

0:00:01.7 Nicole Antoinette: I'm Nicole Antoinette, and this is Real Talk Radio, a podcast filled with honest conversations about everyday. Today, you'll get to meet Irene Morning.

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0:00:12.2 Irene Morning: So, that internal conversation, it's hard. That internal conversation is where I bump into a lot of where I still tie my worth to my money-making capacity, no matter how much I've talked about deconstructing that or decoupling those things, there's still a fear that comes up there that tells me that some part of me believes that my worth is related to being able to provide for myself financially.

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0:00:53.7 NA: Irene is a somatic coach, pleasure witch, and sexual health educator with a focus on trauma resolution and how to utilize pleasure for collective liberation. This conversation was a dream, I took so many notes and I'm completely obsessed with Irene's honesty and thoughtfulness. We talk about deconditioning ourselves from productivity culture, why it's so hard to slow down and some of the fears that are associated with that, the emotional side of money, the links between grief and pleasure, where our self-worth comes from, and so much more. I can't wait for you to listen to this one, you're gonna love Irene.

0:01:31.6 NA: Thank you to the folks who support, made this deep and honest conversation possible, that's the 400 plus people in our sliding scale Patreon community. You all are the best, I appreciate you so much. It's your monthly funding that allows me to get a full transcript made for each episode, cover all admin and hosting costs and pay every single guest, our sound engineer, Adam Day, and me as the host researcher and producer of this show. Our Patreon community, which I have nicknamed Adventures in Honesty, it's not just a funding source for the podcast, it's actually so much more than that. I host a live end of month reflection and journaling circle for the whole community each month, you get a bonus monthly podcast episode called Real Talk Reflections, where my dear friend, Julia Hamlin, and I share deeply and honestly about our own real lives in real time. Let's see what else. You get my monthly business and money report. I love putting those together, that's where I share all the behind-the-scenes info, how much money I make, where it comes from, what the expenses are, the questions I'm asking myself in my business, goals, all of that, and I do an in-depth Q&A about the financial administrative and decision-making side of this small business, and lots of other surprises and delights as well.

0:02:40.8 NA: If you love the show, I bet you'd feel really welcome and have lots of fun in our community. And as I said, we operate on a sliding scale with all tiers getting access to everything. You can find us at patreon.com/nicoleantoinette. That's patreon.com/nicoleantoinette. I would love for you to come and check us out for a couple of months, say hi and meet some other folks. It would be great. Okay, friends, let's get into today's episode.

[music]

0:03:11.8 NA: Alright, let's do this. Irene, welcome to the show.

0:03:14.1 IM: Hi, thank you.

0:03:16.1 NA: So, I would love to ask you about a few of the most pleasurable parts of your daily life these days, like little accessible things, and I was thinking about this because right before we got on this call, I pulled out some peanut butter and chocolate chips and marshmallows, and I've been doing this thing since college that I called Reese's Spoon, like Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Spoon, where you take a spoon and you take a spoonful of peanut butter and then you shove a bunch of taco chips in it and you shove a bunch of mini marshmallows in it, and then you eat the whole thing at once. And there was a period of time where I forgot that it's my favorite thing, and in the last few months, I have recently remembered. And so almost every day I have a Reese's Spoon and it gives me so much pleasure each time, and I just thought that I would ask you what have been some of your little pleasures lately, they don't have to be food-related, but tell me what is working for you.

0:04:08.1 IM: Well, one of them definitely is food-related. I, in the past few months, have gotten super into Creamsicles and giving myself a work break in the middle of the afternoon where I sit outside with a Creamsicle, and I really slowly attune to how much pleasure I get out of the taste, the texture, the smell, and since it's spring now and sitting outside and also feeling the sensations of spring on my skin, that's like a little, almost daily pleasure ritual that I've been working into my schedule. And then there's also the other thing that comes to... There's a few things that come to mind for me. One thing that I teach in almost everything that I do is to have a pleasure altar at the ready. So I have a pleasure altar in my office that covers all five senses, it has something on it to stimulate each of my senses, and then it also has things on it that cover each of the four realms of pleasure that I teach, and that's body-based, mental, emotional, spiritual and energetic, and then relational. So whenever I just need a little attunement or a hit of pleasure in my day, I have something from the altar to actually just drop into and focus on for a minute.

0:05:33.3 NA: Okay, I have to ask very nosy questions. I'm voyeuristically, incredibly curious what is on this altar, right? Just tell me all of it.

0:05:40.0 IM: So, alright, I'm looking at it right now. There is... The altar that I use has tiers to it, it's almost set up like a bookshelf in my corner, and it has a bunch of just elemental witchy stuff, there's all the crystals and stones that I use for rituals, but then there's also a crystal pineapple that my grandmother gave me for a grief ritual that I developed for myself a long time ago. I have sand that I got in India that is in this beautiful little container there, and a gift that my partner gave me, some photos that a friend took. There's a joint and a piece of chocolate and a singing bowl, and a salt lamp. It's got everything.

0:06:35.9 NA: You got your bases very peppered.

0:06:39.6 IM: Yeah. [chuckle] It covers the full spectrum, but that's exactly the point, is like everything on it, it covers a whole spectrum of things that bring me pleasure, and it is right there.

0:06:51.0 NA: Right, like right in front of you. I remember, I think it was last fall or winter, I might be getting the timeline wrong, but I think it was last fall, I had a guest on the podcast, my friend Kirby, and we were talking all about mental health, and one of the things that she shared is that she has a coping kit that she puts together for herself, particularly for her, for anxiety, but I've been thinking about that ever since this idea of, she has one at home and then a travel coping kit that can go in the car or go somewhere else. And the idea of thinking about the things that either make you feel calm or grounded or that bring you moments of real pleasure or delight, kind of what you're saying, thinking about those things during more neutral moments where maybe they're not needed as opposed to, Oh, I'm either feeling in crisis, or I'm feeling down, or I'm feeling like I need something to fix my state of emotion, and then needing to have the decision fatigue of, What do I do? And I love the idea of, it's just right there that's like a little menu to choose from.

0:07:47.1 IM: Exactly. Like it lives right in my peripheral vision all day.

0:07:53.4 NA: Yeah, I've been thinking about that. Just for me, lifestyle wise in the transition from being housed, living with my partner's dad for seven months and then being back in the van, a 20-square foot van does not have a lot of storage space. And so I thought that I had pared down what I had, my items, but this time around has been even more of a paring down and really thinking what are the things that bring me actual pleasure or that are actually useful, and only bringing those things has made a difference.

