

# Joan Lunden on the Lowest Moment of Her Divorce

*The "Good Morning America" anchor and bestselling author opens up about the infamous "Get a Job" headline and the book that gave her "soul muscles."*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Joan Lunden was America's alarm clock. As co-host of Good Morning America, she was up before dawn, buried in briefings, and traveling to interviews before most of the country was out of bed. She built a reputation as "America's working mom," poised, tireless, and always on. But beneath the polish, in Lunden's telling, was a woman moving too fast to appreciate the life she'd built for herself.

In conversation with host Chris "Bulldog" Collins on the YouTube series "Books That Changed My Life," Lunden takes a deep dive into the book she used to rebuild herself from the inside out: *Stand Like Mountain, Flow Like Water* by Brian Luke Seaward.

## LIFE AT 180 MILES PER HOUR

Joan Lunden's backbreaking pace prefigured her role on Good Morning America; as she recalls,

"I was going 180 miles an hour by the time I was about nine or ten."

Raised in Fair Oaks, California, by her father, a practicing surgeon and private pilot, Lunden grew up believing that there were no limits to what she could achieve. She began college at 16. By 23, after talking her way into an audition, Lunden became one of the only female news anchors in



Joan Lunden poses with her copy of "Stand Like Mountain, Flow Like Water."

the country.

At Good Morning America, Lunden woke up at 3:30 AM every day. By the time the rest of America hit their first snooze, she'd finished a pile of briefings in preparation for the day's interviews. Lunden would finish an interview, leave the studio, and board a flight to the next one. Her speed became so frantic that Lunden began to feel as though she were racing through her life, rather than living it.

"When it's such an unbelievably rapid pace... sometimes I feel I have to go back to a country to actually see it, even though I was there," she reports.

#### DISCOVERING "SOUL MUSCLES"

At 40, with decades of broadcasting experience already in the rearview mirror, Lunden began to feel the consequences of her relentless tempo. Her marriage was in dire straits, and she knew what was coming: a divorce, in full view of the public, and intense scrutiny of her reputation as "America's working mom."

So Lunden got to work. She hired a nutritionist and a trainer, lost 40 pounds, and summited the Grand Tetons. But as her journey with physical fitness progressed, her attention began to shift toward a more abstract form of strength:

"It occurred to me that if I could change myself physically so much, how much now could I maybe change myself inside?" Lunden says. "It was like a light bulb went off in my head."

Her questions led her to a book that would change everything: *Stand Like Mountain, Flow Like Water* by Brian Luke Seaward. In the book, Seaward writes about "soul muscles," the inner fortitude we lean on in moments when our physical strength is inadequate to the challenges we face. For Lunden, this concept was a revelation:

"I came to understand that being emotionally strong was different than just appearing strong all the time."

Lunden's hustle served her physical fitness well, but cultivating soul strength would require a novel approach: slowing down. As she admits,

# BOOKS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Books That Changed My Life.

"I actually considered 'slowing down' being lazy."

But when she began delving into the science behind rest, reflection, and stress management, her perspective shifted:

"Rest is not this lazy concept... It's actually a health concept."

"TELL MY HUSBAND..."

Decades of experience pushing boundaries did little to prepare Lunden for the media circus surrounding her divorce. "America's working mom" found herself in an intense legal battle that would make her one of the first American women ordered to pay alimony. Tabloids latched on and refused to let go. In her telling,

"I went one entire year where there wasn't one week that there wasn't an article in a tabloid."

The saga's most interest-grabbing moment unfolded accidentally: a reporter trying to reach Lunden for comment was patched through to a producer, who handed the phone to Lunden without warning. Lunden recalls the incident:

"[They said,] 'Can we just get your opinion on the judge's ruling?' And I said, 'Yeah, tell my husband to get a job.' Well, that was the headline in the New York Post the next day."

The next day, a rival paper's headline read "Pay Up or Shut Up." Rather than backing their star, Lunden recalls being blamed by ABC for the backlash. She paraphrases their criticism:

"How could you have said something like that? As a woman, you should have known better."

Lunden experienced firsthand a concept explored by Seaward in his book: women's anger is so culturally verboten that they suppress it, often before registering the feeling. As she says,

"I learned a real lesson in that one — that as a woman, you are not supposed to express your anger."

The lesson she took away wasn't about restraint or repression, but rather when to walk away from an unhealthy conversation. Years later, in a phone call with her ex-husband, she found herself applying it. She remembers saying, simply:

"You know what? I'm not having this conversation anymore. I'm choosing not to spend any more emotional energy on this. I won't have this conversation anymore. And I hung up, and I never have since."

Ending the call, she admits, was the easy part. Ending the conversation in her head would take longer.

## STANDING LIKE A MOUNTAIN, FLOWING LIKE WATER

Seaward's book continued to serve Lunden long after tabloid journalists had moved on to terrorize new subjects. For Lunden, the book's core message of standing firm in one's values and principles while maintaining fluidity amid life's shifting challenges remains a touchstone.

Ultimately, the book led the hard-charging journalist to a more balanced, resilient mode of being. Linear, clear, and driven as ever, Lunden sums up its impact:

"I took care of my health, and then I took care of my happiness. And my happiness took care of my life."

Watch the full episode [HERE](#).

## ABOUT BOOKS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

"Books That Changed My Life," hosted by bestselling author Chris Collins, is a YouTube show exploring how great books transform us in profound and unexpected ways. Each episode features a special guest sharing a book that shaped or inspired them, sparking deep conversations and unearthing unfiltered personal stories.

Recent guests include R&B singer Eric Benét, soap opera legend Susan Lucci, former covert CIA officer Andrew Bustamante, actress and reality star Lisa Rinna, Dancing With the Stars pro Jenna Johnson, and television legend Kelsey Grammer.

Press Contact: Ryan Oshinsky

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