

[Transcription]

Grief After Dark - Podcast  
Season 1: Dark Waters  
Episode 03: Navigating

[Gentle Piano background music]

\*Disclaimer\*

Micki: This podcast addresses death, difficult emotional content and contains profanity. Listen with-

D: Your own motherfucking discretion [laughs] get your kids ... This is Grief After Dark

Micki: Hello D!

D:Hello Micki

Micki: And hello everyone, welcome to the party , please come in, [joking] may I take your coat? Would you like something to drink?

D:I have my drink, cheers

Micki: Salute. What're you drinking, beer?

D: I am drinking beer. Beer has been my go to thing. My body just screams for like that fizzy bubble, and so like

Micki: [in French] Oi...SO is it French beer?

D:[laughs] No

Micki: Do the French even drink beer, they seem to far above it

D:Seems far too French to be drinking beer. I don't know [laughs] I don't know. Beer is for the people

Micki: What do I know? Beer is for the people! I'll drink to that

D:Beer is for the people. And, I am the people.[laughs]

Micki: YES. I am also the beer people. Although today I am drinking [emphasis] white wine

D: mmm... i'm also a wine person but lately wine hasn't been agreeing with my body so luckily I-

Micki: It's so acidic...

D: It's something. Something's going on. I think I've had some sort of shift happen and beer has been just like "yeahhh, I go down easier, [laughs] settles well

Micki: God bless beer

D:Puts a shine on a dull day. You know.

Micki: It sure does. When you asked me if there's anything that I horde...

D:[laughs]

Micki:I wanted to say wine but the truth is, wine does not last in this house. I'll try. But I also already clarified that we'll drink a really nice bottle of wine on any day because we feel like it and

D:It's so funny because I no longer now believe that I need to save things forever. I used to have to have save things and this is a special occasion. Now' i;m just like "fuck this shit,I want to treat myself right now so i'm going to drink the drink, eat the fancy chocolate. I'm gonna-

Micki: LIVE!

D:i'm gonna live my damn life

Micki: Yes! I remember you used to like hold things for special occasions because when I made you, or Phoebe really, her first baby blanket. The First baby blanket that I bequeathed to you,

D:[laughing] yles....

Micki: I was like, you let this baby use this blanket D

D:[laughing] yes I know

Micki: It's for vomiting on

D: You put your whole soul in this, I am not letting her spit on it and poop on it

Micki:She should chew these edges ragged

D:Yes, I still have that blanket and it was used and loved by all of the children and Stellabelle used hers until it fell apart and Pierce, same same.

Micki: As it should be

D:[laughs]

Micki: Makes me happy

D:So I did, I did turn over that leaf and i'm really trying to stick to it. [clears throat]in all the areas of my life ooooh saving for a rainy day...bitch it's raining today

Micki: It's always raining!

D:[laughing] let's go, exactly.

Micki:Always

D:We're on episode three, navigating

Micki: navigating

D: yes

Micki: How in God's name do we get through this?

D: You know, it's different for everybody and so I think like giving ourselves the room for it to be different and not having expectations one way or another. So that's what i'll throw down at the beginning of this conversation because that I think is right where the meat of the problem is. Where people are so disrespectful and they do themselves a disservice, and then they do other people a disservice by expecting it to be one thing and not leaving room for everything else that inevitably does happen.

Micki: Yeah, I've grown extremely uncomfortable with the word expectation in the last five years or so

D:[laughs] yeah

Micki: Expectation wreaks some ugly havoc

D:I think it can be both things like if we are starting with the question "what do you expect to happen?" rather than having this unspoken expectations and then being devastated down the line

Micki:Yeah maybe that's the danger of expectation is that they're never up front it's always hindsight and in retrospect

D:Well, I mean, they're in there, they're in there.

Micki: And you just don't know it until you're let down

D:yeah we're not asking those questions though from jump...like the very beginning, like what do you think grief is? What is your experience with it? Like you were saying last time, there's people who get into their 60's and don't have any significant trauma.

Micki:Yeah, that's crazy

D:So, when they talk about it, it's going to look very different from say like you or I, where our journeys started fairly early in our lives. So the ways I look at grief and they ways I look at trauma are very different from even my spouse.

Micki:Or your kids...

D:mmm Oh absolutely.

Micki:uhm, shall we invoke?