0:08:23.9 IM: Yeah, totally.

0:08:25.7 NA: You have given me more things to think about, more pleasure breaks to have so yes, yes, yes, yes. Our early spring Zoom hang that we had, in which we talked about productivity and slowing down right before I paused my Patreon and went into what I called cave month, which I'm sure we're gonna talk about, that conversation that we had was really impactful and clarifying for me about giving myself permission to take that month of slowing down, and so I feel very glad that you were down to dig deeper into that topic today.

0:08:57.6 IM: Yeah. I mean, I'm glad to hear that was impactful for you. I so believe in the messaging of slowing down in every nook and cranny of our lives.

0:09:12.5 NA: Yeah, can you tell me about a specific time or two that comes to mind for you from your own life overall or business in particular, where you have intentionally decided to do less?

0:09:24.8 IM: Yeah, I think actually, what feels most relevant is actually where I've been at in the past couple of months, which... So when I started my business a few years ago, from the beginning, I made a commitment to myself that my well-being was always gonna be the first priority, and what that means is that there's definitely moments in getting a business up and running and pursuing a sense of stability in it, where just the normal life fluctuations mean taking a step back from actually pursuing growth and the past couple of months, being now a year into a pandemic and all that comes with that, there have... Me, pretty much all of us, have taken hits to my mental health in that

and have come into 2021 feeling really depleted, and I'm someone who is incredibly social, and I started at the beginning of this year really feeling the accumulation of not having a robust social life for that whole year, and just recognizing that I was at diminished capacity and that there's a lot of grief moving through me for some things that feel more personal, like there's stuff going on with my family, but also just for that collective sense of like, we all just we're still going through this major collective trauma.

0:11:03.3 IM: And that takes a lot out of us, and so I came into 2021 really excited to be pursuing new projects and really growth-oriented in my business, and what has actually wound up happening in the past couple months is I've scaled everything back. I kind of not really intentionally, but sort of what just happened was I sort of closed off taking new one-on-one clients, I just wasn't putting any kind of messaging out there or a promotion out there for it, and I did launch a membership platform that I had expected to be a lot bigger than it was in its initial launch, and it's much smaller than I expected, in part because I'm giving myself a lot of permission to not self-extract in order to make it something that's bigger than actually what I have capacity for right now. And there's so much, I'm so grateful that I'm scaling these things back and that I'm giving myself the space to do that, and at the same time, it's really bringing up for me like how deep the capitalist conditioning lives in me, because it's like I can see that this is the right thing to do, it's aligned, both for me and for the people that work with me.

0:12:36.3 IM: I've had some of my clients be like the biggest reminders of like, Hey, our well-being in our success is directly tied to how slow you work. We appreciate that you go slow, it's important, especially in terms of trauma resolution work, and it stirs up so much fear because I'm not in the growth mindset and I'm not in the perpetually moving-something-forward attitude.

0:13:04.3 NA: Ooh, there's so much in there that I wanna touch on. One of the things that's a point of personal resonance, for me, I guess I probably should give some more context about this maybe in the intro about why I decided to take the cave month down to saying that kind of thing. But part of it for me was the realization that over the last couple of years, particularly over the last year, I've really prioritized financial accessibility, class solidarity, anti-capitalist values in the way that I price and offer my work, that was really simple for me to understand that this is an alignment for me to offer my work in a certain way, and yet it was really only half of the equation, because when you mentioned not wanting to be self-extractive, I had the realization that, Okay, I'm living these values in the way that I price my work, but I'm still treating myself in this very extractive, exploitative, how much can I possibly get out of myself, I'm only worth being paid if I'm doing so much all the time, and that really gave me pause of, Oh, it's not just enough to honor one side of the equation, it's what does it look like to honor both, so that feels...

0:14:20.6 NA: And as we're... One of my favorite things about the fact that we're having this conversation is that I don't have any big capital A answers, I don't imagine that you do either, right? But I'm glad to talk... I'm glad to talk about a thing where we're both very much in, not only in the messy middle of it, but just in the sort of continual deconditioning of this, and that was definitely a big one for me of the fears of, Okay, sure, I can price my work in a certain way and prioritize financial accessibility, but I'm still treating myself like, Oh, my gosh, I have to get the most that I

possibly can out of myself in order to be worth earning a living and winding up feeling creatively, really exhausted from that and empty and not able to do my best work.

0:15:04.7 IM: Totally, and I think there's something for those of us who... Well, no, actually, I'm not gonna qualify this at all because I really believe that each and every human has their own creative fingerprint, and it's really essential to how we exist in the world, and when we're depleted, that creativity just doesn't get to breathe the same kind of life. So I think it's really important for us in centering our own humanity to go... For me to have my creative fingerprint be its full expression, these things have to exist in a balance, and I think you're touching on something that's really important around class solidarity and pricing and business structures that want to be anti-capitalist. I think so many of us who really want to embody a sense of class solidarity in how we offer our work, I think we're actually all really learning and growing pretty quickly as we shift in this, but I think there was kind of a wave where we were, a lot of us were trying to do that in a way that wasn't talking about our own financial needs and our own financial needs, our own nourishment and sustenance are really essential to that equation, and talking about money is not, not anti-capitalist.

0:16:43.8 NA: Right.

0:16:43.8 IM: Capitalism wants us to be secretive about money. For us to actually break free of the molds that capitalism has imposed on us, it's like any kind of healing work, you have to really lay it all bare and look at what's actually there, and part of that means us really being open and transparent with ourselves and also with the people that we're in relationship with around our work, like what's going on here, what do we all need in order for our interdependence to thrive?

0:17:17.1 NA: Yeah, and that those questions are really part of an ongoing conversation. When I decided to take this pause for the month for me, I decided to pause my Patreon community, if you charge people monthly, there's a feature where you can basically just not charge people for a month or for as many months as you want to, and part of it for me was I wanted to just pause everything, and it was really interesting, the messages that I got from folks in the community that said, Oh, we would have totally been willing to pay for your downtime and integration period and working on deeper work, because that's part of the work as well, and it really, Irene, it caught me by surprise, it made me realize how transactional I had gotten in the view of my own work that it's, people are paying for X amount of podcast episodes or X amount of personal essays or this type of stuff that it's like the money for the thing, and it is the money for the thing, but if I think about the creators who I support, I just love the work that they're doing in the world and want them, like you said, to be able to have their financial needs met in order to continue doing that work, I'm not looking at it to be so transactional. And so there's been a lot of unpacking for me around that, and what does it look like to charge for creative work that can't just be produce, produce, produce, produce, like non-stop factory style.

