



Library podcast

Emergent Strategy: An Evening with Adrienne Maree Brown

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[00:00:36] All right all right all right. We're going to ask if we can have all of our lovely guests

[00:00:43] To have a seat.

[00:00:46] We have a really beautiful program tonight. Are any of you all very interested in meeting Adrienne Maree Brown

[00:00:56] Sweet. I'm glad to hear that because she's excited to meet you. My name is C. Davida Ingram and I am the public engagement programs manager at the Seattle Public Library.

[00:01:09] Welcome to emergent strategy with Adrienne Maree Brown.

[00:01:20] For those of you who are veterans for public engagement programs and in particular if you checked out the library in 2018 you know that we are being more mindful that we are on Indigenous land and we want to acknowledge that we are on the ancestral territories of the Coast Salish people. I'd like to invite of a very dear friend and beloved advisor for the library Ellany Kayce. Ellany is going to do a welcome song for us and I'll let Ellany introduce herself

[00:01:57] Gunalchéesh. Gunalchéesh that's a Tlingit word that means thank you. Thank you. Good to see you.

[00:02:02] I'm honored to be here. We are on Duwamish land and I wanted to let you know that I am an enrolled tribal member of the Tlingit nation Raven frog clan and our people came down

by canoe to Seattle long before big was known as Seattle. We've been around for over 12 15 thousand years. And so we're honored to be here in this space today. So and this song is a welcoming song. It's a Tlingit song I sing it four times for each of the four directions and those that are able to stand.

[00:02:37] Please stand thank you. And traditionally we put our hands up like this. Facing this way for this ceremony.

[00:02:47] Thank you Wei Wei. We are a Wei.

[00:02:57] We are a how. We are a way a way way way way way way ah ha ha ha ha ha. We are he way way way way way way way way he ha ha ha ha ha ha he way. Hey we your

[00:03:52] Say it with me Gunalchéesh thank you have a seat we have a beautiful program lined up for you tonight and we're going to start with some acknowledgement and thank you's one of the things that we wanted to do was begin by acknowledging that we worked with a cohort of activists artists and educators to put together a special community engagement event last night. And today's program. So if you were part of the Seattle emergent strategy cohort can you please stand so we can acknowledge you and can we please give them a round of applause. Applause. One of the beautiful things about getting ready for this particular event is that when we started the planning I want to say this was about nine months ago in the spirit of emergent strategy. Adrienne asked us how were we doing. Intentional Community Building. And we promised her that we would be in community doing meaningful work. And I wanted to let you know alongside of doing land acknowledgements and being mindful about Indigenous city. We've been working with clear sky Native Youth Council to talk about a sacred site called Licton spring. Licton spring is in Northgate. And if you follow us on at SPL buzz on Twitter please check in tonight and use our hashtag tonight's hashtag is emergent strategy SPL. But the hashtag for the clear sky Native Youth Council project is honoring Licton in spring later on in June we'll be sharing a short video. We're gonna have a quick clip and I'm going to call my colleague Orlando to the mike just so we can get the clip ready. But we're doing a social media campaign that's focused on environmental equity. That's it aligns really well with some of the conversation I suspect we'll have tonight with Adrienne. But with an environmental equity series we've been looking at indigenous knowledge systems and the short video that you're going to see are young people who came to the library to check out our special collections have you ever been to special collections.

[00:06:23] You can make some noise as a podcast. They're not gonna see you if you raise your hand or they won't hear you if you raise your hand.

[00:06:28] But they were going to see a clip of an elder named Jackie Swanson talking to a young person who is also native about what it means to honor cultural traditions is 30 seconds and we'll keep it going after that.

[00:06:45] My name is Cante. I'm 11 years old and Hunkpapa Lakota My name is a key cheetah or akay. I'm Daniel. I'm 15 and I'm Coeur d'Alene and we're here at Licton springs the place of this name in Lushootseed

[00:07:00] The indigenous language of Puget Sound is Liq'tid and that's where the white people got the name. Liq'tid means reddish or red paint. And they took the iron oxide the red ochre from the spring over here and they used it to make paint for ceremony curing and celebration. It's the last known Duwamish a sacred place in Western King County. It's been somewhat neglected in recent years. And our project with these young learners from urban Native Education Alliance is to increase the protections expand the public signage. And we want the whole site to be a protected city of Seattle historic landmark.

[00:07:44] We started this project with the as a collaborative effort with Matt Remle and the Seattle Public Library. It is a calling that we step up as people who have the resources to give the tools to our young people so that they know and they can be affirmed in their their identity.

[00:08:04] To understand why it's a value that we protect the sacred it matters most to Duwamish and Coast Salish tribes is a sacred site to them.

[00:08:16] And so we should try and protect it even though I'm not Duwamish. I still care about other tribes and their sacred sites because they can't ever be replaced.

[00:08:25] So we did. Thank you for our cohorts but we wanted to make sure that we highlighted our community partners. In addition to our cohort members who put in from January until now planning time so that we can have this really beautiful inclusive crowd that's actually kind of harder to do in Seattle. A lot of it is Adrienne but a lot of it is community being connected with the library. I also wanted to tell you that alongside of working with clear sky

Native Youth Council we've also been working with Charleena Lyles is community Terry Lena Lyles is a mom that we lost in Sandpoint after cops were called when she was having a mental health crisis and she didn't make it through when we worked with community members to see how the library and the Office of Arts and Culture could serve them more equitably. They asked us if we could do an art program with them. So the image that you're looking at was taken by one of the young artists and Charleena Lyles is community and we're looking forward to planning an art show for them. May I ask you a question if we do a screening for lectern Springs an art show for Bressler family place would you be willing to support. And that's some of the beauty of inviting someone like Adrienne to Seattle is that there's so much beauty here already and in reading her book you probably notice that she's incredibly good at thinking about love connection trust accountability and typically for events like that I listen to a lot of our events surveys and people sometimes want the conversation to go deeper. Are you that type of audience where you'd like that conversation to go deeper.

[00:10:08] That's sweet because we want you to just take two minutes with one another because Seattle is a place that's known for having the Seattle Freeze and we break stereotypes at the library so I want you to take a moment to turn and talk.

[00:10:23] There was someone who was reflecting on Adrienne's book and noted that there is a part that says there's always enough time for the right work. There's a conversation in this room that only these people at this moment that would mean us can have find it. So we want you to talk to one another about what kinds of conversations you're looking for tonight. Let's do this in a loving way say your name say your gender pronoun and share space. We have three minutes so let's make sure everyone has the time to talk. All

[00:10:55] Right. If we can bring it back to center.

[00:11:01] That question was planted pretty intentionally because we have a tight program tonight and this is our first overflow program for public engagement. So I want the folks at. You are the best crowd I love. Just keep that energy coming. We love it. I wanted the folks at the top to know and in the middle and right in front of the stage that we're asking you to think about the kind of conversation you would like to have because we're going to have a pretty tight Q and A at the end. Well this is where I get to get off the stage which I'm happy to do. But before I do. Hold onto your service because we're coming back to that at the end. But we have two beautiful people that we I think we were lucky enough to borrow from Detroit. I can't say we

stole them from Detroit because I think Detroit will always be in a warm place in their heart and that's where Adrienne Maree Brown is.

[00:11:58] But I would like to invite Emily Lawson and Scott Kirsch Seagate to the stage to welcome Adrienne because they're dear friends of hers. So thank you Emily and Scott

[00:12:16] My Boo. Hi. Hi. Filipinos in the house. Yes.

[00:12:22] This actually is my hometown of what we call shuttle or Chez apple.

[00:12:28] I was born and raised actually just about a mile or a couple miles from here. So it's nice to welcome my sister friend A.J. and Mary Brown back to my hometown. But before we do that when I met Adriennene I was doing much more spoken word poetry. And so David I said Yeah why didn't you do anything okay. Today. So I just rewrote one this afternoon. That's right. OK. I

[00:13:01] Adapted from one of my trademark poems that I wrote in nineteen ninety five for our Filipino American R.P. Nai activists who were organizing to save Filipino classes at UCLA.

[00:13:16] And so do you all know what a diva is. OK. Well you will now. And. The bar in Tagalog or Filipino D B as in Babar a d i be a loosely translates to what P noise what does it translate to

[00:13:36] Right. Right. It is in it.

[00:13:39] So so you know I know that Adrienne and I we both come from you know church neighborhoods from black neighborhoods. I grew up in a black and Jewish neighborhood here.

[00:13:50] So if you're feeling like church tonight absolutely do the snaps and claps and and a man's if you feel it. So this is for Adrienne Maree Brown who visits Seattle today Thursday April 18th 2019 and Adrienne Maree Brown is a diva.

