

Tiana (00:00):

Okay, thank you Zoom.

Tiana (00:06):

Hey everybody. It's Tiana and I have a guest today. Hey guest.

Patrilie (00:15):

Hello? Hello.

Tiana (00:21):

So this guest is somebody that I just found on social media and I had no idea who you were, I didn't know what you were doing. I just thought like, "Oh, this post is great." I don't even remember what post it was, and I was like, I'm going to follow cause this is great and then I, had the pleasure of interviewing you for the braving body shame 2020 conference or the 2021 conference, and the conversation was a fire.

Patrilie (00:53):

We really had good chemistry, right? Like I'm not gonna lie that I thought that was a really great conversation and it was an honor to be asked, to be able to share my story and my braving body shame story.

Tiana (01:09):

That was so good. I just remember having the conversation and going like, "Ooh, this is deep. I'm learning something. We're going places I didn't think we're gonna go." And I was like, this is good money. We need to do this again. So here we are doing this again.

Patrilie (01:29):

I am so glad that you reached out. I know the space, when I talk about the body liberation space can feel small, but vast at the same time. It seems like there are a fair number of people doing this work but, it's so amazing to be able to find the few that you really authentically connect with and share a lot of lived experiences in different ways. So I was pumped when you reached out and asked me to come, and we can just continue the party, right?

Tiana (02:15):

So good. I have goosebumps and I'm so excited. Nobody knows who you are yet. So my lovely guest, can you please introduce yourself?

Patrilie (02:25):

Yes, absolutely. Hello everybody, my name is Patrilie Hernandez. I have been working in health and nutrition. I've worked as an educator, advocate, a project manager and a policy analyst. I have kind of an eclectic academic background. I have a degree in culinary arts, anthropology, in nutrition and non-profit management. So people are always like, "Oh my gosh! It was all over the place." But if you hear my story right, and my lived experiences, I identify as a fat neuro-atypical femme of the Puerto Rican diaspora. You'll see that a lot of my lived experiences and my life journey really informed my next steps, where I was going to go with my academic pursuits and my career.

Patrilie ([03:31](#)):

Basically, I'm here to disrupt the status of my local nutrition and wellness community, and I advocate for weight clues health paradigms in educational and in healthcare settings. I currently work and live here in Washington, DC, USA. I work in early childhood, health and nutrition, and I help others nurture young children who are confident in their relationship with food, their health and their bodies. In addition to that, I'm the founder of Embody Live and that's a community, a platform that helps people of the global majority reclaim their health and wellbeing. What do I like to do in my spare time? I'm pretty simple. I love cooking for others, I love looking at the moon and I love spending time with my partner and my chihuahua, Sophie.

Tiana ([04:36](#)):

As you were introducing yourself, there's so many points where I'm just grinning ear to ear and I'm like, "Oh my God, I'm so excited!" Also, just like ideas firing off in my head because you told me some things in there that I did not know about you, you're in culinary arts?!

Patrilie ([04:53](#)):

I started off my career in the kitchen. I went to college for two years after high school and it was a hot mess. I needed to find myself, and I found myself in a kitchen of a catering company at an art museum that launched my interest that reignited, cause I've always loved to cook. I'm actually getting paid to cook and work in the rundown restaurant industry. So that's what I did for the first five years of my career.

Tiana ([05:26](#)):

That's amazing. I love that this is just another point of connection for us because I also went to college straight out of high school, and I made it four years somehow, but I had a two year break because I also was completely lost. I had a lot of things that had happened emotionally and mentally. And I was just like, I'm completely lost. So I ended up a two year break. I call it my sabbatical.

Patrilie ([06:02](#)):

At the ripe age of 22 and 24?

Tiana ([06:07](#)):

You know, just gonna go take a break and see the world, and that's the thing, right? It's generally if you were white, you know, affluent, this would be, "I'm going to take a break and backpack around Europe". I didn't take a break to backpack around Europe. I ended up living at my mom's house and working customer service, which I was damn good at but it's basically very different experience.

