

[music]

**0:00:02.6 Nicole Antoinette:** Welcome to season two of The Pop-Up Pod, where my guests and I are exploring one big and juicy question, how much money is enough?

**0:00:11.6 NA:** I'm your host, Nicole Antoinette, I'm self-employed, partnered, but not married, child-free by choice, and I've had a somewhat roller-coaster history of experiencing up and down class changes throughout my entire life. My parents filed for bankruptcy when I was 14 years old, and I have been obsessed with personal finance ever since. And so the question that we're exploring this season, how much money is enough? It's a question that I think about all the time, and I can't wait to share today's episode with you. This intimate conversation is 100% listener funded, paid for by my sliding scale Patreon community, that means you won't hear any ads or sponsors on the show.

**0:00:48.7 NA:** It's just me backed by the support of 400 plus people who have come together to ensure that everyone involved in making this podcast gets paid. That includes me as the host and creator, my sound engineer and musician, Adam Day, as well as every single one of our guests. Our Patreon community also funds the creation of a full transcript for each episode, which you can find in the show notes to help make these conversations more accessible.

**0:01:12.9 NA:** Those are our production ethics here at The Pop-Up Pod, and if that aligns with your own values, I would love to invite you to come check out our community at [nicoleantoinette.com/Patreon](https://nicoleantoinette.com/Patreon). And honestly, I know that I'm biased, but it's just such a fun and easy and supportive and sweet community, truly my favorite corner of the internet. And like I said, it's run on a sliding scale, so you can pay whatever amount makes most sense for you either as a monthly or an annual payment, you can move up or down the scale as needed over time, there's a lot of flexibility and you'll get access to lots of fun bonus content and invitations to live gatherings and group discussion threads, and the chance to help shape the topics and conversations of future seasons. There's so much stuff that happens over there.

**0:01:56.4 NA:** So one more time, it's [nicoleantoinette.com/Patreon](https://nicoleantoinette.com/Patreon). In the meantime, I cannot wait to introduce you to today's guest, L'Erin Alta. L'Erin, whose pronouns are she/her is a mystic medicine woman and spiritual mentor with over 20 years of experience helping people live their souls purpose. As creatrix of Black Girl Mystic, she leads master classes workshops, retreats, one-on-one intensives all for creating wealth, ease and freedom from a place of soul alignment. L'Erin, is one of my absolute favorite people to be in conversation with. This is, I think the fourth time I've interviewed her over the past five or six years, both on podcasts and also live-in person, and the depth, honesty and richness of what she shares always blows me away.

**0:02:43.0 NA:** This conversation is no exception, we talk about money and spirituality, manifesting outside of capitalism and what manifestation even means when it's not being co-opted by the personal development space. We talk about why L'Erin, unapologetically wants a life of wealth, ease and luxury, she shares what that actually looks like for her, and so much more. I hope that listening to these stories and perspectives makes you feel more liberated and totally fired up about

what is possible in your own life as that is certainly how L'Erin, makes me feel. Okay, let's dive in.

[music]

**0:03:28.8 NA:** Alright, here we go. L'Erin, welcome so much to the show.

**0:03:32.4 L'Erin Alta:** Thank you so much for having me. Always happy to be here with you.

**0:03:36.8 NA:** I feel like welcome so much is not even a proper sentence, but it is...

[laughter]

**0:03:40.0 NA:** It's how I feel. Tell me where in the world you are right now.

**0:03:44.1 LA:** I currently live in Kigali, Rwanda, in the District called Kicukiro and my neighborhood is called Kagarama. Now, I'm mis-pronouncing most of those words, but that is technically where I live.

**0:03:57.8 NA:** Great. [chuckle] Great. To be fair, I wouldn't know if you're mispronouncing them so...

[laughter]

**0:04:02.3 NA:** I'll take your word for it. How long have you been here?

**0:04:04.3 LA:** I moved in February.

**0:04:06.0 NA:** Okay, okay. I feel like... I'm trying to remember the last time when I saw you. It was in 2018 in Seattle. So how does it feel to move somewhere with, I assume such a drastically different cost of living and just a different place overall. How did you decide to move there? Tell me everything.

**0:04:23.9 LA:** Yes, well, right after I saw you in Seattle, I went to Mexico, I moved to Mexico, and then I went from Mexico to Thailand, and then Thailand, I think I went back to the States for a little bit, and then I went back to Mexico and then the 'Rona happened. And so then I was like, okay, let me get out of here. 'Cause if something happens, I don't know how to speak... I don't even know how to say, Take me to the hospital. So I went back to the States. I went back to Seattle in the winter. And I said, Oh no, this is not the life I wanna live. [chuckle] I don't wanna be here. And I've been looking. All that traveling was, I wanted to be somewhere that felt like summer year round, that was warm, that was sunny, that the people felt warm, that the culture felt warm. And I kept hearing about Rwanda and I was not paying attention to it because my only relationship to it was the Tutsi genocide in the early '90s, in 1994, and I was like, It doesn't sound quite like what I'm looking... And it's inland, and I wanted to be by the water and on the water.

**0:05:31.1 LA:** And then someone I knew who lived in Thailand, we... At the same time moved and I was like, Can we just set up a Zoom date? And I asked her and she... The words that she said to me were, Rwanda is a soft and gentle place. And that sold me because all of the insanity and violence and trauma that's happening in the United States and has been happening, I just needed to be somewhere soft and gentle, that would be a soft place to land. And part of what makes it a soft and gentle place is that they did come through a genocide. They say, No, we're not going back there again. We know we're not... We know the value of a human life and we are not going to do that. And that is from the government down. And so I just... I think it's been a good place for me to be just to feel like the government cares about the citizens, the government is really intentional, and it's the cleanest, safest and greenest country in Africa. So all of that are the reasons why I'm here. And now I've been thinking recently, well, do I wanna go somewhere else next? Like, where's my next place? I don't know, but I'm here for the time being.

**0:06:49.8 NA:** That's a strong sales pitch, I'm not gonna lie.

[laughter]

**0:06:52.5 LA:** Right?

**0:06:52.5 NA:** You just did like a really solid PR for Rwanda.

[laughter]

**0:06:56.7 LA:** Exactly. Exactly.

**0:06:57.9 NA:** I am interested in the money side of... Obviously, we're talking about money, but of the countries that you just laid out. Definitely lower cost of living significantly than Seattle or pretty much anywhere in the United States. Did that factor into your decision? How has that changed things for you? Yeah, talk to me about the money part of it.

**0:07:20.2 LA:** Well, it's interesting because I have a great deal in Seattle, I have a loft apartment, that's an artist loft, that's like a rent subsidized apartment. So it's like way below market value, dramatically. So I don't know even what market value would be, but at least three times what I pay. So that gives me a lot of flexibility and leverage. But my apartment in Mexico was on the beach, and I think, I don't remember exactly, I think I paid 1300 a month. So it was theoretically because it's Mexico, it could be lower, but not because of where... I wanted to live on the beach, I wanted to have a nice apartment and then now... But it was kind of one bedroom, one bathroom apartment in a six-unit building.

**0:08:07.4 LA:** And then Thailand, I think I paid 650 for a really nice apartment that included cleaning service, and that was a one-bedroom, one bathroom apartment in a really nice building in Chiang Mai. And now in Rwanda, I have a four bedroom, 4 1/2 bathroom, new house, that I pay a

\$1000 a month for. So it's not dirt cheap, 'cause I think people think, oh, Africa, you pay \$50 a month, which you could, I'm sure there are places here for \$50 a month, but for the house a \$1000, it's a pretty good deal, but you just get more for your money. So I'm paying more for my house in Rwanda than I did in Mexico, but I'm getting way more house... No, no, I'm paying less and I'm getting way more house. I looked at houses that were more, I looked at houses that were less and this was just a happy medium here.

**0:08:56.7 NA:** Yeah, do you still have your place in Seattle?

**0:09:00.9 LA:** I do.

**0:09:00.9 NA:** You do.

**0:09:02.0 LA:** I do.

**0:09:03.3 NA:** Yes.

**0:09:04.2 LA:** It's my goal to have homes in multiple area codes. So even if I left Rwanda, I think I would still keep the house here so that I could come when I wanna be here. I'm keeping my place in Seattle for sure. I'm gonna keep that until... Because it's such a good deal...

**0:09:18.0 NA:** Until it's not rent subsidized anymore.

**0:09:18.1 LA:** Exactly.

**0:09:21.1 NA:** Yeah, until they try to take it away from you. Yeah.

**0:09:22.2 LA:** But they won't because it's not government subsidized. It's like some people... Because it's an artist building, some really rich people who wanna support artists just got together and were like, We're just gonna fund this indefinitely. So the government... It can't. [chuckle] They can't take it away. So I'll be there until I decide to move on, but where I started thinking about last night, I can't believe I'm thinking about... Literally, I can't believe this, Nicole. I can't believe it, but I'm like, Do I wanna move to Houston? I don't know. Wait, I don't know, there's lots of things, but... So I haven't... I started looking at the cost of living just to see kind of what the variables would be. I don't know. We'll see. That's a possibility.

**0:10:01.1 NA:** We'll see. When your cost of living changes, does it impact how much money you feel like you need to make? Or are your earnings goals consistent regardless?

**0:10:14.5 LA:** Oh, that's a great question. My earning goals are consistent regardless, but my earning goals are also high because I like to have a cushion. I really... It stresses me out to not have enough, or feel like I'm close to not having enough, and I like to have way more than I need, because I like to be able to live in the overflow and the abundance of it, and not in the hand-to

mouth, and I'm very familiar with living in the hand-to-mouth and I don't ever want to go back there again.

**0:10:49.9 NA:** Yeah, the correlation between cost of living and earnings goals is interesting. It's something that I've been thinking about. So I'm living in Massachusetts now, and the reason that I'm here, this is where my partner's from, and the house that we are living in, his dad owns and has owned for generations, and so there's no mortgage, there's no rent, all we're doing is paying utilities. So basically it's my proximity to someone else's generational wealth, which is a huge privilege that I'm so grateful for. And yet I've started thinking of the reality of the fact that I have housing only as long as I'm in this relationship, which I'm thinking of it as a long-term relationship. I'm not in the relationship for housing, let's be very clear about that, but when I look at this question of how much money is enough, I am absolutely earning enough right now, but if tomorrow I had to pay for housing on my own and not have a partner to split utilities with and groceries and all of those kinds of things, then I would not be earning enough. And so I'm thinking about changing my enough number so that I am earning enough that if I had to pay for housing on my own, that, that wouldn't feel like, oh, my God, what am I gonna do?