0:18:40.1 IM: Yeah. I think that brings up for me so much about our discernment between nurturing audience and building community. I don't know about you, but so much of what I was taught around business, particularly being self-employed as an online business... And actually, this is true even of my work in the non-profit realm before I was self-employed, was so much of it is

about growing and nurturing an audience or a client base in a way that feels very performative. I don't know about you, but I don't wanna be performing all the time. I wanna be participating in emergent liberation and human relationships with an understanding that that's what we're doing together, not like me with something to sell, finding the people who will buy it.

0:19:47.5 IM: I think it's also in that same vein, really important to acknowledge every single person I've ever worked with, every client I've ever had, has really shaped me. It's not that I have a service or a product to give to people, or in your case, like essays, where it's like, "Here's the final thing, you get to just consume it and we're not actually impacting each other." It's a two-way thing where it's so relational and I think when we are reframing this whole thing, it's really nice to know, I'm very happy to hear that that's how some of your patrons are responding 'cause I think collectively, we are kind of moving in this direction of actually understanding, know that this is more relational than it is transactional, and how can we fine-tune around that to really support each other in it.

0:20:52.4 NA: Yeah, and for me, I think it's easy to talk about this through the lens of work because the idea of work and productivity, I think, are really linked together, but I've also been unpacking and thinking about... And maybe we can talk about just where this conditioning and sort of the almost like productivity addiction lives in other realms of my life, like this idea of slowing down. At first, I thought that it was just about the pace at which I am producing or creating things, and actually, I realized that a lot of it was about the pace at which I'm consuming things. The number of newsletters that I'm subscribed to that I actually enjoy all of them, and I can't fully process 10 of them a day or whatever.

0:21:39.9 NA: And with books, I often joke, but it's not a joke about how one of my biggest first world sadness is, is that I will never be able to read all the books that I wanna read and it just... It's not possible. And so sometimes that makes me binge, tear through things, read the book, highlight the sections, okay, quick, go to the next book, go to the next book, and then I never go back to those highlights. I obviously highlighted them for a reason, they were thoughts that I wanted to explore more deeply or use as writing prompts or talk about with a friend, but it's just on to the next thing, on to the next thing. I feel this on social media a lot, and I realized I'm just bottomlessly consuming a lot of things that I'm not actually integrating. So I'd be interested to hear any of your... I don't know, experiences with that because it sounds like from what you've shared, that work-wise, almost maybe more organically so, this year has been more of a slow down than you expected. Have you seen that translate to other areas of your life?

0:22:39.9 IM: Yeah. Being a somatic practitioner, I think of almost everything in terms of the nervous system, and so much of what I see in us as a very human thing, when we're responding to traumas and stressors, we tend to go into either a hyper-arousal or a hypo-arousal. And part of what we're doing in that constant go, go, go in the productivity culture, but also in the consumption, to me, a lot of that is a hyper-response. And part of what's happening in a hyper-response is this unconscious drive in us to avoid or numb pain and grief that we're not really ready to hold space for. And so for me, part of the slowing down this year has actually given a lot of space for that pain and that grief to actually come up even stronger, and that is definitely what's been going on for me the

past couple of months. I've been in a sad, challenging place, and I think part of the reflections that I've had in that sad challenging place are just how much I see that actually the social media presentations of things I have also internalized. I know we all kind of give a lot of...

0:24:30.0 IM: We all talk a lot about how the presentations on social media can be... Are very performative, and do you really get people's highlight reels, but kind of in this slowing down and in watching myself move from that hyper-arousal into kind of like, "Okay, there's more space for the other stuff to come up, I'm not numbing from it anymore." Or right now, anyway, noticing just how much that kind of social media culture and constantly consuming and constantly consuming other people's highlight reels has really been an escapist mechanism for me.

0:25:17.0 NA: Yeah, and so what do you do with that? [chuckle]

0:25:21.2 IM: You know, it's interesting. I think a lot of... Part of what's so insidious about productivity culture is like it has most of us wrapped up in that go, go, go as some of these numbing mechanisms, and really, it's kind of this horrible catch-22 because an integral component of what we need to digest the grief and the pain that comes up when we do slow down is other people and is a community that has skills for being with those feelings, but for so many of us, productivity culture is so pervasive that even if we want to slow down and feel those things, we don't have a lot of the community support that we need in order for that slowing down to actually be in service of digesting the feelings, so we kind of stay in the grind. And for me, in this period that's been a lot more grief and sadness, it has really... First of all, I'm no stranger to grief. Grief has happened in these massive waves throughout my whole life. My mom got cancer when I was nine and then died when I was 14. So at this point in my life, I'm now 31.

0:26:47.5 IM: I kind of understand what these waves of grief are, and I've developed a lot of skills for leaning into grief, and I think that's kind of one of the biggest things, is actually being able to zoom out and frame for ourselves that the emotions that are more uncomfortable and the phases of our lives that have a lot more discomfort in them do come in waves. And so your friend's mental health kit or my pleasure altar, how do we have those things ready to support us for when we're riding a wave? So for me, it's been a lot of like, "Okay, this is hard and challenging right now, and how do I still light the candle that smells good, how do I still enjoy the Creamsicle, how do I still tap into my sense of purpose when I'm with my clients?" Because going through grief and depression and sadness, doesn't it all mean that we're any less worthy or we're any less in service of the collective, it just means that we're going through a wave. And I think there's those personal tools for it where I'm reaching for my pleasure things and I know how to attune to them, and that has been a life-long practice for me, and also having conversations like this where we're building community that has the same kind of framework and the same kinds of curiosities around how we de-condition, is really, really, really helpful for not feeling totally alone in it.

0:28:38.5 NA: I feel like I'm digesting what you just said. Yeah, that reminder... Well, okay, so this isn't exactly what you said, but what I took from what you said about when we're going through those sad periods, those grief periods, it's almost the both end of what I want for everyone is to be able to slow down and have their needs met and move at whatever the right pace is for them all the

time, but particularly during more challenging times. And I think that there is something, at least the cultural messaging that I subtly, under the surface, consumed or was raised on is you hide yourself away when you're not doing well, and you get your two days of bereavement, if you're lucky, using the death example or something else, and you deal with it privately and then take all the time you need or those kind of platitudes, and then when you're better, you come back.