Patrilie ([06:34](#)):

I was very much a nontraditional student. I did end up going back to school, obviously in my late twenties, and I did take out a loan to spend a semester abroad and backpack through Europe. I'm still paying for it today. But, you know, no regrets. I think the break that I took was partially not knowing what I wanted to do with my life, but it was also a mental health thing. I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder when I was 19. It typically takes about five years to really get a hold on treatment. So, they were tumultuous and it was chaotic at times and a lot of low points, but I managed to work as much as I could through that.

Patrilie ([07:24](#)):

I didn't give up on my dream to finally go back to school. I was 27 when I graduated with my undergrad and then I went to grad school not soon after. I mean, it's possible. In American culture, a lot of people or I wouldn't just say white, white American culture, but people that had the immigration experience to the US. The expectation is you go to college for the ones with more education and class privilege, which I do because both of my parents were both highly educated. The expectation was for you to go to college and get the best job you could at a young age so you wouldn't have to financially suffer like your parents and your family did. I see that kind of sentiment when you know, that didn't happen to me. There's a lot of guilt associated with that cause, my parents came here to give me a better life and here I am, it all works out. I would not change a thing about it. I wouldn't go back and do anything differently because if I did it, it wouldn't leave me here to this moment with your time. Right?

Tiana ([08:49](#)):

That's right. There's so much there. I feel so much of that because, it was also my mom's dream that I went to college and when it didn't happen the way she wanted it to, there was a disappointment. I think on both sides now, she's never expressed hers. I know that part of my guilt and my disappointment in myself was also coming from what I projected or imagined what my mom was thinking about what I was doing. I was also able to go back and finish and got out at 26. One year basically. It was really tough but at the same time, going back at that older age, I had only gotten two years but I knew what I was doing at that point. I know what I'm here for.

Patrilie ([09:58](#)):

Same. I don't know about you, but I was working. You had to manage working while being a student and didn't have that college student experience that you see in the movies and stuff. But like I said, when I went back, I knew what I had to do. I was emotional. I had enough emotional maturity to know what was on the line. You finish this and as a result, you can do this and this. It allowed me to take it a lot more seriously.

Tiana ([10:27](#)):

That's right. I think it's unfair, like culturally to ask an 18 year old to choose the path of the rest of their lives. There's a problem there.

Patrilie ([10:41](#)):

I hear so many kids, anyone under the age of 30 is kids. Many of these kids, so many of the youths. I thought that my generation had a huge bout of imposter syndrome. I think our Gen-Zers, have it even worse because they're like 22 and 24 and they're running around saying how unaccomplished they feel and how behind in life. And you're just like, you're 22, 24. I think that's just a product of the society we live in.

Tiana ([11:30](#)):

I agree. That reminds me of something that I wrote down, I had to write it down.

Patrilie ([11:37](#)):

Okay.

Tiana ([11:37](#)):

I will share it not right now because I want to talk about the thing that made me think this, you wrote this article for Wear Your Voice magazine called Food insecurity, Anti-blackness and Fatphobia, what food access advocates need to understand. When I read this, I was like yes, very much. We have to pile all these things together when we're having this conversation. In the mainstream, whatever that means to you or anyone listening, we talk about it in a certain kind of way, which is very stigmatizing. It's very othering and it's really pejorative. We're not talking about people, we're talking about avatars and ideas. This article that you wrote was so human and so real and I want you to talk about it if you would like.

Patrilie ([12:54](#)):

You know, Wear Your Voice first approached me to write an article or a set of articles for their food political series. First of all, I was completely, I don't know what the word, fan, because this outlet has just been so important in my journey to critique dominant cultural systems and dominant power systems. I remember meeting with the editor a few times cause I'm not a writer. I don't love it. I know I have other colleagues in this space that can just pump out thousand couple words, blogs and essays within the matter of hours. For me, I really have to sit with things. I know that the editor was really interested in learning more about my career in food justice and the food access space and what that meant.

Patrilie ([14:04](#)):

I know I mentioned, when I introduced myself that my academic background is kind of a hodgepodge, but it really flows together if you know my story. I didn't feel like I was able to share my thoughts on food access and food justice without sharing my personal story, because every move that I have made in my professional life, I am one of those people where my profession and my passion overlap because of my drive and my innate purpose to do something in this world that makes the lives of others better to help them thrive and to inspire them to have others. So in order to share my thoughts on my experiences on the food access space over the past decade and a half, I really had to go to the place where it all started.

