



# Our Hen House

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## Interview with Colleen Patrick-Goudreau

By OUR HEN HOUSE

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*Following is a transcript of an interview with **COLLEEN PATRICK-GOUDREAU** conducted by **JASMIN SINGER** and **MARIANN SULLIVAN** of [Our Hen House](#), for the [Our Hen House podcast](#). The interview aired on Episode 233.*

JASMIN: Welcome back to Our Hen House, Colleen.

COLLEEN: Well, thank you very much. It is lovely to be here.

JASMIN: It's wonderful to talk to you. We recently had the wonderful opportunity to share a meal with you. You actually were visiting New York City for the party, the East Coast party for your brand new version of *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge*, which we'll talk about in a minute. But while you were in the city, I somehow managed to get you and David down to Brooklyn, which seemed like, I think it was like David's first time in Brooklyn ever.

COLLEEN: Yeah, you might be right. You didn't have to twist our arms at all because we were so excited to see both of you. But I think it was David's first time in Brooklyn, but I don't know. He grew up in Long Island, so you'd think he would have made it there at some point.

JASMIN: Yeah.

MARIANN: Well, he has to at least have passed through it.

COLLEEN: I would think so. But he was 10, he left Long Island when he was 10 or 11 and went to New Jersey, and you know what it's like to get to Brooklyn if you live in New Jersey.

JASMIN: I do. We're both Jersey girls, both Edison girls. But anyway, so *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge*. There was a fantastic party for you at Alexander Gray and Associates. And it was just such a warm, beautiful environment, partly because *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge* is a warm and beautiful project that we're so excited has new fresh air being breathed into it. Can you tell our listeners a little bit about what *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge* is and what this new incarnation of it is bringing?

COLLEEN: Yeah, thank you. It was a lovely party, it was just so amazing. *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge* remains the tool to guide people to make the transition joyfully and healthfully and deliciously, and it remains that. It is really the guide to give people the tools they need to actually manifest their values of compassion and wellness. So I cover everything related to the transition and to being vegan, whether it's eating out or the single nutrients that we're so obsessed about, the protein, the calcium, the iron, the Omega-3 fatty acids, whether it's about keeping a vegan home or communicating your values with people

around you, et cetera. So it covers all of the bases, but it's in a completely brand new form. It's gonna be absolutely beautiful, absolutely brand new recipes, 100% brand new recipes. The content's updated, it's refreshed. Some of it's revised, some of it's new. But it remains just this really important helpful tool for people who want to make the transition.

JASMIN: It's so exciting. I remember the first incarnation of the book which I managed to get my hands on. And I know that you immediately sold like 20,000 copies, which is kind of mind-blowing to me to think like, 20,000 people experimented with veganism because of this the first time around. And to think of the potential it has now that you're managing the project entirely just gives me tingles. I think that our listeners tend to already be vegan, but everyone already knows someone in their life who they want to influence. So this is one of those books that I encourage our listeners to get multiple copies of and just kind of have them on hand. What made you decide to do crowdfunding, where are you at with the process, and how are our listeners able to support you in this effort?

COLLEEN: Yeah, it's been amazing. The bottom line is it's taken me a long time to realize -- it's really interesting. When it comes to my podcast or my talks or anything else I've done except my books, I've controlled all of the content, all of it. And when it came to my books, I mean, it was a wonderful process to work with the publisher that I had had and produce my babies -- I mean, these are my books, *The Joy of Vegan Baking*, *Vegan Table*, *Color Me Vegan*, *Vegan's Daily Companion*, and then *The 30-Day Vegan Challenge* with Random House. And it was pretty much a positive experience.

And then when it came to doing this book I just realized that I wanted to keep control over everything I said, over the way it looked, over every decision that was made, like I've done with every aspect of my work. So I wanted to keep that control, and what better democratic way to do that than get the support from the people who already trust me and already have just belief in me and my work to support this? It's such a powerful statement and it's a really powerful process to actually involve the people -- because basically when you're writing a book you go to the publishers to convince them that you have the value to make the money for the publishers. That's pretty much what the process is. Like, I'm valuable enough and I have enough of a following to make you money. And in exchange for that you'll take care of the production of the book itself. Well I don't have to convince my followers that I've got the value and the content to put out there into the world. They already know it. And so all it meant was, okay, this is our book, this is ours to do together, and with your help I can actually make that happen. And so it's been a really powerful process.

JASMIN: When can we expect this to actually be coming out?

COLLEEN: So the plan is to have it out by January 2015, but I'd love to have it out by the holidays, so hopefully end of the year 2014, beginning of the year 2015.

JASMIN: How can people learn more about it?

COLLEEN: They can go to my website, [colleenpatrickgoudreau.com](http://colleenpatrickgoudreau.com). Certainly they can find me on all the social media networks, Facebook, et cetera. [30dayveganchallenge.com](http://30dayveganchallenge.com) is still up and running, the online program is still up and running and still guides people. The content is already out there in the online version, so if people want to start now, they don't have to wait for the new book to come out. I would never say that, like, no, don't go vegan now.

JASMIN: I feel like so much is changing so rapidly in terms of people's awareness about veganism. And of course you've been doing this for so long and you've been out there for so long that I'm sure you've seen a lot of changes. Have you had to go through this current manifestation of this project and edit things based on the way the world is evolving to recognize veganism as a much more viable and necessary option?