D: Oh yes, let us invoke. The reading that I have today is from The Mastery of Love by Don Miguel Ruiz. The Track of Love, The Track of Fear and this kind of goes right along with what we are talking about today. Love has no obligations, fear is full of obligations. On the track of fear, whatever we do is because we have to do it and we expect other people to do something because they have to do it. We have the obligation and as soon as we have to, we resist it. The more resistance we have the more we suffer. Sooner or later we try to escape our obligations. On the other hand love has no resistance. Whatever we do is because we want to do it, it becomes a pleasure, it's like a game and we have fun with it. Love has no expectations. Fear is full of expectations. With fear we do things because we expect that we have to and we expect that others are going to do the same. That is why fear hurts and love doesn't hurt. We expect something and if it doesn't happen we feel hurt, and it isn't fair. We blame others for not fulfilling our expectations. When we love we don't have expectations, we do it because we want to and if other people do it or not, it's because they want to or not and it's nothing personal. When we don't expect something to happen, if nothing happens, it's not important. We don't feel hurt, because whatever happens is ok, that is why hardly anything hurts us when we are in love. We aren't expecting that our lover will do something and we have no obligations. Love is based on respect. Fear doesn't respect anything, including itself. If I feel sorry for you, it means I don't respect you, you cannot make your own choices. When I have to make the choices for you, at that point, I don't respect you. If I don't respect you, then I try to control you. Most of the time when we tell our children how to live their lives it's because we don't respect them, we feel sorry for them and we try to do for them what they should do for themselves. When I don't respect myself, I feel sorry for my own self, I feel I'm not good enough to make it in this world. How do you know when you don't respect yourself? When you say poor me, I'm not strong enough, I'm not intelligent enough. I'm not beautiful enough, I cannot make it enough. Self pity comes from disrespect.

Micki: Man you find some good shit to read

D:[laughs]

Micki: I love that. I love that we touched on expectations before you read it.

D:Yeah, uhm, I had chosen that last time, but then I switched to something else so I think it kind of just happens that way and we're right on time with everything

Micki:yeah and it, the contrast of love and fear. And love, like real love without the expectation and obligation is such freedom and fear is literally the polar opposite of that.

D:exactly, so let's go with yours and then we'll circle back

Micki:Mine, mine's a one liner, beautiful one liner. I started reading The Girl Who Smiled Beads by Clementine Lemaria. Have you read this?

D: No

Micki: The subtitle is about war and what comes after. It's about Rwanda. It's about the genocide in Rwanda but she survived. Her and her sister ended up seeking asylum in the

United States. I can't put it down. I don't know why I connect so much with the Rwanda genocide, but she is talking in this piece about when she first learned the word genocide. How frustrated she was by it because you can't wrap up all of the horrors of a massacre into such a simple thing. You cannot bear witness with a single word.

D: Whew.

Micki: And that just stuck with me. I must have read that line five different times and it stuck with me. It's still sticking with me. I feel like that's also why we're here I mean we're talking about a lot of emotions that in particular grief

D: Yes

Micki: And I think we touched on that in the first episode, how do you wrap up grief as one little word? It's five letters and it contains more than- I mean people write books on it

D: Whole books, I mean for lifetimes.

Micki: yeah, honestly, and you cannot bear witness with a single word.

D: You can't. You cannot and so, on we go to navigate our waters here

Micki: Yeah

D: So circling back to what we were just talking about the expectations of bereaved and grieving people is a lot. And collectively in our sub cultures and our broader culture we really try to push it underneath the rug as soon as humanly possible and we don't give ourselves that room, like I said, to acknowledge that this is really a thing, this really hurts, what do I do about this hurt and giving a name to whatever the hurt is.

Micki: And it's expectations that we put on ourselves and expectations from others

D: Absolutely, i'm harder on myself than anybody could be on me

Micki: I think that's pretty common.

D: [chuckles] yeah and folks coming in on top of what i'm already doing to myself, that's too much. Like what i'm doing to myself is too much and then all of that other stuff and I have to explain is extra. It's extra energy that I just don't have.

Micki: Yes, I want to bounce back to the contrast between love and fear

D: oh yes

Micki: Because I also went on a total amateur hour internet experience once again, I am not an expert like on, anything. Certainly not biology, but I have always been interested in the biology of fear. This isn't anything that I really knew anything about until a few years ago. I don't know a whole lot about our different nervous systems. So i'm going to read this because if I tried to just paraphrase this it would be a disaster. This is basically how the biology of fear works, really basic. If anybody's a biologist you're going to think i'm an idiot i'm so sorry, i'm just going to apologise in advance: The autonomic nervous system in the brain handles all the automatic stuff and there's two branches, there's the parasympathetic that handles stuff like the rest and digest, they call it. And our sympathetic nervous system that handles our fight flight or freeze. Fear actually affects both so if we're being chased by a tiger through a jungle, we need our digestive system to stop because if we're hungry or tired it could be distracting to fatality, tigers know. We need our heart rate to go to the muscles, we need blood to circulate so we can run longer and faster. If we live in a time or place where we need these kinds of survival skills, that's great they're efficient. They're useful, however, in this modern era where as a general rule probably if you are listening to this, you don't have to run from tigers on a very regular basis, your brain still responds with the same exact chemistry within seconds of something that's not life threatening.