Patrilie ([15:02](#)):

I was on snap benefits for a couple of years. I was working in the restaurant industry. I was trying to go to school part-time and I was trying to figure out my mental health. So, I was juggling a lot of things. I used government assistance programs as a way to navigate my financial situation, my mental health and my career trajectory. I have experience with these programs. Growing up, my parents also utilized government assistance when they were studying out, when they were starting out. So I had to bring, this perspective if I wanted people to truly understand where I was coming from and what that meant for the work ahead. I just started off telling a story about I had, waiting tables in St. Louis.

Patrilie ([16:02](#)):

The first glimpse I got at chronic food insecurity outside of living in New York City, was when I was a youngster in the eighties. That story that I told led me to break down how the work of food access and food justice came into this space that really centers a lot of white supremacist ideas, especially around fatphobia and food policing. I started out talking about the civil rights movement and what that has to do with hunger in America. So, for a few years, I worked as this think tank that was really known as one of the best content experts around hunger and anti-hunger policy in the US and I learned about the history, 'I'm putting this in air quotes', about how hunger in America was first brought to light.

Patrilie ([17:38](#)):

As I try to decolonize my approach around food access, I learned that they left out a lot, and a lot of that was the impact that different sovereignty groups, like the Black Panthers and different indigenous civil rights activists played in developing community feeding programs for children and adults. Looking at this as an introduction way back when there was hunger in America, and was first brought to light because of Bobby Kennedy in this CBS documentary, and that was true to an extent. It brought hunger in America to white audiences, but it didn't necessarily, was not a new issue within communities of color. It was something that they had been working for decades through mutual aid models and through community care models to be able to address.

Patrilie ([18:53](#)):

So that was just one example that I brought up. Saying that a lot of what we know about hunger and food security in America has only been presented to us through a white lens. What does it mean to pull that back and to really look at what the heart is of the issues and what has been done and what can be done if we listen more to black and indigenous leaders on this subject? So the other part of that was when I weave together, I don't know if I could say this word, obesity, the O word, became intertwined into feeding hungry people. That is a little bit more of newer framework. Again, it was something that was proposed by a white male doctor. There was a team of white men that really came together to coin what the obesity epidemic was. It kind of took off from there. From there, you saw the inclusion or the change to BMI statuses that literally happened overnight, where people woke up in the morning and 7 million people were now classified in a different BMI status and therefore, labels as unhealthy because a group of medical experts decided to do that.

Tiana ([20:53](#)):

So, I'm leading a group read right now, and we're reading, fearing the black body, the racial origins of fatphobia written by Dr. Sabrina Strings, and we just finished the chapter four and it's so enraging to find...

Patrilie ([21:13](#)):

Can you remind me which chapter that was?

Tiana ([21:15](#)):

Absolutely. So we have read, where we're at right now is, we have talked about the introduction or how the othering of black people and Africans, or also black Africans, they were referred to them as well. How they were trying to distinguish between and justify, enslaving these people by eventually trying to say, like, "Here's how we are and look at how civilized we are, because we're not like them, they're gross and so savage and look at their just gluttonous". It's enraging because they're talking about, she discusses in the book how the introduction of sugar, which is a production courtesy of the work of enslaved peoples and colonization and how that impacted essentially the waistlines of the colonizer countries.

Tiana ([22:35](#)):

We were talking about how in the book is...I'm stuttering because there's so much rage. They're talking about how beauty ideals were changed to better differentiate between, what is a "good white woman versus these lowly black Africans?" And the thing that is just enraging is, all of it is horrible. It's just horrible to read. It's really hard. But the thing that's very frustrating is, the fact that it's just this handful

of privileged white men who arbitrarily are making these determinations. What are they based on? Not much, except for what I personally happen to light, because I'm influenced by these other privileged white men who have made these arbitrary ruminations. Oh God, it's so frustrating.