[00:14:12] De Bar we call her Monday as income Monday our sister friend not sister my friend but just a friend. All said in one she's the writer author facilitator singer activist organizer Dula tarot card reader healer clear warrior fighter daughter sister Artie mom a part of ruckus raising

Ruckus Society raising Detroit Summer EP she Troy Queen and multitalented multitasking emerging strategist pleasure activist woman. Who defies. Stereotype popularity not a bubbling babbling bit of a ticket to banana yellow face white bread mentality. But the need to wage love. Wage love

[00:15:04] Wage love that is reality in totality it ain't no wonder she crushes the violet patronizing of misogynist white supremacy and flushes it down the tall. Not enough so she conquers the city streets. Telling a hard nosed cop that we can wage a massive protest. Provided she keeps us on the move Adrienne is a diva diva. So instead of walking I see in your typical circles she sends us Captain Lightman movement spirals like tornadoes whipping on shielded store fronts she is the diva De Bar Oh she is more than a w o and be mad with her saber like tongue gleaming brown skin and almond eyes she burns far into the souls of activist folk making us look back at women legends of the twentieth century. So. Yes so we study you know Octavia Butler. The first diva of all science fiction divas who lived and wrote here in Lake Forest Park of Duwamish territory. And Earth will again be out there and get information and the intergenerational wisdom of place based scholar activism and elder Grace Lee Boggs but Adriennene is more than a teacher De Bar. She's the mother of all lands. That resists using our bodies as bases of war. She is like a book of ages. And time that can't stand still. She is the strong waves of her story of our story of our radical revelations of our liberation.

[00:17:00] Aging is a diva.

[00:17:04] Grace got one that I was nineteen ninety five come into 2019.

[00:17:19] We're gonna do quick acknowledgments but can I tell you all something important that you might like to know. This is not the last time you're going to see Emily Lawson. She's gonna do a guided Q and A with Adrienne right after Adrienne does her keynote.

[00:17:34] So before we do that Scott's going to introduce Adrienne but we have some acknowledgments that I want to do with Ricky Riaz because tonight was made possible through the Office of Arts and Culture and the Seattle office of civil rights. And I just wanted to leave sometimes to acknowledge them and to leave space for Ricky to say a few words to

[00:17:58] You. How's it going. How's it going. I'm a be quick. I know you are really here to see you so like I'm trying to get through this. I know when this project was put together you got to

see the pictures of some really dope and brilliant black and indigenous people of color and with the office I have the pleasure of working with the creative strategies initiative which looks at how we can use art to look at just different issue areas such as community building environment and what I like really think about like emergent strategy and like creative strategies. I think about like the folks like Dean and Mary at the hilltop urban garden in Tacoma who are focusing on black farming and community building and I think about like the folks over at feast arrest shout out Michael shout out Angelina who are really focusing on like how can we bring sustainable food and healthy food to rain beach. And I think about Adrienne who reminds us daily that folks like Octavia Octavia Butler and order Lord through poems and through alien sex can help us find can help us find our orgasmic yes and life. So I'm I just leave y'all with facts I know you're really here to see about come check us out we have your house over at King's Cross Station now it's an all indigenous show let's open Tuesday through Saturday admission is free but thank you for coming.

[00:19:34] Thank you.

[00:19:36] Thank you all for coming out. This is really a. Credible. And I just really want to acknowledge the library and David and everybody that worked on this. There's so many amazing events that happen here so just a quick thing about me. I was very fortunate to have a event for my book a couple of years ago when it came out on Detroit called the 50 year rebellion. So that's sort of what I do.

[00:20:05] Hold it and so to me it is a great honor to be able to introduce tonight's featured guest. It's an honor. And of course it's a pleasure. The pleasure is all of ours to be able to share an evening with Adrienne Maree brown. That's I'm very excited to hear you talk about this new book which I am actually just holding for the first time. And so you may know her from Octavius brood because we did an event here when was that about three years ago. Right. Amazing event here. And are any of the Octavius brood authors here today. I know there's Seattle folks in the book Oh that's right.

[00:20:51] They're doing an event like in western Washington. Okay. So look for them. Look for them. Leah Gabriel you know them. They're amazing artists. You may also know Adrienne from emergent strategy

[00:21:11] And this book of course comes out of the writings and the thinking of Margaret Wheatley who wrote leadership in the new science. But I think for both of us it really comes out of the way Gracie Boggs brought those ideas to our organizing work in Detroit among communities of color among disabled folks queer folks and really allowed us to think outside of the box beyond protest politics. And I think what's really significant is that Adrienne is taking these ideas which on one level are very complex because they're about complex science

[00:21:58] And about seeing more than what's like on the surface and yet she does it in a way that's accessible and humble and invites us in to be part of the conversation rather than sometimes happens where I work in academia but could even happen political circles people create their small circles their close circles rather than widening it to be more and more inclusive. So I think she's a very important model of what an organic intellectual can be today. She's also incredibly in demand as a facilitator. And now I understand she's training other people to be facilitators and we all need that in our movements. We need that. We need help for our movements over all and we need to have a sense of our own health and self care when we're movement builders and I really got to see her up front as a community builder and a healer in Detroit doing things like the allied media conference

[00:22:55] But also very personal things so if you read emergent strategy know her Dula work is really integral to her thinking about life and love. And she was actually the Dula for my daughter right here. Corrado

[00:23:13] Who was born almost exactly five years ago. I really couldn't imagine doing it without Adra and we had some difficulties and things and she just brought us through amazingly and so one thing Grace Lee Boggs often said. When she would open up a talk is that this is a time of great hope and a time of great danger. The danger is really obvious. We see what's happening. But the hope comes in the fact. That. Somebody who I consider one of the most caring ethical persons I've ever met ever known in the world can be really just blowing up all over the place drawing crowds training folks and someone we just had one of our really good friends make the time 100 list today as well. So there are good people. From our circles who are also being recognized because the world is changing simultaneously in dangerous ways and hopeful ways. And so the work of Adrienne Brown really helps us to understand what love looks like as a political force in the world. And so with that I really want to bring her to the stage so we can all share in the world that Adrienne is helping to create and bring into being just like she brought my own daughter into the world five years ago.

[00:24:41] I.

[00:24:43] Oh gee what a deal.

[00:24:45] Wow. Totally blew my emotions out. So I was crying already. So hi I'm Heinz Marie Brown 72. I know I'm like I'm not getting as many excuses to getting to introduce myself to people lately. I'm Adrienne would I need to do do better. All right. Thanks Orlando.

[00:25:08] Thanks. Oh wow. That is different. You're good at your job.

[00:25:14] All right. So. Hi beautiful people. Thank you so much for coming out to spend your evening with me. It's good to see you all. There's a lot of people in Seattle that I really care about and love. And then there's a lot of people that I don't know but I probably would care about you and love you. I didn't know you. And it has been incredible to work with this team and really trust this team. I'll say that because I feel like I have my life has been going through so many changes very rapidly and I'm like yeah change and then it's like when it's actually happened like call it. You

[00:25:50] Need to grieve. So it's been really beautiful dropping in but also being like trusting people and the team that pulled all this work together. It was so much trust.

[00:26:01] You know I got on the phone I heard how how intentionally y'all were approaching every single decision and I just knew it was gonna be all good. And it has been all good. So just the people. So I thought for this evening one one question I have for y'all because so it's been really interesting is the way the trends work in the world is people are like yeah we all know what a merger strategy is we heard about it but then and maybe even have it. And we got it but not necessarily have read it. Right. Which is fine right. I always tell people I'm like if you read page 15 41 and 42 you basically have it. But for the sake of this evening one of the options is I could read you those pages I could read you some of the basic stuff from the book which could help give us a common context in which to do this. So does that sound like a Yeah. Cool. And the other thing I wanted to check on hmm is I do have another this other new book that came out. And it has been such a delight having it. I'll say one of the big differences is when emergent strategy came out and people were excited about it they brought me like offerings of sage and then with pleasure activism came out.

[00:27:22] They bring me different kinds of herbs and it's still gifts and I really appreciate it but it's like oh what book do I want to write Max. Like a deep dive on ecstasy or you know just like to see what happens.

[00:27:38] All right.