**0:12:03.3 LA:** I totally understand. When I was in my, I guess, early 30s, I was in a relationship, a five-year relationship, and we both knew that the relationship had run its course, it had taken its toll and taken his turn. But I didn't have what I call fuck you money. I couldn't just leave. My partner at the time was paying for where we were... The condo, and took care of most of the major financial responsibilities, and I was working retail, building my business. And so I did not have any money to just go. And so I ended up staying in the relationship longer, staying in the condo longer, and when I finally was able to move, it's because my mother helped me move and I was in my mid 30s. And so that was kind of my never again moment. I'm like, never again will I be financially reliant on anybody. I don't wanna have to be... Even if it is a marriage or a partnership or whatever, I wanna be able to... If I need to leave, leave or if I wanna go on vacation, go on vacay... Or whatever I wanna do, I don't wanna have to be reliant on anybody else. That was a very unpleasant corner to be in.

**0:13:14.7 NA:** Yeah, no, I can imagine. My parents probably would have gotten divorced a long time ago if they had the money to... Support two livelihoods. And it was something I thought about a lot in getting divorced back in 2019 from someone who was an incredibly high earner of like, I did have a moment of, I am choosing a financially harder path, and also for me, that was not a reason to stay in the relationship and...

**0:13:38.4 LA:** I do.

**0:13:38.5 NA:** Yeah. Oh, okay. So I have so many questions for you. Okay, let's start here.

**0:13:44.2 LA:** Let's do it.

**0:13:45.2 NA:** Tell me something that has felt great about money for you so far this year. What

money-related thing can I celebrate with you? To get us started.

**0:13:50.6 LA:** Oh, this is my favorite money memory of all time. Okay, let's go on a journey. Let's go on it literally and metaphorically, let's go on a journey. I'm gonna give you a little back story and then I'll tell you the 22 version. So when I was in the eighth grade, I went abroad for the first time with my eighth grade French class, we went to Paris, [0:14:11.1]       , and this was 1994, 1993 or 1994. And me being me [chuckle] I was like, oh, I'm gonna sneak up to first class because that's where I wanna be, and so I did. I snuck up to first class somewhere over the ocean...

[laughter]

**0:14:28.6 LA:** And I settled in, and this was... I remember it, this is way back in the day, because the person I settled in next to was smoking a cigarette, you could still smoke on airplanes. And I was like, oh, this is the life. This is how I like to live, this is where I'm supposed to be. And so from then until 911, quite frankly, I would just sneak up into first class, and then you had to find the right timing, you had to find it while people were still loading, but you couldn't do it too late because then they would count... They were checking off people who are supposed to be in their seats, but you couldn't do it too early because then the people were... You might be in someone else's seat and then it would cause a scene. So I found out my perfect timing until 911 shut it down 'cause they were being much more regulated as they should be. So fast forward to... Which was magnificent. Fast forward to 2022, I started flying first class everywhere, paying for it myself. Paying for it myself.

**0:15:33.5 LA:** So flying, I came and visited... I went to Zanzibar initially in December, I was living in Atlanta for just a few months over the summer, last summer, so I flew from Seattle to Atlanta first class, Atlanta to LA first class, LA to Zanzibar first class, Zanzibar to Rwanda. Then I was here, then I flew back to the States first class, and then I flew back from the States to Rwanda to move first class. And when I first settled in that seat from LA to Zanzibar, I literally started crying because I was like, I did this, I did this.

**0:16:08.6 LA:** I planted that little 14-year-old seed when I snuck up and I did this myself, I paid for it myself. I am here, and it was such a full circle moment. It really was. And I love really nice customer service, I love luxury and wonderful treatment. And so the food is delicious, and you get this extensive menu and the bed lays down and the door closes. And when I got up and went to the bathroom, the stewardess or the hostess said, Would you like me to make your bed? Yes, I would.

[chuckle]

**0:16:49.3 LA:** I would love for you to make my bed. Thank you. So that is my 2022, 2021 highlight, money highlight. And it was... Because the first time I did it, it was I think my first ticket. My first international first class ticket was \$3500, and I was like, was this worth it? I didn't know even up until sitting in the seat, I was like, was this worth it? I don't know. This was \$3500. But when she closed the door, Nicole, when she closed the door, my nervous system just dropped. I felt

so soothed and I was like, hands down, this is worth it. Especially in COVID times, I just needed my privacy, I needed that space, it was worth it. And I will do it again and again and again.

**0:17:40.3 NA:** I'm obsessed with this story. I would like you to know I will never not hold the vision of you at 14 years old sneaking in to first... I just imagine you like creeping up there, but then totally acting like you belong.

**0:17:51.8 LA:** Right.

**0:17:53.8 NA:** And absolutely...

**0:17:53.8 LA:** That's exactly it.

**0:17:55.1 NA:** That's a ballsy thing for a 14-year-old to do. I don't know what I was doing at 14, but it definitely wasn't having the wherewithal to be like, you know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna sneak up to first class. Oh, my God, stop your iconic.

[laughter]

**0:18:08.1 LA:** And the thing is, it literally... I don't remember talking about it with my classmates, I don't remember, but when I posted something else, and I don't even remember what the post was on my Facebook, one of my classmates, who I'm still Facebook friends with to this day. And this is in this era, so this is like in 2022, said, That reminds me of when you snuck into first class on our trip. And I was like, I didn't even know anyone noticed. I didn't even know anyone remembered that moment, so thank you for saying that. I was just being L'Erin.

**0:18:37.4 NA:** It's so great. This makes me think, you know, when you mentioned having that moment of pause of this \$3500, is it worth it? Something that I struggle with a lot, not just money-related, but time as well is, and I'm trying to unlearn this, that feeling of needing to maximize the joy from something, or did I have enough fun on this vacation? Or... I feel like even if I had the disposable income to spend \$3500 comfortably on a first class plane ticket, which I do not currently, but if I did... I can't imagine what would have to be true in my life for me to not be anxious about, am I enjoying this enough? There's a particular kind of, in my head, I call it vacation anxiety of, you know, I took this day off, is it restful enough? Right, and this is something I'm definitely talking about with my therapist, so I'm not expecting you to be my therapist, but is that something that you just don't have come up for you? Is it something that you've worked through?

**0:19:36.7 LA:** It's not something I deal with at all. I really love luxury and I love leisure and I love being supported. So for me, even when I was in Zanzibar, I would just sleep in... Tumble into the restaurant for breakfast, I don't have... The less I have on my calendar is the better I feel. So if... The least I have to do, the better. And the more support I have, the better I feel. So even in Rwanda, thanks the Lord for Lydia. And Lydia is the godsent of my life. She's been with me since the day I moved into this house. She comes to me... My house six days a week, cleans my house from top to

bottom six days a week, goes to the market, cooks me three meals a day, from scratch, walk my dog, washes my dog six days a week, and that to me is like exactly how I wanna live my life, I love... Because then I can... I hate, I'm not domestic, I hate cooking, I like to eat, but I am not a good cook. So now if I wanted this life in Houston or Seattle, it would be a lot more expensive to have that kind of support, so I think it also... When we were talking about cost of living, it also is helpful that I'm somewhere where I can afford to pay a person... Her top rate, I don't believe in negotiating people for their rate. So I paid her exactly what she asked for, and I get really wonderful support. So... Yes, I love that.

**0:21:05.6 NA:** Great. Are you available for leisure coaching? Can you teach me how to... We can talk about that of air. Okay.

**0:21:12.7 LA:** Okay.

**0:21:13.5 NA:** So I had you talk about your desire for an abundant life in other places, whether it's on your podcast or writing and stuff, and this idea of a life of wealth, ease, luxury and freedom, and you just kind of spoke to some of those things. And I would actually really like to break down each of those words because I think that we hear wealth, we hear luxury, that means different things to different people. Ease means different things. Freedom means different things, and part of what I'm trying to do on this podcast is have people be specific. And so maybe we can start with, if that feels true, that you want a life of wealth, ease, luxury and freedom. What is being wealthy mean to you? What does that look like? Obviously, you've just shared a couple of things, but is it a dollar amount? Is it an emotional experience?

**0:21:55.9 LA:** Both, for sure. For me, wealth means if I'm gonna do like the broad strokes, it means having all of my resource needs met. So emotionally, energetically and financially and time-wise, having all of my needs met. And I do wanna be a multi-millionaire, I wanna have my money making money for me and not have to work at all, like that is... And that has been a goal for me since childhood, like young. And I grew up in a very class stable family, I grew up with a lot of... My mother would contest that I would say upper middle class, that was like so not how she would ever will describe herself. But it's true, it's true. And so I was like, I like this, and I really want it long, I really want long money, and I want it to grow for itself and I don't wanna have to work. So to me, that's what wealth is, and I think it's... And for me, personally, I want that to be transferable, in other words, I wanna be able to spend a month in Paris without having to look at my bank account, just spending Euros or Pesos in Mexico. I don't have to... I want it to be not bound to one specific geographic location, I want really... That's what wealth means to me that like... And it's not necessarily... So the multi-million is based on kind of my personal desires, but I don't think you have to have multi-millions to be wealthy.

**0:23:24.7 NA:** Yeah, yeah. So can you talk about some of the other words? What is an easeful day feel like for you, or look like for you, where does luxury come into play, what kind of freedom do you want? Anything about those words that you wanna speak to. I love this picture that you're painting. I feel like honestly, this is already permission giving for me. I'm like, This is great, I'm into



it.

**0:23:44.1 LA:** Oh, wonderful. So ease for me is really an internal conversation. I mean I don't use an alarm clock, I have a very easeful day, like the structure of my day is very easy, but I think it's really easy because I allow it to be easy, I'm not in a hurry, I don't beat myself up for a thing, like I allow myself to take whatever time I need, it's about really my relationship to time and flow, like there's no urgency, there's no... Yeah, there's no urgency. I can just be in the ease of it and the pleasure of it, and allow that to be good enough. Leisure... Did you say luxury or leisure? Luxury?

**0:24:24.9 NA:** I mean, luxury, but either. Yeah.

**0:24:29.2 LA:** So I'm not doing this currently because I had a falling out with the Marriott, but my house, despite it being four and a half bathrooms, does not have a bathtub, and so once a month I would treat myself to a weekend at the Marriott, which is the fancy-ass hotel in Kigali in Rwanda. So to me, that's luxury, like really a lot, giving yourself permission to meet your needs, like what... For me, I'm inland, right? So I don't see an ocean, I don't see a... I don't see a coast line, there's no water, and I not to have a bathtub as someone who really loves water, giving myself permission to go and spend the weekend at the Marriott and order room service and have breakfast, all of that is like luxury for me.

**0:25:09.3 LA:** It's like the first class flights, all of that, I don't really care about brand names, that's not really... 'Cause I feel like I'm giving... Promoting someone else's business, I don't care about Gucci. But if I'm gonna give myself what I want, oh another thing that's luxury, like I go weekly and I get a two-hour massage. And now I have someone come to my house to come... Instead of going to the spa. So those kinds of things are really about what I love, how I love to be taken care of, how I love to be met. And I think it's different for everybody, right? Some people maybe going fishing or something else, but for me, it's very... This world's very body-oriented, it's food, it's deliciousness, it's self-care, it's massage, it's bags, it's those kinds of thing, and it's first class flights. It's nice hotels. Even when I was living in Seattle in the Panini Press, I would go to... 'Cause I had a bathtub in my place in Seattle, but I wanted a deep soaking tub, so I would go to a fancy hotel in Seattle and rent it for the weekend. And so I imagine as I continue to grow my money that it'll continue to be...