Patrilie ([23:56](#)):

I would love to talk about this, that this is all done right in the name of "Science, Race Science." That is what you were referring to when you were looking at the classification statuses, and the book by Sabrina Strings to determine who was of a higher status, who was closer to God, who was pure, who was more worthy. That developed out of anthropologists that are used as a scientific framework to classify race, which is complete another... With the BMI classifications, we see something not necessarily paralleled, but if you look at the methodology for example, this status that was changed overnight, that impacted the people. It was a decision that was driven by profit in a sense, because by lowering the BMI, the overweight category from 27 or the normal "BMI status from 27 to 25, and anything above 25 was overweight".

Patrilie ([25:18](#)):

That was, for insurance companies to be able to promote that number 25 as being easier to remember. This was not based on long to two studies, double blind controlled studies. This was due to appease a financial stakeholder. So when we look at the parallels of race science and how that's driven by capitalist profit, when the onset to justify chattel slavery, so people, Africans to justify the enslavement of Africans to be able to work the land in order to develop a strong economy for the white settlers and the white collar colonizers. You see, how science is weaponized in this sense. I just think this is really relevant now, especially in this time, as people are questioning science. But I think it's just interesting because the people that are questioning science and what it means are, again, the majority of them hold dominant identities. Especially here in the US right? We're looking at the anti-vax movement, all of that. It is being primarily driven by those that have very systemically advantaged identities, whether it's class privilege, whether it's skin privilege. I just find that really interesting. The parallels among the three and how science is really driven by a lot of the times, those with the most capital and those happen to be old white men most of the time.

Tiana ([27:12](#)):

Oh my God. Yes. It's so frustrating cause that's also something this book is talking. I think for the beginning of the book, we're talking about the 15 hundreds and the part that we just finished reading, where in the 17 hundreds, and it's been a couple of hundred years now and we're still doing this.

Patrilie ([27:36](#)):

I think it's hard to reconcile, especially, personally as someone that has an anthropology degree and my father is a scientist on my father's side. A lot of them are engineers, scientists, and reconciling how life-saving science can be, right? But at the same time, looking at how it's been used to methodically. So you know, test and eventually wipe out black and indigenous populations. So I think like the conversation around this right? And how it relates to the work that is outlined in the book by Sabrina Strings, to what I referenced in the article for where your voice to what we're seeing today. I think it's a very interesting conversation that we had, especially because it impacts so many marginalized people.

Tiana ([29:00](#)):

That's right. When I have conversations with Patrilie, I tend to have that moment where I don't know what to say next, just like marinate, just letting it marinate and like sweep over me and just all the emotions anyway. Yes. So I want to come back to this article because, I've got it in front of me and we, that's where we left off on my tangent was talking about how, just a bunch of "designated, random white dudes get together and they decide that it's more advantageous to help people remember numbers by making them browned. Who cares what other people who's actually affected and what it really means." So let's go back and talk about this BMI lowering.

Patrilie ([29:59](#)):

I think that was the whole incidence and the way that BMI is leveraged. I will say exploited to make assumptions and to cut resources and to manipulate, especially communities of color black and indigenous communities. I think that highlights where we've gone wrong in the food access and food justice movement. I feel like some conversations are happening now. I feel like some people are kind of waking up to how this kind of BMI and this concern about obesity has overshadowed, what the real important work is. And that is in a country that produces so much food and has the capital to feed everybody. There is a disproportionate amount of people that still can't put food on their table every day and still can't food put food that they feel nourished as them.

Patrilie ([31:15](#)):

That is the issue. I feel like that's been spread and accepted by lots of different groups in the food justice and food access community, especially in the BiPAP community. I think the internalized fatphobia and the internalized oppression, we have in our own communities that being in a big body is a moral failing. I think some of the worst perpetrators sometimes are among our own. I think it's the hardest. It's so hard talking about this stuff in communities where people look like me, right? That identify as people of color because they're the ones most indoctrinated with this fat phobic and internalized hatred of fatness and what that equates to. So I think that was more like the second part of the article. Sorry, the essay that I wrote.

Tiana ([32:38](#)):

That's really heavy.

Patrilie ([32:43](#)):

I mean the truth is heavy and I feel like I would love more spaces to talk about this, to talk about the way that we, the collective people of the global majority, replicate, white supremacist ideology among our own people. Oh God.