0:29:36.7 NA: And there's something in that, not just as it relates to grief, but I think that there's an intersection with this productivity conversation, that if you're not at your best, whatever that means or looks like, if you're not kind of producing or working at your peak level, it's okay, you kinda go dark for a while and then you come back when you're ready to be at that peak space. And on one hand, it's like, "Yes, stop working. Take all the time you need," but the both end of this for me is in what you just said, it's not like we don't have things that are valuable to offer and give and share during that time. It's not as binary. Some of the best feeling podcast conversations that I've had have been ones where before it, I'm like, "I'm really tired. I'm not really in the mood to do this." And maybe I show up from a different space, maybe I'm a little bit more vulnerable, a little... I don't know, and then something magical can come out of it, and I forget that going through the hard time doesn't have to mean that you aren't seen. Does that make sense?

0:30:37.3 IM: Totally. And I think there's something like... Something that I often run into conflict with in the coaching world is like this messaging of getting completely aligned with your offering in order to promote it or invite people into it effectively. Like, yes, I think we should be giving people our offerings from a place that's grounded and really in our own capacity, but for me, so much of my work talks about pleasure, and something that's really essential to me in the framework that I teach, is that grief and pleasure are actually two sides of the same coin, that expanding our pleasure is actually about expanding our capacity in every direction. Our nervous system doesn't necessarily differentiate between pain and pleasure, and so learning to really be in our full capacity for grief helps us be in our full capacity for pleasure when we're back on the pleasure wave.

0:31:44.6 IM: And I find I'm often bumping up against this thing where if I'm in grief or I'm in sadness, that there's messaging out there around business, that then I shouldn't really be showing up to sell pleasure and like... I just don't agree with that. Like, yes, as you're saying, if you need to get your needs met differently, step away from your work and make sure that your needs are getting met, but some of what I've been articulating to the people who are seeing me really intimately right now is like... Some of my needs just aren't gonna get met for this period that I'm in, and it's not really okay, but it is a wave of life. Sometimes we go through periods where not all of our needs can be met all the time, and that doesn't mean that what I have to offer my clients or what I have to offer in my pleasure coven community is not of value to someone. And also, beyond that, I actually think it's really, really, really important for us if we're centering our humanity and how we're operating in business, to be able to bring our full humanity into that space.

0:33:13.3 NA: Yeah, yeah, and I find for me, that that is often easier said than done.

0:33:19.8 IM: Yeah, for sure.

0:33:20.6 NA: Because a couple of things come up with that. A, we're not rewarded for slowing down the sort of... What's put on a pedestal is look how strong you are, look how much you were able to do despite the circumstances. There's that piece of it, and then there's the piece... Something I've been thinking about for a couple of years now, I've always... Well, always... Relatively always been open about my own mental health, and something that I started to notice in those conversations, and I think overall it's gotten less stigmatized and there are more mental health conversations happening with honesty online, elsewhere than maybe there were 10 years ago. I think that that's just true, and most of what I see and participate in, to be honest, is that sort of after the fact. It seems to be relatively accepted for us to have a conversation where I tell you about a time in the past where I was in a real depressive episode, that we seem to have developed social comfort for that to a degree, and yet, I really don't see a lot of talking about it from the place. We're okay with the...

0:34:31.5 NA: Same thing with grief. We're okay knowing about the hard thing or editorializing on the hard thing once it's sort of wrapped up in a bow and don't worry, we're fine now, but I'm really interested in what you just said about bringing that into, not just the business, but the friendships, the relationships, that being able to be more human, and part of the reason that's scary is because it's risky and because it's not really rewarded. But I think when you were talking before about the performative nature of particularly social media, I think about the ways in which we're all performing competency, like we're getting some of these harder, messier needs met in secret, almost, and who are we serving by doing that? And I don't know, not that we owe each other our most messy, like I'm deep in the depressive episode and I'm gonna live stream my life, I don't know that that's necessarily the answer either, but there is something in this of letting the things be true in real time that feels both necessary and risky.

0:35:34.2 IM: Yeah, 1000%. I wish you could see me right now. I've just been nodding and nodding.

[laughter]

0:35:45.3 IM: I think it's kind of like one of the... So in every single online group space that I facilitate, we go through a set of group acknowledgements together, which is kind of like group agreements, but I like acknowledgements better. And one of them is, there's no right way to do pleasure. Similarly, I feel there's no right way to do grief or to do sadness. All of this for me is about finding our own authentic way that feels aligned for the relationships that we're in. So I don't think that we all need to be out there performing our sadness or exposing it if it doesn't feel like it wants to be exposed. Sometimes it is actually really appropriate to curl into ourselves, and that's what we want.

0:36:42.2 IM: But when I talk about bringing the fullness of my own humanity into what I'm doing with work, some of the group spaces that I facilitate, I am also a participant, and that is not at all what my training would tell me to do. I was very much trained in this like you don't disclose information about yourself because that somehow is asking your clients to carry your emotional weight. And for the most part in one-on-one spaces, I find that to be more true, but in group spaces

where we're really focused on nurturing community and questioning, How can we really facilitate interdependence or honor interdependence because we are interdependent, it's already there, just how do we work with it? In my online community space, one of the things that is included in that space or that I have kind of like sold that space as being, is that I will offer a few times a week what I call pleasure prompts, which is just to help people continuously orient a pleasure. And in the depth of where I've been in the past couple of months, I dropped off for a couple of weeks. I just was not making good on that bullet point of my commitments.

0:38:12.0 IM: And when I did circle back to it, I came in with a note that said like, "My body's been processing a lot, and I have needed to give myself permission to not be on screens as much. And I'm not sharing this to ask you to necessarily hold me, but more to just tell you where I'm at and hope that me telling you where I'm at gives you permission if you weren't already giving yourself permission."

0:38:45.0 NA: Yeah... I think that it's... I guess, obviously, I can't speak for everyone. But it seems to be as near universal as could be, that it is hard to give ourselves permission to be less productive, whatever that looks like. Even if that's what we say that we want, not just for us and for everyone. And so I think back to earlier in the conversation where you were talking about this period of slowing down for you has been sort of a waking up to how deeply ingrained the capitalist conditioning is within you. And I'd be interested if there's any specific examples that you can share of what that actually means or looks like.