COLLEEN: No. No because my intention -- I don't care why people come to it. And so there's a lot of information out there about why vegan, and people want to come to it for a number of different reasons. My perspective is, it doesn't matter to me why they want to come to it. So my information doesn't change based on new statistics or new studies, et cetera. People are finding that information without me. Once they decide they want to do it, I give them all the tools to actually navigate in a non-vegan world, so again, eating out, raising the bar to just get back into the kitchen for 15 minutes a day, like, not that long. So making the time to cook, trying new foods, talking to your family members about it. So everything that's related to "how vegan" is what that book is all about and what the program is all about, and that hasn't changed. That doesn't change, and that's what makes this book I think timeless.

JASMIN: Mm. I love that, it is timeless, definitely.

MARIANN: It's timeless, but also it's so clear that the time is now because people have shifted from "why vegan" to "how vegan." And your book is gonna answer those questions.

JASMIN: Yeah, absolutely.

COLLEEN: Thanks.

JASMIN: There's a couple other projects that you're working on right now and that you're involved in right now that we want to talk about while we have you on the line. And first of all, I do want to mention that I'm excited to be in not one but two anthologies with you that are coming out right around now. One is *Circles of Compassion*, which is edited by Will Tuttle and is going to be a project of Vegan Publishers. And the other one which just came out is *Running, Eating, Thinking: A Vegan Anthology*, published by Lantern. And I wanted to chat with you a little bit about this book. I'm a big fan of this book. We've spoken with Martin Rowe, and we had Christine Fritchen, who's another one of the contributors, on our TV show actually. And I wanted to chat a bit about where you're coming from with this book. What is your connection between running and veganism? How do the two overlap for you?

COLLEEN: Yeah, I was really excited to be a part of this because I'm certainly no competitive runner. It's something I do out of self-care. And that really is the whole point of my essay in this lovely, lovely compilation of essays. My whole feeling about it is that for me, running is about self-care and it's about demonstrating compassion to myself, so certainly the impetus for all of my work is compassion for non-human animals. But it's also compassion for human animals as well, and that has to include ourselves. Like, that has to include us, it has to include me. All of us as activists know how we can sometimes sacrifice caring for ourselves for the sake of someone else. And so running for me is one of the ways that I demonstrate self-care and compassion, self-compassion.

JASMIN: I love how you just totally simplified it to that. Sometimes I get so caught up in, well, there's so many different social justice aspects and... And I just go into this incredibly

complicated answer, but at the end of the day there is a lot of self-care involved in both running and veganism. And not only is there self-care, but when you're looking at self-care from a holistic perspective you're also looking at it in terms of caring about those around you, including the source of your food, not only the animals who we choose not to consume, but the other many, many issues involved in food production. So I would really love it if you would grace us by reading an excerpt from your chapter in *Running, Eating, Thinking*.

COLLEEN: I would love to read an excerpt. Yes, I would love to, thank you.

[To read more from *Running, Eating, Thinking*, [visit Lantern Books](#).]

JASMIN: I love that. I think that's gonna resonate with a lot of people. And I'm so --

MARIANN: I think it's not only going to resonate with a lot of people, it's going to remind a lot of people that taking care of yourself is part of what you have to do to take care of the animals. And even if you're not thinking about yourself, it's still very important to do. Too many people forget that, and it's so important.

COLLEEN: I forget it, and so even just reading it is really helpful for me. So it is absolutely, we have to remind ourselves -- that's part of what meditation is for me. Even if it's five minutes, it's actually just deciding what this day is gonna be like and how I'm gonna take care of myself. And it makes me a better advocate, it makes me a better person, it makes me a better wife, it makes me a better friend in all of these ways. So self-care is not optional. We have to do it and it makes us better for it.

JASMIN: It's funny because I wrote my piece in this a while ago. This book has been a long time coming, and I also -- so it was kind of sitting without me seeing it for a very long time. And I reread it and I also reminded myself of certain things about why I run and why it's important to me for mental health and how I connect it to my veganism. So it's a funny experience to kind of be asked to put into words something that you frequently don't think about that specifically, and then use your own words almost like a journal entry, something to learn from and to remind ourselves of why we are trying to be whole human beings with our life choices.

Anyway, Colleen, I'm so grateful to you for sharing your wisdom with Our Hen House today and for really impacting the world of animal rights more than virtually anybody. And I'm very, very, very excited that we are in the same books because you've been a mentor to me for a long time. And so I am grateful to you for many reasons. I'm glad that you came out to Brooklyn. I promise that the next time we go to San Francisco we'll go out to Oakland again because it's kinda the same thing, going to Brooklyn, going to Oakland, right? Sort of.

COLLEEN: That's what the *New York Times* says! Apparently Oakland is the new Brooklyn, apparently.

JASMIN: Maybe!

MARIANN: Maybe Brooklyn is the new Oakland.

COLLEEN: Maybe. Maybe that's what it is.

JASMIN: Excellent. All right, darling. Well, we'll stay in touch and I'm sure we'll talk to you again soon. Lots of love and thank you again for joining us.

COLLEEN: Thank you. Love you both.

JASMIN: That was Colleen Patrick-Goudreau, and she was reading from her chapter in the book *Running, Eating, Thinking*.