Tiana ([33:09](#)):

That's big. Oh my goodness. So I'm going to stutter a little bit because this is tender for me. This is a big idea. This is a really big idea. The things that are jumping that are like my knee-jerk reactions to this are of course it makes sense that we're so heavily indoctrinated as people of color and the reason why is because survival, right? You know, we're trying to survive out here in these white supremacist streets and we are disadvantaged and disenfranchised at every turn. We just don't have a chance. They bottle our thing. They take things from us, they repackage them and they sell it to us at a higher price while penalizing us for having had it in the first place.

Tiana ([34:13](#)):

Also in spite of all of that, we still say, stay so strong and we really work toward perseverance. But the fact of the matter is, is that in the end we punish ourselves and each other. I do have to say that like, as much as I believe in my work as a fat activist and a body of the liberationist and a fat liberationist, like I get nervous sharing about it in a largely black space that is not already a warm space in a way that I do not get nervous doing it in a white space or a majority white space. I think that for me, part of that is, I don't belong in that white space. So if they don't receive me in the end, it's sort of fine because I knew that I didn't really fit in there anyway, but in the majority black space, if I get rejected, that threatens my survival in some way. I mean, not like materially, because I'm not depending on these people to pay my rent or anything like that.

Patrilie ([35:54](#)):

There's more at stake, I think, emotional and from a soul perspective. I get what you're saying. That's powerful. That's not where I thought I was going to go with this, but I think it's real. On the flip side because people are the global majority, because we've been indoctrinated to believe that white supremacy ideology will help us survive in this white supremacist world. There is even more racialization colorism that occurs which we have to be cognizant of our positionality. The way that we navigate spaces in a way that we might not have to be in exclusively white spaces because I'm a non-black person of color.

Patrilie ([37:01](#)):

My adjacent nearness to whiteness is a lot closer than someone that is black. But I think it predominantly white spaces. They just see me as a person of color. They see me as a Latina or whatever some brown Latina, and they'll just paint me with a broad brush, right? They'll say this but there's a lot more in spaces that are BiPAP, black, indigenous, and other persons of color. There's to navigate these spaces as completely different and require a lot more care. You add body size on top of that and it becomes even more complicated. So I think for me, someone that is in black when I go into white spaces and I talk about fat liberation and my experiences. As a person of color, you're right.

Patrilie ([38:00](#)):

There is less at risk. I think emotionally and mentally than if there are in spaces that are BiPAP. I speak of my fat experiences and I even have privilege in this. Like I'm a small to mid fat, but because of the skin privilege that I have, navigating these spaces becomes a lot messier and a lot more tender, and there's a lot more at stake, not just for me individually, but as a collective. It's definitely lots of layers of complication. I think talking about this stuff, especially in spaces, for example, I'll just use my family. Racially, we're all very diverse. To talk about that liberation to somebody let's say in Puerto Rico, where I'm from, that identifies as like an Afro buddy or identifies as black, living in a black, and living in a fat body, like in Puerto Rico.

Patrilie ([39:14](#)):

Societally, you are much more marginalized here in the US I think. You are much more marginalized being dark skinned and being fat than if you are being a blankita. That being, like light skin with the light eyes and being in a fat body and the same thing. I think the level of marginalization you face when you're thin, "conventionally attractive" regardless of skin color, you are perceived in a different way on the island, than if you lived in a fat body. There's a lot of nuance to that, for sure.

Tiana ([39:58](#)):

Absolutely. I mean, that really speaks to just the anti-blackness that has been exported around the world. Courtesy of colonization. Just exhausting.

Patrilie ([40:09](#)):

So it is like the fact that I spent my all my waking moments thinking and analyzing and processing this, when there are white people walking around, and this doesn't even cross their head once. Like I feel robbed of peace.

Tiana ([40:30](#)):

Talk about that. I mean, that's real. That's where that comes from, right? Like, the marginalization and all of the physical and mental effects of that. The emotional weight of all of that. This is where it comes from from the fact that I have to think about it. Like everything that I do, I always have to think about it.

Patrilie ([40:52](#)):

Your steps are informed by that.