It could be any tiny little trigger and you are getting chemicals running through your body like you are in imminent danger and so especially after experiencing trauma or prolonged fight or flight then you end up with chronic anxiety or i chemically you just suffer with anxiety. You can screw up at work, if your phone rings and you look down at it and it's someone you don't want to talk to. It can be absolutely anything that makes you uncomfortable, it can start to trigger these biological responses. Which for me, it made me feel better because I actually do respond physically very quickly to something I am uncomfortable with.. Apparently my voice seems level and i'm not visibly shaken but if you look at my, I will be shaking like crippling fear. It's really not something I need to feel bad about. It's not something anybody needs to feel about. We're only human, and this is a human biological response system.

D:It absolutely is. I'm not a doctor, [both laughs] i'm going to say that right away, but I carry my body with me everywhere I go, all day long, and I've been with myself for 42 years. I know damn well I have felt exactly what you're talking about. I know when I'm in the place of anxiety, when I am triggered. Whether it's something with my kids, you know, anything

Micki:anything

D:we're going to talk about triggers in a few but knowing what those are and knowing how your body responds to it, rather than trying to stop the response, let the response happen, because your body needs to do that. And I just saw a really brilliant post on facebook about it and I reposted it's about completing that cycle of like, if you're super duper angry, rather than just trying to remove the stimulus, letting your body complete that cycle. So maybe you're a crier, maybe you're a screamer, maybe you need to go punch something, or maybe you need to go, that needs to go somewhere out of your body, which is why dancing is so helpful, or movement and we have the ability to do those movements for a reason, like we have been given all the things we need to survive. Honestly.

Micki: Yes

D:Thinking about that and recalling because I am in a good place right now and my body is, you know I feel good. I feel calm. I know what calmness feels like in my body. I know that this is the place I want to be kind of all the time. And this is nice and I love it and whew. So when that change happens, I feel it very viscerally in my body. My whole body starts to tingle, or I've got shingles. You know shingles never really goes away.

Micki:Nope.

D:Mine was stress induced. It was severe stress, because I was pregnant with the girl child ,Stellabelle, who she just took me through it. She came here to fix my life, but also really did a number on my body, that's like a symbiotic relationship you have to have. It's insane and I could feel that in my body and I was trying to explain it and on the outside it didn't look like anything was happening to me. It was so hard for me to get people to believe that I was in excruciating pain

Micki: [laughs] Wow! That sucks! I mean I'm laughing but yeah

D:and it's funny now but this is exactly what we're talking about, exactly what we're talking about. We live in a society where if you can't see it with your eyeballs, you are distrustful of anything somebody says because well, "you look fine"

Micki:Right

D: "you look fine" "you don't look like you're grieving" "you don't look like your kid died" 'you don't look like anything's wrong with you"

Micki: Yeah and I really think the fact of the matter is that most of the time when anybody is extraordinarily anything unfortunate, tired, in pain, shingles, oh my gosh, digestive issues, emotionally trauma, nobody knows, that's why everybody says: " You don't know what the struggle is" you don't know what that person is struggling with. You know you encounter people and I hesitate to give people excuses for being shitty to one another because I have known some people that have gone through some really bad shit that can still do a pretty good job of being nice to the general public and people that they encounter during their day. I know that's not everybody's situation

D: Absolutely, I feel like I have been on both sides of those coins because the shit's so real like I can't hold in my sureness, I can't hold all of these things at the same time

Micki: Absolutely

D: Where niceness is generally my standard, i'm nice to everybody, you know, even if you've wronged me depending on what the wrong is, but again we already know there's only one thing you can do to me that will really send me over the edge [laughs]

Micki: So don't do that and we're fine

D: right, don't do that and we're good. I'm better at letting people go these days, and that even sounds far fetched and harsh but it's true. Like you know what? It's not personal, none of us have this grand capacity to just ingest hurt all day, everyday. One hurt on top of another, we odn't get to complete the cycle of whatever the first hurt was and we're right into the cycle of second and the third and life keeps going on or whatever

Micki: Yeah it compounds

D:SO it's the impact of a life, of a person who's lived a full life and whose living their life, we can't judge how things are going to affect them and we can't judge that just because I look ok on the outside that I am definitely ok on the inside. People drop dead all the time.

Micki:Well hell, we can't even usually see how we're going to respond to things.

D:Exactly.

Micki:we can't judge that either

D: Exactly, we can say all we want to say about a situation before we ever get to it, you know we. we do that a lot, we make predictions about what we think we would do, but we don't leave ourselves any room for Jesus and any room for change. Know what i'm sayin?

Micki: Yeah and this is all, I am going to have to absorb this conversation really slowly because it's applying to me. So I got home, I think it was yesterday and I was getting out of my car and I was thinking to myself, you know all this time i've been trying to find sort of a cure for worry and anxiety or can help alleviate it. It's only just now occurring to me that I am going about this from the wrong angle, it's not something I am going to be able to fix today, or heal today. I will always aspire to getting rid of it entirely. I like to imagine that I can live a life without the kind of anxiety I am living with now but in the meantime, what I need to seek out are ways to navigate it and live with it because the fact of the matter is I am here, I am in the fucking water.