[00:27:38] So for this one Oh the reason I brought up pleasure activism is if there's people who are interested in hearing a little bit about that I can do that. OK. Cool. OK. Good. I think we've got it. So the first thing I want to start with is a little breakdown about what are the some of the things that we get taught. How do we get socialized. Because mostly this book is a counter socialization operation. Right. It's trying intentionally and I think pretty transparently to say we got socialized in a messed up way. And if we're going to create a different future we have to resolve Scholz ourselves on purpose. We have to deal colonize and then we have to but not it's not enough to just say no no no we have to really have a sense of like oh where did we go awry. And then what is it we really want to be dropping into building into weaving so you're some of the things we we get taught we learn to disrespect indigenous and direct ties to land. I'm on page forty seven here. For those who want to read along we learn to be quiet polite indirect and submissive not to disturb the status quo. This is especially true in the northwest and the Midwest. Between the two of our places we're just like I don't know I mean I don't know I like. I know no I'm really upset right now I'm mad I think we should talk about Eleanor. Do you know what I mean. Does that feel familiar at all. I don't want to offend anybody.

[00:29:29] Ok. We learn facts out of context of application in school.

[00:29:34] How will this history science math show up in our lives in the work of growing community and home. We learn that tests and deadlines are the reasons to take action. This puts those with good short term memories and a positive response to pressure in leadership positions leading to urgency based thinking regardless of the circumstance we learn to compete with each other in a scarcity based economy that denies and destroys the abundant world we actually live in. The wool is over eyes we learned to deny our longings and our skills and to do work that occupies our hours without inspiring our greatness we learn to manipulate each other and sell things to each other rather than learning to collaborate and evolve together we learn that the natural world is to be manicured controlled or pillaged to support our consumers lives. Even the natural lives of our bodies get medicated pathologies shaved or

improved upon with cosmetic adjustments. And if you really like to shave everything no shame. Just think about it. Why. We learned that factors beyond our control determine the quality of our lives. Something as random as which skin gender sexuality ability nation or belief system we're born into sets a path for survival and quality of life. In the United States specifically though I see this in most places I travel. We learn that we only have value if we can produce. Only then do we earn food. Home health care education similarly we learn our organizations are only as successful as our fundraising results. Whether the community impact is powerful or not we learn as children to swallow our tears and any other inconvenient emotions. And as adults that translates into working through red flags value differences pain and exhaustion we learn to bond through gossip venting and destroying rather than cultivating solutions together. Would had canceling their perhaps the most egregious thing we're taught is that we should just be really good at what's already possible to leave the impossible alone.

[00:32:21] So we got to fix that.

[00:32:23] All right so so emergent strategy it really came out of sitting at the intersection of all those lessons and feeling like something was off. And I'll say I started pretty young with the like something's weird about this here planet. That feeling of like I had the right time of history. I don't know. You know like I'm on a pretty light by the time I was like in the fifth or sixth grade I was already having pretty big existential crisis and. And you know it makes sense because I'm this and I was born into like a military southern Christian household right. I had come a long way to get to freedom. So the military industrial complex the church industrial complex all these complexes they only work if people don't really ask a lot of questions. And so from a very early age I was like Well I think asking questions is like my thing here and emergent strategy in a lot of ways is just like looking at that list of things and being like here's some big questions I have. Why are we doing it like this. You know one question that occurs to me all the time is this planet is amazing. Like I'm really passionately into this planet. I got crushed out it's my bay it's my boo I really I'm just like sometimes I'll just you know out here I'll just like cash the north. I mean this area is so interesting to me it's so wet it's gray but lush right. It makes me think of like Fleetwood Mac.

[00:33:59] I don't know it's just like an interesting I don't know. There's something about this just like yeah let's just like get in sweaters and like let's just be cozy and it's like a way.

[00:34:09] Right. And if it's not your place it's not your place. Like if you're a desert creature whatever. But I love that there's like even amongst humans there are humans who are like this is my way. Like a great day to me is kind of like a rainy day in cozy right. I like that. I think I should visit here more often. But I think it's like the idea that there's this kind of totally beautiful place and then four days ago I was in Thailand and it was very fascinating because it's also super lush super green super vibrant and alive totally different feeling and super wet like the whole time you're walk around it's like I am pouring sweat. It's you know I can't even pretend like I smell fantastic like is normal I smell great right now. This is the place you check

[00:35:01] It out.

[00:35:04] I think I just made up a new thing you know. All right.

[00:35:14] Oh yeah. So anyway is this whole other experience right. It's just like getting to be someplace if be like and then what has the body done to organize itself to be in this place and just for me the a magical miracle thing I've been like when I was in that place here's how my skin felt and here's how I felt and then landing here I got off the plane and it's like not freezing it's not Detroit's not snowing I was like oh you know so cold now is like oh but in two days three days my body has fully acclimated and now I'm like It's fine it's great right. So I just I'm like I didn't do that like the earth got created and then billions of years of DNA and billions of years of evolving and somehow my skin learned that trick right. That kind of thing just I'm like it'll never cease to fill me with wonder. Also you should watch the show one strange rock because Will Smith is also full of wonder. Who knew one strange rock Will Smith Basically give saying the same things I'm saying right now. So Octavia Butler Seattle Seattle Light lover of Washington. I want to tell you guys the truth I kind of have held it against ya that she slipped on ice here. And died right because I was like it was her time but would that have happened in California.

[00:36:34] I don't think so. Right.

[00:36:36] So I just want to say I'm getting over it but I want you to know we're working at something between us and we're gonna work through it OK. So but Octavia loved it here she came here on purpose. I'm a big fan of people moving places on purpose and being someplace on purpose. I think this anti-immigration anti migration anti moving between places is so anti human right. That's not how we are and who we are. We're a migrating force or

migrating body. We route down into certain soil and care for it but we also migrate and trading take care of each other. And she was a little bird that was like I got to fly north. There's something really useful up here for me. And so Octavia is like a god to me goddess Diva diva. OK. And the reason for that is because she wrote these stories and she took very seriously her art form that writing new stories was a crucial activity that a black powerful person should be involved in. And she wrote these stories that I kept reading over and over again. And when you come across a writer who does that for you were you just like I'm just gonna read it again like this is my grandfather was an evangelical Christian. I talk about him often. I loved him very much. Still love him. He died but my love continues and he returned to the Bible. So I think about that the way he came back to the Bible all the time. Like if I would say anything to him like grass is green he bike you know what the Bible says about that if you turn to first Corinthians Well you know be like. I mean can I just talk about the weather. So. But I feel that way about Octavia. Like people will say anything they like this person was just so nice to me and Starbucks was like kindness eases change.

[00:38:20] They're like OK you know.

[00:38:24] But she wrote so much. She wrote 12 novels she had a collection of short stories and then in the Huntington Library there's Epic Content from her. There's so much more and there's scholars luckily who are going through digging in the Crates finding all the goodness for us to have. But this text and everything else I've ever done in my life in deep ways is tied into the lineage of her work and there's this particular verse all successful life is adaptable opportunistic tenacious interconnected and for kind understand this use it shape God so I of course read this a million times a million maybe twenty four before I started writing this book and then. And then I wrote the book and then afterwards I came back and was reading through her versus again and I was like oh this verse basically is the whole book. How did you to write the book. But. You know sometimes you need 300 pages to get to get to 10 words. So fecundity. So I want to break this down in terms of how it translates into the emerging strategy elements right. So there's two systems of emergent strategy. One is these sort of six elements. And the other is a set of principles and the elements I think of as the like what.

[00:39:47] And the principles are kind of like the how like you want each of these elements present in an organizing space or in a collaborative space or in a liberated relationship. Right. All of these things need to be there because change is constant. Right. So if change is constant These are the elements that help you move through that with grace. So one thing is

understanding fractal the fractal nature of the world as we are at the small scale so we are at the large scale and the more we can understand that the more we can shape our organizing in reality I came up with amazing opportunistic optimistic organizers who were often trying to pitch to me something that was totally impossible like we should take over the government. And I was like awesome I'm down. I want a revolution. But then the question I often ask with that is how many of you and I'd love to ask is here. How many of you right now would say there's a functioning democrat democratic process happening in my household. It's a functional democracy. We make decisions together.

[00:40:54] We vote on the budget. Tell the truth.

[00:40:59] But raise your hand if you're like No no no we got it at my house we're doing it we're doing it we're practicing. We all work together. Two year old to 20 year old to 50 year old on the budget. OK cool.

[00:41:09] So then right then taking it to your block. Right. So it's like you've got it working in your house. How many those people would still raise your hand if I was like my whole block together we are a democratic sharing our resources. No it's good. I'm like I want to hear it. OK.

[00:41:26] And then so then your city OK. Cool. So. I ask that just because on a frat if we're thinking on a fractal nature we're not practicing at the small scale

[00:41:41] Something that we can actually bring up to a larger scale. And so what happens is people are getting elected who've never practice it on any scale and they were like Why are you so bad at this job. Like why. Right. It's because you get elected and your job is not building community when you get elected. Your job is press press statements as far as I can tell. It's you know it's like what is my scandal right. So fractal is something we need to figure out like how do I practice democracy at the smaller scale adaptive and I say here adaptive with intention because it's not just oh something happened I'm changing and I think we've been doing way too much of this since this late latest election. Right. It's just sort of like anything that orange man says Raul like I'm like That's not adapting. That's reactivity. Right. He knows how to get us to react. It's a total classic narcissistic abusive toxic relationship you've ever been in one don't recommend it. You don't even have to do what you have been in one now because this is the president. So you know you've got the experience and it's like that right where someone just be like Oh you think this I didn't do the dishes I broke the door right as a.