Tiana ([40:55](#)):

Every single one. Before I even leave the house, it's just like my husband who is white, he's French, but he's white. He's not thinking about this kind of stuff. He's just like, "do I have my wallet and my phone and my keys?" Like, this is what he's thinking about. I'm thinking about those things too, but I'm also thinking about, "Will the chairs fit me? Are they gonna talk to me funny because I look like I do." Even though I look like I do, like you, I have quite lot of skin privilege. Because I'm biracial, but I am not definitely black. If you look at me, you'd be probably wouldn't know. I mean, I can't tell you how many times I've been told, I was Dominican or I'm Puerto Rican. Like all kinds of ...

Patrilie ([41:50](#)):

Like that racially ambiguous.

Tiana ([41:52](#)):

Exactly. I'm racially ambiguous. Absolutely. I'm always mixed something. It tells me more about who I'm talking to than anything, but knowing that I have that, still makes everything. It somehow even complicates it even more. I absolutely know how you would treat me if I was a dark skin person walking into a place, but I'm not.

Patrilie ([42:20](#)):

It's really uncomfortable place to straddle, like personally uncomfortable, right? Because you navigate your privilege and power with ways that you've been marginalized and it's such a fine line. And at the same time, you need to be very cognizant of how you position yourself in spaces of color. So it takes up a lot of my brain. It does. I'm going to be honest, it gets tiring sometimes but I think, if my goal is collective liberation, that's what it has to be.

Tiana ([42:58](#)):

That's right. I mean, it's part of the commitment. It's just like, this is what you have on your plate and you just do the best you can to carry it the best you can.

Patrilie ([43:11](#)):

Right.

Tiana ([43:16](#)):

Well, that's not where I thought we were going to go today, but I'm glad that that's where we went today. So just to come back to this article, just one more time. Like I said, the thing that was really impressive to me was, just how human it was. I feel like there's really a fundamental dissonance in our culture where there's this impetus to always keep moving forward. Always be progressing, always be changing, always be moving, reaching towards...

Patrilie ([43:55](#)):

I fall into that trap a hundred percent.

Tiana ([43:58](#)):

How could you not? Right? But what I really love about this article is that, you look back at yourself and you are pretty raw and honest with who you were and what you were thinking and your biases and, and those things that you carried with you at that time. And I think that, I'm going to use this term. I think that's amazingly brave, you know completely, like non pejoratively, but I think it's really brave. And the reason why is because, looking back at who we used to be, especially considering the fact that most of the time, great majority of the time, the person we used to be as somebody sort of not really pleasant in relation to where we are today.

Tiana ([44:55](#)):

And so, there's definitely a lot of, "I'm not going to look at that. I'm going to pretend she didn't exist. I'm going to pretend that didn't actually happen. I wasn't there." I love when someone actually can look at their past self and have a conversation with them and be honest with that. Also, show the little breadcrumb trail of how you got to where you are today. Because I mean, this is the thing that I wrote down, which is how do you know, or how do you grow if you don't know where you are rooted?

Patrilie ([45:35](#)):

So I resonate with that on so many different levels of where I am right now, currently. Absolutely. It's very interesting that you say that, because connecting to my career trajectory and my academic background, I've wanted to be an anthropologist since I was five or six years old since I first learned what it was, because what I understood about it at the time was it was a glimpse into who we were that leads to who we are now. When I was in seventh grade, my teacher told me you can't be an anthropologist. That's not a real job after I spent like a months on my anthropology science project. But it's all right, because it took a mental health diagnosis, three attempts to go back to college at three or four different schools to say, "You know what, I'm going to go back to my roots and do what I wanted to do, which is to study. To get scholarship around anthropology." So just that what you wrote down, I think it really reflects my world view because if the roots are strong, that's where you flourish. I've never been somebody who has run away from who I am.

Patrilie ([47:14](#)):

Sometimes, do I feel a lot of shame around it sometimes, unnecessary shame. Yes, and that's something I struggle with a lot, but hiding who you were, denies community, denies the world from your

wholeness. Right? I think when you just present yourself in one way, that's just a fragment of who you are, and is that how you want to live through life and it connects. So I have a tattoo on my right arm of the seven moon phases of the sub phases of the moon. I resonate a lot with the moon because, there's this phrase that says, no matter what phase you're in, you're always whole. Right? And that is how I walk through life. So I think it's always really important for people to see the wholeness of you, to really know what it's like to live life as a human. That's what I am, because that's what we are.

