Pavini: Any experience that we're having our ancestors already had. Right? Like, 1000 times.

Amber: Hello friends! And welcome to the Medicine Stories podcast, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth, dropping the cultural lies that keep us disconnected and disempowered, and moving closer into kinship with the earth, the ancestors and our deep selves so we can live lives of connection healing and empowerment.

If you believe that story is medicine, magic is real, and healing is open-ended and endless, then you've found your people.

Amber: I'm herbalist, Amber Magnolia Hill, and I'm here to remind you with every episode that earth wisdom and ancestral connection are your birthright. This knowledge is in your bones, and you came into your body carrying your own unique medicine.

This is Episode 46, and today I am sharing my interview with Dr. Pavini Moray. Pavini is the host of the Bespoken Bones Podcast: Ancestors at the Crossroads of Sex Magick, and Science. I'm hoping that that sentence makes you want to check out the podcast because you should.
Among the many things we talk about today are engaging trauma as an alternate state of consciousness in which deep healing can happen and potent gifts can come forth, transcestral healing and the blessings and healing of complex gender, how we’re living in a sexually traumatic culture, coming back into sexual wholeness, and this really brilliant reframing for me that sexual liberation is not a state we permanently get to, some sort of future nirvana where we’re free, but is a path and a process and a practice.

[0:02:08]
Amber: So, before we get into all that a quick listener spotlight:

This is iTunes review is from LaurenG23. It’s titled "Rich and Vital Conversations":

‘Medicine stories is a must listen for anyone who is walking the path of uncovering their ancestral roots and learning to live with reverence for their lineage and in support of personal and collective healing. Every guest has shared insights that have deepened my own practice of ancestral remembrance and whole-hearted living. This podcast is deep and potent medicine.’

Thank you so much, Lauren! Thank you everyone who leaves an iTunes review. They are wonderful. They're helpful. They feed my soul.

Another way you can support the podcast is to subscribe, of course. Super easy. Wherever you’re listening right now, subscribe and then every week - boom - it’s right there for you. You can also take a screenshot on your phone when you listen and share it in Instagram stories.

I love looking at those, and I try to repost them as often as I can without totally spamming my followers (Amber laughs). And whenever I see them -- which is not always because I'm trying to spend less time on Instagram, while at the same time doing more videos on IGTV cause that's been really fun! I love IGTV. They've really made it so user-friendly. I love watching other people's videos. It's so fun when it's someone who you've followed and known throughout their still images and their words for so long, and then suddenly, you're seeing their face, and hearing their voice, and watching the words come out of their mouth (Amber laughs), syncing the face and voice up. I really am loving it.

So I just gotta tell you real quick what I'm drinking right now, because what I'm drinking right now is lilac water. And I wanted to get this out there for anyone who has access to lilacs right now. We are so blessed to have four lilac trees on our property, including one right outside our front door. So during this glorious week or two every spring we get to smell the incredible scent whenever we walk outside.

And the other day on Instagram I saw a post from Plant Makeup, so just check out Plant Makeup’s feed. She does so much awesome stuff and great products. Umm, but she had
this post about making lilac water. It's basically -- it's so easy -- it's all herbal medicine (Amber laughs). It's so simple! So don't overthink it.

[0:04:48]
Amber: Umm, take a half gallon -- or if you only have a quart or a pint -- but with a half gallon jar I picked three bundles of lilacs. Just, you know, cut them off right at the stem, leave the stem intact, put them in a jar, filled it all the way to the top, put the lid on, and put it in the fridge. And I did about 24 hours. You could do less. You could probably do a little more.

Umm, and then strain it out (Amber laughs) and then drink the water. It's so insane how delicious it is! Like, it just feel like it's fake, you know? It feels like Jolly Ranchers or Starburst made it up or something. It's so heady, and floral, and like, perfumey in the best way.

Umm, so yeah. If you've got lilacs going on right now, go ahead and make yourself some lilac water between now (Amber laughs) and when those beautiful blossoms start to fade.

[0:05:43]
Let me tell you about the patreon offering that goes along with today's episode:

Pavini has provided a one page PDF called "The Erotic Experimentation Process." And so, with this process you just start with a question, something you want to dive deeper into with your sexuality. And this question is, "What are you curious about exploring in your sexuality?" And then the rest of the document takes you through a process of exploration and tracking your results. So you can find that available at the two dollar a month level at patreon.com/MedicineStories.

Thank you so much, patrons! There's, like, 725 of you or something right now, which is unbelievably amazing, and buys me the time to make the podcast happen. Basically completely covers our childcare for the month at this point, which is absolutely the only way I can do this podcast (Amber laughs). Especially now that, as I announced in the last episode, "The Deepest Self: To Know Yourself, Know Your Ancestors," I'm trying to move this from a twice a month podcast to a weekly podcast which is craaaaaazy I'm realizing (Amber laughs), because I already feel so strapped for time.

Time is so scarce as the mother of two children, one of them being a toddler. But umm, I just feel super determined to figure it out, and make it happen. And even though I'm telling you this, speaking it out loud, you know, I might miss some weeks in the beginning as we're getting going. And it's reminding me of what we talked about in the very first episode ever of this podcast called Ancestral and Embryonic. It's just 10 minutes of me talking and kinda introducing the podcast, which is this idea of creating a part from perfection. Something from an article I read in my early twenties that really really stuck
with me and has helped me ever since then to just keep putting things out into the world, even though they’re not perfect, and they’re never going to perfect. This podcast is never going to be those super clean, and polished, and spectacularly edited podcasts that I love so much. That’s just not me. I don’t have the time. I don’t even really want that.