**0:26:17.4 LA:** That will be the tone of it. Maybe I'll spend money at designer clothes, 'cause I think that's what people think of when they think of luxury, but I really like experiences, I really like luxury experiences, I like feeling taken care of, I like feeling like the people who are working are really paying attention to the work, which is why I had the falling out with the Marriott. But anyway, another story for another day.

**0:26:42.4 NA:** Anyway, right, right. Just throw them under the bus. I also love taking baths very much and do not... That we have like a bath shower combo here, but it's a really shallow small bathtub, so it's not a bathtub that's really soakable. This idea of going to a hotel for a weekend to take a bath is immediately going on to my bucket list.

**0:27:00.2 LA:** Yes.

**0:27:02.3 NA:** There's an Airbnb that was not even an hour away that... 'Cause before my partner and I moved into this place, we were living with his dad. And so we were living with his dad during the depth of the pandemic, right, we had no alone time, we're like, Let's just get an Airbnb for... Let's go on a sexcation for a couple of days.

**0:27:17.9 LA:** Yes.

**0:27:18.4 NA:** And so we went to this place for that purpose, that happened to have the best bathtub I have ever seen or been in in my entire... Like, I still think fondly about it, and I would have never thought I could actually go there alone just for the bathtub. It really wasn't that expensive. So I just feel like that what you are laying out is, or how I'm interpreting what you're laying out, is this really shame-free approach to want... Letting yourself want what it is that you want. It might seem so silly to someone else to do something based around a bathtub, but if you're really in touch with what it is that makes you feel cared for and joyful and the way that you wanna feel, it actually doesn't matter if that thing seems silly, and it doesn't matter if it's not something that someone else would want, because I'm sure what would feel really good for someone else, wouldn't feel good for me, but that's not my business.

**0:28:06.4 LA:** Exactly, exactly. And to me, what you just said is freedom, that is freedom. Doing what you want. Doing what you want. That's it. That's all. Yeah, exactly. Even when I came back from... When I came back to Seattle from having been in Georgia for five months, and I came back to my apartment and I walked in, and I was like, oh, did someone ransack the place? And I was like, oh no, L'Erin, you left it like this, this is what happened when you packed in a hurry, it just looked a mess. So I just rented another Airbnb, I was like, I have to recalibrate and I rented an Airbnb to soak, to relax, to get all my nails... Like have a calming... 'Cause I had left it in such a state of chaos that I couldn't relax. To me, that's freedom, I don't... It doesn't have to be tit for tat, it's really like, I can be expansive in my life, what do I... How do I want to experience this moment? And I'm giving myself permission to do that.

**0:29:04.0 NA:** Yeah, so you mentioned, it sounds like you were well-resourced growing up.

**0:29:11.2 LA:** Absolutely.

**0:29:11.7 NA:** Yeah, I'm interested sort of in the timeline of that, because then it sounds like the... When you mentioned being in that past relationship that you felt like you couldn't leave because you didn't have the fuck you money, so it sounds like maybe it wasn't... You weren't always as consistently resourced. I'm also interested in, was there a pivotal time along the way where you got family financial support. Or will you talk about kind of the behind the scenes a little bit? And I ask this because I recently did a little poll in my Instagram stories of what's the one thing that you wish people were more open and honest about when it comes to money, and leaps and bounds, the most

popular answer was essentially whether people have secret money, whether they have either generational wealth or they've gotten family support, and not that there's anything wrong with that, but if you have it and don't talk about it, it makes other people feel like, Oh, what am I doing wrong? You get what I'm saying.

**0:30:01.2 LA:** This is such a deep rabbit hole that I'm excited to dive into with you, because it's complicated, and I think being a black American person who's the descendant of enslaved and free Africans, generational wealth is different, it's not the same, right? So yes, let's go there because this is juicy, and I've never talked about this deeply with people because no one asked, but I wanna talk about it. So as I mentioned earlier, my mother would totally deny the idea of growing... That I grew up upper middle class, it's kind of a shame around it, she has like a shame because it's like... She doesn't feel like that's true, but it is true. My mother is an entrepreneur and has been... And before that, she was the director of staff training and development at the University of Washington. She's very successful, and beyond being very successful, she's brilliant at money, she is brilliant. Now, so which means I grew up in the house that... My parents divorced when I was 2. She got the house, she owned the house. We moved when I was 15, she had a 30-year mortgage, paid it off in full in 15 years, like my mother is a beast at money and it's like probably the house, it's worth over half a million now.

**0:31:15.2 LA:** I'm not sure what the Seattle prices, it may be even closer to a million. Who knows? I don't know, but it's a very nice house that we moved in in brand new. She paid for private school for me and my sister out of pocket, like we pay... She pay for skiing. Everything we needed, we had the financial stability to do. And she, my mother made the money. My parents... My father paid child support, but that was it, right. This is all coming from my mother's income. My mother paid for my college out of pocket, I had no scholarship, no FAFSA, no financial aid, nothing, which really... The private school, yes, was a great education, but it was also the exposure to what wealth really looks like. Because my classmates, one of my schoolmates, her grandfather started Japanese Nintendo. Her father started American Nintendo. The Nordstroms went to my school. Bill Gates and Paul Allen went to my school, like that kind of rich. Not like, that's generational wealth, like owning presidents or founders, and all that kind of stuff, all those. So my little mom's paltry money was pennies compared to what they had. But my mother also... My grandmother owned her house and my great-grandparents own their house and the land.

**0:32:37.0 LA:** My great-grandfather had 160 acres of land in Texas, and my mother, grandparents, my parents' grandparents and great-grandparents all had undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees, which is another form of wealth. So my great-grandfather was born two years after enslavement ended, and ended up with two undergraduate degrees and two Master's degrees, and my great-grandmother had a Master's degree. So it didn't look like owning factories, but it looked like, this is how we get free, this is how we create class stability. This is how we build legacy for the future. So by the time I got to college and then into this relationship, my mother was... Her mantra was, You need to get off my paycheck, which had been her mantra for a long time, and so this is why I was working retail and not asking her for money because it wasn't a funding of my life kind of money. It was like, I'm gonna get you this far, now it's your job to take it and run, but I didn't

want to go to traditional work.

**0:33:42.4 LA:** Pre-law, pre-med, corporate America, I didn't wanna do those things that were gonna guarantee me money. And so it has taken me a while to figure out how to make my own money and not be reliant on my mother, and because I have really shifted my dynamic with my mother, and over the last few years, I have intentionally not taken any money from her and not asked for any money and not received any money even though... Because quiet as it's kept, it has come with a lot of strings attached, it wasn't just, Here's the money, with a lot of strings, a lot of expectations, and what they call golden handcuffs.

**0:34:23.1 NA:** Do you still feel even in the very, very back of your mind, some sense of comfort that there's a safety net to fall back on?

**0:34:32.1 LA:** I don't. I don't because it's not mine, it's not mine. I'm not in communication with my mother, which is a choice on my part, on my end, and that's what I mean by it has had strings attached, so if I come back into the conversation that it still has... Currency is the communication in a lot of ways.

**0:34:58.2 NA:** Yeah. So for you and the wealth that you're building, the wealth dreams that you have, it sounds like it's predominantly from earnings that you are making.

**0:35:06.1 LA:** Absolutely. Owned, yeah. But I wanna be clear, because I think this is... I would not have this relationship to money had I not had the exposure to wealth that I did.

**0:35:18.3 NA:** Which is why it's nuanced, right? It's easy... It's easy to think that like family, financial support just means, does your grandfather cut you a check or whatever, but it has so much to do with what you are exposed to and what that changes for you.

**0:35:35.1 LA:** 100,000%. A lot of people, because I'm from Seattle, which is not a very black city at all, especially now, but it was blacker when I grew up, but my mother, being from rural Texas, it was very, very... And growing up in a very pro-black community, was very intentional about the way she raised me and my sister. And so we grew up in a community of... My primary care doctor was a black woman, my dentist was a black man, my accountant was a black man. Our lawyer was a black man. So everybody I saw doing things that would generate money and generate wealth were black people, and so I didn't have this hang up around, Oh, being black means I can't have money, or I can't do this, or I can't do that, or only white people have money. It was really like, No, you can do this, but I didn't. And because my mother was also an entrepreneur, I knew I could do it my own way, so it was absolutely exposure, 100%.

**0:36:38.7 NA:** There's something coming up for me that I don't really know how to articulate, but I'm gonna try. I feel like the racial aspect of wealth is... It's so present. I feel differently about you creating wealth and luxury for yourself than I do about white people like me doing the same, which doesn't mean that I want to suffer or murder myself or anything like that, but I just feel so

differently about white wealth accumulation given... It's deeply problematic, fucked up history, than I feel about black wealth accumulation, indigenous wealth accumulation, and I don't know that I have a question in that, but it's... There's something there for me that I feel differently about, who... Not who has access to resource, I want everyone to be well-resourced, like that in my mind, liberation is every single person is exactly as well-resourced as they need to be. But there is something to this, I think.

**0:37:30.0 LA:** Absolutely, because it is different. It is different. Even if someone moves to the United States from Bulgaria tomorrow and they don't have any generational wealth in this country, in that country, they come into a legacy of white wealth, so it is different, it's very... Even if someone comes in from Nigeria to the United States, they come into a different context, in a different conversation. So it is different, it is nuanced, it's layered, it's complex, it's complicated, it's challenging, because there is this sense of, Who do you think you are, unless that's your cultural framework, unless that's normal for you, then it is like... And this is why I say that even my mother, just shun the idea of being upper middle class, it's like, no... 'Cause it's like a separation. Even though her friends are judges and lawyers and professionals who make lots of money and have big fancy houses, it's still this like you don't wanna be separate from, you still wanna be part of and belong to.

**0:38:38.8 NA:** And especially you don't wanna be separate from where you came from in a way, if that's not how she grew up or that all of this conversation about money is always about so much more than money.

**0:38:49.2 LA:** Absolutely, 100%. I remember when I was still building the business and I was so stressed because I had no money, and when... I'm a very literal person, so when I'm saying no money, I don't mean secret money, like you mentioned. I don't mean like it's hidden away, I mean like no money. And I went in and I was talking to my mother and I was so stressed out and almost on the verge of tears, and she said, I understand... Now, my mother's a little narcissistic and self-absorbed, so let's just put that out there. Okay, so she said, I understand when I divorced your father, I didn't have any money either. And I was like, not the same. But you owned a home, you had a Master's degree, you had a salary job at the university as the director of an entire department. So even if you... 'Cause there was a moment after the divorce that she couldn't buy milk, which was like her story, I couldn't... I didn't wanna ask your grandmother for money to buy a milk. I can't even buy the milk. But you knew that your paycheck was coming in a week or two or whatever, so even if that's the case, we are not the same.