Tiana ([48:28](#)):

I love it. So good.

Patrilie ([48:32](#)):

It's something, I've I think a lot about on a daily basis. So I had that ready to go.

Tiana ([48:39](#)):

Be prepared. Obviously we will be with the mic drop. I love it. But I mean, just like this conversation about being rooted, I'm just amazed with this phrase, that came from as my reflection, after reading your article was one that resonated so hard with you because it reminds me again of our first conversation. The first interview that we did with, for braving body shame, where I am struggling myself. Like it's something that I want to get back to. Like learning more and digging into my own indigeneity and my ancestry and being in closer relationship with these things. The thing that's holding me back from doing it is grief. This deep grief of like being disconnected and not knowing and not being in better relationship. There was some sharing, that we did on that. It's so good, to know that I'm not alone. It's sad to know that I'm not alone somehow too.

Patrilie ([50:11](#)):

Because it's sad. You wonder why so many people struggle with this around grief. It's been a few months since we connected through that bo- braving body shame conference. I know that, I told you about all these plans cause very much, I was in a similar place about truly what it means to reconnect with the wholeness of my ancestry. I'm mixed as they say that includes white colonizer and settler ancestry and how do I leverage that in a way that moves towards collective liberation while still honoring and never dismissing my west African and my indigenous ancestry. And so that's been my journey. I think since the last time we talked, I even spent a significant amount of time in Puerto Rico and doing a lot of reflection around what it means to have your ancestors and your ancestry as part of your human practice, right?

Patrilie ([51:30](#)):

Spiritual practice, human practice as a human while still recognizing. The wholeness of it and how to move forward. If that includes who to be in solidarity with, consider reparations, some of restorative process, around the ancestors that have contributed to colonialism and colonization. Right? It is a grieving process. It is a process of letting go but also a process of honor paying homage and paying honor letting go of a lot of things. So yeah, it's never too late to reconnect with that. I mean, I'm in my mid thirties, for a long time I thought my ancestry was one thing. And then it kind of opens up in your face and you learn things about you and your family and the trauma that's been passed down. But you know, the timing of that was a gift. Even if it was later in life, it's still a gift because I'm at a point where I can actively choose. I can actually choose what to do with it.

Tiana ([53:04](#)):

That's right. That's where we should all be. We should all be able to actively choose what we do with whatever it is. I love that. So, I got one final question.

Patrilie ([53:21](#)):

Okay. I'm ready. All right.

Tiana ([53:25](#)):

Good. How are you living your best fat life?

Patrilie ([53:32](#)):

How am I living my best life? I am living it with lots of self-compassion. I'm living it with the realization that unfortunately, while I want to live my best fat life, the world is not necessarily equipped yet to handle all of that, but, I think it's important to share it and really hold on to the moments that the world does affirm you. So for me, it looks like food and body shame run deep in my family. Like my eating disorder, is not a personal disorder. It's a family disorder. Just because it was so ingrained, I feel so affirmed by being embraced by the matriarchs in my family who are proud of the work that I'm doing. And say that they wish the things were different for them, right, but they hold hope for the future. That really affirms me because the matriarchs in my family, my grandmothers, my like my BS, my feminine women, cousins and family members knowing that the work that I'm doing to heal around our family trauma and our generational trauma and doing this ancestral healing is reaching them like it makes this all worth it. So knowing that helps me live my best, big fat life.

Tiana ([55:47](#)):

I love it. So delicious. God, truly thank you so much for coming and speaking with me today and having this deep conversation and just going there. I love it.

Patrilie ([56:01](#)):

Always. Thank you for curating the space that allows me to be vulnerable and shares the vulnerability. I know there aren't too many spaces out there for folks like us. So the fact that we can hold the space and curate the space and share this space together means a lot.

Tiana ([56:19](#)):

I love it. Oh, well, thanks for being here. You have the best day.

Patrilie ([56:26](#)):

Thank you.