D: That PART. that's the part I think a lot of us like to skip over, let me really investigate what this is, and what is triggering me and it could be something benign and leaving room for those benign triggers and the unpredictableness of it and knowing. So there's knowing. Things you know that are going to trigger you and things you don't know that are a trigger for you. So let's say that I know that I am triggered by seeing little girls in the clothing department wearing tutus and all of that. I know that I am triggered by that, but I also know that I can't make everybody

stop wearing tutus. So I am going to have to find a way to live with these tutus in my life or live without them in my life. And that's it, there's no argument about it. I'm going to either live with them or I am going to live without them. And I am going to know that I am ok, even if I do get triggered by a tutu, it's ok for me to be triggered by that because there was something so significant about those for me and the person I had the relationship with who loved those. I am trying to use the most benign examples that I can because I want folks to know that I can literally be in the grocery store, take a look at some string cheese and not want to buy it and that will trigger a lifetime of memories for me. And where do I put those, do I just deny that that's a thing. I have to decide that I don't give a damn if people see me crying my eyes out next to the string cheese. I just don't care any more. I used to care. But then i'm like that's too much caring, because then i'll never leave the house. Like, literally, I will never leave the house because there are so many ways that I can be triggered. In fact, even if I leave this planet, those things are going with me. So when you say living with them. That's exactly what we need to be learning to do, rather than trying to get rid of them all the time

Micki: Yeah and suppressing the response

D: Mmmhmmm

Micki: I probably could lose my mind in front of other people, I'd kind of rather not. Part of it is me trying to maintain some sense of dignity as I go through the shit that I have to go through and part of it is, it is often not the person's fault who triggered me.

D: raelly, and also the other side of that coin is that other people who aren't being triggered have to understand that it isn't personal, I mean unless they are doing it intentionally. Because there are people who do that

Micki: Yeah

D: And they won't stop doing it and those people need to be punched in the throat

Micki: [laughs] right in the neck

D: Just punch them in the throat and keep on going, no really

Micki: No seriously though

D: Seriously though use your discretion [laughs] Anyway

Micki: Whew I almost lost my wine on that one

D: Because otherwise you know, you're gonna be spending your time worrying about those people as well. So that's the thing we're all wrapped up in the time and essence of the things all the time and it's really intense when we have to identify the trigger that's the first thing and acknowledge that this is a thing for you and then finding what way works for you when this happens. When we're in that constant state of triggered though

Micki: Yeah it's making me feel like [dry heaving sounds] ew. For example I am very jumpy, my ear holes are very sensitive to noise. I've got some real audio sensitivity. Some days more than others and it kind of depends on where my spirit's at that day. If i go to a play, a live performance and someone pulls a gun out [in the play] and points it, i know that it's gonna make a big pop and i'm gonna be the only asshole in the audience that jumps out of their fucking seat when that gun fires. The anticipation, in this case I guess it's a literal trigger, hey

D: heyyy

Micki: The anticipation is a trigger. I know people who trigger me in certain ways and I can't necessarily avoid them. If it's family, if it's work, you know anybody that i'm going to have to interact with. Apparently some people are just better at blowing that off than me but I get all up

in my nerves, waiting for that person to trigger me.do, And when they do, i'm horrible at responding to it in a calm normal sane fashion.

D:oh my goodness yes, I think that that one for me is similar. I am usually expecting people to do the thing. It's taken a long time and a lot of isolation and a lot of bolstering my own responses and really retraining my own brain to say that I'm in the place that I'm in, this is what i really need in my life, and this is what I don't need in my life and there are no more questions about that. Because again, I am forty two years old. I don't have to beg anybody to stop doing things. I really just don't. I just, I refuse. And if they're not self aware, which a lot people that I have to deal with, they're on that fence of : they know exactly what they are doing but they can straddle that fence of they're not doing it on "purpose" but when I see that pattern, it's a pattern and you're doing it on purpose and that's when I have to cut it off. It's not personal, I don't trust my response because you don't know what day you caught me on

Micki: I think that's fair

D:I have to be fair to myself and say that. First and foremost, my response is more about me than it is about the other person

Micki:Right

D:And they're gonna get a fair warning, but i'm not gonna keep repeating myself. Anybody that I have to keep asking to do that same thing or not to do that same thing. That's not a person we're kickin it with. I'm done doing that. We'll see you when we see you.

