7:01: Yeah.

7:01: So if you've proved you've rented for so long, why can't you get a mortgage?

7:06: I know people now are getting them older as well, because there's no other way of being able to afford them.

7:12: A friend of mine's 62.

7:15: And she's, I think she had houses, a house when she was younger, but marriage broke up, she's ended up renting somewhere in Darwin.

7:22: She's doing one of these, share.

7:24: Yeah.

7:26: The new, the new one's being built near me, which I can't stand because it's taken away the character of character and the people need somewhere to live, but they're just, they're doing a bit fifty-fifty is really, it's very I know, but I think she's got quite a big deposit cos her mum died.

7:42: So she's using that money, so I think it's bringing the other side of it right down.

7:47: So what is the 50/50?

7:48: You are, you own the housing authorities or whoever own the other half, so you pay rent on half of it, but you're still paying mortgage on half.

7:59: You don't have any control over the rent, I'm not, no, I don't know how it works, yeah.

8:04: But I think because she had a big lump sum to put down, I don't think her mortgage.

8:09: is as big and then the rent bit is nowhere near, she'll actually be better off than what the rent she's paying now because she's working out quite well.

8:19: it's only like a two bedroom detached and she's got one with the kitchen overlooking the garden, it's open kitchen, dining, living room, I think.

8:29: Yeah.

8:31: so she can't wait, you know, sunny weather because at the moment she lives in a flat.

8:35: And it's got a tiny balcony, but she's scared of heights, so she.

8:40: So she doesn't use it, but I mean, you know, that is a good way to do it, but again, I don't get this 50/50 where you pay a mortgage for 50% and rent 50%, because how, how's that affordable?

8:52: I don't get it.

8:53: No, no, I don't.

8:55: I just wanna throw another question into the mix.

8:58: Yes.

8:59: Do you think friendship requires regular contact?

9:03: No.

9:05: I don't think not necessarily.

9:06: It depends what you mean by regular.

9:08: Exactly.

9:09: Well, did it stop us?

9:10: Well, last year you pick up at the reunion.

9:13: Was it last year or the year before?

9:14: I'm wondering if it was, it was the year before summertime.

9:16: It was.

9:18: No, I seem to think it was last year.

9:20: It was, was it?

9:21: Yeah.

9:21: And I missed it cos I was going to see Lionel Richie another jaunt.

9:29: Theme for the day.

9:32: Lorna's jaunts.

9:34: So that was it about July, do you reckon?

9:37: I thought it was the schools were still in the schools were still still in.

9:41: Yeah, but because we, yeah, we hadn't weren't me and Sarah had because we kept it all through.

9:49: Yeah.

9:49: But again, you lived in another country for such a long time, but we were still, we're still in regular contact.

9:55: It depends what you do as regular.

9:57: Yeah, exactly.

9:58: Sometimes you can just pick up where you left off.

10:00: Yeah, yeah.

10:01: In the old days.

10:03: was picking up the phone and telephoning each other or writing a letter or writing a letters.

10:08: Yeah, I think we wrote when you went to Australia we had letters because you were telling me the plot of Neighbours, so I knew before everybody else.

10:16: I did, I did she lasted 6 weeks because Brett?

10:21: No, it was in 1988.

10:22: You didn't like your mother if I remember right, I didn't like it.

10:25: I think I was too young, too young and, and the mother expected her to do household chores.

10:32: Sarah had never done a household chore.

10:35: Well, not if I didn't because your mum was a homemaker, you didn't need to.

10:39: Must have been for pocket money, that's when we did chore it was last year, 13th of June I, I see Pauline quite a bit.

10:46: Me and her are gonna go for a Christmas thing.

10:48: Oh good.

10:49: She says, oh, say hello to everybody.

10:50: She was involved in the church as well we should we should photoshop you into the picture so you yeah, that'd be good, wouldn't we feel like you're still part of it.

11:01: But that was like you say, so we hadn't, like you said, we bumped into each other for different things.

11:06: I'd, I'd not seen you really we brought up earlier.