**0:39:55.4 LA:** That's not what I'm talking about. And she couldn't hear that, it was very triggering for her. So there is a conversation that needs to have about reality, what are the numbers we're actually dealing with, and not just... Because it does... There is something like... It feels like I don't have any money. And that's relative. For some people, that mean I have a million dollars in the bank, and that feels like nothing to me, and for some people are like, I have 10 cents in the bank, and that literally is nothing to me.

**0:40:26.4 NA:** I mean, I remember a stat that my business coach shared about... It was some study that was done of, do you feel like you have enough money? And it was... This was asking incredibly wealthy people, right. And that... The answer was pretty much across the board, no, and how much would feel like enough, and no matter how much money they had, it was 20% more is what they said would feel like enough, and I think that's interesting too. And, yeah, all of this, the idea of enough-ness, it's rooted in how money is related to safety or a self-worth or like you said, ease or freedom, and it's... Yes, it's about the actual dollar amount, but it's about so much more than that too.

**0:41:12.1 LA:** Yeah, because capitalism bastardizes money. Capitalism just makes shit up. It's not actually... Pre-capitalism, it was much easier to feel abundant, I'm imagining, because if you want a mango, you go get the mango off the tree. It wasn't this... Capitalism is based in scarcity, it's based in this idea of not enough-ness, it's based in this idea of there's only a certain amount. And so when we buy into this idea of capitalism, we're always chasing that extra 20%. There's no way in the world that Jeff Bezos, whose children go to my school, my alma mater, there's no... Needs to have this much money as he has. There's no way, because even if he does, Amazon should not have the working conditions that it has. There's things that don't add up. That don't make sense. There's no way.

**0:42:06.5 NA:** No, I mean, there is no one in the world who could convince me that there is a way to ethically amass the wealth that Jeff Bezos has, it's not... You cannot do that without deep exploitation of land and people and resources, it's not possible.

**0:42:20.1 LA:** Exactly, which is what he's doing. Which is what he's doing. I would feel different about him if Amazon was a great place to work, right, if the companies weren't exploited, if the employees were happy to be there, if they could take pee breaks, like if that... Then we'd have a different conversation. But at what cost?

**0:42:40.4 NA:** Yeah, I feel like this is an interesting segue point. I really wanna ask you to tell me about your relationship or the relationship between your spirituality and your money, 'cause I think there's almost something that you're not saying yet that I would love for you to say.

**0:42:55.2 LA:** For me, God is money, and I don't mean that God is money, I mean that God is everything. God is joy. God is abundance. God is prosperity. God is wealth. God is ease. God is freedom. Creation. God is all that is. And I say God, so if some of your listeners are triggered by that, fill in the blank with whatever word that resonates. I just like saying God, that resonates with me. So to me, all that is, includes all that is. Thousands of years ago, it was cowrie shells and beads we were bartering for lamb and carrots. It doesn't matter, it's all that is. And so for me, when I can tap into and be in alignment with that, with my creator, with God, the source, with that, then it's so much easier for the valve of abundance to be just flowing for me to receive it, 'cause it's always flowing.

**0:43:47.7 LA:** When I start trying to barter or bargain, or convince or coerce a higher power that

I'm worthy of what I want, it knocks everything out, 'cause that's actually not abundance, that's actually still perpetuating lack, limitation, scarcity. So it's a big leap of faith, especially when money feels like it's not coming in or not showing up, but my highest paying clients have come without me trying to apply or interview or even knowing they're in my world, they just showed up, and that is abundance to me, that is flow. When I'm having to market or sell, and if it comes from a place of like grabby, like I need this money, that feels more suffocating and stifling to me than just trusting that the right people will show up in my world, but that's all about being in a devotional practice that's like surrendered, that's surrendered to God, surrendered to the divine, surrendered to source, and being in the flow of what I know is my highest and best good.

**0:45:01.0 NA:** I don't know if this is a question that you can answer, 'cause it might just be trying to explain the unexplainable, but when you say a devotional practice of surrender, what does that actually mean? And very much a selfish question, 'cause I'm like teach me. [laughter]

**0:45:19.5 LA:** While part of it is... The biggest part is knowing that I don't know, and knowing that something bigger than me does, and that I don't have to know, that I don't have to be in charge, I don't have to control it, that I can really just surrender and I know... It's like my mom used to say, you can't answer a question with a question. With the same words. [laughter] So for me, it's like trusting the process, it's a leap of faith. It's not something that happens intellectually, it really is a leap, it is a surrender because I don't know. I don't know where my next client is coming from. I spent... I just launched Black Girl Mystic in July 29th... June 29th. And I spent the last over a year building it out, working, photo shoots, copyright, building the website, all this stuff, I haven't worked with a client, I just had launched a master class last week, just did it like a 90-minute master class of the first Black Girl Mystic master class where... Who wants this? I don't know. [laughter] Who's signing up to work with me? I don't know.

**0:46:33.8 LA:** This has all been a devotional practice, and it doesn't mean it's been easy. There have been times when I'm like, for real, I'm being obedient because this is what I felt called to do. This is what I felt like this is what I have been asked to do by the divine. Where the money is coming from next, I don't know. And if I lean on the fear of that, 'cause like I said earlier, I like knowing where money is coming from, I like having money coming in all the time, I love daily sales, that gives me comfort and support and helps me feel safe. So I'm in this place now, now that I've actually officially launched, of trying to be in alignment, staying in alignment, in the flow, and also being strategic about what am I saying? Who am I saying this to? How am I speaking? And so I don't know if I'm answering your question, but it's kind of messy and jumbled, it's not clean cut.

**0:47:33.9 NA:** Yeah, again, I don't think that there is a capital A answer, I was just curious to hear you talk about your process. I wanna go... So you said before, when you... In that conversation with your mom, starting your business you had no money, and I'm curious, there's like an intersection that's coming up for me in the kind of surrender, the leap of faith, trusting that it's gonna work out, but the practical reality of I don't have the money, and then also the \$3500 first class ticket. There's something interesting in here that it's like I wanna ask the practical question of, how did you do that? How did you make that happen? Did you make the decision to take on debt to start the

business, or take me to that I don't have any money, I have this idea, I wanna do this thing. How were your financial needs being met at that time, and how did that feel?

**0:48:22.7 LA:** Great, so I do not believe in debt, debt stresses me out, so everything I pay for I just have the money, or if I don't have the money, I don't pay for it. But when I saw... In summer of 2020, in the wake of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor's murders, I was like, No, I don't wanna have these conversations anymore. I need to shut it all down. That's the message I got from God, shut it all down. And that's... So I did, and that the first thing I started out of that was a Black Girl Mystic podcast because I wanted to center black women, feminine, non-binary voices around their spiritual journeys, and...

**0:48:58.8 NA:** So when you say shut it all down, you mean shut down previous iterations of your online business.

**0:49:02.7 LA:** Exactly.

**0:49:03.3 NA:** Okay.

**0:49:03.8 LA:** Shut down courses and shut down my one-on-one work. I was like I am not open for business.

**0:49:06.1 NA:** Okay. Yeah, so this business iteration is new, but obviously you have a long history of various forms of self-employment.

**0:49:14.8 LA:** Yes. Exactly.

**0:49:15.3 NA:** Okay.

**0:49:16.1 LA:** So I shut it down, and because I didn't have the emotional capacity, I was like, these people are getting murdered. I don't wanna talk to... I don't wanna talk, but I didn't know what to do and I didn't know where my money was coming from, but if nothing else, I am obedient, so I shut it down. I shut it down in the summer, maybe June, July, and I think in October someone I knew from Seattle, who I'd never worked with, who had recommend me for other work, was working in some capacity at a non-profit somewhere, not even in Sea... I don't know where they were, I don't know what they were doing, but they referred me to do organizational development work, healing justice work with this non-profit. I didn't interview, I didn't apply, and it ended up being an incredible contract that paid me very well for a full year, so that I could focus on building Black Girl Mystic and get my money. And so that's also what I mean by faith. That's also what I mean just trusting that it comes and it does come because it has come. That just... And so that's how I've been able to live, because I had a client who allowed me to do my work, but in a very contained environment, and then I could focus on building Black Girl Mystic while I was doing that without having to make money from it.



**0:50:42.4 NA:** Yeah. No, that's super helpful to know. And also what you said about trusting that it's gonna come, but it might not come from the place that you think. We can't always pull the puppet strings that this is exactly where the money is going to come from, I see that in the surrender as well. Almost like an opening up, these are my needs, these are my desires, this is what I want to be met, and I'm open to the fact that I actually don't know where it's gonna come from.

**0:51:09.1 LA:** 100%. Because it's like, they are infinite in possibilities. So for me to think it has to come in this little format, in this little structure, in this little way is limiting God. And God's unlimited. So let me not do that. Let me just sit back. But sometimes it can... It gets a little too close for comfort, and I'm like, okay, we're on the edge of glory here. Now let's get some money coming in. Let's have some income coming in, but it is the trust. It is the surrender because I can't live a small life, I feel suffocated if I'm living a small life or a life that doesn't feel like me. So I have to keep... So in other words, I got the best website designers that I wanted, I got the best photographers, I hired a set... I invested in building the brand, not knowing who my clients were gonna be. There was nobody like... Other than God being like, Make this. [laughter] No one. This was my calling.

**0:52:08.1 NA:** Yeah, and as I DM'd you about the websites so beautiful and the photos, I was like, Oh man, the photoshoot just looked fun, it looked like you were having a good time and were really centered. And yeah. So, great job, you did what you set out to do.

**0:52:22.5 LA:** Thank you.

**0:52:23.3 NA:** Were you... While we're kind of in this spirituality and money, I'm interested in two things. The first is, it's interesting to hear you talk about your relationship with God, source of spirituality, money as this really expansive thing, because I have heard from other folks, and maybe this is people with more religious conditioning trauma in their upbringing of that sort of more... It's not actually a spiritual belief, but what's sold as a spiritual belief that money is bad, and having fewer needs is a more moral way to live. I think that there's another experience that people have had when it comes to thinking about that intersection of spirituality and money. And so I guess what I wanna ask is, what would you say to people who are holding that belief or who are struggling to move on from that belief that money is somehow bad?