Micki:I remember back in the day Master Baird was teaching a class anda he knew that i had just through some some shit with somebody involved in the school and this person, I just felt like they were cons tantly fucking with me. They were so so skilled at pissing me off. And, master Baird is like listen, and he tells the story for the whole class and every person in that room feels like they're talking about him. But this day i was like NO this one's for me, he's like you know this person, you're friend's with this person they walk in the room and they walk up to you and they punch you in the face, and you're like what the fuck? And they're like "oh my god i'm so sorry, I don't know why I did that, I'm really very sorry, are you ok?" and you're like " yeah i'm ok but like

D: What the fuck?

Micki:yeah, "please don't do that again". Next time you see them, they walk in the room and they walk up to you and they punch you in the face, and they're like "oh my god I did it again, i'm so sorry!" and you're like "yeah ok, seriously." how many times does the person punch you in the face before you make sure you keep them at arm's length? Not that many.

D: Or you knock them the fuck out first.

Micki:Also that

D: I mean you don't get that many times to come do that to me. You just don't.

Micki:That's a chance you take if you keep punching me in the face

D: That's what i'm talking about. You know, that's one of my boundaries. If you keep treating me some kind of way, I am going to wait, watch and see how you treat other people, if we know the same other people. I'm going to watch and i'm going to learn about how you respond when you are in certain situations so like if you're disappointed about something. How do you respond when you're disappointed, or if i disappoint you in particular

Micki:you mean as compared to their response to other people?

D:mm just in general, just in general because usually it's even, the folks that I have had to deal with and I don't expect any special treatment because being decent is not something I have to actually work at. There's a lot of people that need to work on that, that's not something that I personally need to work on. Decency is just, whether I like you or not, it's very rare that I say I don't like someone or that they trigger me in such a way and I know it right away a lot of times. We're probably not going to have a long term relationship or I can see how far our relationship is gonna go. I know when to get get off, and i'm like "welp we're done here, thank you"

Micki:You know, it's like the great Kenny Rogers once said... "you gotta know when to hold em'-'"

D: "Know when to fold em'-'"

Micki: "know when to walk away, know when to run"

D: heyyy, heyyy

Micki: How many people started singing the song?

D:I did in my head

Micki:You gotta know

D: You gotta know, heyy [laughs]

Micki: So here is my questions for you because I know my answer and I would like to hear one of yours. What would you say, what is one trick when you know that you are moving into a triggering situation. Not those unforeseen like total side swipe triggers, but when you know that you are walking into a situation that triggers you? What is one thing that you do to help prepare or get you through it or aftermath, or all of the above?

D: Well, I really work on my attitude because my attitude and my tone of voice is very difficult for me to wrangle. I just am somebody's mom so when I say a thing, I say a thing and they've gotta know i'm not joking. So I realise that about myself and I really try to either do a lot of self care before I have to go do whatever it is i'm doing in situations that are very triggering, wear special jewelry, clothes that I feel the best in I wear my hair the way I love to wear my hair just anything that really comforts me. If I am fully comfortable with myself and my emotions are in check and I can be mindful about where I am mentally. I'm also not adverse to just changing my plans until I feel better. So it really depends on the day, but most of the time that's what I do. I wear my favorite color, I wear my favorite fabric, I wear my jewelry, my lipstick if i'm feeling like I need it. So I dress for the occasion.

Micki: I like that

D: Yeah , thats just one thing. All of my jewelry are significant pieces that I carry with me or i wear all the time. Your essence kind of just gets into the things. And I think that's part of knowing what comforts you too. It goes along with having the triggers. If you can have all the things that are a comfort to you, available to you so that you can do your self care before and after. So after care, after these situations. So let's say we know we are going to a high intensity meeting and these people are crazy, they're going to be triggering me. You know, we've got to talk about racism and dismantling the system and all the things I'm like you know, whew, that sounds like a job that I didn't sign up for so, say it's one of those. Then, I am going to show up feeling my best and not expecting the worst

Micki:Yeah I mean the power suit is, well it's got a name, that's how popular it is. Like everybody's got their power suit. Mine happens to be a really nice pair of jeans but hey

D: Yes, folks should wear or do what's comfortable to them. So if it's yoga pants and titty tassels, that's what you do. [laughs]

Micki: yeah

D: if it's appropriate

Micki: If that's what gets you through Trader Joe's

D: [laughs] right, if it's appropriate you know what I mean

Micki: right, don't wear titty tassels to Trader Joe's

D: [laugh] right, don't do that. Don't go to trader Joes in your titty tassels

Micki: On that note, we need to talk about survival kits again

D: survival kits, yay

Micki: My thing that I like to do. I do try to prepare for triggers, I'm not always great at doing that, breathing and focusing on my breath is huge for me to bring me back into the present moment. I know that a lot of the time, all of the fear responses that we have are based on things in the past, they're things we've already been through. They barely even apply to what we're going through in the present moment, that's why I can go somewhere new that I've never been before and look for a place to park and I'm responding like I'm lost in the goddamn woods. It's all [laughs] yeah...