[00:42:56] You can just wash the dishes. No. Okay cool. So how do we instead of just reacting all the time to fuck shit how do we become adaptive with intention. And I love to look at flocks of birds for this because flocks of birds when they're migrating south. If they get thrown off by a storm they're not just like we'll just stay here in New York then for the for the winter here. It'll be cool. No they're like we've got to survive. So we need to just figure out how to adapt. Mexico is our goal and I think we should all have that goal. Or beach any beach any place. Non-linear and iterative. So this is how change actually happens. How many of you have ever made or made others strategic plan. All right. Keep your hands really high. If that strategic plan worked exactly as you planned it awesome you guys that was so beautiful. That was exactly what I. I was like it's always awkward. You know you're taking a risk. If I was like. Strategic planning works for me

[00:44:10] Right. So it doesn't work right.

[00:44:12] What happens with those plans is often we do really beautiful research digging work visioning all of that and then we put it away. And so a lot of it is instead how do we set strategic intentions how do we set core values that we can organize ourselves around so that when change comes we can ride the waves of change in non-linear ways and still get where we need to be. Yeah and iterative that just means what we do over and over and over again we become what we practice. So I'm always asking people like what is it you're practicing.

[00:44:44] You know when someone comes and tells me like this person just came up in my face and yelled at me right.

[00:44:49] I'm like immediately let's flip the story away from that asshole who cares about them. But why did you practice in that moment right. That's all I'm interested in it's like did you yell back. Did you push back. Did you let them agitate you. Did you let them steal your day. How quickly did you reclaim your time. How quickly did you step away from that. Did you intervene. Like what happened. I'm much more interested in what happens next and I think our movements have gotten way too stuck in the bad thing happened and then we want to calm and we want to tell them the bad thing happened and just get a lot of like waves of sympathy and empathy but it doesn't actually stop the bad thing from happening to another person like the bad thing just rose right. The only difference is now we're more aware. Bad things happen. Honey I knew that.

[00:45:32] All right. The next one resilient and in this book I tied it with transformative justice because I wanted to really push myself and push us to claim transformative justice as a real way to practice recovering from harm together. I think of us as like tiny little babies in transformative justice practice where we're like crawling. I was just around a little tiny baby who's like about to crawl right. So she's got like. I can't really show you but

[00:46:07] I can really show you. But

[00:46:09] I was like there's no appropriate way to do it.

[00:46:11] You guys have phones but.

[00:46:15] But I'll say this is basically like she puts her hand.

[00:46:18] She's got her hand she's got like she get her butt up or she can get her up or die and then she goes back to the right. And so we were as adults all getting on the ground and crawling around in front of her because we were like OK where we got to practices with you so you can kind of see here's what you're not gonna jump straight to walking but that's how you've seen us do. So like let's talk let's walk. And she was like Oh so she's started doing like you know when they start doing the rocking back and forth leg as I am. Oh I get it now on. Just get you know and then we all clap and she's like You know my babies are the best. So. But I think we're in the same place a transformative justice. I think sometimes we get our butts in the air sometimes we get our upper dog sometimes we even like start rearing towards justice but very few people actually get to the part where they're even crawling but then we're mad at each other as if we should already be running marathons in it. Right.

[00:47:14] We're like how are you so bad at this I'm like you don't know how to do it here. We don't know we don't know.

[00:47:19] We live in a punitive justice system and we've been socialized to believe that when someone does any kind of harm to you we dispose of that person in school we dispose of them by expelling them suspending them they have to get out of school had to get out of the classroom. And then as we get older we put folks in prison or we just kick them out of the community in some way. We shamed them we hurt them right because we are mad at them

but let's end them like if I got mad but then figured out a way to restore the harm there'd be more of us. That's ultimately my goal is I want us to have so many people that are healed from whatever the harms are that have created the patterns between us that we actually are a compelling force that we can't be argued with. So that's why we need to practice transformative justice. And I would love to get a sense here how many people would say again in my intimate relationships I am practicing transformative justice. Like when harm happens I really try to go to the root of that harm. I try not to rely on the state to resolve that harm but to try to resolve it in community. Yeah. I look at it systemically and not just interpersonally. Good. Okay. Seattle

[00:48:31] Wash I'll be the hub of T.J. in the future. T.J. cheers for justice here. You know what you're talking about. So the next one is interdependent and decentralized. I'm geek about this one. I feel like when you look at movements in the past a common thread that we'll see is that they hit a standstill because whoever was seen as the movement leader was taken out either taken out by being removed being in prison being forced into exile or assassinated. And so then we have these movements that get stuck right because they're like we were relying on this person to give us the guidelines. Now I'll just say this. That's usually what that is when you're one step removed from movement. I think we all know this. We all see people who get lifted up as our leader all the time and then we liked

[00:49:26] I'm not going to say anything. I'm not going to say anything publicly am I going to say anything on mine. But you know she don't really. Know what he does. OK. Or whatever it is we talk shady stuff about them. But in some ways I'm like Hey it's safer if this is the person. That's right. Like they're not going to do anything effective.

[00:49:44] And then we can all do what we need to do. But in a longer longer run the more we understand Leader fullness.

[00:49:51] Right. That we want movements that are full of people who feel like I know the vision I think of it as the dandelion seeds right a dandelion seed holds the entire potential not just for one more dandelion but for an entire community an entire field of dandelions and each seed has the capacity. We are the same way in our bodies we have multitudes of options for ways to seed community. Right. We often choose a very narrow path that's not our path.

[00:50:18] So what are we practicing in terms of interdependence and then decentralization. I always say you can test decentralization if you talk to the EDF an organization or the board of an organization and they like our vision is this right. And it's so beautiful like it's so articulate. Right. But then you go and talk to someone in the community that they supposedly serve with that vision and you're like What did they do and they're like hmm you know I don't know exactly. All right. Or the best case scenario and that is I don't know exactly but they're really good to us. They show up for us. They are there when we need them. That's best case scenario rare case scenario often case scenario is really about it. Right. Or they get a bunch of money. Oh no. Right. Well I never heard of them. That's one of my favorites is when I go into a community that someone's like we work this community and they've only had like five people in the pictures ever. And then you get there you're like see all I know them do you. Right. And I think this is I blame philanthropy. I blame funders for this. I blame capitalism for everything OK. But I really do believe that so much of our movements get shaped by how much money can we get. Who can we get that money from. What is the funding grant cycle that they're in. And almost as soon as you get the money you're in a reporting stop the madness. So. One of my goals in life is to in philanthropy

[00:51:56] Thank you.

[00:51:57] Thank you. I take it as a blessing. So and then the last one is creating more possibilities creating more possibilities. So the way that many of us learn strategy and agenda development is. We will narrow it down to one best option. What is the one way and usually you probably have been a part of these processes. They start out so rich and vibrant and like all these ideas and then in order to get to the one idea we all give up what we care about and love and we end up with like well here's a sentence we can agree on it has words.

[00:52:34] This is our vision. Words change

[00:52:39] Transformation diversity scene right.

[00:52:46] And I you know I love when I'm working with groups I'm like That's not what you care about. I can see that you don't care about it like you're telling me you're saying it's me and I can see that you don't care about that.

[00:52:58] It's like oh what do you really love. How do we make room for everyone's really loved thing to be cohabitate and coexisting and again nature offers us beauty in this because the most resilient systems in the world are the most bio divergent right the most of many things coexisting and I really think this is a thing that you might have heard me say unless you never met me before but

[00:53:27] Then a mushroom just gets to be a great mushroom. Right. And it's not like a mushroom. You're so not an oak tree.

[00:53:37] That way of being is not strategic or small and mushy like you need to be strategic and tall and like canopy right.

[00:53:45] You can imagine like no mushroom really. I process toxins and give people high. Like you. Stand still. OK

[00:53:55] But in nature there's no such fight. The mushrooms the mycelium are actually like trees. There's a little situation happening over there we just thought we would communicate it to you through our mausoleum network so that you can protect yourself and not get that say. I mean like

[00:54:11] Mycelium are so hot I really love mycelium anyway. That's all I had to say. So

[00:54:23] So a couple more things here. One is principles of emergent strategy. So those were the elements they like six chunky elements there and then these principles I'll just read out real quick without a lot of extra is what that means. All right. Small is good. Small is all the large is a reflection of the small change is constant. Be like water. There is always enough time for the right work and there is a conversation the room that only these people at this moment can have find it. These are my two favorites for facilitators facilitators always like we just don't have enough time to do anything. Or you know when you work how many of you have worked as a facilitator or like right. Oh my goodness. Vic I love it. So how many of you have worked and developed an agenda that had increments. There were five minutes long in it.