**0:53:24.3 LA:** It's a deeply rooted conversation, so I don't know that I can provide a short quip, and that's not my experience. I don't have that... I don't have church hurt around that, and I don't have it around money. The only messaging I really got around money and church was to tithe, which I still tithe. There's a lot to say. There's a lot. But it's hard to distill. I think my first thing would be just to invite them to... If they're willing to revisit the relationship, if they're willing to think about it in a different way, and if they are then we can have a different conversation and have a deeper context around it, but because some people are so hurt and have so much trauma around it, that they don't wanna touch it with a 10-foot pole. It's like, I don't even wanna touch... No. But if it's like, Yes, then... Because for me, I would encourage them to look at different ways that the divine is experienced across cultures, across nations, across the world, because that is not everyone's

relationship to it. And to redefine abundance, to redefine wealth, to redefine prosperity, to create your own definitions of it, because you, whoever you are listener, who may feel this way, have a direct...

**0:54:47.8 LA:** There's a Gospel song that says, Jesus is on the main line, tell them what you want. And it doesn't have to be Jesus, but it can be anything. You have a main line phone connection to all that is, because you are an expression of that. We are all unique emanations of all that is, of the creator. So if you are willing to say, let me just open up even a little bit to say, source talk to me. How can I see abundance differently, and maybe that's in the sand on a beach, or the leaves on a tree, or like air, like birds, something... How can you start to see that capitalism got us fucked up. Capitalism is what started to warp that relationship and bringing those two, capitalism and God together, 'cause they're actually... Capitalism is based on scarcity, God is based in infinite expansion, so they actually don't work together.

**0:55:46.8 NA:** Yeah, that's so beautifully said. And also what I just felt is, we can't ignore the fact that we do live under capitalism, so pretending that we don't is not... That's not useful, but it's like I believe in everyone's ability to really hold the nuance of the both and that I can figure out how to survive and thrive in the day-to-day capitalist situation that we're in, and also hold an infinite God belief or like you said, whatever other word you wanna put in there that I don't know that they have to be mutually exclusive because I think it would be really easy, and maybe my former self would have done this to be a little bit eye-rolly about like, Okay, sure, God's infinite, but practically I have to pay rent, or practically... You know those kind of things, and I don't... I have since come to think they can exist together.

**0:56:33.1 LA:** Absolutely, they can and they do. That's the thing. And this is where that leap of faith comes in because it takes some faith, no it doesn't take, because miracles are happening all the time. Miracles are happening all the time, but if we're not attuned to it, we're not available for it. So I'll give you an example. When I was moving from Georgia, my summer in Georgia, back to Seattle, I had my iMac, which is what we're talking on right now, and I had it all bubble wrapped and shipped and all the things on FedEx, and I had it insured. FedEx lost it. Nowhere to be found, just MIA. The time had come and gone for when it was supposed to have been delivered, I reported it lost, long story short, it finally appeared the day before I was gonna move to Rwanda. You know what appeared after I left? A \$1700 check, so I have my computer and a \$1700 check from FedEx. That's what I mean by miraculous. I'm not a very good capitalist. I guess I wanna be wealthy, but I'm not gonna... I'm not good at navigating the systems, I believe in the miraculous, which is bigger than the systems, and so by that I mean I did my part, I had the padding, I had it insured, I called, I reported it missing, I didn't just say, FedEx is gonna discover it and send me a miraculous check. No, I did my job, and then I went on my plane and I did what I was supposed to, and the check still came. That's not me. That wasn't me hustling to get the check from FedEx.

**0:58:08.4 NA:** Yeah. It also sounds like you have a very clear sense of what is and is not within your sphere of influence, because I think that there's something really powerful about okay, these are the five action steps that are mine to take in this situation, like you said, you bubble wrapped it,

you got the insurance, you did whatever tracking you were supposed to do, when it was missing you reported it. Okay, and then what? What are you gonna do? Spin your wheels about it? It definitely... There's nothing you can do, and it's like, as an anxious person, this is me saying this to myself, the only person being hurt by me continuing to ruminate on what's maybe or maybe not gonna happen next is me.

**0:58:43.9 LA:** That's right.

**0:58:45.0 NA:** Yeah.

**0:58:45.2 LA:** That's right.

**0:58:46.0 NA:** That's great. [laughter] Would you tell me... Yeah, go ahead.

**0:58:48.9 LA:** [laughter] Can I say this...

**0:58:49.0 NA:** Go, yeah, yeah.

**0:58:50.7 LA:** So when... I was a little flustered when it was happening, but to your point, I was like, This is where the surrender comes in, this is where the trust... And still staying in the trust that whether the check arrived or not, whether my computer arrived or not, I was gonna be okay. This wasn't a life or death. I wasn't hanging on the life by my toenails, this was gonna be okay, and it was okay. It was better than okay.

**0:59:15.7 NA:** Yeah, because whether the check comes or not, what you give yourself through surrender is not having to lay awake at night and stare at the ceiling about it. Which...

**0:59:23.4 LA:** That's right. Exactly.

**0:59:25.9 NA:** Yeah. I would love to hear the specifics of your tithing practice, is it something that you have as a system around, is it a set amount per month, is it more intuitive than that.

**0:59:37.3 LA:** It's 10%. I just tithe 10% and I tithe it to wherever my spiritual home feels in the moment or wherever I want to, so there's an Agape International Spiritual Center in Los Angeles, and I tithe to them sometimes, sometimes I tithe to artists or activists or people who I just want to bless and I just send it mysteriously and randomly, but it's a consistent practice. For me that feels good. And I saw somewhere that people are denouncing tithing, I don't care, it feels good to me because it also is like this act of I don't have to have it all because more is coming. That's what... To me, it's like, more is coming, I'm in the flow more is... I don't have to hoard it, I'm in this... Because if money is a currency, which it is, I wanna keep the circulation going, I don't have to hoard it, and that feels good to me to be able to pass it forward.

**1:00:36.5 NA:** Yeah, yeah. Again, I guess maybe because I didn't grow up in a religious context and

tithing in my mind is quite a religion word, maybe that's not true, but that was just my association with it that I think of it as wealth redistribution. I also have a system, I'm currently at 7% of my income every month and would like to get up to 10% and yeah, having a system around it actually feels really good for me that it's like a joyful thing every month to be like this money is getting redistributed. I think about what Kelly Deal says about keeping the money flowing in the feminist ecosystem, that it's... You just... Yeah, keep it in flow. Send it out there and it will come back to you, that it's not about just hoarding it all.

**1:01:21.4 LA:** Yeah, because there's more than enough. If my foundational belief is that there's more than enough, there's no need to hoard. There's no need to hoard. Now, I also, I'm not gonna get... This is... My brain just went somewhere else, I was like, let me give a little context, so here in Rwanda, I don't have a car, so I take taxis and there's a... They're similar to Uber or Lyft, but they're not that. And so sometimes drivers will try and charge to me what they wanna be paid, not what the meter is actually saying, so I'm not that generous, I'm not gonna just give you money 'cause you wanna take advantage of me, 'cause you think I don't know any better, but I will give, Lydia, your rate. If you wanna be charged top dollar and you do top to other work, I'm gonna pay you your job. I'm not gonna negotiate with that.

**1:02:08.9 NA:** Yeah. Can we talk about manifestation?

**1:02:12.4 LA:** Yeah.

**1:02:13.3 NA:** I just feel like that fits in with this. This is another word that I have always felt a little eye-rolly about, and maybe because of the way that it's been co-opted by white women in the personal development space online, I don't know, but there's something about manifestation that I... I don't know, but I respect you and your work and your vision for yourself in the world so much that if anyone can change my mind about what manifestation can be, it's you. Maybe we can start with that as a question, why do you think manifestation can sometimes get that bad reputation? I can't be the only one who feels eye-rolly about it, right?

**1:02:50.7 LA:** No. I'm glad you asked that as the first question because I... Deep sigh. Deep sigh.

**1:03:00.8 NA:** Your face shows everything right now. My gosh. [laughter]

**1:03:03.0 LA:** Because even on my YouTube channel, I'm like, Okay, I'm reconfiguring what I talk about, but most of my videos, recent videos are about manifestation, and I'm a purist at heart. So for me, when I say manifestation, I mean the pure definition of manifestation, and I think like most things spiritual in the last several years, it has been exploited, it has been misconstrued, it has been taken advantage of. And my eye roll comes from people who have privilege that they're not naming and calling it manifestation. That pisses me off because it's like, is it manifestation, or is it white privilege? Is it manifestation, or do you just come from wealth? Is it manifestation or did you... Are you just pretty? But people don't wanna have that conversation. Now, like you said, holding the both and manifestation is real and happening all the time. So it's tricky and it's frustrating to me

because I wanna talk about manifestation, but similar to money, it comes with so much charge that it's like when I say manifestation, people will hear a lot of other gobbledygook that's not actually manifestation, it's spiritual bypassing and all this other stuff that isn't the reality, and the reality is we're manifesting all the time.

**1:04:21.4 LA:** That we are plugged in. That we are expressions of the divine, if we are that, then we have more personal power than we realize. And that we know, and that we can use that and leverage it to create the realities that we want, even living in a society that has oppressive structures. We can still manifest what we want and manifest the lives that we want to live, and it frustrates me because there are some women, for example, that I've seen in the personal development spiritual da da da world, who are like manifestation, manifestation, manifestation not naming that their husband makes millions of dollars a year. It's like, let's tell the whole truth if we're gonna be talking about it.

**1:05:13.1 NA:** Yeah, so then maybe you can center us on your definition. When you said you operate from a place of pure manifestation, what does that actually mean? Because I feel like I understand what you're saying, and also my brain's kind of like what?

**1:05:26.2 LA:** Oh. Okay, so for me, and I aspire, I will aspire. I'll say it two different ways. We all are operating from a place of pure manifestation, we all are manifesting all the time, it's intentionality and taking 100 complete responsibility for everything in my life. For everything in my life. So that means I manifest it... And I don't wanna get into the... What's the word? What's those things when you walk on... Land mines. I don't wanna get into the land mines of physical health and people... Children who were born ill, I don't know about that, 'cause I often think if we're manifesting all the time, how did enslaved happen? How did the genocide... How did Holocaust happen? I don't know, I don't have those answers. So don't come for me.

**1:06:13.2 LA:** But in my own personal L'Erin experience, I own my energy, and energy is a magnet, energy we live in, and this is where I'm always hesitant to talk, and I haven't figured out how to be articulate about this, because I think this is where the eye rolls also happen, it's like vibration, frequency, energy, woo woo, like sitting on a cloud playing a harp, and I'm like, but we do live in a vibrational universe, everything has its own frequency, everything has its own energy, and so for me, I take responsibility for my thoughts, that's what I do have control over, my thoughts. I do have control over my feelings, those are two things I have control over. And then my actions, but the actions that I take are based on the thoughts that I'm thinking, and so my intention is to be intentional about my thoughts, which inform how I feel. Which inform what I... How I act. That's all I can do.