D: I just [laughs] like... [laughs] I love this because it's so true. One of my triggers, starting a thing and then finishing a thing. Going from start to finish and having a resolve and going on to the next thing.

Micki: ok

D: There's so many times where we're driving and he won't tell me where we're going first or whatever. I need to know these things. Just tell me because I'm expecting to do this thing. I will say "hey, I need to go to Whole Foods"... well in his mind he will have a whole thing that he's gotta do as well so he will go and do that thing first... and I'm like "where are you going?" and it's a trigger for me because now I'm like oohhh I have to reroute my whole day [laughs] I've got this well thought out plan of things that I'm doing already but we haven't communicated this to each other. [laughs] and so that's also where breakdowns can happen if you don't communicate

Micki: Absolutely and again, if you can pre plan and pre map... good for you. If not, when I find myself in that moment before I completely lose my shit and subject everybody around me to my crazy. I take a couple deep breaths, and I'm not talking anything insane Kundalini shit, like, everybody in the car doesn't need to know you're doing it. I can quietly and slowly just take a couple deep breaths, three is my magic number and by the time I've taken my third deep breath, I guarantee you I am more centered and I'm still gonna have an accelerated heart rate it's not gonna fix it, but I'm gonna feel more present and more grounded and be a little more aware of what my response system is doing. I'm gonna be a little more clear in my words and just my feelings in general. It just brings me back into my body, and no so frantically out of control.

D: Mmmhmmm and so often we are all holding our breath.

Micki: Oh my gosh yes, yes. I can actually, because of Qi Gong I did that for so long and studied for so so long. I am hyper aware of breath. That's probably why it helps me in anxiety situations, but I can hear people holding their breath all the time. I hear them when they grunt and I have to try to not be like, you need to breathe!! [laughs] please!

D:Yes. I struggle with that like doing Tai Chi and also doing massage and all of those things and really being a facilitator of having other people breath while i've got my elbow deed, dug in their back or whatever

Micki: uhhh oucch [laughs]

D: Those are things I notice about myself... like i'm holding my breath, my jaw is clenched, I have a terrible tmj. My asshole is clenched

Micki:My butthole is clenched!

D: Relax, RELAX

Micki:Breathe

D:Breathe

Micki:Fun segue, breathing is one of my reminders in my survival kit

D:Yes

Micki: so most of my survival kit has basically ended up being a whole bunch of reminders of what to do. I thought I was going to be collecting a bunch of things to put in the box and it's just a bunch of notes that I put in the box and I don't know yet if i'm going to cut the all apart and make it like a grab bag or if i'm going to keep it one list. So I did make a list of people to call or text. I've got my six people. I put a reminder that I can put one little drop of weed tincture under my tongue and not be stoned and have it really make a difference in my day. Or, if it's a responsible thing to do, I can have one glass of wine, just a little bit. if i do too much of anything it can really turn on me. One glass of wine of wine, kicks it all down to like, manageable. right?

D: Turn the volume down, yeahhh

Micki: I'm at an 11, I need this at a functional, let's say 8.

D: That's part of learning what your triggers are, how things affect you. So my clown did a thing about knowing your devices. So, i'm not a preachy person to tell folks they shouldn't be doing xy and z. I want people to know more than anything how, whatever their vices are, how they affect them. How do these things affect your body, you your body. You, not your uncle, not your cousin, not your sister's homegirl's boyfriend down the street, last year you talked to their niece. That doesn't matter. How do these things affect YOU. how do you function in the world with these things? If any of these things are interrupting your daily life, find a way to cut it out or add a different habit for yourself . it doesn't necessarily have to be anything new, but it can be an old habit that you decide that you're going to visit when you feel this way, instead of doing this other thing that you know will exacerbate your reaction

Micki: Yeah we don't want these things to be counterproductive

D:right

Micki:If I get stoned when i'm not feeling good, it's gonna turn on me, it's not gonna be pretty. There's been way too many times I've tried to comfort drink and I have at least one too many, often three, and no good can come of these things. But, like I said, I can do one little drop under the tongue, I can have one glass of wine and kind of try to mute my brain down a little bit and that other thing like you were saying earlier that's really helpful is moving your body for whatever reason, there's something about keeping your body moving. But I live in a place that snows and gets really frickin cold. I don't love the snow, I don't do winter sports. Summer, I'll hike all fucking summer long, if I have anxiety in the summer time. I can go for a walk and everything's fine. Winter time, you know what I do? I fucking rage clean. [laughs]

D: Oh my god. Rage cleaning is all the rage. If I have to say, rage cleaning is a thing that I employ

Micki: I love it, I love it.

D: Yes

Micki: It takes my mind out of my... [snickers] mind. If that makes sense?

D: [laughs]

Micki: It gives my brain something else to do especially, today I organized. Everything was kind of just off all afternoon and I got a bead order which is kind of like Christmas for me only like way way better. And so I just decided I was going to organize the shit out of the studio and I went through hours, D, hours of organizing. [dog barks] was that your dog?