11:10: I'd seen Sarah a couple of times, I'd seen you a couple of times.

11:13: So no, I don't we met for our 50th or something we did, yeah, yeah.

11:17: So that's like 8 years, 78 years I know, right?

11:20: I think it depends, doesn't it?

11:22: It depends.

11:22: I think cos sometimes you don't see, I mean there's a few friends that I've lost along the way that I'm surprised that I've lost.

11:29: Yeah.

11:29: But then sometimes you find out like some people.

11:33: What sort of friends were they in the first place?

11:35: Well that's it, there was one I thought was quite a good friend.

11:39: I'll not give any names, and.

11:43: She got with somebody else and suddenly didn't have much time for me, her marriage broke up.

11:49: And I was a supportive like our children were friends as at a similar age, and we were quite good friends and.

11:59: She'd come to a house party that.

12:02: Some other friend's house.

12:03: And then there were rumors going round that she'd got off with a guest there who was married and that they'd slept together at the party.

12:12: I don't know whether, I think he walked her home.

12:15: I asked her about this and she point blank said it didn't happen and I'd stuck up for her saying no, she's not like that, she wouldn't have done that, absolutely not, he's married, she wouldn't have gone there.

12:26: She then a month or two down the line, I can't remember when it did happen, I was really upset because.

12:34: You know, I'd I'd vouch for her and I, you know, my ex had done that to me.

12:41: You know what I mean, you know he's married and he's got a family and I've vouched for you and you've done that and then blatantly lied to my face instead of saying oh I was really drunk, it was a terrible mistake, whatever, blatantly lied to me.

12:54: So that really changed my opinion of it, and then, we used to bump into each other in the same pub in Darwin and, I knew a couple of others of her friends, so we kind of got talking together again.

13:08: And then there were two separate occasions where she'd put on, oh, is anyone going to such a place, and I was like, oh I'll come, I'll be there.

13:14: And both these separate occasions, nobody was there.

13:17: So the second time it happened I thought, well there's obviously an issue, whatever, I've not bothered ever since, but it started with.

13:26: You know, there's one thing about me is I am honest, to my detriment sometimes, I, it's all over my face, I can't lie to save my life.

13:35: Which sometimes you wish you could, you know.

13:37: Sometimes you wish you could, but it's like you say, it's really, it is a positive.

13:42: Yeah it is, yeah, you know, indeed.

13:45: Yeah, so this is why I could never have cheated on Nick cos it would have been bloody obvious.

13:50: Whereas he was an amazing liar.

13:53: Oh, so I think that's probably why that upset me more because she wasn't, so again that's like some friends who you think are friends and or you just, you generally, your life goes in different directions and that's why they don't they?

14:05: Yeah, friends are there for a reason, a season or a lifetime.

14:11: Yeah I've heard that I've heard that some you might just be friends with cos you've got children who are young.

14:17: Again there's a few friends when.

14:18: The kids have grown up, well, once they start secondary school, you don't see them the same cos you see them when they're babies and at the school gates and you, you're all doing things together in the birthday parties.

14:29: They go to secondary school, you suddenly don't see them unless you're like really close anyway.

14:34: So yeah, that's the reason one and then the season one can just like she was a season for a while and what have you, but.

14:44: Or a lifetime.

14:46: Yeah, it's not necessarily a bad thing, it can have a positive effect on your life and then like you said, for some reason you go in different directions, but drift apart you just wish them well and you know that's that.

14:57: So, but it is a, sometimes it's a shame and especially if you don't know the reasons why.

15:04: Exactly.

15:05: But you know.

15:06: So it's just one of them, isn't it?

15:08: Yeah.

15:08: So what would you say, what would you say makes an old friendship comfortable, Nicola?

15:15: Oh, have you any thoughts on that?

15:17: Comfortable.

15:18: It's just like a, a, yeah, it's like an old comfy pair of pants or an old comfy coat.

15:23: pair of pants.

15:24: Yeah, you know, it's just like comfortable.

15:26: Yeah.

15:27: Do you mean like say like oh a friend.

