

[Theme Music: upbeat smooth jazz bassline.]

Katie Axelson: Welcome to Have Hope; Will Travel, I'm your host Katie Axelson. Hey, before I introduce my next guest to you, I need you to know that I have called Xfinity about the internet situation at my house. I do not know why this is suddenly a problem, but it is a problem, and we're working on it. So I apologize that the internet quality on this episode is less than ideal. It makes the audio a little bit choppy. I want to remind you first of all, it gets better as the episode goes on, so the introduction is rough. But it gets better. And then the other thing I wanted to remind you of is every episode is transcribed. You don't get to hear Oly's beautiful, peaceful voice in that way, but if the choppy internet is just too much for you to handle, transcript is a great option for you as well. Like I said: we are working on it, I apologize profusely. Please blame all of the internet on me, absolutely none of it on Oly. It is my fault. My house's problem. We're working on it. Alright, I think that's all I needed to say. Oh no there was one more thing I needed to say. The tornado siren goes off at my house, about minute forty-three or so. I don't know if you can hear it in the audio, but I just want you to be aware, if you happen to hear a tornado siren: it's probably in the podcast. Don't need you freaking out. All right. that's all I got I will bring on Oly.

[Transitional music interlude plays, an off-beat electric riff.]

Katie Axelson: Welcome to Have Hope; Will Travel, I'm your host Katie Axelson. And today I'm here with a new friend, Oly. Oly is a certified life coach, she's a certified personal organization coach, she is a Black woman originally from Kenya, then she moved to Ohio, now she's in southern California. She is also queer. So we have got no shortage of things to talk about. So Oly, welcome to the show.

Oly: Hi! Thank you so much for having me.

Katie: Absolutely. I'm excited to get to learn from you, to hear your story, get to know you a little bit more. This is going to be fun.

Oly: Yeah I'm really excited to be here.

Katie: Good! Well, let's start off: I just gave off the high-level introduction of who you are. Let's have you take a few minutes and share in your own words a little bit about who you are and what your journey has looked like.

Oly: So I was born in a coastal town in Kenya next to the Indian Ocean. I am the second of five children to my parents, David and Margaret. Raised middle class. Went to private schools - that's considered middle class in Kenya. Graduated. My parents decided that I needed to get an education outside of the country for some reason. Applied to universities in Australia, England, and the US. I got accepted into a bunch of universities in the US and my parents decided that they would have preferred me to study here because I had family in Ohio.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: So I ended up going to Ohio State University. I started out as an architecture major, then I switched to Interior Fabrics, worked in banking while in college. Completed my degree. Was in a

long-term relationship that ended. I'd always wanted to move away from Ohio because of the winters.

Katie: Yes!

Oly: They're pretty intense for someone who grew up in the tropics, yes.

Katie: For sure.

Oly: And then I was deciding between New York and California. California won so I moved here a few years ago, and I've been trying to find my way home, I guess, you'd say. So that's my story.

Katie: Home meaning like, back to Kenya? Or home meaning like, your place in the world?

Oly: I didn't know what home was for a long time. You might define it as a physical place, or a person. It was always an external definition of home. But in the last, maybe four or five years, I've found that home is in me, within me. I'm home.

Katie: That's really cool.

Oly: It's something that I struggled with because I was always attaching things on the outside as my home and then when I'd lose them I'd feel very lost. But now that I've discovered that, I have everything that I need within me. So that it's not - it doesn't matter whether I lose a relationship, or I lose my apartment, or move to a different state. I can always return to me, my home.

Katie: Wow, that's really profound.

Oly: Thank you. It took a lot of suffering to get to where I am and how I feel about myself now.

Katie: So let's talk about yourself. How do you identify?

Oly: I identify as a queer Black person of color. That's essentially my definition, that I'd use if anybody asked. Obviously that can be broken down, but that's how I like to be identified as. BPOC.

Katie: BPOC. I've never heard them combined like that, that's a cool thing to hear, thank you.

Oly: There's also another combination I use sometimes, it's QBOC: queer Black person of color, as well. That works too.

Katie: Maybe this is a weird question: what makes it important to you to have both Black and person of color in your identity that way?

Oly: I think because I feel like I'm not just Black. I'm Black on the outside but within my physiology there's a lot of different races from my ancestors. I think that's why I include "person of color."

Katie: Okay, cool. Thank you for educating me.

Oly: Oh my pleasure. Thanks for asking!