[0:08:25]
Umm, but I do want to keep doing what I’m doing, and what’s been working so well for my beautiful, wonderful listeners, and I want to do it more often, and it’s not going to be perfect. And thank you so much for sticking with me through all that. And I really hope that it’s inspiring others to create a part from perfection.

[0:08:47]
Umm… Okay. Before we get into it, also I want to remind you that there’s still time to sign up for Dr. Daniel Foor’s Practical Animism Online Course. I interviewed Daniel two episodes ago, now. Daniel has been a teacher of Pavini’s, as we talk about a little bit at the end.

I met Pavini at an Ancestral Lineage Healing Intensive through the Ancestral Medicine framework which was created by Daniel. And this Practical Animism Online Course is starting pretty soon: May 13th, I think, but you can sign up through sometime in Mid-June. So you can check that out at AncestralMedicine.org, or go back two episodes and listen to my interview with Daniel.

And then another quick teaser is that next week -- yes, I am going to get another episode next week -- umm the episode is going to be all about Rose Medicine and working with the soft, and sweet, and strong, and sacred medicine of roses.

[0:09:58]
So, Dr. Pavini Moray is a somatic sex therapist and private practice in San Francisco. Pavini helps clients struggling with sex and intimacy to communicate more effectively, to feel more sensation and pleasure, and to have greater capacity for closer within one year or less.

As a queer, trans witch, Pavini walks the glitter path of dancing bones, ridiculous delight and old magic. Find out more at emancipating-sexuality.com.

And without further ado, here is Dr. Pavini Moray

[0:10:38]
(Transitional Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[0:10:42]
Amber: Hi Pavini, welcome to Medicine Stories
**Pavini**: Hi Amber, so happy to be with you.

**Amber**: And I am happy to be with you, as well. And I would like to start by asking you to, umm, lead an opening invocation, a prayer. I've heard you do this before and I find it really potent.

**Pavini**: *(Pavini deeply inhales and exhales)* Well ones and bright ones, all of the benevolent, and kind, and loving powers that support me, and support Amber, and support all of those who are listening to this.

Welcome.

It's a gift to have the breath in these bodies. It's a gift to be your children and to be humbly in service to goodness. And so Amber and I are going to do this interview, and ancestors, well and bright ones, we ask you for your blessings in this work. We ask this be the right medicine for this moment in human history. We ask for the words to be easy. We ask for what comes through to be clear and useful or everyone involved. And that the healing moves out in concentric circles so that many, many, many are touched by this and move forward on their personal paths of healing. Be close sweet ones.

Blessed be.

*[0:12:01]*

**Amber**: Thank you and hearing your words I'm wondering, are you someone who has always been comfortable offering prayers in public?

**Pavini**: *(Pavini laughs) No! (Pavini laughs again) I'm from Cleveland. *(Both Amber and Pavini laugh together)*

We do not pray out loud.

We do not hug when we meet.

This is like some California woo-woo stuff *(Amber laughs).*

No, it's vulnerable. It's definitely vulnerable to pray out loud. The more I do it the easier it gets, and the more I see the need for it, and like how putting things inside of a prayer container is really useful. Umm, because then you can trust, like, you don't have that terrible backlash of "Oh my God! Did I really say that? Why did I say that?" you know "Why did I say that" you know, I just like, "Oh, I put it in the prayer container, so what came through was what needed to come through." So there's a lot of umm, I don't know. I find that soothing and supportive.
Amber: Yeah, I ask because it's something I would like to be working on myself. I always light some angelica root or juniper branches and do my own prayer before I get on a call, but I know you do it at the beginning of the call for your podcast, and I've just been, ever since hearing that on your show, been thinking, "Oh, can I get to that point?" (Amber laughs)

I'd like to be that person.

[0:13:24]
Amber: And I want to ask you about the name of your podcast. How did you come up with this name, "Bespoken Bones?" What does it mean?

Pavini: Yeah... my ancestors gave it to me, actually. Umm, and bespoke.. You know how you learn a word and then you start seeing it everywhere?

Amber: Mhhmm--

Pavini: -- And I learned this word "bespoke" a few years ago, like, right before my podcast started, and I just thought it was the most amazing word. And it's funny because it - it's bespoke. What it means is "made-to-fit," like, "custom-ordered," right?

Umm, and just, it doesn't sound anything like the word, right? Like, "Be-Spoke."

Amber: Right.

Pavini: It sounds like, “Be spoken,” like, say it out loud. And then yeah.

So then when I was trying to figure out a name -- I don't know. You probably have this experience, too, that naming is a really magical process and often things come through in dreams. You're in that liminal space right when you're waking up -- And that's when it came through: Bespoken Bones.

And it was kind of like, a play on words of umm, you know, "made-to-fit bones," and like, "Be spoken, Bones." Like, "Hey Ancestors, like, (Pavini laughs) I'm making a podcast so you can have some airtime." (Amber laughs) And I don't know, it was just playful and I can't take credit for it. But I do love it.

[0:14:50]
Amber: I'm always a fan of alliteration (Amber laughs). And I found you through iTunes Podcasts suggesting, "You might like this one," and I was immediately drawn to the name and your logo, actually. I want to ask about that, too.
It's a raven and a rose. Is that right? A rose?