15:29: Yeah, like we, we sat around tonight just chit chatting, eating, sharing food, conversation, and it's just comfortable.

15:36: It is, and you don't ask me, but I, I would think it's because we do know each other.

15:41: From such a long, long time.

15:43: Yeah, and I think like you said earlier about us all being similar, you know, quite upbringing, I think we're sort of quite easygoing, yeah, fair minded.

15:52: Yeah.

15:53: Similar values.

15:54: Yeah, I think so, you don't have to put on any.

15:58: There's no judgment, there's no.

15:59: I'm not trying to impress anybody, right, exactly, not trying to impress anyone.

16:05: Our age as well, because like you said before about once you get to menopause, you.

16:09: You are you whatever this is if you don't like me when we all met up, but it wasn't stilted at the junior school, was it, so you knew that it it wouldn't be, it wouldn't be going forward, you know, I better I say at the junior school, I don't mean when we were there.

16:24: No, no, the reunion, so you knew that it because otherwise we won't have suggested it.

16:30: And then when we've met up since it's been really easy and yeah, I think we've completely different tales to tell as well.

16:37: Yeah, and because it's been a long time in between.

16:40: Everybody's bringing new stories to the table and like I know you two have kept better contact, so you probably know each other's stories more.

16:48: But it's nice to, like you say, hear everybody else's time since there's been a lot of living hasn't there a lot of cos sometimes it's like I, I, I mean I, I bet you maybe think this as well, I've said it to other people and they've said the same.

17:00: When I think back to when I was little, even though it's gone quick, almost.

17:04: It Seems like it happened to somebody else at times.

17:06: It seems about 150 years ago.

17:08: When I went back to Longshire, it's almost like, did it happen?

17:12: But we were at the school.

17:13: Yeah, we were like you were you're transported right back as if it was.

17:19: Yeah, I can smell it now.

17:23: Yeah, and yet it was 50 years ago.

17:26: That's ridiculous.

17:27: 5 decades ago.

17:29: I get, I get quite weepy though thinking back.

17:32: Oh I do, I do.

17:33: Because I look back to like cos everything was so much simpler.

17:37: Simpler.

17:37: All your relatives were alive.

17:40: And you, you're older now and in some ways life is harder in some ways because we had no, obviously we were kids, so you don't have any, any expectations, and this is why I think with music sometimes, the eighties, it takes me right back.

17:54: I'm like teenager again and.

17:57: And it's like sad that you can't be.

17:59: And it's, I know it's ridiculous cos you know you've gotta get older, but it's better than the alternative I think a lot of people probably feel that I do get that you've got positive.

18:12: Memories of it but it does take you back, you're in a happy place.

18:16: and music and smells, they always say that.

18:20: So it is lovely that you've got all those good memories to think about because like you said, some people are very lucky, so yeah.

18:27: And so then thinking back 50s, 50 decades.

18:32: 50 years or 50 years or 5 decades, do old friends get a different version of us?

18:43: Than new friends or friends we've maybe known 10 years or 20 years.

18:47: I think we're all different, we're different people.

18:50: Yeah, you're probably right there, yeah.

18:52: So you think if like I came out with you and you were friends, I would see a different you?

18:56: Is that what you're saying?

18:57: I don't necessarily mean a different me.

18:59: I think you show different sides.

19:02: I think I would, I'm still me.

19:04: Yeah.

19:04: But like when I'm in the charity shop for instance, when I'm doing people's paperwork, I'm quite.

19:13: That that a business side of Almost, yeah, it was like it was weird, my brother once said something to me, Hayden, cos we'd been in his house, and one of his many parties, and I was telling somebody about something, and it, I must have been selling it really well, and he just, he just looked at me and he went.

19:31: Do you know, and he said, it's a shame you're ill because you'd make a hell of a saleswoman.

19:36: Cos whatever I was doing, but it yeah it's it's yeah I'm I'm almost like I'm quite serious and getting all this information, but equally it can be upsetting, but I'm having to put this serious side cos I don't want to get upset and I can't, I can't tell them sometimes what I really think.