[00:55:23] Ok. How do you know about this. Does anything happen in five minutes. No.

[00:55:29] And so what happens is you put out because what usually that means is are like we're putting everything right. That means that you got a list from people that was like Here's the 20 things that we think could be useful. And then that next step we like let's pare down to the priorities does it. And say you're just like let's give it off five minutes but then you know what happens that first person takes 10. And everyone's sitting there passive aggressively.

[00:55:56] No it's fine. No it's fine it's fine.

[00:56:01] We're going to make it work it's fun. Right. And then it piles up and there's like the sad last person's is like I guess I don't have any time but. I exist

[00:56:14] Anyway.

[00:56:14] So one of the things I've really been training myself in is not even mentioning time when I'm facilitating and if people mention it just be like we have enough there is enough. I almost always end early now when I'm facilitating because that approach of ineptness somehow magically works and it focuses people. Right.

[00:56:34] Because our lives are miraculous and we should never waste them on bad meetings.

[00:56:42] This next one comes from Rihanna's body.

[00:56:47] Never a failure always a lesson. She literally has a tattooed on her clavicle. Someday I hope to touch. I have a longer there's more to that fantasy.

[00:57:03] Okay.

[00:57:05] We all have our dreams. All right. So

[00:57:08] This one comes from the dowdy Ching allowed to trust the people. If you trust the people they become trustworthy the opposite is also true. If you don't trust people they don't grow into that move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections over critical mass. This doesn't mean you give up on critical mass. It means that the way you get critical mass that matters under pressure is that you focus on critical connections. If people have only signed a

petition that's not numbers you can count on. Right. They're not going unless they show up in the street they're not going to take the arrest. They're not going to do it you know for white folks this is a big one they're not going to be accomplices when it when something's happening and it needs an intervention right. But if you've built deep critical relationships across communities across backgrounds across needs if you really know each other then when the police come running that's when you get those amazing acts or people are like no we're going to use our privilege and say No you're not taking these people. Right. So we need that kind of critical connection to each other. And so in order to do that I say you build the resilience by building the relationships and think of it as a spiderweb. Right. Like a spider can't just jump from one place to another and just be like bam web. Right. It's like all these little connections and spiders are so brilliant because they're like oh this is as far as I can stretch this line without having some connecting lines here or else my Web is going to not work it's not going to hold it's not going to catch what I need to catch for nourishment.

[00:58:41] It's not going to work. Spiders are really good teachers at the patients it takes to actually build a functional system that can actually hold. And that's I think of that kind of resilience where I'm like I want bullshit to come flying at me and then just to be in a web of awesome that's just like

[00:59:02] We're gonna use you later. Right. That's amazing. I like. That's composed.

[00:59:11] I know you saw me come with that composed I just I was like in my compost for life. I love compost so much like I'm like poop whatever compost maze. So. All my farmers in the House are like compost is great. Less prep more presence please don't do any more all nighters preparing power points. We can feel that you're no longer present with us when you show up because you're so tired because you didn't sleep. Just get really great sleep and trust in your passion and show up and like a person and then what you pay attention to gross what you pay attention to grows. Huh. This one will change your life. I think all of these will really change. I mean I'm biased but

[00:59:59] I really believe this what you pay attention to grows like what you bring your attention to. I think the reason we have this orange pumpkin president is because we put our attention even negative attention.

[01:00:09] We just gave it all. We were like you are annoying and dumb and not smart.

[01:00:17] You're not good at business.

[01:00:18] I'm like I know so much about this person that I do not want to know anything about. Why. Because y'all put your attention. I'm not blaming you. I blame Fox but also I'm like Yeah. And we didn't take our attention say where is AMC where it is Barbara Lee. Where are our leaders that we want to bring our attention to and uplift Yeah. You have some leaders like that here. They're like these people. If we just gave them our attention instead of putting it on the shit we don't like these people could be winning instantly. I see some people pointing at themselves and around each other. OK put your attention on your friends all right. So last thing I'm going to read to ya. And then I think well good.

[01:01:00] So I mean it this is going down vulnerable lane because why not.

[01:01:06] So four years ago I was just reminded four years ago was 2015 math and so of course I knew that. So we released Octavias brood that year and it was incredible thing to release this collection of short stories from social justice people with all their visions in him it was really incredible. And we did a big book release in Detroit on April 18th. Right. Four years ago today and I. Two days before that. Had an ectopic pregnancy total. You know I don't know. How much you know about these things but it was a very big surprise because I use Plan B.

[01:01:51] I was like the B stand for if it's not stop the baby anyway I don't know what I thought but it didn't work for me. Oh actually have you all seen shrill. Did you have this moment did anyone else have this moment so shrill. I'm going to sideways when I come back and it's gonna still be our time so shrill is this is based off of Lindy West's brilliant work. She's y'all know her right

[01:02:14] Love. So television show comes out about this and in the television show The woman is overweight. She's going into get basically the like a plan B type thing and takes it. It doesn't work. She has to go through and have an abortion. And one thing she learns is they're only dosed up to 175 pounds. And I was like

[01:02:35] Time travel. I'm hungry.

[01:02:37] Like why didn't I know that four years ago when I went to the counter and I was like I just had unprotected sex. It was great. Now I would like your pill right. And no one mentioned it. I could have taken a double dose changed my life instead about a month later I go to open a window and all this and I feel like I'm dying. Someone just cut me in half. I don't know has anyone experienced an ectopic pregnancy is very rare. All right. But what it feels like is kind of like a kidney stone made out of a game of thrones Dragon it's like right. It's like I'm inside you and I'm coming out. And so it was a shock to my system. It was a big shock. And then I had two days before I needed to do this big event right. That I've been preparing for for many years. And mostly I was in shock you know so when you're in shock you're like It's fine. I can totally do this. It's fine right. But then I wrote this essay because this is what it actually took to get through. All the stuff that follow what I have been studying by being hyper aware inside my life is how much being interdependent is a series of small repetitive motions. Here are some of the things I have had to do repeatedly towards interdependence.

[01:04:00] One be seen initially with defensiveness I am not like you say I am even especially in the face of experts I have diagnosed myself. I know what is wrong with me. I just want to know. I pulled up to the hospital like having an appendix thing that appendix thing is happening to me and they're like could you be pregnant. I know I should plan B so I just am having the appendix I need you to focus on the hunt. And they were like Okay but could you possibly be pregnant. Like no I don't know how else to say this to you I'm not pregnant. I barely ever sleep with guys I just am having an appendix thing. So the nurse was so kind when she came with my blood tests she was like OK. It's a miracle. You're never pregnancy you are a and then perhaps without agency being seen as actually non-negotiable though I can hide or I can determine my level of grace and relationship in it. On so many levels interdependence requires being seen as much as possible as your true self. Meaning that your capacity and need are transparent meaning even when I don't want to look in the mirror I am and I choose to be open to the attention of others. Sometimes I start with my woes those with whom I'm co evolving through friendship I show something I've been hiding and hope I'm still lovable.

[01:05:34] This generally goes better than could be expected every single time. I've also tried starting out make it on a hard operating table under a bright light shivering from the cold of so many strangers eyes I can walk towards this being seen and experienced the beauty of releasing all that guard and protection that miracle distortion. Or I can resist it and only be seen in moments of trauma and loss of control. But I will be seen and the more I open to it the gentler and more necessary that attention feels to be wrong. There is nothing like the wrong

feeling of being an intuitive witchy healer and having to be told something indisputable about your body. Particular if you've already done the thorough work of disputing said something out loud at a volume that might by some be described as unmedicated anguish level. Is pitiful wrong. The easier being wrong is for you the faster you can release your viewpoint the quicker you can adapt to changing conditions. Changing circumstances adapting allows you to know and name current needs and capacity to be in relationship in real time as opposed to any cycle of wishing and or resenting what others do or don't give you Sorry I set you up for that I knew that was going to happen. Sometimes there isn't one definitive truth.