**Pavini**: A raven, a rose, and a bone.

**Amber**: A bone, yeah.

**Pavini**: Mhmm.

**Amber**: Are those meaningful symbols for you?

**Pavini**: I mean, yeah, those are symbols from my, from my lineages, my maternal lineages. And umm, the artwork was done by uh, Derek Lozupone, who's a lovely, talented, graphic designer-artist and massage therapist, and all-around, general amazeballs human (*Amber laughs*).

And you know the deck, The Collective Tarot?

**Amber**: Mmm no, I don’t think so.

**Pavini**: It's a beautiful Tarot deck designed by a collective: four different artists. Each one took a suit, and I really loved the bones suit. And so we umm -- which is Earth? Pentacles? -- And so, we looked at images from that, and so I was like, “Yeah, I want something like that.”

And so then Derek designed it. We did a trade for ancestral work, as I recall. And so it was sweet.

[0:16:16]

**Amber**: That’s fun creating things, isn’t it? Umm, so you grew up in Cleveland, and I know you were a Montessori teacher for a time--

**Pavini**: -- Yes --

**Amber**: -- And I'm wondering how your life unfolded to a place where sexual liberation and wellness became the focus.

**Pavini**: Yeah, I’m still a Montessori Teacher.

**Amber**: Oh! You are!

**Pavini**: Well, you know, I feel like it’s a calling, a vocation, and it’s like, once you're a Montessori teacher, you’re kind of always an Montessori teacher. And so, all of the teaching I do, I do alot of teaching -- it’s all informed by Montessori principle of really
meeting exactly where they are, and this beautiful guiding principle of not knowing what someone needs to know, right? Like, there's just this like complete, you know that whole expert paradigm?

**Amber:** Amber laughs- mhmm

**Pavini:** It drives me nuts. Umm, but there's that - it's the absence of that, of like, "OH, I'm not an expert. You're the expert, and you, I'm just here to support you and to put my resources and everything I have behind **you** and support you on your path of liberation.”

And so, yeah I just feel like the Montessori principles are so, so potent in every aspect of my teaching.

[0:17:30]

**Pavini:** Umm, so how did it move from Montessori elementary to sexuality professional?

(Amber's laughs)

**Pavini:** I started to, I mean, I was exploring my own sexuality and I started to lead masturbation circles. Umm, which, at the time was **SO** shocking, like "Oh my gosh!" And uh, it probably still is to a lot of folks. But to me it was like, "Oh my god. I couldn't possibly masturbate in public in front of other people," and then I was just suddenly doing it. And it was... it was very liberating. And so then started to do more and more of that.

It just became clear that there was just something there of how to practice communal liberation through eroticism. And as these things do, I --my work-- shifted. I actually got fired from my job. I wrote a book called *Putting the Edge in Education: An Anarchist Cookbook for Teachers*. And it was really, umm, an exploration of my own, like, how do you become a radical educator? How do you radicalize your teaching and put your students first? So you know, that, combined with authority issues, didn’t make me a particularly "good" employee. Umm, and so I got fired.

And then it was like, “Okay, well now what then?” And so I sat with that question. And yeah. Sex just kept coming up. Of like, “Okay do something with sexuality,” and it was like, “OH that's not -- that's not a thing I get to do. I don't get to be that person.”

I remember being at a retreat, and there was a person doing sexuality workshop and stuff like that, and I was **SO** mad at them (**Amber laughs**) I was **SO** mad at that person. It was like UGH. UGH. You know what I mean? Just kind of seething and just so jealous. Like, why do you get to do that and I don't?!
There was just this huge process of giving myself permission. And I had, you know, a great role model for that: Captain Snowden was one of them, of folks who had done it before me. But yeah, it was a lot of permission giving, and so yeah. That's kind of how it happened.

**Amber:** Were you living in San Francisco already when this all unfolded? And I'm asking of course, because it seems like the **perfect** place --

**Pavini:** --Oh, yeah. --

**Amber:** -- to explore?

**Pavini:** It's so much easier in a community that is sex-positive to do that. But you still have to come up against all your own internalized shaming.--

**Amber:** -- Oh my god, yeah.--

**Pavini:** -- and homophobia, all that stuff.

But yeah, I was in San Francisco which made it, I think, there was support, right? There was the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality, which is where I did some of my training. There's SFSI, San Francisco Sex Information, which is another place I did training, and there's just so much sex-positive cultural stuff, right? There's less now, but there was at that time a lot in history, a lineage of sex radicals, you know, Medicine Young, and Annie Sprinkle, and Adam Joseph Kramer, and like, all of the amazing sex radicals, Keith Hennessy, like, all of these people who are here doing this work, and have been, and rest on the work of their ancestors, right? So there was this, like, umm, there was a space for it.

[0:20:52]

**Amber:** Yeah, I'm curious, too, what drew you to San Francisco in the first place?

**Pavini:** Umm, I was finishing my Montessori training and needed to do a practicum and came out here to do that. And then life happened.

But, I would, I mean, that's the kind of the boring answer. I would say that like, San Francisco, when I first moved here, someone said to me, "Oh yeah. San Francisco is a place people come to bleed."

And I loved that. It's like, oh yeah, it's where you go when you're ready to be in your wounds, right? You're ready to really explore, like, **WHAT** is that? I'm kind of done with the Mid-Western -- I was at that time in the South -- I was kind of done with that denial or covering it up and just missing it. I'm ready to just like, be in the muck.
And umm, and so there's like the mundane answer of what drew me, but then there's the more spiritual answers, which is what has drawn people for so many years to this place because it's so it's so active. It's on an active fault line, right? It's, you're going to be confronted with your stuff. I feel like that happened to many people, and it happened to me, and yeah. So that's how I got here.