D: It is the dog, sorry

Micki: no don't be [in unison] mascots!

D: laughs

Micki: And, another thing I know you touched on is I started listing foods that are

D: good enough, good enough

Micki: Easy and good enough and I'll tell you where my good enough is coming from. For me personally, if I eat shitty food it makes me feel gross. I am officially too old for that shit, I can't just eat crap and move through my day like I could when I was 21. Themes the breaks, I'm living with it. So things like cereal, ramen with an egg, crackers even today I was eating Triscuits, they were cheese and herb Triscuits and underneath it said, natural flavors with other natural flavors [laughs] and I'm all what the fuck? Wait a minute, define natural assholes, because if it's just natural flavors you shouldn't have to separate them

D: yes

Micki: Anyway, processed food, it's good rough. If it's between Triscuits or not eating, I'm gonna eat some fucking Triscuits with natural flavors and other natural flavors

D: One of my favorite things to do when I feel really good is to cook and plan for a rainy day. So what we used to do for a couple of years running, we would do like a cooking day. So this cooking day would include just pre preparing meals for whenever. It was some breakfast. Some lunch, some dinner. We have kids in the house so it was one of those things that I was trying to see if we could work into our schedule because we're really busy

Micki: And prepping can take a lot of time

D: Prepping takes so much time

Micki: and you don't always have the energy or time

D: you don't always have the time or the energy for it. However, it's one of my favorite things to do. So it kind of happens that I'll make noodles, or I'll make cookies or I'll make whatever we're making and so we're trying to work that back into our house just in general

Micki: I love it

D: On the family level this is kind of how we have to do a thing and on a personal level, I really just horde my own snacks and make sure I have them available. I don't care any more, I used to feel like it was being rude to my kids or whatever but honestly I just don't have time to myself and I don't have food to myself and they're always expecting me to share. And, they don't understand when I say hey guys I'm just in a place in my mind where I just need my things. Please don't eat up all my things, because that's a trigger for me. [laughs]

Micki: [laughs] how's that working out?

D: We have our own refrigerator in our room now and we have our big girl bar and our area for our snacks and our little kitchenette. So I can make things and I don't have to leave my room. Thank goodness my spouse encourages my isolation. I have my water cooler here that I can make my ramen in my room. I don't need a lot, when I feel good, I try to prepare for when I don't feel good, I know that I don't have a long walk to the refrigerator. You know these things are all helpful to me. They're probably you know, weird to somebody else but I'm trying to survive here  
Micki: That's all you can do. And you know with this, I just put this together in my head, I think what this kind of sums up to for me is the easiest way to navigate is to use what is already there.

D: Use what's already there

Micki: Make it help you get you where you need to go. Find the wind, put up the sails, figure out downstream, learn the tides. Whatever you can figure out, preparedness when you can, great. When you can't, you gotta know how to read the wind and the water

D: Well, that comes from knowing and accepting that you aren't going to get it right every time and you aren't going to be able to plan every time. You are going to get caught in those instances and you're going to be given the opportunity, do you let your old patterns dictate how you want to live your life right now or do you sit with the thing and say hey this irritates me, what about this irritates me?

Micki: I would like to go somewhere new

D: I want to do something different and what can I do that's different that's not going to produce this same result

Micki: then you're in a whirlpool

D: asking those questions of yourself and then being respectful of whatever your answer is

Micki: That's a tricky one actually

D: It is, because we're so conditioned to believe we've got to feel better in a certain amount of time and we're conditioned to suppress rather than accept and work with what's there. Because that's the reality, this is what's there, focusing only on the positive things that I want to feel, doesn't cancel out this thing that I actually feel right now

Micki: No and it doesn't necessarily get you where you want to go either

D: So confronting and saying hey this is a trigger for me and right now I need to regroup. I need to not be involved in this, or I need to say no to this or I can't come around certain people because they do a list of actions and they're really blissfully unaware of how it affects me. And so if I know that, that's how I have to proceed. Like I can't. That's part of the self care, that's part of the survival kit. We're making it in ways that I'm taking responsibility for this. I am not about to ask you or convince you that you need to change, you go ahead and keep on doing what you need to do or what you think you need to do, but don't involve me in it and don't be mad if I don't want to be involved because it ain't about you, it's about me and my response to whatever it is you're doing.

Micki: No offense. It's like that t shirt that says, I'm sorry I am late to your party, I didn't want to come.

D: I didn't want to come

Micki: Do we want to do five questions?

D: Yeah we can do five questions

Micki: And for the record, my interest in doing the who are you game show questions was obviously so people can get to know us. I like to hear your answers, it's fun to think of my own answers. The questions are really intriguing, but I am kind of hoping that everybody else is asking themselves the questions and answering them as well.