[01:07:02] My favorite situations and sometimes there is one but you can't see it. Least favorite situation. Just at least consider that the place where you're wrong might be the most fertile ground for connecting with and receiving others and in a beautiful twist. Being soft in your rightness as opposed to smashing people with your brilliance can open others up to whatever wisdom you have accumulated. I'm grateful to all the people who were softly right about me this past month when I couldn't see my own needs. Three except my inner multitudes and honest self would agree to some self care practice or limitation that would protect my recovering wounded body and then another honest even earnest self would almost immediately act against that agreement. I'd be half bent over to lift something when the voice of one of my precious beloved was slipped through. Seriously what the fuck are you doing. My loved ones are pure molasses sweetness. There is a me that wants to get that sugar devil away from me for good. There is a me that can't go through physical trauma without ice cream. I can't even imagine that also just on a sale of ice cream so consistently. It might be it might be my most consistent relationship in my life. So good. You can always count on ice cream. You won't take your things. All right. The more I accept this

[01:08:30] The more I can share my contradictory truths with those who can support me and help me move towards my best self. Thank you. I am not turning against myself. I am multitudes. The tide to be turned is a process of inner alignment. And those who wish to soar. Support me need to be vulnerable with that inner contradiction. For. Ask for and receive what I need. Can you drive me to the hospital. Can you explain what is happening to me. Can you stop my pain. Can you open this water bottle. Can you help me stand up and sit down. Can you open the door. Can you put my bag in the overhead bin. Can you bring me groceries. Can you drive me to the airport and actually park and help me bring my suitcase inside. Can you hold me while I cry. Can you heal me. And so on for what feels like forever. And most of all the childlike request inside of every storytelling. Can you listen while I feel this again. Again I'm

learning that interdependence is not about the equality of offers in real time. I had to ask most of these things that people I didn't necessarily know or who I knew but wouldn't be able to offer anything to in the foreseeable future.

[01:09:51] I had to trust in that karma ish idea that the support I've offered in the past or will offer in the future would balance the scale which felt so me tilted over and over I offered up my small self and was held in big ways thread through me again and again the result of this experience is that I feel so much more woven into the world I still anticipate my independence my default can do self space but I don't want to sever any of this connecting fabric between myself and all the incredible people who held me through this past month saw me corrected me held me and my contradictions met my needs I want more of my life to feel this interdependent this of community and of humanity I love knowing how incredible it feels to have a need meant to be loved and cared for and also know how incredible it feels to meet an authentic need it's data all this learning tender data Yeah so thank you for celebrating this anniversary with me

[01:10:56] Yay that's it.

[01:11:03] Yeah. Now let's do some Q and some a and some feels and some thoughts and some questions and some comments and some stuff.

[01:11:10] Can we give it up for Adrienne so we're we're getting geared up for Emily Lawson to do Q and A with Adrienne I'd want to do a reminder earlier in the program we asked for folks to hold onto your comment cards. Now's a good time if you have some comments written to start passing them down.

[01:11:39] This is credo. Yeah

[01:11:47] It means revolutionary love song. Yes. And Adrienne is a singer. Maybe later she'll sing for you.

[01:11:54] Maybe you think maybe that dead. They behave well. We can research okay. Are we ready. Okay. Okay. You know Adrienne.

[01:12:04] For those of you who don't know I actually am an oral historian. Yes. And my work was centered here is centered my research and work is centered here in Seattle. And my second home of Detroit where I lived for several years. Yes. Near where Adrienne lives and I could actually teach Asian-American studies and women's studies at the University of Michigan.

[01:12:26] You fight to do that. Yes. Yes had I teach your writings and work. But I've never got a chance to interview you. I know. Never. We've never done that actually sit down we're actually just you know chasing babies and making change and all that.

[01:12:40] So we're blessed to have you here in our hometown. And I want to just ask you you know you've been here several times and we just want to ask you what it's been like for you this particular trip.

[01:12:54] I know you did some community sharing yesterday and was there something from this experience that you want to maybe share with the rest of the group here.

[01:13:03] Yeah. So yes I told people yesterday that it was I'd never express anything like what we did yesterday. So we had a space that was for black indigenous and people of color healers only. And every time I've ever come to Seattle it's mostly been an all white experience or a mostly white experience and it's all good. You know great white folks. Right. And I always feel a little in question. You know I'm like oh what are the dynamics happening here.

[01:13:35] How does all that good intention land on the black and indigenous and people of color. Does that intention translate into tangible resources and you know is there redistribution happening is there. Right. So I always feel those questions and in Detroit is so different. Right. It's like a majority black city a majority black organizing space. And so yesterday getting to be in that room of all these black indigenous and people of color it was really healing from for the people in the room were like I mean the all we could not wait to get to dancing you know.

[01:14:11] I mean like it was like we were just like we're around each other. Yes. I was like Oh OK.

[01:14:16] Seattle come through and Tacoma OK. There was a Tacoma person. All right.

[01:14:23] And I want to offer that here in a space is not all black. Indigenous people of color because I think that everyone in this space including white folks can do a lot to support those kind of spaces existing right. And I think a lot happened to pull it together. But I'm like that should just be a regular thing. And I really believe in that comeback he river statement approach of like if it's good for the black women it's going to be good for everyone else because of the nature of the society. I think of it as a fractal from combat. Ray is like if it works for this group of oppressed people then everything else would have had to shift to make it work. So I think about that like I'm like pay attention to you strong black women and make sure that they have those spaces and then flow out from you know flow from their patent. I mean like this space I also want to say to see the growth that has happened around claiming the claiming indigenous histories of this place and actually uplifting indigenous presence allows for indigenous futures in this place and that thrills me to that I really felt that yesterday I was like oh it's not just we want to honor that this land once belonged to someone but it's more like this is this is whose land this is is to Amish territory now and that changes what the future is gonna be.

[01:15:41] That's very exciting to me awesome thank you. Yes you can. Yeah.

[01:15:46] You can snap and clap. I told you all that before. We're used to it.

[01:15:52] So you know I tell students all the time I assign and teach Octavius brood also while every year I know I know like I'm like Emily such a important and serious brain in my life.

[01:16:03] So I'm just sort of like you teach my Well you know I tell the story in class how you were editing that book when I was pregnant. Yes. And you were our doula. Yes. And so we basically gave birth to beautiful babies together. Yes. And so since that that was oh several years ago now five years ago now Corrie is five four years ago. And since that time you published emergent strategy and now the new pleasure activism book a lot of those. Yes amazing right. Can you talk to us a little bit about pleasure activism and more. What. You know what. All right. You want to play with that book.

[01:16:50] Your activism is so exciting. It's in the lineage of Audrey Lord's work and her essay The uses of the erotic I got permission to reprint it in the front of the book.

[01:17:01] So if you have never read how many of you have read that essay. OK. Good. Yeah. Good. So if you never have you can and should I highly recommend it. And now you can read it in the book. But I also recommend going on the Internet and Googling it and you can actually listen to her read it to you. It's so good. It's odd your lord across time and space. So the key concepts of that for me are that we get we believe that we don't deserve pleasure in direct relationship to our experiences of oppression and trauma. So it's not just like Oh I am privileged but it's like I believe I deserve pleasure. So I want to tell a little thing. I went to Bosnia 5:00 today. OK. And it was I was for a long time for like several hours I was the only person of color visibly person of color that I saw. And I had this experience of like oh yeah this was this was mostly the experience I've had with going to spaces where it was like a bathhouse or spa or some like that was like it's all white people and then me like me too.

[01:18:08] I'm also getting him as such. All right.

[01:18:11] And someone immediately wanted to tell me how to move through the space. Right. Like you don't know this yet. Right. But this is how you do it.

[01:18:18] I was like Oh I've been bad housing OK. I wrote a book about it. OK. I did have that last Hey. Don't tell me how to put the hat on I know what to do in the house. So anyway it was this experience though for me that has been so common in my life of pleasure has to be a sidebar.

[01:18:39] Pleasure has to be something I should even feel guilty about because the world is so jacked up and we need to be rescuing it 24/7. And it's been flipping in my own life and now it's starting to flip through this work is it's actually a measure of freedom. How much pleasure we can feel how much pleasure we can access in our bodies those parts of us that have gone numb to protect ourselves. Many of us are survivors of harm that created numb pattern is numbing patterns throughout our bodies. Many of us are have experienced direct trauma and then we have ancestral trauma. There's just like so much just piled up that tells us you don't deserve. And when I used the word pleasure in this book it's really joy contentment and satisfaction joy contentment and satisfaction.

[01:19:24] And people like it's so funny when I say the name of the book people like oh it's like Freaky bacchanalia you know and I was like No that's just how oppressed we are. Right. We are so repressed that the idea of having any pleasure is like. So you just had an orgy. Right.

I'm like now in life that's your thing. No shame. But like for most of us if you could just have a regular consistent orgasm you'd be in good shape and by yourself. Right. Just try it. You know Mae West says that an orgasm a day keeps the doctor away. I can testify. But what's in the book I talk about reclaiming sexual territory.