**Amber:** Yeah, that's why I asked. It's a special place. It's umm, it's **SO** overwhelming for my nervous system to be in that city *(Amber laughs)*. As I'm driving over the bridge, you know, I'm like *(Amber makes high pitched buzzing sound)*.

*(Pavini laughs)*

But it's so fascinating too. It's such a special place.

**[0:22:22]**

**Amber:** Umm, so at what point, then, in all of this, did the ancestors come to call, and what was the process for you of connecting sex and the ancestors?

**Pavini:** Yeah, it's a little bit of a longer dive. You up for that?

**Amber:** Do it! Dive in!

**Pavini:** So I was, I was in the process in graduate school working on my Ph.D, umm, and thought I was going in one direction with my dissertation, hadn't started writing it, hadn't started my research, and was really interested in the development of sexual wellness, especially after a trauma. And umm, and you know, in my practice, that's what I do, I work with folks who have sexual trauma and figure out how to come back into sexual wholeness, right, and sexual integrity and sexual sovereignty. And umm.. Yeah I, I was at Wolf Creek Radical Faerie Sanctuary, which is in Southern Oregon, and my partner and I were facilitating a sacred sexuality container, like a space for a week called a “Bower.” It was in the container of the larger event that was happening, so we were the kind of custodians of this Bower space where there were rituals and workshops and play parties we were going to tend this space.

And Wolf Creek is really special, because -- I mean, it's special for lots of reasons -- but it was actually land that was purchased during the AIDS epidemic by radical faeries, who, at the time, were mostly gay men. And umm, and so, the land itself -- I don't know 100 acres or so -- really beautiful, beautiful land has the ashes of hundreds of folks who died of AIDS. And has been a community land for 30-40 years. It has a long history until we were going to facilitate this on that land.
And so, we had this idea of like, umm, I’m always interested in how do we navigate, how do we navigate harm to healing? Like, what is that pathway? And um, just in the nature -- it's a very sexualized space -- just in the nature of sexual spaces sexual harm occurs, whether we intentionally want that or not (I mean I don’t think anyone ever wants that) but it happens.

My sense was that there were a number of spirits, ghosts, people who had died who might be interested in doing a project together, which would be to create this Bower Space and have them on the spirit realm kind of hold the perinterter as an act of atonement, of like, "Okay, maybe during my life I caused sexual harm. And that kind of sucks, you know, being dead, because it like, it hasn’t been resolved, yet, and I want to resolve it."

And so we had this idea that we would engage with the spirits and -- of course, we have no idea what the fuck we're doing. We're just making this up as we go along -- and so we'll engage with the spirits, and that they'll hold the container. We'll hold the container. They'll hold the container, and so that would be some kind of atonement for them. And we're going to this in a very boundaried way. So that's what we do.

We had some, you know, some support, but we really didn't know what we were doing. And it luckily worked. I would NEVER do that now, like, knowing what I know now (Pavini laughs), I would never work with the unwell, the unwell dead and ask them to help hold a container, but you know, we were lucky, and it worked out.

[0:26:18]

Pavini: Umm, but then I came back from that, and I was like, alright so I know there have to be technologies out there. There have to be people out there who have done this work already and know actually what they are doing. Instead of me recreating the wheel, I could just study with them and learn from them. And so, yeah, that’s how I started pursuing ancestral work and worked with Armand Volkest, and a family conciliation person -- I forget her name -- and Daniel Foor, and then really started, and then the work of my dissertation really started to come into focus.

It was oh yeah, the development of sexual wellness after trauma WITH ancestral reverence. Because transgenerational trauma is real, right? Transgenerational is real, right? Sexual trauma transmitted through generations, so like, what is it to build these relationships with the ancestors, the well ancestors that can help, support us as we work through our own sexual trauma and perhaps the sexual trauma of those who came before us.

And this was showing up in my practice all the time, you know, people were having, they were being like, “Yeah, I don't think I had any trauma, but I know my mom did and I feel
like I kinda have it in me, and that's impacting me in my relationships." And so I was curious: what were these ways of working that were safe and effective, umm, that could help support the development of sexual wellness?

So that's kind of how I came into the ancestor stuff. It was roundabout. It wasn't a direct route. So there you go.

[0:27:52]

Amber: Mmm... I love that story! I love that it is you were on the land with the bones in the form of ashes of these folks who had died decades ago, and this was like, the inspiration for you to move into this work in a way. That's really beautiful.

Umm I'm hearing these words that you've used a couple times: the unwell dead, the bright ones, and the well ones. What is the differentiation there and why is it important?

Pavini: Yeah, in the way I work it's super important. Like, just like, you discern in the living between who you trust, who you just kind of don't trust, right? Your spidey senses are just like, "Oh, I don't know about that person."

It's because there's degrees of wellness, right? And by wellness I don't mean health. I don't mean healthy. I don't mean some empirical, hierarchical structure that's imposed from without. It's really like how kind are you? How loving are you? How well do you self-reflect? How well do you do your work? How well are you relationally? Right?

Not, like, Are you HEALTHY? Like that. Does that make sense?

Amber: (Amber agrees) Mhmm.

Pavini: You know the people you can trust because you know they aren't going to stab you in the back because they are trustworthy. They are kind. And so, you know, we all know people in varying degrees of wellness. I mean, some folks are actively dealing with their addictions, and that's a certain level of wellness or unwellness.