**1:07:10.5 LA:** I'll give an example. And this is also, again, in the context of trusting that we live in a universe where all of... We're loved. We're provided for. We're protected. So, a few years ago, I had a five-figure client, and we did this really powerful three-day retreat. And she hired me for like, I think, \$30,000 contract, something like that. And we started the contract, and then she ghosted me. And she did not finish paying for it, and just was like, I changed my mind. This isn't what I wanna do. Which left me high and dry financially, 'cause I had put all my eggs in her basket. Fast forward,

because I hadn't set up other streams of income, I ended up sleeping and living in a rental car, because my apartment in Seattle, I had someone living in it that was renting it from me. And I was in California now at this point, living in a rental car.

**1:08:06.4 LA:** Now, would I say I was living in a... Did I manifest that? Yes. Yeah, I did. Who else was gonna do that? I can't blame her. I didn't set up multiple streams of income. I didn't have enough savings. I didn't manage my money in a way that would take care of me. So, yes, I manifested that. That doesn't mean I'm a bad person. That doesn't mean she was a bad person. Doesn't mean I was wrong. It doesn't mean she was wrong. It just means that was the reality in that moment. And for me, I had to dig deeper into my soul alignment, deeper into my trust, deeper into my surrender. And so what did that look like? 'Cause that was in Oakland, which is not the safest place to be sleeping in a car. I had to be... My energy had to be so squeaky clean that when I would say, Where am I supposed to sleep tonight, that I listened to divine guidance and would park somewhere safe. So it's not about good and bad, right and wrong. Was that ideal for me? No, it wasn't. I made the best of that situation manifesting safety. To me, it's an incremental, step-by-step process, that it's not about always flying international first class flights. It's like, What is the reality that you have right now, and how can you make the best of it? It's not, Woe is me, I'm a victim of life. But it was stressful. That was, really, a hard, hard moment.

**1:09:30.6 LA:** And what made it even harder, as I mentioned, I come from a family with means, my uncle owns apartment buildings, my brother has money, my... And nobody helped. It was my last straw. And no one... Everyone's like, Oh well. So that was also the thing that flipped my switch to be like, Oh, L'Erin, you're living in a car that you don't even own, and your family doesn't have your back. You gotta figure out how to have money. So when you asked if I'm kind of like... Know that they have my back, I know that they actually don't.

**1:10:10.0 NA:** Mm-hmm. This concept of owning your energy, I don't know that I've ever heard it phrased quite like that before, but I feel like that's really powerful, especially 'cause I feel like we're talking about a lot of the nuanced both ands, which is what life is all about, this idea of taking 100% responsibility for yourself, and also surrender. Where those seem like they're contradictory, but they're not. They go together. And so this idea of... And maybe this is my Virgo rising brain that I'm like, Give me the spreadsheet, but owning your energy, what does that actually look like? Or what are some things that you do in your own practice if you need to change your energy? Or in that moment where you were like, Oh, I believe that I manifested this situation by not doing X, Y and Z. I would like to raise my vibration, change my energy, whatever the language is that you're gonna use. I feel like I become a deer in headlights at, Well, okay, well then what? But how though? [chuckle]

**1:11:12.2 LA:** It's a practice, is the first thing I can say, because it's also a privilege to be able to think about raising your vibration if you're in survival mode. And so if I'm living in a car, I wasn't really thinking about raising my vibration. I was thinking about, How can I stop living in a car that I don't own that I have to keep paying for? But it also requires a trust. And so that's the practice. It's like building up the reservoir, so that I knew that God has my back. Even if I'm living in a car, I'm

safe. I'm still safe, I'm still protected, I'm still taken care of. And so a friend... My friend at the time was like, You need to reach out... 'Cause I was being very Taurus Sun, stubborn, and was like, I am not asking my family for help. I was determined, 'cause I was like, They're not gonna help me. I just knew. And my friend was like, You need to give them the opportunity to help you. And I said, Fine. Very reluctantly, but I was living in a car. So, against my will, I know it's trendy now to live in your car. It's big on TikTok.

**1:12:18.8 NA:** Great. Living in a car, but not in a cute way. Yeah.

**1:12:19.6 LA:** Right. Exactly. [chuckle] Not in a cute way at all. And so I was like, Fine. So I reached out to them. I told you their responses. I finally... I reached out to my stepfather who was like, Oh. Had the same response. And I talked to my step-sister, and she said, You need to tell him a specific dollar amount that you need. Then he will respond. But if you just say you're living in a car, he's not gonna do anything. I did, he gave me the money, I was able to get into a hotel, and then I was able to get re-situated. So it's the both and. It's the trusting that my needs are met, it was the willingness to be uncomfortable and ask for what I needed, and to receive, to finally... I'm not against receiving, I just knew they weren't gonna help me. That's why I didn't wanna ask. And then to take action to change the scenario. I think a lot of people are just waiting for the fairy to come sprinkle fairy dust on them and... Like the manifestation fairy dust, which as I mentioned with the FedEx check. And some things, it happens that way, but it also has to be about owning your actions, owning your energy, owning your responsibility, how are you gonna show up. I don't know if I answered your question, but I...

**1:13:41.3 NA:** Yeah, but it's... I don't... Again, I don't... These questions don't have answers. I'm just curious about your process, this... Just this idea of changing the energy. It's like I almost... The benefit of hearing other people be honest about what's true for them, even if it's a hard to articulate thing, is that it brings up something in the listener. I'm certainly having my own experience listening to you. I'm sure everyone who's listening is having their own experience. And what just came up for me, and of course, this is me projecting my own stuff, you didn't say this, but is, I feel like part of raising the energy for me would be not attaching my own self-worth or lovability to the answer. You ask for this assistance, you take the action, and part of the maybe trusting that something bigger has your back, that I'm not gonna make it mean anything about my worth if a bad thing happens to me, or if somebody says no, and it's really easy to flatten that out. And I'm living in a car, so therefore I'm a bad person or I did something wrong or that... I don't know, there's some tie-in there of just a greater sense of enough-ness or being cared for.

**1:14:48.8 LA:** Absolutely. Because my value doesn't come from another human being. That's the... No human can determine my value. Nobody made me. Even if my parents created me and birthed me into the world and raised me, they didn't make me. So they can't put a value on my worth. And their behavior cannot determine my worth. That has taken... That's who I am at a base nature. But unhooking from those golden handcuffs that I mentioned earlier is part of that process, because then I have to be informed of my own worth, whether I'm sleeping in a rental car or flying... Paying \$3500 for a first class flight. None of it determines my value. And we know people, or seen them on

the socials, who think that the \$3500 first class light or the Fendi bag or the Prada, whatever, makes them valuable. Or not having it doesn't make them valuable. And it's like, when you know who you are in God, when you know who you are in source, when you know who you are in creation, none of that matters 'cause it's all made up anyway.

**1:15:55.4 LA:** So they can ask, they can... They can give me the money, they can not give me the money, but it's not a reflection of my value 'cause I know that my value, who I am outside of any of these man-made institutions or constructions... If I were looking to the world to define who I am and to put a marker on me, I would be lost in the sauce. Especially because when I think in the context of my ancestors actually were bought and sold. They actually did have a number value on their head. So their... This society is fucked up and warped. There's no way I can outsource my sense of value to this society.

**1:16:38.4 NA:** Mm-hmm. Right. That your ancestors were the capital in capitalism.

**1:16:44.4 LA:** Period. Exactly. So we know it's warped. We know it's distorted. So there's no way that I can make it make sense. It doesn't make sense. I have to calibrate to something higher than that and bigger than that, and trust that it is responsible for what comes and how it comes, and I just have to be in alignment with that.

**1:17:09.8 NA:** Mm-hmm. Are you someone who sets financial goals?

**1:17:14.8 LA:** I have financial big goals, like multi-million dollars, but anything that I try to make it more tangible and tactile than that feels like suffocation to me. So I don't... No.

**1:17:31.0 NA:** That's interesting. It feels like suffocation why?

**1:17:34.0 LA:** Because it feels like something I have to achieve, as opposed to something I get to allow.

**1:17:40.5 NA:** Yeah. Okay. Then maybe you're not gonna have an answer to this, but the big question we're exploring in this podcast series, How much money is enough for you, is there a clear dollar amount that you're like, This is how much money per month feels like enough or abundance or whatever it is that you're looking to feel?

**1:17:58.5 LA:** No. I don't have a number. I don't have a number, but I'll tell you what I enjoy. I just like making money every day.

**1:18:08.7 NA:** Okay.

**1:18:09.6 LA:** I like having sales come in every day. It doesn't have to be big sales, it doesn't have to be small sales, it just... I like money, I like being in the flow of that kinda circulation. That feels like abundance to me. And I like having money in the bank. I like having money in the bank and



money coming in every day. That feels really good to me. And I like knowing that people want what I have to offer. That feels... Also feels really good to me.

**1:18:32.7 NA:** That feels really good to me too, because that gives me almost more of a sense of security than a dollar amount does, because feeling like people want what I have to offer makes me feel like if I need more money, I can create a new offering and people are gonna want it.

**1:18:46.0 LA:** Exactly. Exactly.

**1:18:48.2 NA:** Yeah, yeah. One more kind of specific money question, and again, maybe you don't have an answer to this. When you said you like having money in the bank, is there an amount where if it dips below that you feel anxious?

**1:19:00.5 LA:** Yeah. But then it has dipped below that, so then I'm like, fuck it. [chuckle] I'm not gonna feel anxious 'cause I thought, Oh... Because as I mentioned, I... My contract... I haven't worked since November. So it's July now. I haven't generated income because I've been... My contract ended, and then I've been building off the brand. And so I was like, when I get to this certain amount, I'm gonna stress out. I just know it. And then that amount came and I'm like, You know what? I'm not gonna stress because I still gotta eat, I still gotta do things, I still have to pay... I'm not gonna stress out. I'm just gonna do what I have to do to stay in the flow and keep generating money. And I wanna be intentional, because I know I keep saying words that feel intangible, like flow and abundance and all, but I don't mean just hope and pray that someone hires me. I still mean doing all of the things, but not being attached emotionally to them, not allowing myself to stress out or feel overwhelmed. And maybe that means, Okay, I'm not gonna go get my weekly massages until I feel a little bit more financial stability. Okay. Until I make a little bit more money. I don't have to do every single thing, but I would rather not do things than feel stressed.

**1:20:17.6 NA:** Yeah. So it's more of like a... You're making adjustments based on where you're currently at. Yeah. Which makes a lot of sense. Is there anything we haven't talked about that you really wanna mention, even if it's like a complete left turn?

**1:20:35.3 LA:** There is something that I do talk about in... I kind of touched on it, which is what I call the black money wound, because it is specific. It is when your ancestors were traded for capital, as capital, that is a very different relationship to money and abundance epigenetically. It was passed down in our genes. It's a very different... When you see your children bought and sold for money, your relationship to money is going to be different than when you buy and sell. It's just gonna be different. There's a different level of trauma. And it doesn't mean that abundance doesn't happen, it doesn't mean that abundance isn't the lay the land, that God isn't conspiring in our favor, it doesn't mean all these universal laws aren't true. It just means we have to have a more nuanced conversation about it, because we can't do these broad strokes and not acknowledge the trauma that we're carrying in our bodies, in our conversations, in our sense of value, in our sense of worthiness, that really will start to shift things. It's a complicated and very layered thing. But if we don't name it and just try and skirt past it and pretend it's not happening, I think it does more harm than good,

because then we're still reliant on the rules of capitalism to set us free. And capitalism will never set us free.