0:39:24.1 IM: Well, I think part of it is that it actually took me a while to surrender to slowing down this much of my work... You know. Like I said, at the beginning of 2021... I came into January guns blazing, so psyched about a few projects that I wanted to launch this year, feeling like... From the end of 2020, I was kind of finally hitting a rhythm and a stride in my business that was feeling really balanced to me and I was really excited to keep riding that wave up. And I came into 2021 going like, "Okay, before I launch these things..." Or before I really dig into creating them, I'm gonna redo my website a little bit. Because my website at the time, really was no longer relevant to the work that I'm doing.

0:40:15.9 IM: It was kind of more from an era of my life where I was doing yoga therapy, which I no longer practice any teaching or therapeutics around yoga. A lot of my anti-racism work has completely removed me from that world. And so I was kind of like, "Before I launch these big projects, let me just re-do the website real quick..." Hit pause, website focus, and then resume. And actually, what wound up happening in that whole process was like a wave of... I see it now as this wave of necessary slowing down, that was just kind of organically what happened in my business. But me for a month and a half in there, I was going, "Oh, shit. Oh shit. Oh shit. Oh shit."

0:41:11.8 IM: What do I do? What do I do? What do I do? And working longer hours to try to quote unquote, "figure it out". And reaching for all of the cognitive processing and strategy that I could. And it really took that full month and a half of me like having a panic about money and systems and finances and products that will sell and being quote unquote "successful" if I'm going to launch something before I was like, "You know what, there's really a lesson here that circles me

back to that promise that I made to myself at the beginning of the business. That my well-being is a priority." And if I'm gonna surrender to what this is, and focus on my well-being, then I understand there's really some letting go of my internalized capitalism that needs to happen here, which has now turned into a daily practice of releasing the projected fears around money and rooting into the facts about the safety that I have access to right now.

0:42:33.0 NA: Are you down to talk about money a little bit?

0:42:34.8 IM: Yeah. I'm down to talk about money. I have a really interesting money story, actually.

0:42:37.8 NA: Yeah, well... I feel at this point... I always sort of think of other podcasts that I might wanna start or like side projects. And all I wanna do is talk about money. So there's something there for sure. I feel like this conversation that we're having a... That we're having could be on so many different layers. Because there's one part of me that even hearing myself share about wanting to slow down and feeling really tacked out and deciding to press pause on Patreon for a month, there's the voice in my head that's like, "Oh well, it must be nice that you had the money to be able to do that." Right?

0:43:09.0 IM: Mm-hmm.

0:43:09.8 NA: There's some self-judgment in there. And it definitely felt scary. And I have the money and also don't... Right? Like I... It definitely... It is a sacrifice to not be... To have not earned money for that month. And... I don't know, I just think given everything that you just shared, talking about the money piece would be really interesting to hear about whatever it is that you feel comfortable sharing. 'Cause you mentioned before that question of, what are your financial needs? How are they getting met? How does money... Like the realities of money in your life and potentially the fears around money or scarcity of money, how do those intersect with this conversation that we're having?

0:43:55.3 IM: Yeah, so... Oh my God, there's so much in there.

0:44:02.4 NA: Right. Do you wanna talk for the next six hours? Cool. So...

0:44:06.1 IM: Yeah... So we're doing this all day?

[laughter]

0:44:06.8 IM: I'm trying to figure out what's my entry point here. I think probably... It's probably useful for me to actually just frame my general money story here. And this also kind of circles me back to something that was popping into my head at the very beginning of this conversation when we were talking about class solidarity and pricing structures where... I have a lot of financial privilege. I am acutely aware of that financial privilege. And when you were talking about trying to price things consciously and with class solidarity and in an anti-capitalist way, I think there's really

something for those of us with certain kinds of privilege to be looking at and how we're willing to self-extract in order to have that political lens in our businesses. Because I think there's a lot of... I don't know if it's guilt, but there's something that can show up where we go like, "Okay, technically I can make this work and so I should, because some people are worse off than I am in these certain realms of being."

0:45:24.5 NA: That's an interesting perspective, yeah.

0:45:26.4 IM: And I think it's actually a really disempowering model. I don't think it is what serves our interdependence. And to kind of tie this into my own situation... So my money story... I mentioned that my mother died when I was 14... She died of asbestos related lung cancer. And my family was in a class action lawsuit when I was 12, against companies like MetLife and major construction companies from the 50s, 60s, 70s who had misrepresented the dangers of asbestos. And so my family got a solid chunk of money from that lawsuit that kind of immediately went into paying off my parents' college debt, stabilizing our living situation, buying a house, and then setting up college funds for me and my brother. And then also trust funds for me and my brother. The amount of money that went into those trust funds is... I'm not like the trust fund baby that never has to worry about money again. It's not that much. I think in total... I mean, I'll just be really transparent about all the money stuff. In total, that trust fund at the time was about \$300,000, which I recognize is a significant chunk of money. But it's not an amount of money that you can live off of for the rest of your life.

0:47:02.0 NA: Right, this isn't the \$10 million lottery, you never have to think about it again.

0:47:07.0 IM: Right. And... I grew up with the understanding that my parents' intention for that was for it to help me buy a home. Or... Kind of like these big life markers that would like... It would support that. But that lawsuit happened before my mom died. That lawsuit happened while my mom was actually in a cancer-free period of her life. And then the cancer came back and she died a year and a half later. And so there's a lot of really, really, really complicated emotional stuff for me around that money. And that money is what has enabled me to step into being self-employed and take my time to figure it out. There's a backstop there that I know I can pull from, and at the same time, that's a very conflict ridden thing for me, because I don't just constantly wanna keep pulling out of it. You know what I mean? So I have... So part of the resistance that I have to these waves of slowing down is a narrative that I have about, if I draw from my savings or if I draw from that. I kind of facetiously refer to it as dead mom money.

0:48:28.4 IM: And I always get to a place of reminding myself that actually that money is there to support my healing, and that money is there to support me stepping into the life of service that I wanna live. But even that... And that use of that money look very, very, very different than what my parents had intended for it, or what the conditioning was that I was raised with around it. I still... Part of my attachment to it is recognizing that because I'm self-employed and the money has not yet stabilized in my self-employed business, there's fear around retirement. And so there's a part of me that just wants what's left of that money to just sit there for retirement and that's it, and I don't touch it. But that's not really the economic landscape that we live in.

0:49:30.1 NA: Yeah. Yeah I...

0:49:31.9 IM: Did I answer your question?