[01:20:08] And one of the main things in the me too movement moment that feels really important is I think we have now seen decades of trying to deal sexualize every encounter D sexualized the workplace. Do you sexualize the spa. Do you sexualize all these places. And it's not working right. It's not working to be like just pretend you don't see each other's bodies and how hot everybody is and all that. And what happens is you push it down and in like a volcano. Right. Anything that's like I need to move out and instead you're containing it blows out and it blows out in acts of harm. So I think so many of the acts of sexual harm you see are people who are like you know I've been trying to repress something instead of engaging in a healthy way. So one of the things I talk about in that is like how do we learn relearned or learn for the first time how to use our voices in sexual encounters. How do we learn to take a no and still be in a respectful relationship. You know like if I'm like Emily I've got such a big crush on you girl.

[01:21:04] Can we hook up and you're like No you know me and Scott are just doing our thing then it isn't me like Oh well then I guess we should never talk or should just be awkward like OK cool. Thank you. Thanks for the boundary. Can we still be friends. I'm like if we if like everyone knew how to do that basic move so much of our community drama would be kaput. Right. Because how many people are like we can't work together that person try to hit on me once or whatever. It's like we don't know. So there's a big part about sex.

[01:21:29] There's a big part about drugs and really decriminalizing legalizing exploring. And it's really interesting to be in this pivotal moment of a lot of decriminalization happening but all the benefits for it still flowing back towards big pharma or white folks. And so it's like how you know Yano 2013 union you know so. Exactly right. And I'm like I just want to say Seattle weed is really great. So but just making sure that it's like are there black on dispensaries Indigenous owned dispensaries. And are you support. You know it's like making sure that that's what's going.

[01:22:05] And then there's a whole section just on other pleasures. So the pleasure of fashion and the pleasure of humor pleasure over the age of 60. Pleasure once you had a cancer

diagnosis pleasure after childhood sexual abuse you're just like raising sexually liberated kids like there's just a bunch of stuff in there a lot of brilliant people from all over the country so hopefully I'll come back and just do some pleasure stuff with you. Yes we would love it once you love that. Pleasure activism conference maybe you. Know people keep being like it's the first time I could give these people can we host you for a pleasure activism retreat I'm like yeah oh

[01:22:47] Right where you make me cry. Yeah. Absolutely. I'll bring all my friends from Seattle. Yeah.

[01:22:58] For those of you who don't know where we Adrienne and I have really been blessed to have been part of the beloved community of Detroit to have been part of Detroit Summer and the allied media projects extended family learning and working with the late Gracie Boggs you know who was really known for her work in Detroit.

[01:23:18] And she and her husband Jimmy the late Jimmy and Grace Lee Boggs they would start their annual conversations in Maine. And we've been blessed.

[01:23:26] We were blessed to remain a beautiful space there and they would always start conversations with Maine in Maine with this question. And. You know I was gonna have to throw it out to you. So the question is and they would always ask and I ask you now. What time is it on the clock of the world.

[01:23:49] What time is it on the clock of the world on the clock of the word Mama Grace. I love it because Mama Grace I want to say shoot also before I answer my answer she would ask it and then someone would answer especially some who'd never met her before they'll come their answers but

[01:24:07] She would just do it.

[01:24:09] And as you either say OK that's fine. Or she'd be like just totally ignore that I'd be like here's what time it is on my clock. And I'm like so it always gets me I'm like who let me get it right.

[01:24:20] I think it's a time of apocalypse. And I think it's not the first time of apocalypse. I think we are survivors of apocalypse. I think that that's a big belief I hold is that every single human that we can see anywhere we are all survivors of Apocalypse is right.

[01:24:35] We are all of us in our lineages have times when our people came through something and had to get through it right. And that's whether you have a biblical sense of the world or whether you have a cyclical or secular sense of the world. Ray there's been so many endings and beginnings I think me too is in some ways an apocalypse and it's an ending of a certain way of patriarchy being able to exist and run rampant in the world. And I'm here for you. But I think we're in a time of maybe intentional apocalypse is and I'm not sure you know having this is the only time I'm gonna get to live in that I that I'm conscious of right now and so I'm like I don't know if there's in peak times before people like we need an apocalypse. Right. Because I think we we're so like oh we're scared the apocalypse. You know something's going to end but I think right now we're in a moment where we need certain things to truly end. And it's terrifying to consider the ends. So I'm like I can't quite imagine the end of capitalism but I know we need it if we're gonna survive on this planet. So I'm.

[01:25:39] Yeah right. But I'm like but I really love flying and eating butter and coconut milk. I mean there's just stuff that I'm like I'm really struggling with it personally. It's pleasurable because it's you know this is one of the main things for the pleasure because I had to really claim pleasure doesn't need anything but the body the body is what you come into the world with the bodies which you go out with and it's all you need for pleasure.

[01:26:05] But there's luxury.

[01:26:10] So what are the things I want to do is like make common these things we think of as individual. And I think it's an apocalypse of individuality or an apocalypse of individualism is needed. So we need to stop. The reason we have so much scarcity thinking is because we think in terms of the individual only right.

[01:26:29] And it's like there's not enough for everyone to have a hot tub. Only I had to write and it's like no no no.

[01:26:35] This year the hot tub if you wash and shower before you get in. How was your shower before I get it. Good. Don't have sex. Matt. All. Right.

[01:26:45] But I think those you know to me it's about collectivization and that's what we're moving towards. And so whatever I want to call that releasing individualism and moving towards collectivization I think that's the time it is on the clock.

[01:26:58] Wow.

[01:26:59] Off of that maybe as you think Popo Grace as our kids would call her Mama Grace would have loved that she would feel.

[01:27:11] She's here. She's with us she's always with our two or more gather graces with us.

[01:27:15] This is this is. And Octavia and Audrey they're always always with us. We have us Zach.

[01:27:23] Y'all are really good. Yes. We have like a. Stack. I don't know did you count how many there were here.

[01:27:29] I don't think we're gonna get to all of them but I'm five minutes so OK let's do it let's do it. OK.

[01:27:38] We have time for 15 to 20 minutes. Oh yeah.

[01:27:45] We just catch I understand. We just catch up a little later. Because. I want to

[01:27:52] Respect all those and all the amazing things they wrote on the wall. So yeah you have some souvenirs.

[01:27:58] So OK.

[01:27:59] So I just apologize in advance if I don't get to your question but maybe I'll I'll do maybe you know a few and then maybe and we'll try to do wrap if all of them and rapid fire I can give one word answers. No. OK. Yeah. My old eyes.

[01:28:22] There are folks in my SJ social justice.

[01:28:25] Yes SJ communities that support a movement that has done great harm to me and my people. I try to have conversations. But it feels that the cop compromising my humanity in the process how to approach this situation.

[01:28:45] Thank you.

[01:28:47] I think one of the things I'm trying to proliferate in our movement spaces is high quality facilitation and high quality mediation like having skilled people who can actually hold processes like this in community. I think it's very hard to hold an entire movement accountable. But I do think it's always possible to hold humans accountable and ask humans to change. I don't you know not knowing all about the situation. But it sounds like the converse in the conversations. I think there's a conversation of like what would it look like to hold a facilitated conversation or a mediated conversation that names the harm and says what would actually make it right again or what could make it possible to move forward together. This is one of things I'm going to a conference next week with Miriam Kaaba the Mary campus organizing who is like going to get us all free on this team transformative justice. And I'm hoping to go and learn a lot more around this but from my own mediation work this is one of the things I think happens a lot is we're trying to have conversations without being well held by folks who really understand the whole context. Sometimes we make the mistake of going in with someone who understands one side of it and is like here I'll help you hold it. You know it's like you've got to have someone who's like I'm not overly invested in the end I just want to make things better here between ya and then I also think sometimes we go in with just like you've caused me harm and I just want you to be sorry about that but I think what we need to be doing is you caused me harm and I wanted to end and here's what ending that harm could look like. Let's begin together to build we're ending the harm could look like because people like it's too vague it can never be and it's like no all harm can end it has to end. And so we have to do so these are kind of all in a relationship.

[01:30:46] I feel I trust so you are on a good path.

[01:30:49] I don't know if you know if there is if it was answering exactly all your questions but this is an interesting question.

[01:30:59] How do you hold onto yourself when you are feeling lost or pain etc..

[01:31:11] I have a really strong set of practices in my life that mean that I very rarely feel lost or in pain in that way. Each day I center each day I pull the Tarot which for me pulling the Tarot is a way of surrendering to the forces that are much larger than myself. Because a lot of times when I feel lost is because I'm trying to take on everything myself. Right. Like why can't I figure out the way we're gonna end capitalism why can't I figure out a way to stop war. Why can't I figure it out. And when I when I can accept my own insignificance you know in that grander grander scale that's like I'm doing my best right. And there's I also feel like when I feel lost I try to look myself back to the train of someone who I trust more than myself so I'll be like OK I'm sure Harriet Tubman literally got lost and she didn't give up.