Katie: Yeah. So let's talk about your experience in Kenya, and then you moved to the United States. I've lived abroad before so I can only imagine what a culture shock that was and transition it was. So can you share a little bit about what that journey looked like?

Oly: Oh my gosh. I grew up very conservative. Quite spoiled, in terms of taking care of myself and I didn't know that until I went to college. A different country, in a different continent.

Katie: Yeah.

Oly: One of the first things that I noticed when I moved to Ohio was food. The food was so completely different from what I was used to having every single day. My mom was our cook and so she made all of our meals. At home we rarely ate out, so when I moved to college and my roommates were talking about eating out every single day I did not understand that.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: So food was one. Second, a big one was race and accent - I guess accent. Luckily my roommates were very friendly and open and curious, and would ask me questions, but when I would not go to class – and Ohio State is a huge university, classes are like one hundred to one hundred and fifty people in it – and I was always the minority. A lot of times I was the only person of color in my class. And so I would get a lot of looks, a lot of stares, which makes it very uncomfortable when you're new. And then on top of that, well participating in class I'd get a lot of questions about repeating what I just said -

Katie: Oh interesting

Oly: - Because of my accent. So it was a lot of overwhelm in how people received me. When I moved here.

Katie: Sure. This may be another weird question but just my own lack of knowledge: do you consider English your first language or did you speak other languages as well?

Oly: Okay, there's no weird question - I like when people are curious. I don't think your questions have been weird at all. And to answer your question, yes I would consider English my first language because in Kenya, we have two national languages, English and Swahili. We have to learn both from kindergarten. And so I - in our household we spoke English all the time. All my friends speak in English. All the education is in English. All the businesses are done in English. Swahili is more of a community language, and then I have another language I have to learn which is my parents ethnic group, which is Luo. But that's the one I don't speak very well, the least well.

Katie: Thank you for telling me about that, I didn't know. And so it's fun to learn. I'm just not making an assumption. And you mentioned that people were asking you to repeat things. I don't hear an accent in your voice, a significant one, maybe it's because I'm from the Midwest and you maybe speak more of a Midwestern accent. Has your voice changed since then?

Oly: Absolutely. In fact, when I originally moved to Ohio, everyone thought I had a more of a European accent. And that's because we were occupied by the English before we got our independence and so our education was based on England's education system, and most of my

formative teachers were all English. And that's where my accent that came from, so it's actually become quite americanized now.

Katie: It sounds much more americanized, I can hear the English influence a little bit, but not very often.

Oly: It's interesting that you mention that. When I was taking my English classes in college that I needed, my professor would always make notations that my grammar was very English, not very American. And I don't know if they were criticizing, and so I worked really hard to change it to be more American when I don't think that's what they were trying to say. They were just making a comment.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: Yeah.

Katie: Yeah. I guess that's just part of being in the minority and trying to fit in, right? Unfortunately losing part of yourself.

Oly: Exactly.

Katie: So let's talk about the differences in the challenges you face or maybe still face being a queer Black person of color in the United States versus in Kenya.

Oly: In Kenya, I wasn't out. Yeah, only my family knew. And because it's illegal -

Katie: oh wow

Oly: - To be queer or gay in Kenya, punishable by death. I was not allowed to come out. I was not allowed to come out. Yes, I was not allowed to come out to any of my other family, extended family or friends or. So I came out when I came to the United States, to people here, my college mates, my housemates, my co-workers and stuff, so I personally didn't experience any challenges being queer because I wasn't queer in Kenya.

Katie: Right.

Oly: So I was passing as straight. So everything was okay in that way. But here, when I came out, which wasn't a bad experience for me, everyone was very open and welcoming and accepting of me, luckily for me. I'm very thankful for that. It's more society that I struggle with, and systems in the US. Even within the queer umbrella, there's sort of a social hierarchy. There's white gays, or queers. And then there's Asian and then Latinx and then Black. And then on the other end of that spectrum is the fact that I identify as female, and generally in American societies, white - everyone else Black. And within Black, female identifying people are last. So I have both queer and female identifying Black person. And so I tend to feel quite invisible. Yeah I don't feel seen. I see that a lot of other people see other people in themselves, there's a lot of representation especially if you are a queer and white, queer and Latinx, queer and Asian, but queer and Black and female identifying, is hard to find. So I think that's been my struggle. It's, people are surprised, they don't - they feel uncomfortable trying to get to know me. Which is fine for me, but mostly it's the systems and society that doesn't seem to care so much about people who identify like me.