0:49:34.3 NA: I don't even remember what the question was, but I'm very into that we're talking about this. I appreciate your honesty, because I also think... It's like any conversation that we have about productivity or about capitalism, or about self-employment or about any of these things... Like the kind of secret thing underneath that conversation is money. Right?

0:49:54.4 IM: Mm-hmm.

0:49:55.7 NA: And that there has to be... I think about periods of time in my life where I was not self-employed. And I'd never done the kind of corporate salaried job route, that was never my path. But times working retail or working seasonal jobs. And there is definitely financial and emotional pros and cons to both ways of being. And I think that there's just so much in the conversations about these things that are really made better by specifics, even if the specifics of your situation... Like let's say there's no one listening that that's their situation. I actually still think it makes it more relevant to know the details... Like when you were talking about the fact that your...

0:50:37.3 IM: Totally.

0:50:38.1 NA: Dead mom money... That this money is a real kind of safety net, and also that there's a lot of emotions there. What came up for me personally is my... I don't have a kind of family, financial safety net. My parents had a lot of money and then lost it and filed for bankruptcy. And there was a big significant class change. And then getting married was a class change in the other direction, and then getting divorced was a class change again. There's been a lot of up and downs for me. And my safety net has been keeping my needs really small. That... I mean, I don't pay rent. I live in a van.

0:51:13.3 NA: I do like... And that's the current iteration. But there were all throughout my entire adult life was, "Well if I just don't need very much and it doesn't cost very much..." And I know that's not the same kind of safety net as a particular chunk of money, but there is something to be said for the fact that what keeps us feeling safe also has its own emotional stuff attached to it, that then of course, comes into play with the fears that we might have around our earning potential. And for me, the fear of slowing down or even coming out of the cave month period, wanting to change the pacing of my work. Thinking what are the financial repercussions or consequences gonna be for that. And are they real, are they... You know that there's... It's all tangled up together. And I don't know that I have a point to that necessarily, but I appreciate you sharing.

0:52:06.7 IM: No, I mean... I think what I hear in that is just the point of like, we all have money stuff. And what I said earlier about like... I do really feel that actually, what is bad in capitalism and really harmful in capitalism wants us to keep not talking about our money stuff, because it keeps us in that trauma bond with capitalism. And actually for us to shift those ways of being... Being

transparent about it, being open about it is really, really, really important.

0:52:45.1 NA: Yeah, and being open about where the money comes from and how we feel about it and what our needs are and... Yeah, there's just a lot here that I feel like similar to when were talking about the... How generous it can be to be seen in your grief or the truth of your mental health, if that's something that... Doesn't feel like you're exploiting yourself in order to do it, of course. But that it can be generous to show up in that place. I also think it's generous to talk about money. Yeah...

0:53:12.5 IM: Completely agreed.

0:53:15.3 NA: Yeah, I also wonder for you too, when you were saying that your business hasn't stabilized money-wise, or that this slowing down, I would imagine has meant bringing in less income so far this year than you had expected. Can you talk about what that feels like? Is there a fear there? Do you feel like you're de-conditioning a scarcity mindset? I'm interested in... I don't know... Like what that internal conversation is like.

0:53:42.4 IM: So that internal conversation is... It's hard. That internal conversation is where I bump into a lot of... Where I still tie my worth to my money-making capacity. No matter how much I've talked about deconstructing that or decoupling those things, there's still a fear that comes up there that tells me that some part of me believes that my worth is related to being able to provide for myself financially. And there is for sure a self-esteem thing that comes up there. Like when we're looking at ourselves and we're going like, "Okay, you're not..." For me, that sounds something like a big fear around not being able to provide for myself.

0:54:39.1 IM: And then feeling not as good about myself because of that. And when I'm in a more regulated space with myself and I'm really in my grounded capacity, I can look at that narrative for exactly what it is. And I can see that that has ties in capitalism. It also has ties in really just being able to get your needs met. I don't wanna just write it off as totally one thing. But yeah, there's definitely fear that comes up. And there's also... What I'm grateful for in it is being able to continuously re-anchor myself into trusting that there are waves and cycles to these things. And an ebb and flow that continuously teaches me more about the alignment of my business. 'Cause I think part of... I used the phrase it financially hasn't stabilized yet, but I've made a lot of changes in it in the time that I've been in business. I think in the first couple of years of any business, you're actually really kind of finding out what is the business. And when I give space for that and recognizing how much transformation the business and its offerings have gone through, it makes so much sense to me that there's not financially a stable rhythm yet.

0:56:14.0 NA: So you mentioned sort of trying to de-condition yourself from the... Self-worth is related to what I can do to earn money and self-esteem there. This is something, again, very relatable and that I bump on or maybe just something that I'm very in real-time thinking about, and so I would like to have a little bit of a real-time conversation about. It's one thing for me to sort of intellectualize that or to say in my mind, it's like I don't want my self-esteem, the way that I look at myself, the way that I value myself or anyone else, based on their output, based on what they can do

to earn money because... Sure, we have been told that that is the only way to... That is the only value that you produce. And so, sure, I know in my head that that's against what I believe in and not what I want, and then I think there can be sort of a disconnect of then where does the self-esteem come from, maybe that's quite an existential question, but it sounds like that's something that you've thought about, and I'm interested if there's anything that you would like to share about that.

0:57:17.6 IM: Yeah, I think for me, there's a question there for me of refocusing, where does my self-esteem come from, where are the places and the moments in my life where I feel I'm living my values. And I think part of the real conundrum in tying our self-worth to our earning capacity or our earning potential is that that's really not one of my values. So of course, when I'm in that framework and in that belief system, of course my self-esteem plummets, actually regardless of my earning capacity. You know what I mean?

0:58:03.1 NA: Yeah.

0:58:05.2 IM: And so I think there's... For me, when I'm working on this in myself, I tend to re-orient to where do I really feel like myself, and where are the spaces and moments in my life right now where I am tapping into embodying my values. And for me in a period of grief and depression and sadness, that can actually mean just giving myself the grace to be unhappy. And it sounds like a weird loop, but I can actually tap into my sense of self-esteem from being able to allow myself to be unhappy, because I know that that is actually something that's taken me a long time to get to.