[01:32:10] She was oh I guess I should just eat an edible and watch you know Grace and Frankie like yeah or whatever her options were right. But. Yeah I'm like She figured it out. Just say I'm gonna keep going.

[01:32:26] So I look backwards you know to try to find like Who are the people I can claim in my lineage who didn't give up and kept going and then humbling myself like my job is to kick the kick the ball down the field right. I'm not like I really think about like none of us you know like I love the matrix but I'm like none of us are neo you know like I think that it's really like everyone tapping into everyone's tapping into like we're in a fake world.

[01:32:58] Like everyone has to collectively awaken to that. And so of course we feel lost literally almost everything we're encountering is a fake lie. And so when you start to feel something true inside yourself it's very daunting. But if you keep listening to that and you keep surrendering to something bigger somewhere in there you're gonna be all right. Then it's Friday.

[01:33:24] Yeah. You can sleep okay.

[01:33:31] How do I forgive my co organizer.

[01:33:35] Mm hmm for his misogyny in our relationship there's actually a couple questions here. Okay.

[01:33:42] Hi. That's deep enough right there. How do we forgive people. Yeah. Okay.

[01:33:48] How do I reconcile the sexual with the political.

[01:33:55] These are really good question. I mean I I'm being told it is personal. I cannot think or I cannot trust him as an organizer anymore. Oh they have worked together and feels intensely personal. At the same time and I want to transform it. OK. Forgive my call. Nice northwestern city. That's a keeper.

[01:34:18] That is a keeper. All right. Well one thing I don't know about all the things in this I love this question. Whoever you are you're really live in this life. Yes.

[01:34:26] Yes.

[01:34:28] What I will say is I find it's very hard to forgive people for things that are still happening.

[01:34:34] So if you're like if the person is being misogynist every day you're not yet in a place to be like let me forgive you for that misogyny because then you're just saying look let me accept the way you are which is clearly wrong.

[01:34:47] I feel like you're wrong though. But I do think for me it helps to explore like how do I how have I eradicated systems of oppression inside myself.

[01:34:57] Right. So I was also trained to be a misogynist. Yeah. And how did I. How have I begun to eradicate misogyny inside myself that usually will help me figure out what this relationship could look like. Where can I believe that he could actually stop being misogynist. Because if you don't believe that someone can reach that place the only to me the solution is boundaries.

[01:35:20] Right.

[01:35:22] If because I think that we play that too it's like you don't just stand your misogynist you're misogynists you're misogynists.

[01:35:29] You know that person's like I know I hate women I love it. I don't know. You know it's like that's how I am who I am. I gotta be me.

[01:35:35] Right. So I think there's something really big about having the person actually say I'm not. I'm committed to not being misogynist anymore just like that. OK. I love this to be so much shorter. What is one of your superpowers. What superpower are you seeking to grow

[01:35:57] Oh OK. Question on here. Yeah. No. Let's do this one. OK.

[01:36:02] What is one of my superpowers. Applying glitter under a staircase.

[01:36:10] What is a superpower. I'm trying to grow. Thinking kind thoughts even in my head yeah.

[01:36:19] Because usually what happens is like I noticed on the way over here like my Lyft driver did something and I was like a dummy. And there's a

[01:36:27] That's nice right. And like I like it.

[01:36:30] Is there a different way inside you know in there. I feel like I can usually get before it gets to my mouth I can be like that wasn't what I was hoping you would do. And now I'm gonna be late. But you know in my head.

[01:36:46] Yeah.

[01:36:47] Also the second part of the same question was What do you do to move in grief especially the physical embodied pains of grief.

[01:36:57] I left standing in a really hot shower playing Whitney Houston didn't we must have that.

[01:37:07] All right that will get me. I'll just be like. And I sing it about this planet.

[01:37:13] Right I'm like we literally had the best planet ever and we're just like putting oil all over it and I'm just like this. It just makes me feel actual grief in the shower but shower grief is my favorite bath brief.

[01:37:25] Also really clutch grief yes yes you're very good with sage and things like that.

[01:37:32] So I. Yes I have a travel alter bag in my life I got my tarot deck with me right now. I'm never without my tarot I'm never without my crystals okay. Literally stones activated like a urban Avatar. Not a bad movie when you know the good. News is you literally saved our lives with that sage. Remember. Yeah. They were outside a story Emily. Yes.

[01:38:01] So actually your last statement kind of connected to this one. My question is a principle on there is always enough time for the right work. But what about climate change that is crucial time sensitive. Is there enough time to for that crucial work.

[01:38:14] That's great. I love that question. I mean I think there must be if it's either I'm wrong and there's not and we die we will know probably mostly right or and I say that we do because I really do believe I do deeply believe in the resilience of the planet. So I'm like I think we all cause harm and then earth will just be like

[01:38:38] You weren't worthy. I think about that a lot. And but I also think the other option is there is enough time if we attend to the right work. And so this is where when I do my environmental justice support I only work with groups who are really clued in about false solutions and not fucking with that and really about we we can't like you can't just tax people so that they can keep polluting you can't do things that are like we're still die and that solution scenario right. I'm really interested in only scenarios where we live. Right. So that's a and in a meeting pontification like think of pontification as pollution in a meeting and just be like we're not going to tax it we're going to stop just excited about it.

[01:39:32] Ok. We have two minutes so maybe I'm going to combine a bunch of questions. OK. You kind of choose. All right I'm ready. Where you want to go. OK. Yes. Because see we could do the death. So

[01:39:43] First one was OK and can you talk about how you'd like to see white women show up in accountability with women of color. OK. I know you can do that quietly listening.

[01:39:55] Ok. Well we got to Rapid Fire. Yeah. Oh OK. I'll go let you choose which ones you want. OK.

[01:40:01] Quietly and listening listening. I love it. We're doing it. How do we transform adaptive self-destructive pattern of thinking specifically perfectionism into a loving generative practice. How do we stop treating ourselves as an enemy.

[01:40:16] You need a mantra and the mantra is something along the lines of I am enough and I am all that I need to be is. Well what was your biggest takeaway besides interdependence from your miscarriage from your. Pocket. Wrap it up

[01:40:42] Deejays with their penises. Wrap it up. No. OK. You got one more you got to do one more.

[01:40:49] How do I help people in my life who are stubborn and set in their views. People like my mother.

[01:40:55] Oh expand their mind buy her my book.

[01:40:59] There you go.

[01:41:09] By the book by all the book.

[01:41:12] The first book I read of yours was how to get stupid white people out of office. Yes. Throwback a throwback. But all the books not just one.

[01:41:20] What was your what was most supported you to trust your presence as a facilitator especially around the abundance of time. Having people who are willing to let me mess up what does emergent education look like ideally in reality in this economy ecology unschooling people out in the forest in the woods. There you go. If you work in a complete opposite of social justice space corporate America where in your opinion is the best place to start advocating for emerging strategy practice quitting your job. I loved him I love him he died but my love for him can continue soft righteousness keep paying it forward it's already come back to me this is the universe telling me to continue. That's not a question statement nobody's love.

Have you googled Murray Butcher. There you go. OK. And maybe Brown. Thank you thank you for all that you do and all that you know. That

[01:42:26] Give it up for Adrienne Maree Brown.

[01:42:36] So folks you couldn't have been a more amazing audience. I wanted you all to know that one of our largest events on that's designed for a biopic queer and trans communities is coming up. It's May 10th and it's called legendary children. And we figured we would just. We're gonna just play you a video. If you've never experienced a legendary children so you could see what it's like.

[01:43:03] Technology is gonna work for us. Okay. There it goes.

[01:43:06] It was a that's purple lemonade by the way. That's one of the artists that we've had but legendary children as a celebration of house-and-ball culture. And this year we're celebrating house-and-ball culture and also Indigenous sovereignty.

[01:43:20] So there is a show that we are connecting with that Sam by an artist named Jeffrey Gibson. That program is May 10 fill out your surveys and tell us if we can do more programs that you really enjoy.

[01:43:33] And final thank you's to Adrienne to Emilie to Scott and to all of our cohort members to the Office of Arts and Culture and to the SPL staff because a lot of you all meet so many amazing things happen. And thank you to Elliott Bay bookstore.

[01:43:49] I see you signaling Adrienne do you want one more thing.

[01:43:52] And thank you to see the video Ingram. Give it up to amazing organizer. Thank you Seattle Public Library

[01:44:02] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.