And so just like with the living, it's like that with the dead, too. The kind of, my worldview there is, after you die there's a process that your spirit goes through. That you don't just become a well ancestor just because you died. Right? That you might be dead, and you're just dead. You just don't have a body anymore. And so that ancestralization process happens, or doesn't happen.

And working, making the decision to work with the dead who are really well in spirit, who aren't ghosts, who aren't malevolent, who aren't toxic, who aren't jerks, means that it's just like you're surrounding yourself with living humans who are going to be like you're
transporting an awesome. Like, I want my dead community to be like that, too. And so that it's not a point of differentiation that ALL ancestral healing methodologies make or all cultures make, but some do. And for me it's been really important to be able to discern that.

Because like, there's, you know, there's just like that thing -- I don't know if this ever happens to you, Amber, but umm--- obligation. it's Christmas, and you're supposed to go home and be with your family, and it's like, "Oh god!" That sense of obligation, (Amber laughs) and that can happen with the dead, like "Oh God, they're my dead family. I have to be in relation with them." But really, it's not necessarily useful unless there's a degree of wellness and of kindness that's present. It's just detrimental and drags everybody down.

So it's kind of like that. Does that answer the question?

[0:31:33]

Amber: Yeah it does. (Amber deeply inhales and exhales). What is transcestral healing?

Pavin: Well, it's the name of my practice that, that I do most of my ancestral work in. So, you know, transcestors, like, we have dead of blood, right? And then we have the dead of heart, or dead of lineage, or dead of spiritual tradition, like, the mighty dead, or you know, your teachers, or those who have passed on who you maybe weren't related to by blood, but who are your ancestors. Like, Maria Montessori is one of my ancestors, right.

So you know we have this, this really intense gender binary that everyone that's born gets categorized into. But that's not the experience of many people as they live their lives of like, "Oh, I fit fully into this one category or fully in this other category." Right? Of gender binary. And umm, it was, and it's true of our ancestors, too.

Any experience we're having our ancestors already had. Right? Like 1000 times.

And so, for me widening the frame on welcoming in those ancestors who during their lives experienced the blessings of gender, of complex gender, welcoming in those who I know by name, like Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, Leslie Feinberg, Lou Sullivan, you know, welcoming in those ones, as well as the ones in my own bloodlines who had complex experiences of gender, right? So when I think of transcestors that's who I'm thinking about. It's not language, it's just language I made up. it's not language they would have necessarily, they wouldn't have necessarily used that language.

But I think it's also about the -- I think the gender binary is a violence, and it's a false binary. And so, when I talk about transcestral healing, it's also about that: about being able to have a more inclusive, yeah, just a more inclusive way of being in our bodies,
where we’re not just being one thing or all another thing. We get to be the entirety of our human experience, yeah?

And that is going to be above and beyond any checkbox that we could tick on a form.

[0:34:23]
Amber: I can imagine it’s very comforting for people to connect with these transcestors.

Pavini: Yeah I mean, I think especially for folks who are dealing with their own gender complexity, it’s like a relief, right? To be like, "Oh right."

Because it can be so alienating from biological family. Not for everybody. You know, I think it’s changing a lot, but many folks who are gender-diverse, gender-blessed, trans, gender non-binary, gender-queer, two-spirit, just like, all of these words that we use, many of these folks have challenged relationships with blood family because of those blessings, because of transphobia.

And so, being able to plug into a lineage, that these things are actually a blessing. They are the liminal spaces. They are the ritualists. They are the magicians. They are the shapeshifters. Like, these are, these are blessings, powerful, powerful blessings that have been, have been demonized. But that the reclamation of that, of those spaces of like, “OH. This is a powerful magic that I have in my body,” and that there’s others.

So it’s a relief to, like, not be alone, and to belong to something.

Amber: I hear you use such positive language around it, and I don’t think you’re being Pollyanna-ish at all, you know, by taking what trauma some folks have experienced and reframing it as a blessing. I can just imagine how powerful and healing that is for the people you work with.

[0:36:16]
Amber: And it reminds me of what I’ve heard you speak about: about trauma and engaging with that as sort of an altered state of consciousness. And yes, tricky and scary, but also this really rich territory to walk through, and being aware of not pathologizing your trauma, but using it as a gift.

Can you speak about that?

Pavini: Sure. Yeah... It’s a stage.

When someone is first coming into the awareness of the trauma that they have endured, that they have survived, it’s not...that’s not step one (Pavini laughs). Step one is acknowledgement of “Oh shit. The deep impact of that I’ve experienced through this,”
and I think that, I think that for a lot of folks who see me in practice, for me personally, there is this dismissiveness around traumatic events.

We all do this thing where like, "Oh yeah, I've had some trauma, but at least it wasn't that bad. It's like so and so." I hear this again and again from my clients. Yeah. But your capacity to feel, your capacity to be in relationship is significantly impacted. And so like, I think it's a protective strategy to minimize. But it also has a cost. It has a pretty huge cost.

So when we start to actually acknowledge the entirety of the impact, and that's a process: of really coming to be able to name that and to see that because it does just become the new normal of "This is just the way it is." You know?

And then, there's lots of stuff that has to happen around that. Like, there has to be. There's a period of rage, of deep grief, of deep numbness, all of these parts of the process, and it's not linear. They are kind of happening on top of each other or in spirals.