**1:21:57.3 NA:** Mm-hmm. How does what you just shared impact what it is that you wanna do with Black Girl Mystic?

**1:22:05.1 LA:** I wanna give a place to hold all of it, because I have friends, and maybe now that we're real... We're all full-grown adults, they don't feel like this anymore, but in my 20s and 30s, I had a lot of friends who were very afro-centric or very black-centered, who were really into bartering. Really, really into it. I was not really into it, because I'm like, Nobody that I have to pay bills to barter. So that's not my thing.

**1:22:33.2 NA:** You're not bartering for a first class ticket. You're like, That doesn't work for me.

**1:22:37.9 LA:** No. Or rent or food or anything. And so I think there's this pride around not needing money or being... Wanting to barter or wanting to circumvent, cap money. And I think that has its place and it can have its place, but to your point earlier, we still live in a capitalist economy. So even if you're getting donations because you don't wanna... 'Cause you don't wanna charge money, somebody had to work inside of the capitalist system to get money to donate to you. So I wanna... With Black Girl Mystic, it's really creating a space to hold all of it, because it's like, You don't have to live hand to mouth and barter and not have any money to spend and not create a life of whatever feels good to you. It may not be first class flights, it may be something totally... You may wanna buy 50 acres of land where you can grow your own food and not have to be in the urban sprawl. Whatever it is, I wanna create a space where you can hold for all of that, and where there's no shame and judgment, but you can live luxurious lives of wealth, ease and freedom, and miracles.

**1:23:47.8 LA:** When I gave that example around 50 acres of land, I had an example of some friends of mine who have I don't even know how many acres, but they have acres and acres of land in Upstate New York. This is... We all used to go to a festival together every summer, this is how we all met, and she... My friend was standing in line at the food line at this festival, and was just... Made friends with the person behind her. Long story short, she was like... Just gave her these acres of land. And now they have this farm in Upstate New York that centers black and indigenous and people of color farming, returning to the land. So this is... Miracles happen every single day. It's not one or the other. It's both and. It's really being available. But if she wasn't in the receptive, if she wasn't open, if she wasn't available, if she hadn't turned around and had that conversation and said, This is my dream, and this is what I'm working on, and this is what I'm creating, she would not have resonated with that other person who had the land, who was like, I got all this land. I'm not doing anything with it. I would love to give it to you. Literally was that simple of a conversation, and that's how it happened. So that circumvents capitalism.

**1:25:06.9 NA:** Yeah. It's like the manifestation outside of capitalism that you've talked about.

**1:25:09.6 LA:** Exactly. It's a both and.

**1:25:11.8 NA:** Yeah. It's so good. I feel like that's a good place to start to wrap up. If you could leave our listeners with one affirmation of sorts, based on our conversation, basically, what is your wish for everyone listening?

**1:25:27.1 LA:** To trust the process. Oo, Even better. This is even better. This is even better. How you know if you're in alignment with your soul, with your source, the divine, is if you feel good. That's it.

**1:25:43.6 NA:** My God. That's so good. I said we were gonna wrap up, but we're actually gonna talk about this a little bit for a second, because something that was on my mind on my morning walk this morning, knowing that we were gonna talk, obviously, you talk in your work about this idea of kind of a soul guidance, soul alignment, soul purpose, and something that I have struggled with is feeling, I don't know, shame around not knowing what my one clear purpose... There's something about that that feels really pressure-y for me, and maybe that's the way that this idea of having one thing has been co-opted by capitalism, that it's like, It has to be your one thing and it has to be profitable in these... I don't know that we're gonna unpack all of this right now. But what you just said of, You are in alignment when it feels good, that is the exact affirmation that I did not know that I needed. So that's brilliant. Thank you.

**1:26:31.8 LA:** [chuckle] You're so welcome. It's true. It's like we have to really unlearn so much bullshit. We just do. There is... Because what if your one thing is just to be? That was it. Not to achieve, not to accomplish, not to do. And then it can look like running, it can look like... It can look like all the things that you do. Your whole world is what your purpose is, is to be an expression.

**1:27:02.8 NA:** Yeah. If we take this idea of purpose away from, It has to be the thing that generates enough money to get our needs met.

**1:27:08.0 LA:** Okay. So I'm glad you said that. I'm glad... I'm glad you said that.

**1:27:12.9 NA:** People can see you. You have just whipped your glasses off. You're ready? Class is in session. I'm ready. Okay.

**1:27:19.3 LA:** This is what I used to say in all my classes, especially 'cause I... You have a classroom on purpose. And people would be like, I need to know my purposes, I need to make money from my purpose, and I wanna start a business from my purpose. What's my purpose? And this is why I always say, and I'm glad you said that, God is not a capitalist. Your purpose does not have to make money. You were created with a purpose that has nothing to do with income. God is not a socialist, God is not a communist, God is not a... It's not based in an economic system. So your purpose has no economic tie to it. Now, you can make money being yourself, but it's not your purpose. Because what if you were born 7000 years ago? You wouldn't have to try and make a side hustle as you were walking the savanna. You know what I mean? It would just... It wouldn't even

make sense. It would't... There would be no context for it, so...

**1:28:18.5 NA:** Yeah. Yeah. Being able to take off the pressure of... And like you said, the purpose can be to just exist. I've been thinking about this. This could be whole other conversation. But I've been hiking a lot lately about what I call soft ambition, that I don't want kids, I don't want a big career. A lot of the things that we're kind of supposed to want or supposed to strive for, I don't. And there's little to no road map for that. And what does it mean to want things but not want them with your whole heart, or not being... Willing to do whatever it takes, and existing in this place of softness and joy and doing things just because it feels good to do them, even if they don't lead anywhere, even if they can't be monetized. And I will tell you, L'Erin, it is so uncomfortable. This is... It's like the opposite of everything that I've ever been told. And I'm like, Is this okay? It's like it feels like a fun little playground to experiment in that I'm sure over the next year or so I'll have more to say about it. But yeah, there's something very permission-giving about remembering that the purpose is bigger than capitalism.

**1:29:15.0 LA:** Totally. Because what you just named is it, right? Like if it gets to be fun, if it gets to be playful, because I would say that it's just about being in the moment, like you just get to enjoy that moment. Whatever is coming up for you, you get to enjoy it, you get to live in it, and there's more than enough, the right clients come at the right time, the right experiences happen and you get to enjoy your life. But it is contrary to everything we've been taught in capitalism. The idea that we ask five-year-old children what they wanna be when they grow up, is an example of this brain washing, right? We don't even know the possibilities, not that they have to be anything. They could just and... But it's like it's non of... I don't think it's as much about what you're doing, but how you're experiencing while you're doing it. You know like when you... Have you driven and paid a toll collector who just seems to be having the best life in the whole world, and just enjoying every single person who comes through? And you're like you're a toll collect... Like this? This isn't a glamorous job this isn't... And then you meet people who have super glamorous jobs and seem to be so miserable. It's not about the what it's about the how.

**1:30:30.1 NA:** Yeah, I'm not gonna be able to give the right credit 'cause I don't remember who it was but when you just said that about asking five years olds what they wanna be. I saw some tweet I don't know, some manner of months ago. That was like don't ask me about my dream job. I don't have a dream job. I don't dream of labor. It was something like that.

**1:30:45.8 LA:** Exactly.

**1:30:46.6 NA:** And I was like, Yeah, yeah.

**1:30:50.0 LA:** Yeah.

**1:30:51.7 NA:** Okay, so the affirmation for everyone listening. The sole purpose it feels, you know it and it feels good when you're doing it.

**1:30:57.5 LA:** Totally, and the both and of this is I am also a very ambitious person. I love to work. I love to work hard. I also love... I take a 90-minute nap every day you know what I'm saying? Like, it's the both and.

**1:31:12.0 NA:** Oh yeah. And it's like, it's an interesting place for me to be in as I am one of what people would say are the lucky ones who does love what they do, there is no... I had this realization at the end of last year, there is no aspect of my job that I don't like. Because if there's a part of it that I don't like, I don't do it anymore. And that comes from a long time of being self-employed and I feel incredibly grateful for that. And I love making things that feel good to make, and I don't have big career ambitions. I'm not trying to get on some prestigious media list and I say that judgment free. If that is someone's dream and that feels good. That's great. But it's not true for me, and trying to pretend that it is or pretending that I wanna climb that ladder forever? That wouldn't be authentic to me. I just wanna make things that feel good to make for and with communities of like-minded people forever and have that hopefully give me the resources that I need. And it doesn't have to go anywhere. I don't need career progression in that way and that has actually been as freeing as it is scary.

**1:32:10.9 LA:** Yeah. Can we stay here for a moment? Can I... Can we?

**1:32:15.6 NA:** Yes.

**1:32:16.4 LA:** This is why it's complicated right? Because inside of this context of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy that we live in, especially in the United States. We know that being able to do what you wanna do is a privilege right? It is. So I think about the fact that my great-grandparents had graduate degrees and Master's degrees and founded a school and were in agriculture and did all this stuff. And educated the next generations and all. Maybe they wanted to do other things. I don't know, they didn't have that kind of wiggle room right? Then I think about my grandmother who's the child of those great grandparents and was also a teacher. Now this is gonna go a little but we're gonna come back for the...

**1:33:05.4 NA:** Yeah. Go for it.

**1:33:07.1 LA:** Okay, okay, so my grandmother was also a school teacher in the segregated south in Texas. Second generation school teacher and the superintendent who's a white man asked my grandmother, what do you think about integration? And she said, I think colored children should have the same access to education as white children. That's what she said because my grandmother was a truth teller. She's a Scorpio she tells the truth. She lost her job and had to move four hours away to the next school district that was going to hire her. That means she split up the family. My mother ended up being raised by her great-grandparents. She took... My mother and her older brother and her younger brother went to live with my mother. That created severe abandonment issues for my mother. Severe which she's still dealing with to this day.

**1:34:00.7 LA:** So I say that story to say, Yes it was a privilege. My grandmother said what she

wanted to say. She told the truth. But it had severe consequences for her and for my family that have rippled for generations. And so I just wanna name that because it's like we get to make whatever choices we wanna make, we get to decide how we wanna live, what we wanna say, what we don't wanna say. And sometimes there is some cost and sometimes there are benefits. And sometimes there are both right? Often there are both and so as we start thinking as I'm naming and we talked about freedom it's like... It's not always cut and drive, it's not always like I get to take an hour and a half naps and do this thing. But there may... There other ways I could be hustling and grinding and making money and doing... Maybe right? Like if my grandma had kept her mouth shut would the family have stayed together? Yeah. Would she have had her dignity? Maybe not. So I think it's layered.