19:53: Right.

19:54: But I I I think it's more with.

19:57: Relatives, like I was different with Nick's parents obviously, than I would be with my own cos it's almost like, mind your P's and Q's, you're right, and I would purposefully not argue with his mum because I knew, She would sulk because you know what the reaction would be.

20:13: Yeah, so you certain things you just don't talk about because I knew she wouldn't like it, so I do think that you sometimes maybe dampen certain aspects with certain people that you're with.

20:23: But I think as we've got older I don't think I'm necessarily completely different.

20:28: But I think as well that's again part of your upbringing, you were brought up to be respectful respect your elders and also because they were your in-law.

20:34: You wanted them to think well of you and it's not, I mean, there's always, you know, there's always yourself that comes through and, you know, older generations spot typing.

20:44: Well I did, I think one time was I told them straight was when me and Nick had split up and his cousin was getting married and we'd gone to, they had a cottage in the lakes and they had some and they got married and I can't remember the name of this little tiny village, and it was probably.

20:59: One of the nicest weddings I've ever been to cos you walked from the church to like this hall and it was lovely.

21:06: And I got on really well with them, and so Nick had said to me, you go to the wedding and I'll stay at home, and I just looked at him and I said, are you stupid, it's your cousin.

21:14: And I was like, well what I'd really like is for us all to go as a family.

21:18: I was like, right, that's fine, well me and Sienna will share a room, you can be on your own.

21:23: Your mum and dad, absolutely fine.

21:25: Mum and Dad started having a go at Sienna, she was only 8.

21:31: cos she'd said something to do with age, and Nick's mum, oh my God, if you said anything about age with her, she would.

21:40: She want, she stopped speaking to him because he told Mrs.

21:44: Nick, the waiter in a Spanish bar, that she was his mother.

21:49: Oh.

21:50: I wanted to say, oh well he said grandmother and he corrected it, but I thought no, I had to bite my lip.

21:57: But anyway, so they must have, they've all started having a go and I just, I just looked at them and I went, will you all stop?

22:05: Oh, well he's been this, I said yes because you're all having a go at him.

22:08: And it's no good, we're not putting up with this, cos I, I didn't need to anymore.

22:12: No, well done.

22:13: Yeah't do it again for the rest of the trip and then me and his mum stayed friends.

22:19: me and his mum used to go out shopping at least once a month.

22:23: She was always wanting us to get back together.

22:26: I very tried not to speak to him.

22:28: She hated, she didn't know the mistress.

22:32: She didn't like the new woman at all who he's with now, wasn't keen because she wasn't me.

22:37: And I'd had years of this, but also I'd had years of the little comments and the digs that I kept my mouth shut to, and I never got a comment or a dig ever again.

22:47: And she actually came and stayed with me for a month when Tony was in hospital really ill.

22:50: Good grief.

22:52: I know we were just gonna have a quick chat, so thank you for that.

22:54: We've had a good half an hour, 32 minutes chit chatting.

23:00: So let's wrap it up, maybe we'll do it again next time we all get together.

23:04: Ladies, thank you very much.

23:07: You know, I think what I loved the most about this conversation was the reminder that friendship doesn't always have to be maintained in the way we think it does.

23:17: Sometimes, sometimes people are there for a reason, sometimes for a season, and sometimes if you're very lucky for a lifetime.

23:25: And perhaps the beautiful thing about an old friendship is that you don't have to keep proving it.

23:32: You can lose years, live different lives, move to different places, become different versions of yourself, and then sit around a table together and somehow you're right back there again.

23:46: Still laughing, still remembering, still learning new things about each other.

23:52: And well, maybe that's what friendship looks like over time, not staying the same, no, having people who are willing to meet the person you've become, while still remembering the person you were.

24:06: Thanks for trusting me, and thank you for sharing this episode with people you care about.

24:11: And when you come back, I'll be here, ready to meet you where you are.

24:16: And so until next time, as always, stay safe, be well, and be your own definition of amazing.

ENDS