Katie: Yeah. Let's talk about that. Do you have an example of a system that's just not built for someone like you?

Oly: Probably the medical field. I've had health issues, and when I go to see a specialist for something, and in the intake form, they'll ask you, "How do you prefer your pronoun? What race? How do you identify?" The people I meet in the medical field, whether it's from the doctor or the nurse, always forget all those things. I understand it's human, we can't remember everybody. But they always mess up my pronouns, they assume – always – that I'm in a hetero relationship and so when I'm asked about my partner I have to correct them. And that's mostly how I've experienced the system when it comes to being queer and Black. There are other examples but I can't think of any right now.

Katie: Sure, and that's a great example. And because we didn't address it, what pronoun do you prefer?

Oly: She/them/they.

Katie: Okay. You said she/them/they?

Oly: She's okay. I'm okay with she because I get tired of repeating that uhh, they/them. A lot of people just make assumptions because sometimes I dress quite androgynous or then there are times I'm quite girly or feminine presenting, so people just feel comfortable. Like I said I completely understand it, I grew up around that. To assume someone's dressing as representing their gender. But she is fine. They/them. Thanks for asking.

Katie: But you prefer they/them. I want to make sure that I understand correctly.

Oly: Absolutely, yes..

Katie: Perfect, then that's what we'll use. So how - you say you don't feel seen. How can I, as a white straight Christian woman, do my part to make sure that you feel seen?

Oly: Two things I can think of. And they're connected I think. One is compassionate curiosity which I feel is what gently asking, with the intent of wanting to know, coming from a place of wanting to understand. We don't - I don't mind answering any question anybody has about my hair, or my skin. I'll gladly answer any question if it comes from a place of love.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: So that'll be my first. And the second is actions. It's easy to say that you see a queer person and you're trying to support them, but if you're not showing that in actions, I can't tell. So it would be nice if in your workspace you notice that there's lack of diversity and you speak up about that. When you go to church, why don't we have other ethnicities at church? How do we reach out to these people? Is there a protest going on? How do I support them? How do I show up for them, in action? So those would be my two ways that I feel anybody would support, a minority or a Black person a color.

Katie: Yeah those are great, and I was glad that you give some examples of like, actions that are supportive. Because I think it's hard to know where to start and what's actually supportive

versus what just feels supportive to me versus what looks more performative versus all of that. So thank you for giving some examples.

Oly: Of course, my pleasure. Thanks for asking that's a really good question. I wish more people asked that in day to day. I know that people are afraid, "Am I offending this person? Is this going to be uncomfortable for them?" But that's where we need to push through that because if we don't do that, how do we learn what's comfortable and not comfortable for someone to ask?

Katie: Yeah. That's one of the things I love about, I mean, even hosting this show right? Is getting to have conversations like this, but then also in the hopes that listeners will have conversations like this with people in their real lives. And recognize like, "I don't always get it right," but maybe we can come up with some questions or some conversation starters for listeners to have the conversations in their real life, to have conversations, to take action, and to know at least what at least is supportive for you, and then that gets them started on finding what would be supportive to the people in their world.

Oly: Yes absolutely. That's - I was listening to some of your previous episodes and I really like that about this, your podcast. So I'm glad that you're going forward with being uncomfortable and saying that "That's okay, it's how I learn." So thank you for that.

Katie: Thank you, and thank you for listening. I appreciate that. It's always fun when a guest is like, "Yeah, I've heard your show," it means a lot to me.

Oly: Of course!

Katie: So since we're talking about the listeners, what suggestions would you have if they want to start a conversation with somebody in their world who identifies differently than they do? You have any tips?

Oly: Two ways. One, I would suggest virtually or social media, you can DM someone. Ask them how they're doing. If there's an issue going on that's maybe local or national, just inbox "How can I support you?" And that also applies in real life, I think. If you have a coworker who's Black or a person of color, just check in on them. "How are you? How are you feeling? What can I do? How can I support you? How can I help you? How can I show up for you?" I think that's where it all starts. It's us reaching out to our neighbors, literally and virtually and just asking, "Hey I'm here. What can I do?"

Katie: Yeah that's so good. Do you have advice on how to be open to elevating other voices or other genders?

Oly: I think we just need to recognize that there's always been louder voices. There's always been voices that are always louder than others, and so allowing that to be something that informs how you deal with people who don't have voices helps. If you see a post, somebody who has a small business and they're Black, share that. Share it in your stories. In real life, go to stores that support people of color. Black people. Black owned businesses. Again it all comes down to like what you do, your actions. That's the only way that we know you're supporting us. Those are the only examples I can think of.