And once trauma is somewhat processed -- and I think that there's layers and layers, and there's always more to process -- but once it's processed in the psyche, and once it's processed somewhat in the body -- because we can definitely do the psyche processing without the psyche processing, which doesn't work, like, you've been in therapy for years. You've completely intellectualized your trauma. You understand it, but yet it's still happening on a deep body level. --- so, once that has been processed for awhile -- both of those things: the body and the psyche, the psychological --- there, yeah, there comes this, there can come this moment of starting to recognize the gifts of it. Right? Like, it's been a bag of shit and there are some gems in that bag of shit. And often for folks who are, for example, really sensitive, really empathic and REALLY attuned to the energies in the room and can really read people. That's a skill set. That's a skill set they developed because they were in a pretty bad situation. But on the flipside, it's a skillset to be able to do that, and it's, it's, it can be really supportive to be able to do that.

Pavini: So I'm not trying to bypass all of the stuff around it, and you can't just jump to this phase of being, because that's just spiritual bypass or trauma bypass.

But there is a place where you can just be like, "Oh yeah, I have these gifts because of these experiences, and I like who I am right now... I like who I am."

And I think that's a really pivotal moment in healing when you start say that because it's like the anger is less, and the blame is less, and the self-blame is less, and it's just like, "Oh, I did see that that was part of how I got to here, and would I choose that? No. But do I like who I am? Yeah. And so what do I do with that?"

One of my clients categorized it as “Fuck you. Thank you,” which I really love (Both laugh).
Pavini: Yeah, and you asked about trauma as liminal state, and others have asked about this as well.

It is the deep psychedelic experience of a somatic trigger, and I think a lot of folks with sexual trauma, at least, me and others I've worked with. There's like a way time gets really bendy, and you know when you're deeply in that. And learning how to navigate in those altered states (I think that was your original question) it's like, you know how - I'm sure you've had people on this show, your show, about a psychedelic experience and -- sometimes when there's a really skillful facilitator, who's facilitating a group of psychedelic experience, that person is also imbibing the substance. Like, they're also, but they are so skillful in navigating that space in themselves that they can do that, and for others while they are also, you know what I mean? They just have to, they just enter the landscape with the people they are facilitating. And they don't get lost. They know the way. Because they've done it.

And I feel like that's kind of the landscape of trauma. There's like, oh, there's these psychedelic states we go into and really harvest some really amazing stuff, but it's dangerous. And it's not without risk. "Don't try this at home, kids." It's like, yeah, those people who are leading those medicine journeys for people, they've done it hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times, and they have lots of training. It's not like, "Woohoo let's see what fun we can have with trauma today!" You know?

(Amber laughs)

Pavini: Right? And that's what I've got out of that.

(Both laugh)

Amber: Umm, (laughs), seems like maybe a silly question, but like, does anyone not have inherited transgenerational sexual trauma?

Pavini: Huh. I dunno.

Amber: I mean, look, thinking about women, especially. Our grandmothers, great grandmothers in looking in on all my lines, I'm like, "Damn. Her life sucked!" You know? Not all of them, of course. It's complex, but it's hard for me to imagine that we don't all have some, and it can affect us in various ways and intensities. But that we don't all have some sort of inherited sexual trauma. Just from patriarchy.
Pavini: Yeah, I mean, I am of the opinion that we all have sexual trauma, no matter what your gender identity is, just because you're living in a sexually traumatic culture, right? Where the thing, the very essence of our existence of our existence, like, you are here because of sex. The essence of our existence is packaged and marketed back to you. And you're told what you're supposed to be like, and you're told what you're supposed to know, and nobody ever teaches you. You're just supposed to know all these things, and how to be a sexual being, and how to do consent, and how do know things someone likes, and all these things no one teaches us we're just supposed to know (Amber laughs).

I don't presume to speak for everyone's ancestors. I don't think I can do that.

But I think what you're saying is reasonable. You know?

I think what's also interesting about transgenerational sexual trauma is that you can have symptoms even if nothing has happens to you. (Amber agrees) I mean, it's the same -- not just sexual trauma, transgenerational trauma -- but for folks whose families went through and endured starvation during World War II, maybe were in the camps in World War II, third generation survivors can experience symptoms, can have stuff around food, for example, can have stuff around starvation, because it's stored in the body, right?

And if nobody has made those connections for you, nobody has connected these dots, you just think, “Oh, it's personal.” It's much more personal, “OH I just have issues. I just have food issues.” Rather than like, “My grandma or my great grandma was in Auschwitz and survived or didn't survive, and there…” You know what I mean?

There's like, I think the framework of transgenerational trauma is also a relief, at least for me. That it's not so personal. Like the things I'm struggling with are the results of what a few generations struggled with.

[0:46:18]
Amber: Yeah, that just hits home for me so much. I remember at college I was at UC Davis, early 2000s. There was some group set up this thing on the quad, big poster boards full of rape stories, and I remember walking around it, and reading it, and I had like a total physical breakdown right there. And I had not been raped. I had not had any sexual trauma at that point in my life.

And I remember going home and being like, "WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO ME?" (Amber laughs). Like, that was not about me at all!

I really just feel like I inherited this much larger burden of sexual trauma from -- at that point, I wasn't framing it in terms of my ancestors. I was framing it more in the terms of the collective conscience. It just makes sense to me that these are the waters that we're all swimming in.
Pavini: For sure.

Amber: And bless you. You know, as I was preparing for this interview and reading more of your stuff, I realized just how many edges I have around sexuality, how many things really freak me out, that I wish didn’t freak me out. I want to be, you know, liberated (Amber laughs). I want to be comfortable.

[0:47:41]

Pavini: Yeah, I mean, liberation.... is it okay to just speak to that for a minute?

Amber: Yeah. Yeah.