**1:35:04.3 NA:** There's... Of course there's consequences. Consequences sounds like a negative word, but you make a decision, you take an action and then something happens next right? And I think a lot about the... Sacrifice also sounds like quite a negative word. But for the most part I feel like we can't have all of the things. There's some choices you can't make both choices at the same... You can't have kids and not have kids. You're making choices and it's... For me to be able to say finally that there's no aspect of my business that I don't like. That has been a consequence of continuing to choose creative autonomy and time freedom over really good health insurance over access to a 401K. And I'm now in the phase of not unlearning the starving artist thing, 'cause I've come pretty far on that. But really paying attention to the ways that I believed it was a binary in the past. That it's like I can have time freedom, but I have to struggle financially because that's the trade off that I have to make.

**1:36:11.1 NA:** I'm allowed to have time freedom as long as I suffer in these specific ways. And so now I'm kind of like, No, what if that didn't have to be true. But there definitely were forks in the road of I am going to choose to be able to spend my time the way that I want even if it means that I'm gonna live in my van for three years. Even if it means that I'm gonna sleep on an air mattress in someone else's living room and to other people that would not have been worth it. And I do not regret it one single time, and that's kind of what comes up for me when you talk about soul guidance or maybe soul alignment. It's like it felt better than the alternative, and there was never a question about that for me, and so I'm willing to do that, and I know plenty of people that aren't. The more secure path is more worth it to them and that's great. We are not making the same choices.

**1:36:58.2 LA:** Totally. My theory that I'm living into. An experiment. 'Cause it's all an experiment. We don't know nothing. We're just try to figure it out.

**1:37:08.9 NA:** All of this is real and nonsense we don't know.

**1:37:10.7 LA:** Exactly. Exactly, exactly. Okay, two things. Exactly. So my theory is that you get to have it all and it gets to be easy, so then I'm like, How can I make that true? How can I make that true? If I get to have it all and it gets to be easy. How can I make that true? That's the one thing and the other thing. And you said, it's all nonsense. Exactly. So then I'm like, If it's all nonsense what nonsense do I wanna choose? And that's answer number one, 'cause I'm like, I don't wanna choose

that you have to struggle and sacrifice and scrimp and save to live. No. I wanna choose that you get to have it all and it gets to be easy and how can that be true? And that is like, just show me God, show me. You show out for me, you just show me what you can do. Ruzzle dazzle me, 'cause I don't wanna have to figure it out.

**1:37:52.1 NA:** No, that's brilliant. And also it really puts front and center for me to be honest about the places where I'm creating fake problems for myself, because obviously yes. Of course some things are circumstantial. Some things are systems of oppression like as you said, you're not believing in manifestation to the point that that explains how enslavement happens. There is a whole other part of this. But on just that really, really micro level, if I'm deciding what if this were easy, as you're saying, it does bring some things into visibility of why am I making this so hard? I'm like, Because I think making it harder makes me seem more worthy or that I deserve it more. I don't know there's just a lot of stuff there that leading with this. I get to have it all and it gets to be easy. I certainly never really tried that so. It's all an experiment I'll give it a shot.

**1:38:42.6 LA:** Exactly. And it gets to be easy. So can we find that easy experiment.

**1:38:48.5 NA:** Yeah. I feel like my current... This is in a world view but either a mantra or a thing. It's like, I'm gonna die. I'm just actually gonna die. And sometimes I'll catch myself when I'm like really in the comparison trap of like someone else's Instagram which doesn't happen nearly as much as it used to. But I'll stop myself and be like, Nicole, you're gonna die. And you're right now... Is what you wanna do with your life spend it feeling bad on Instagram? You're actually just gonna die. Go bake a cake or something. I don't know it helps. It really does help.

**1:39:19.3 LA:** Exactly. I love... I've been thinking about that too. I used to think about that a lot when I was younger, 'cause I had a lot of people die when I was younger and it freaked me out. But now I'm thinking about it because time feels like it's going by really fast. Like in a day, I'll look up and I'd be like, How is it this time? But I think about it and I'm like, You're gonna die. How do you wanna spend this? How do you wanna think about this time, how do you wanna be present to your life? Do you wanna... And that's why the ease when you ask me about ease it's like how I think about things. What I allow myself to do. I do enjoy first class. If I did not fly first class, it would take a little bit more oomph for me to enjoy it. But I could do it. You know it's like, How do... I'm not gonna beat myself up for it. It's just the conversations you have with... I heard this years ago and it stuck with me. The conversations you have with yourself about yourself when you're by yourself are the most important conversations.

**1:40:17.7 NA:** Yeah, no, that's so true. And like this I'm gonna die thing is actually sort of how this soft ambition realization came up because I realized I had been really indoctrinated in the online business where it's not just online business. But it's like, what's the legacy you're leaving. What do you wanna be... And I was like I'm gonna be dead. What do I care? Which again no. Please no one listening. If that is something you care about, I am not trying to belittle that as a dream, but I actually don't care. I will be dead. If nothing that I ever create out lives me. What I want like you said is to know that it matters to someone now, I wanna be in these relationships now, I wanna have

relational reciprocity now, I wanna lay on the couch and read a fun book, I'm in a phase of no self-help books right now. Just for fun. I don't need to improve myself constantly, I don't... I'm not a project to be fixed, and what if it were enough to enjoy my life and take whatever steps I can to make sure that as many people as possible can also enjoy theirs. That's enough.

**1:41:23.4 LA:** That's it. That's really all there is. That's it. You just revealed the Holy Grail, that's it, that's...

**1:41:32.8 NA:** We've solved it.

**1:41:33.2 LA:** We have solved it.

**1:41:34.9 NA:** We've solved the secrets of the universe.

**1:41:37.1 LA:** That's it.

**1:41:37.2 NA:** My soul purpose is to feel good. Yes, liberation for everyone. First sneak into first class. Yeah. Okay, great.

**1:41:48.9 LA:** That's it. I mean, literally... That's the [1:41:49.0]       . When you say I'm gonna die. It's true. I think about, I have so... Even though I grew up in this community with all this black wealth and upward mobility and all this stuff, I was always the rogue outlier, I was always the one who was there like that's just L'Erin, she's gonna go to France, she's gonna do her thing, everyone else is very conventional. And now in 2022, very conventionally successful, all of the peers I grew up with have Master's degrees, PhDs, JDS, MDs, right, like MBAs, all of them. I'm the only one who only has one degree and is an entrepreneur, the only one. Everyone else is very conventional. And when we were becoming adults, I got so much judgment. They actually kinda excommunicated me in a sense. They were like, you are not one of us. We aren't the same. One of these things just doesn't belong here. And now that we're adults, so many of them are like, How are you living abroad, how are you traveling? You have your own business sneakily coming back into my communication even though they totally exiled me for so long. And I think... 'Vause I've always been like, This is my life. Who else's rules am I gonna live by?

**1:43:13.2 NA:** Yeah. I feel like that's the point of affinity that I feel with you the most and always have, and it's like, Well I might as well just do what I'm gonna... Take the path that I wanna take, because otherwise I'm gonna be the one who's trying to creep into other people's DMs, to ask them how they're doing their life because I didn't do what I wanted to do.

**1:43:27.7 LA:** Yeah. Hello.

**1:43:28.7 NA:** It's so good, it's so good. You're the best. I could literally talk to you all day. Anything else you wanna share before we close.



**1:43:36.5 LA:** Thank you having me. I love our conversations always. So thank you, thank you, thank you. This is invigorating and lights me up. Thank you for having me.

**1:43:43.3 NA:** Me too. Me too.

**1:43:44.0 LA:** And listeners, thanks for listening.

**1:43:46.8 NA:** What's the best place for people to say hi, if people are like, We wanna check out this gorgeous website, we would like to throw money at you, or just say hello... Where do you wanna be found on the internet?

**1:43:57.2 LA:** Yes, come find me at blackgirlmystic.com, I'm obsessed with the website, and totally in love with it. You can also find me at L'Erin Alta, L-E-R-I-N on Instagram or Black Girl Mystic on Instagram.

**1:44:13.2 NA:** I will put links to those things in the show notes. Also wanna give a shout out to your entire archive of podcast episodes that are so good. You are such a phenomenal podcast host.

**1:44:21.7 LA:** Thank you so much. Thank you, thank you. The podcast has started it all.

**1:44:25.5 NA:** Yes, love it. Relatable, very relatable.

**1:44:30.6 LA:** Thank you.

[music]

**1:44:44.5 NA:** Thanks so much for listening to this episode of The Pop-Up Pod. There are a few awesome and super helpful ways that you can support our show if you've got a few minutes to do that, five star ratings on Apple Podcasts are so sincerely appreciated, it helps new listeners to see how much other people love the show. Writing a one to two sentence review to go along with your rating is even better, this is the kind of thing that I always tell myself that I'm gonna do for the podcasts that I love, and then inevitably I forget, so I am trying to get in the habit of doing this for myself, because even as a podcast host, knowing how grateful I am for every single review that the show gets, I still find myself forgetting or procrastinating on doing it for others, so perhaps we can do it together. You will do it. I will do it. We will just shower podcast reviews down on all the shows that we love. The third way to support the show, let's talk money, it's very meta, I know with this theme of the season, but all of the intimate and honest conversations here on The Pop-Up Pod are 100% listener funded, so that means that they're paid for by our sliding scale Patreon community, there's no ads, there's no sponsors, it's just a couple hundred people coming together to ensure that everyone involved in making this podcast gets paid.

**1:45:57.5 NA:** That's me as the host, my sound engineer and musician Adam Day, as well as every single one of our guests, our Patreon community also funds the creation of a full transcript for each

episode, those are our production ethics here at The Pop-Up Pod. And if that aligns with your own values, I would love to invite you to come check out our community at [nicoleantoinette.com/patreon](https://nicoleantoinette.com/patreon), that's the page of my website. That answers all of your questions. What the heck is Patreon? How does it work? Why do we use it? What bonus content do you get access to? What can you expect when you join? All that good stuff. And remember, it's run on the sliding scale, so you can pay whatever amount that makes most sense for you. So one more time, it's [nicoleantoinette.com/patreon](https://nicoleantoinette.com/patreon), you can come check us out for a month or two. Cancel whenever you want. Stay for years. It's really flexible. It would really help support the show and you can see what we're all about and meet some other people in our community. Okay, friends, until next time.

[music]

**Thank you for choosing Scribie.com**

Cross-check this transcript against the audio quickly and efficiently using our online Integrated Editor. Please visit the following link and click the Check & Download button to start.

<https://scribie.com/files/c5a25699c03343b6a221ac6934b18238ad7ec40b>