Katie: Yeah. Those are great examples.

Oly: Thank you.

Katie: So you moved to the United States about seventeen, eighteen for college. What advice would you give yourself if you were at that point in the transition again?

Oly: You'll be fine. [Katie laughs.]

Katie: That's good!

Oly: Don't worry about it. We all live forward, learn backwards. It's going to be okay. I think I just want to reassure them that there's a light at the end of the tunnel, you'll find support. You'll find friends. You'll find work. You'll have great experiences. Don't stress.

Katie: Yeah. That's good. Was becoming a life coach always the end goal for you?

Oly: No! Actually I just recently discovered that it was something I wanted to pursue. I worked in banking, which is very... structured and rigid. I've done an interior design showroom, which is essentially what I went to school for. Fabrics Department, I worked for a small business owner doing real estate. I worked for a law office. I've had quite an eclectic work experience. My resume is very eclectic, I hear that all the time when I interview. But after the pandemic, or during the pandemic, I had to really sit with myself and ask myself "What do I want to do that supports my values, and my interests, and my unique abilities?" I had to really dig deep about that because I've never done that in my entire life. I've always just, find a job, something that pays the bills, save some money, get married, have kids. I was conditioned to pursue what other people thought would be success for me. And so the pandemic, giving me a lot of time to reflect, [Oly laughs.] I realized I've never liked a single job I ever had.

Katie: Oh wow.

Oly: And none of them have ever reached my values, in order to please parents, society.

Katie: Sure

Oly: So I really had to reflect internally: what do I value? What do I care about? What do I want to do about that? And I decided that I want to find a way to serve people. And then next was like, "How do I do that with my abilities? What do I have in the past, or in my past experiences that I can use to serve people?" And listening to all the feedback I've ever had with my friends and my family, I thought that I could be a counselor because everyone says I'm a good listener, I'm patient, blah blah blah. But I thought about counseling, and comparing it with life coaching, and I realized that life coaching was more of where I wanted to take my interests, because it's way more positive. I don't know if people know the difference between therapy, counseling, and life coaching.

Katie: Tel us!

Oly: So therapy is more intellectual, more your brain, what happened to it. I call it mental injury, not mental illnesses. Dealing with mental injuries and trying to heal those.

Katie: Yeah. I like that, I'm going to borrow that!

Oly: Sure! Of course. It's for everybody, it's not really mine, I borrowed it too! [Katie and Oly laugh.]

Katie: Sorry to cut you off.

Oly: No, no, fine you're fine. So mental injury and trying to heal that. And it involves a lot of going to that pain point, since it's supposed to be a painful experience and then eventually you get to the end. Counseling is around the same thing too, it's a lot of establishing things that hurt you and working towards getting to a place where they don't hurt as much. Life coaching on the other hand is more goal-oriented. Where do I want to go? It's not so much about looking back at what caused the pain, it's like "I want to go on vacation. I want to go to France at the end of this year and I struggle with saving. I need someone to help me save money."

Katie: Sure.

Oly: Or it could be, "I'm feeling lost in my career. How do I go about trying to find where I want to go?" So coaching is way more fun, it's - I sit with clients and we discuss their interests. What excites them, what they look forward to, what they love to do. And then we find a way to get them to use those strengths and interests and values to find or accomplish the goal that they're trying to get to. So I find that it's a way more fun, light, joyful experience and so that's what I decided to study. And I'm so glad I did it, because it's - everyone I told about when I announced to my friends and my family that I was pursuing this, and I was going to train and pay all this money and take classes and they were like, "You should have been doing this way before! You were meant for this, this is exactly what you were meant to do! I'm so glad you have finally found what your calling is, essentially." So that's what led me to life coaching. As far as professional organizing, seriously as far as I can remember some of my favorite things were purging, getting rid of things decluttering. I love wrapping gifts. Just wrapping in general. And so when I was doing my life coaching classes, and part of the classes is also you trained as a client, as a potential client, to find what your strengths and interests and abilities are. And one of the questions that was very key for me was, "What do you remember doing in your past that made you not think about eating or using the bathroom for hours and hours." And it was decluttering. I could literally do that all day, everyday for the rest of my life and I'd be very happy. I'd feel completely fulfilled. I know it sounds quite boring to somebody else. And then the other thing they asked us is, "Of all the jobs you've ever had, what is one role - not role - one duty that you had that really excited you that you looked forward to go to work even though you hated your job. And when I worked for an interior design showroom in downtown Los Angeles, I was made to manage their sample and fabrics library. Honestly, if they could take me back right now and pay me minimum wage, I would happily do that job all day. Going in there, organizing, categorizing, getting rid of lines that are not available anymore, incorporating new lines from the designers... that was like, my happy place. And so that's, long story short, that's how I've come to where I am today where I've started my business, I'm getting ready to be certified in professional organizing, and I'm looking forward to all the client that the universe is going to send me, because I know they're going to be good for me and they're going to help me grow. So yeah.