Pavini: I think for many folks there’s a binary of “I’m liberated or I’m not.” Typically “I’m not, and therefore, I’m not.” And it’s just not my sense of what it is. Liberation is not this state you get to and you’re just there. Like liberation just happens in moments, like a moment in bed, or a moment in nature. You’re like “Oh I feel free!” Right?

And for me, sexual liberation, erotic liberation is a commitment to a practice I’m doing. I’m committing to that as my liberatory path, but I don’t expect to like, get to this place where I’m just going to be all good. I think that, if that’s, if we put that on ourselves, it just, it’s in service to that broken narrative: “Oh, just somehow I can’t reach sexual liberation and stay there, and therefore, I must be so broken.” And I’m like, oh God! It’s such a boring narrative! (Both laugh) Like, no!

[0:48:53]

Amber: Oh that's so helpful. Thank you.

Ugh, it’s hard to talk about sex. Gosh it’s so, the waters are so muddied.

Umm you (Amber laughs), recently put a survey up, out to your friends, based on a talk you were going to give. I think? About giving your whole self to a relationship? And over 60% of the people who took the survey didn’t think they could bring their whole selves to a relationship that is authentic, vulnerable, and welcomed. What is going on here, and how are you addressing this in your work?

Pavini: Yeah, I found that shocking. I found it absolutely shocking. And that is why I did that talk, was because of that. I did that survey, and then got that information. I was like, “Oh my god!”

Amber: It wasn’t what you were expecting?
Pavini: No! No, I didn’t expect that, and it was heartbreaking.

Amber: Yeah.

Pavini: And as we got into that, you know, as I dove into that topic a little bit, there’s a couple things that come up, like, a lot of shame.

Amber: Yeah

Pavini: ’Cause there’s this, it might be you bring your whole self to your relationship, and your partner is like, “Oh heck no! I don’t want that.” Right? “Reject! Get back in the box! I don’t want that part.”

Um. But a lot of times that decision is made before that part is even brought to the partnership.

Somebody is SO afraid that that part is going to be rejected that they don’t even give their partner a chance. And yeah, totally, there are partners who can’t accept parts of us. That’s totally true. But what parts are we not accepting of ourselves and projecting that onto our partner? “Oh. They won’t accept it.” Right? And so then, of course, like, shame. That’s the reason why. And then if we look at shame, then what is shame taking care of? Right?

What is, so like, for example, let’s get a little bit more concrete. If I feel like I can’t bring the part of me that has violent sexual fantasies, I can’t talk about that, I can’t bring that to my partnership, I’m afraid my partner will judge me, will reject me, what’s actually going on is that I have a lot of shame about that part; the part that has a lot of violent fantasies about sex. And I’m not accepting that part of me. I’m rejecting that part, that part, like, I don’t understand that part. I don’t have empathy for that part.

And so that’s not always what’s going on. But my sense is that that’s a lot of what’s going on is what are the parts of you that you aren’t accepting, that you say, “That part isn’t okay. That part doesn’t get to be here?” And we can see it through this metric of what we choose not to bring.

And that’s not to say we’re going to bring that to every relationship. You’re not going to go up to your boss and be like, "Oh guess what I was fantasizing about last night, right? " You’re not going to do that! Like you’re smart, you’re wise, you know what’s appropriate. But in our most intimate of relationships, our best friends, our partners, when there are things that we feel like, “Oh, I couldn’t ever tell that person this thing about me.” I’m just really curious about why not? You know, what’s up? And is that, am I taking care of myself in a particular way, you know? Or am I dismissing a part of myself or
“dis-accepting” -- I don't think that's a word-- but dising a part of myself in that, yeah? Does that make sense?

**Amber**: Oh yeah, and I think, too, when it comes to sex how many of that 60% are being held back by just body shame?

**Pavini**: Oh right. There's that piece too.

**Amber**: And just not, just being uncomfortable with the body they were given in this lifetime.

[0:53:10]

**Pavini**: Yeah, I was reading this thing the other day by Richard Strosey Heckler, he's one of my teachers, and he was saying, "You don't have just one body that you inhabit in this lifetime." And I love that.

But yeah, you’re right. You’re totally right. Body shame and not feeling comfortable, and umm yeah.

**Amber**: Yeah

**Pavini**: And I remember when, *(Pavini laughs)* I was female-identified, and i asked my partner, who was a cis-male at the time -- I mean, he is still a cis-male, he's just not my partner -- and I was like, "Hey do you ever suck your stomach in?" and he was like, "Why would I do that?"

*(Both laugh)*

**Amber**: Oh man. Yeah *(Amber laughs)*, that hits close to him.

I really, really like what you just said, that that guy you were just speaking of, that we just have so many bodies throughout our lifetimes. That feels really helpful to me. And yeah, I just zeroed in on the body shame thing because that's my biggest issue in sex right now, and it has everything to do with having my second child. And still being like, "What is this new body? This isn't me!"

And of course it **IS** me *(Amber laughs)*.

**Pavini**: It's a new version of you.

**Amber**: Yeah. Yeah, it's a new version of me.
Amber: Umm, so Dr. Moray, you recently got your PhD. Congratulations! Are you gonna start using doctor (Pavini laughs) when you introduce yourself?

(Pavini laughs)

Pavini: Oh my god, the first day I got my diploma, I changed everything on my website. I was like HECK YES! (Both laugh)

Amber: Good good.

Pavini: I don’t know about when I introduce myself. I'd be like (Pavini does distinguished sounding voice), "Hello, call me Dr. Moray." (Amber laughs). But yes, it's definitely on my website.