D: I hope so too. I think we should put them on the Instagram

Micki: That's a great idea, listeners your mission your mission, should you choose to accept it

D: [laughs] ... ooh what is the meanest thing you've said to someone?

Micki: Ughh that's such a mean question [laughs] You know I don't remember, but it was probably honest to God truth.

D: [laughs]

Micki: You?

D: Uhm I believe telling somebody to fuck off for the rest of their life is probably the meanest thing I've ever said. I am pretty sure that I have come up with some really harsh commentary but I don't know that I have necessarily said it out loud. So I do this thing where I come up with some really harsh commentary in my head and then I find the most diplomatic way to tell somebody to fuck off.

Micki: I do the complete opposite. I think I'm being totally fine and I'm saying the meanest shit I can possibly say, and I don't know until later when somebody's like that was really mean. And I'm like shit was it? It was the honest to God truth, I don't know.

D: [laughs] Do you consider yourself worldly? I feel like we've answered that one already though...

Micki: I don't think we have...

D: Ok, well do you consider yourself to be a worldly person?

Micki: No, you know everything that I know just proves how much I don't know

D: Mmmhmmm

Micki: So, no is my rapid fire answer [laughs] you?

D: I feel like I am a little bit worldly and I'm open to being worldly

Micki: mmhmm

D: And otherworldly also

Micki: Oh yes! Otherworldly, yeah I got that

D: Otherworldly, I've got that on lockdown [laughs]

Micki: I don't get this world so much

D: Is there a sound that relaxes you?

Micki: the ocean

D: mmm

Micki: You?

D: I have to say it's Captain Picard's voice

Micki: [laughs] Captain Picard is going to make an appearance in every podcast

D: Captain Picard, Sir Patrick Stewart, is one of those voices that I will just know, until I lose my hearing or something

Micki: It is a nice voice

D: [laughs] ... Do you have common sense and do you think other people lack it?

Micki: Ok so here's the thing

D: [laughs]

Micki: My wonderful dear friend Megan Riddle often says if it's everyone else, it's probably you  
D:[laughs]

Micki: And di'm up there with Voltaire, common sense is not common, which means probably I don't

D:[laughs]

Micki: I[‘m just trying to be fair for once. I like to think I do but probably not. Do you think you have common sense

D: for the most part I think I do,

Micki: Do you think everybody else does?

D:Not all, no[laughs]

Micki:[laughs]

D:I mean it depends, there's a fair group of people I feel like the do have a lot of common sense but there are just so many people that lack. And maybe it's not common sense actually that I mean it's self awareness, decency, all those things. That's not the same question but whatever

Micki: I think those are supposed to come into play with common sense

D:Ok

Micki Those might be the virtues lacking

D: The virtues lacking. I love it

Micki: Yaaasss

D: How similar are you to your younger self? Have we talked about that?

Micki: No, but holy shit, I ended up on a limp down memory lane and found a picture of me in JV cheer holding pompoms and I gotta tell you, I cannot relate to that girl any more, at all. I love her. I wish I could give her a hug and tell her it's all gonna work out just fine, but no, I cannot relate to my younger self. I can barely relate to who I was ten years ago

D:[laughs]

Micki: and I think part of that is not to dis the former me, it's just i think, progress

D: Absolutely. I feel like I have some of the same habits. I do collect some of the same things that I used to collect as a child, you never I never stopped collecting these things. But, I definitely feel like I am not the same person at all. There's so much ugh so cringey

Micki:ughh yeahhh cringey is right, thank God I burned those journals, that's all i'm sayin

D: Yes! That's five I think

Micki: Good game

D: Feels like five. Good game [laughs]

Micki: Good game

D:[laughs]

Micki: I think we navigated some shit there, I don't know. I never know.

D:I think we navigated quite a bit

Micki:Thank you for your time. I'm enjoying this, I hope everyone else is too

D:I hope everybody is enjoying it as well and

Micki: All 6 of you

D: All 7 of you [giggles]

Micki: Yay! We gained one! Wheew, new listener. Thanks for stopping by San Diego!

Micki:I would like to dedicate this episode to my former self and all of the terrible choices that I made, that got me where I am today [laughs]

D:[laughs]

Micki:I have mourned my younger self so

D: I too would like to dedicate this to my former selves and also my future self

Micki: yes

D: Because I want to remember that i've had clarity [laughs]

Micki:[laughs]

D:I have had clarity and we had the wherewithal to push record and we are doing this together and it just seems like a really sweet way to round out my weeks honestly. So thank you for that and I do have a song picked for today.

Micki: What is it?

D: It's by Gladys Knight (& the Pips), even though she is not in the dead musicians club, which we will share on instagram, I've Got to Use My Imagination.

Micki:Yeeeeesss. Thank you D. I love you.

D:Until next time

Micki:Thanks everybody