0:58:57.2 NA: Yeah, that makes sense to me, that self-esteem is related to self-trust, and we trust ourselves by being honest with ourselves. There's something there, like the way that those things connect that makes a lot of sense that when I'm not hiding the truth from myself and, I mean, that hit the nail on the head. That has been a huge growth moment for me. There were so many years of my life, a lot of it wrapped up pre-sobriety when I was still drinking, where the things that I would do in order to not admit the full truth of something to myself either what was happening, or how I felt about it, or what I had done, or something that I was ashamed of, or something that someone else had done to me, or just something I couldn't handle, that I sort of had this feeling that if I admit the truth or the depth of the sadness or whatever you wanna put in that placeholder, then that means that, Oh God, I have to do something about it. And the thought of having to do something about it was so overwhelming that it felt easier to stay in the dark about it. And being able to separate for myself, being able to separate telling myself the truth from having to do anything at all, honestly changed my life.

1:00:10.0 IM: Well, and that is... I love that. And also, it brings me right back into how deeply ingrained and internalized productivity culture is, the idea that as soon as we recognize something to be true, it requires action from us, is not true.

1:00:31.5 NA: Or that every single part of us is like a problem to be fixed.

1:00:36.8 IM: Totally. I was in a somatic session as a client a couple of weeks ago, where the practitioner was asking me... We were in this inquiry around my needs and my needs, which needs

are not getting met, and the fact that some of my needs are going unmet right now, and every time she invited me into that sensation in my body, my cognition immediately jumped in and was problem solving how to get the needs met. And the work with her was like how do we un-couple that? How do we recognize like, "Okay, thank you mind for doing what you know to do to try to keep me safe, but it's okay for me to sit with just feeling that my needs are not getting met."

1:01:35.4 NA: That sounds very uncomfortable.

1:01:39.9 IM: So uncomfortable, so fucking uncomfortable.

[chuckle]

1:01:42.5 NA: Oh, my God. I wanna ask you two questions on the heels of that, one, if you would feel up to sharing what are a couple of the needs that aren't getting met? And then the other question for anyone maybe who doesn't know what happens in a somatic session or in the work that you do, I'd love for you to provide a little bit more kind of like grounded detail about that.

1:02:00.7 IM: Yeah, yeah. So I think the needs that aren't getting met for me are primarily social needs. I just love being around other people, and in COVID, in 2020, I moved four times, and one of those moves was from Providence, Rhode Island to Joshua Tree, California. So I'm now in Joshua Tree and arrived here in the summer, and since everything has been closed, there's really been very, very, very little opportunity for me to create new in-person community, and that's just hard. It takes a while to build a community when you move anywhere, and it, particularly like this is a small place, and so that's kind of hard to really find the people that you connect with, and also moving in COVID when nothing is open for you to just kind of go out to the local bar and see who is around, it's challenging. And that's part of where being able to recognize that the needs aren't being met and cultivate some acceptance around it, these just are the circumstances in COVID.

1:03:16.5 NA: Yeah, and potentially, specifically with the social thing and COVID, I have felt there were different phases of the pandemic where I was trying, trying to meet that need in new and creative ways, again, trying to problem-solve and some of that stuff helped a little, but it's... This might be a strange analogy, but I love long distant hiking, that's like my chosen hobby activity of choice and... Sure, going for a day hike is also great, but it's not the same thing, and if what I'm really craving is spending two months on trail, that going out for the day is not going to meet that need and is not gonna fulfill that thing while it might be also a lovely thing, I have felt a lot in the last year of a shallower version, the actual need isn't getting met, and I'm kind of trying to do some band-aid stuff and in a couple different ways, particularly socially, I just stopped. It was like, "Okay, what if this need just isn't gonna get met and I stop trying to convince myself that this other stuff counts or makes me feel as good," and maybe that sounds a little bit cynical, but it's actually really helped.

1:04:19.8 IM: No, I think it's actually really liberating to go like, "Okay, I'm grasping for all these replacements, and that grasping is actually wearing me out, so let me stop doing the thing that's depleting and just make peace with the circumstances."

1:04:36.4 NA: Yeah, just let yourself be sad, like you said before.

1:04:40.2 IM: Yeah, yeah, and I think to bring this other thread back in, I think one of the needs for a little while, although I feel like I've made some progress in this, is actually having spaces and people where the messiness of my sadness and the depth of my grief, could be witnessed by other people. That was a... I can't remember his name off the top of my head, but there's... One of the most famous grief researchers talks a lot about how grief comes to completion only when it's witnessed by other humans. And that resonates with me so hard. When I'm able to actually be seen in my grief by other people, I feel a sense of resolution around it in a way that I just don't when I'm grieving by myself. And so I think that, for a good chunk of time in there, was also an unmet need. I was able to identify it and open myself to being seen in different ways, but that was certainly also part of it. And it's something that I think collectively we're gonna be working out for a while to come because we all are carrying unprocessed grief from... Well, we've experienced in COVID.

1:06:04.3 NA: Right, not to mention any other unprocessed grief that we might have had for decades or years or whatever.

1:06:11.9 IM: Exactly. Exactly.

1:06:12.0 NA: So I guess, yeah, so will you talk a little bit more about what somatic work is?

1:06:18.0 IM: Yeah.

1:06:18.5 NA: And maybe that's a good thing to wrap up on?

1:06:20.3 IM: Yeah, for sure. So for those who might be listening where that's just completely new terminology, "soma" somatic work essentially means body-based work. I have a Master's Degree in Yoga Therapy, and like I said earlier, I have since left the yoga world, but what my training and education gave me is a really solid sense of how to work with the body and how to work with our experience of the body. And so, somatic sessions are really a whole range of things. It's funny, I did a consult with a potential client the other day, and I... People always ask, "Well, what is a session like?" And it feels like such a cop out to say it, but it is different with every single person, but a lot of what you can come to expect in it is that will be in talking about what's showing up for you now, what's feeling present in your life, what's feeling like it needs attention in your life, and then kind of going into an inquiry of like, Okay, how is this also showing up in your body, how are these sensations expressing themselves in your body? And if there are patterns of like what I was talking about earlier with the hyper-arousal or the hypo, how can we expand the capacity for you being in your body and with those sensations so that you can actually be more present somewhere in the middle.

1:07:55.8 IM: So a lot of that, the tools that we use for that are actually just bringing awareness into different parts of the body, but also things like breath work and movement inquiries, and basically the whole framework falls under some understanding and some education around how the

nervous system is operating. And so there's usually some element of helping people understand what's your nervous system doing and how can you recognize the signs of being in different places in your nervous system.

1:08:31.5 NA: This sounds not only interesting, but it's funny to feel like I'm somewhat resistant to this, which means I'm like, probably I should be your client. So I'm glad that you shared that. Thank you.