Amber: Okay, I want to, I thought we could do sort of a retrospective on what you’ve learned since you've started your podcast. I think you have over 40 episodes now. Is that right?

Pavini: Umm… Yeah.

Amber: It’s actually about where I am now, too.

Is there a theme emerging of transformation for you personally, or put another way, what have you learned from your guests from doing the podcast, from the process of interviewing people that maybe you didn't anticipate at the beginning?

Pavini: (Pavini pauses)

First, I want to say that having the privilege of interviewing people and asking them whatever you personally want to know is tremendous, that I get an hour of these people's time, uninterrupted, and I get to ask them anything I want. And I often have the image of, “I'm sitting at your feet listening” especially with some of the elders that I've interviewed. Like, I just feel this sense of this is like a lineage transmission that I'm receiving. So there's a lot of, I feel really humble. (Pavini pauses)

Sometimes in the interviews where I'm really try to reach to understand, like, what the heck they're talking about, and it's like, it's this funny dual role of being the interviewer and at the same time it's like my head is blowing up a little bit. You know?
Amber: (laughs) I do.

Pavini: And so this is where I'm at. Am I getting it? You know? Umm, and I love that, and it's also, like -- I mean they're pre-recorded, but I don't do a lot of editing -- so it's also happening on the fly. I'm having to learn and expand my understanding on the fly, you know? And it's going to be public.

I think it would be even more intense if it was live, but I really don't edit that stuff out. So that's also humbling. And there's been moments where I have stumbled or, you know, I say something, "Oh god, that was a dick thing to say!" (Amber's laughs) "Oh that really shows my lack of awareness around…"

There's like one interview where my lack of awareness around disability justice, and the shame spiral hits, and I'm like, still in the interview. Like that all still happening, you know?

[0:57:56]

Pavini: (Pavini pauses)... I think the other thing I want to say about it is the trust in the process of where it's going. That you know, I (like you), I plan out some questions but then the conversation goes where the conversation goes. And being available to -- it's like a dance. It's like an unplanned freeform dance where you're just following and leading, and seeing what happens.

It's improv.

And so there's just such a sense of trust. Like, trust the process. I would say those are kind of the big things that I've learned.

Amber: Umm you, you really, I've been in ritual space with you for three days in a row back in February at the ancestral lineage intensive through the work of Dr. Daniel Foor of Ancestral Medicine, and I've listened to your podcast a lot, and you really embody this very grounded wisdom. Your voice is incredibly soothing, really everything you say when you're interviewing people just always hits, hits my heart.

And I'm just wondering, now as we're having this conversation, what --were you like that as a child?

(Pavini laughs)

What thread connects Pavini now and child Pavini, such a long time ago and such a different space in life?

Pavini: Yes and no. Yes and no is the answer to your questions. Yes, I was like that, and no I was not like that.
The confidence comes from the work I've done in somatic coaching with my somatic coach. And the embodiment and the groundedness all comes from that: of five years of really intense somatic work.

Umm, the throughline, when I was a, when I was 6 I started to draw this symbol which was a star with a circle around it, with a purple stone in the middle. And I drew it hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times and then at my 7th birthday, my mother's partner had it made into a necklace for me. Which I still have, and it's been a precious thing in my life.

I mean, obviously, I grew up in the Mid-West; we were not witchy at all. And so, but that, when I was probably like, 18 or so, I began to understand what that symbol was and started to come into my witchiness, and I was like, "Oh, that's weird."

And so I feel like that's the touchstone of like, that's been the thing I can hold in my hand and be like, "You have always been magic. You have always been connected with spirit." I mean, we all have, right? I'm lucky that I have this thing that I can hold in my hand that reminds me of that. Like, all of the hard stuff, through all of the hard stuff that was happening before that and after that, there is this through line of self-hood, and I luckily have this things that reminds of me of that.

Amber: That's sweet.

[1:01:51]
Amber: Okay, Pavini, tell the good people where they can find you, and things you may have coming up.

Pavini: Sure. Umm, I have a zillion websites. (Amber laughs)

And this next one is emancipating-sexuality.com. You already talked about the TranscestralHealing.com one. My podcast is Bespoken Bones. We mentioned that. Yeah, I always have lots of stuff coming up. I think just like, you know, I'm involved in like 10,000 projects, so just check it out. Check out my websites and the stuff I'm doing.

Yeah, I also just want to issue this invitation of just like, be in touch. I feel like this stuff is just stirring, and it's good work, and I always welcome hearing from folks on their journey, or what their questions are, or what they're up to. A lot of the guests on my podcast are, like, because people are like, "Hey can you interview this person." And just wanting that, I love that communication. So just inviting people in to that.

Amber: Okay, thank you so much for talking to me today, Pavini.

Pavini: Thank you so much, Amber. It's such a blessing, and thank you for your good work in the world. I respect the hell out of you.
Exit music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux

Amber: Oh gosh, thank you. Likewise.

[1:03:20]

Music continues: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux

Amber: Thank you for taking these Medicine Stories in. I hope they inspire you to keep walking the mythic path of your own unfolding self. I love sharing information and will always put any relevant link in the show notes. You can find my blog, handmade herbal medicines, and past podcast episodes at MythicMedicine.love.

While you're there, I invite you to click the purple banner to take my quiz “Which Healing Herb is your Plant Familiar?” It’s a fun and lighthearted quiz, but the results are really in depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with the medicine you are in need of.

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