1:08:44.9 IM: Yeah, and, I mean, I find... I will also say that I came to what I'm doing now, more previously focused on specifically trauma work and Trauma Resolution, and I reached a place with a lot of my clients where we would stabilize kind of a more acute trauma or a more intense expression of anxiety or depressive symptoms, and then we would go like, "Okay, now that you're feeling more grounded and in your capacity, what do you want in your life and what do you want to cultivate?" And I was finding with a lot of my clients who have... Who were more focused on trauma stabilization, that that question of What are your desires about and really what brings you pleasure in life were really kind of unexplored questions for them. And so my work took this direction of going like, Okay, how do we do Trauma Resolution by centering pleasure so that people who have lived their entire lives without prioritizing their own pleasure or without believing that they deserve pleasure, can actually understand that pleasure is integral to their being?

1:09:58.8 NA: Yeah, actually, that makes me think maybe a lovely full circle or a book-end moment for this conversation since we started. I asked you, if things that are... Real accessible things that have been bringing you pleasure. Are there, I don't know, one, two, maybe three more practical tips or tools, things like lessons that you've learned from centering pleasure in your life and then also in your work that you would wanna share?

1:10:27.3 IM: Yeah, I think one of the biggest lessons that I think we learn from really attuning to pleasure and practicing pleasure with intention brings back the conversation about self-worth, which is part of why I find pleasure-orienting so useful in this conversation about breaking free of productivity culture is like, if we're not gonna tie our self-worth to our income, how can we affirm our self-worth through other things, and when we give ourselves pleasure practices, it is a signal back to ourselves, I am worthy because I'm receiving this pleasure. And that to me, is not a specific pleasure practice itself, but whatever brings you pleasure, taking the moment to actually say to yourself, "I am taking in this pleasure, and that is affirming my worth," can be the whole thing. But I think to answer your question about more specific tangible things, something that I always go to with people is having one thing in place for each of your five senses and walking yourself through each of the five senses because it helps your whole body come online and it helps your whole body actually wake up to what can bring you pleasure.

1:11:53.0 IM: So like when I'm working all day, I keep a flower next to my desk or sometimes several. I also have a candle lit for the scent. I usually have something nearby that tastes good. Actually, a client earlier this week was talking about how she's taken to only drinking seltzer out of champagne glasses because it makes her feel fancy all day. And so I'll usually have a drink nearby in a fancy cup to be sipping on to stimulate what brings my taste pleasure. And it's small. I think

sometimes we think of pleasure as this big concept where if we're stressed out or we're sad, it's really hard to access, but it's actually the smaller we make it, the easier it is for us to step into it more.

1:12:44.5 NA: Yeah, that makes so much sense. And I think it's a really important and lovely reminder. If you could leave folks with one call to action based on this conversation, what would that be? Maybe a question to ask themselves or a small action to take?

1:13:00.3 IM: I think the question for me is just to reflect on what really brings you pleasure. How can you access pleasure right now and then make yourself a pleasure altar or a pleasure box that has some of those physical tangible reminders in it so that you can just reach for them all the time.

1:13:24.4 NA: Yeah, and I will add to this, something that has been helpful for me because I can put a lot of pressure on myself, no surprise with this whole conversation, that I think, like you said before, pleasure has to be this huge deal, what's the most pleasurable thing? Last year, I started trying to reorient to this idea of just having a mediocre lovely time. This was... I took a sabbatical, I took a couple of months off work and I had all this pressure and expectation of, I have to make the absolute most out of this. I have to have so much fun. What if I never get this time again? There was a lot of pressure. Again, definitely has hooks into productivity culture and everything else we've talked about, and for me to just say like, what if I just have a mediocre lovely time, what if it's just fine, what if I... And I actually wound up having quite a great time, but something about that feels applicable for me or people like me here in thinking about putting together a pleasure box. It doesn't have to be like the best candle in the world where like, "Oh, the smell is good. I like the..." letting it be almost mediocre, there's something in that for me that's very permission-giving.

1:14:24.5 IM: Totally, totally. And I think another thing that comes to mind for me as you were saying that is another exercise that I sometimes have people do, is to write down pleasure affirmations on little scraps of paper and just keep a bowl of pleasure affirmations around. So anything that you might need to hear, like you have permission to slow down or you are worthy of pleasure, just those little reminders that are less about you doing something and more about you just giving yourself that permission, having a bowl like that around so that whenever you're feeling tapped out or stressed out, you have already set yourself up for a reminder from you.

1:15:08.8 NA: Yeah, I feel like one of mine would be around the idea of... Or the reminder of, you don't have to earn rest or pleasure. Yeah.

1:15:16.3 IM: Yeah, totally.

1:15:18.7 NA: No, this is so helpful. What is the best place for people to find you, to say hi online, to learn more about what you do, do you have a favorite way to connect with new folks?

1:15:28.3 IM: You know, it's so funny. I'm on, and I only say it's so funny, in the time that you and I have been friends, I've been like, "I'm leaving Instagram, I'm leaving Instagram, I'm leaving Instagram," but right now, Instagram is actually my favorite place to connect with people, and I'm

on Instagram as @Irene morning. That's a great place to find me. And my website is irenemorning.com, and that has a whole bunch more information about me and what I do, and other ways to get in touch.

1:15:56.6 NA: Awesome, I will put links to both of those things or ways to find you in the show notes. Irene, thank you so much.

1:16:02.7 IM: Yeah, thank you so much, it's been wonderful.

[music]

1:16:09.2 NA: And that's our show for today. Our music is by Adam Day, who also handles our sound editing. Thanks, Adam, you're the best. And huge thanks again, I can't say this enough to our Patreon community for making this honest conversation, this whole entire podcast and so much of my other work possible, like my weekly personal essay and discussion thread series on Substack, which is called Good Question, yep, that is funded by the Patreon community as well. Your monthly funding allows me to keep creating resources and gatherings for folks who crave honest conversations, both with themselves and others, and I fully believe that these conversations can change our lives, our relationships, and our world. Maybe that sounds like a lofty goal, but it is one that I believe in with my whole heart. To join us, just come on over to patreon.com/nicoleantoinette. Our community operates on a shame-free sliding scale, so you can feel good about supporting this work from within your own means. So I'll see you over on the Patreon community. Yes, hopefully. And until next time, know that you are doing great, you are exactly enough, you are not alone, and I am totally rooting for you.

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