Katie: That's awesome.



Oly: Yeah, you can tell - I light up when I start talking about organizing and life coaching.

Katie: Yes, those are definitely passion points for you. Do you have any fun life or organization hacks that you're willing to share?

Oly: Oh yeah! This is random but it's more of a tip about your mattress. You should change your mattress every five years. Get a new one. Why? Because first of all it doubles in weight, and the reason why it doubles in weight is all of your sweat, all the dirt from your body, and all the dust mites in there.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: So always change your mattress every five years if you can afford it obviously.

Katie: Of course, of course. I'm actually in the market for a new mattress so ironic that you brought that up

Oly: Ohh, are you? [Oly laughs.] And then I think you have to create a habit of clearing things and making sure they go to their homes. That's my number one tip. It's easier to clean a small mess than it is to clean a big mess.

Katie: True.

Oly: So trying to have daily or weekly habits where every day at the end of the day, before you leave your work office, make sure that everything goes back to their home. Everything has to have a home. So clear your desk space. Clear your floors. And then that way every time you wake up in the morning and you're getting ready to start work, it's clean. And your mind is clean because we - people don't realize how much we carry in our brains with the things that we have around us. We are always carrying them mentally, so they weigh down on you. So if you could just clear that, already you're saving money, you're saving time, and you're increasing your productivity. So win all.

Katie: Brilliant. When I had a desk job, I would actually intentionally clean my desk on Friday afternoon. Make sure all the papers got put away, it got dusted, so that when I came in on Monday morning I had a beautiful space to start with. I think I tried to do it everyday and that just didn't become realistic, but on Fridays I spent the last hour of my day cleaning up for Monday morning. And that includes like your download folder, digitals, like do your downloads folder, that kind of stuff.

Oly: Absolutely I'm so glad you do that. And I'm so glad you say that because everyone is different. I have the cleanest desk probably you'll ever - it doesn't matter what I'm working with, my desk is just generally clean but I'm naturally like that. My partner is the opposite of that. They dump everything on their desk for some reason, I don't know why. But we've gotten to a good place where at the end of the day, when they're trying to decide, "Okay, end of work. I'm going to go ahead and start my evening routine, I'm going to relax, I'm going to decompress. Let me just at least clear everything and put it in their home." It might not be neat, but it'll be in their home. So yeah.

Katie: That's great, that's so great. What do you wish everyone knew?

Oly: That everyone is worthy. That's the big one, that's the one that I keep. Because of the classes that I've taken, it's so easy to recognize it in other people now, and I recognize it in my past. Honestly, a lot of our suffering would be greatly reduced if we thought that we were worthy. You are worthy. The listeners are worthy. I am worthy. Every single human being, all seven, eight billion of us, are worthy. And that's, that's my... every time I pray, that's my wish. It's like an impossible wish, because that's something that you have to discover on your own, it's something you want to find on your own. But my biggest wish is always that people find their worthiness in themselves.

Katie: Yeah, that's good. So we have talked about a lot of diverse topics today. What have I not asked you that you want to talk about?

Oly: But you can maybe ask how I feel about religion or what I believe in.

Katie: Sure. How do you feel about religion?

Oly: Oh I love all religions. Actually, I grew up Seventh-day Adventist, my mother is a Seventh-day Adventist. My dad is atheist growing up, so there was a bit of a conflict about how do we raise our kids. Mom won. Mom won, so we went to church every week.

Katie: Sure.

Oly: And then I sort of be-, I want to say "disillusioned" by Christianity, but I found it too constricting for me as a queer person. It didn't feel like I was accepted, and so I strayed away. And I was like, "I'm not interested in organized religion," but now I'm sort of, how do you say? Accepting of all religions.

Katie: Okay.

Oly: I have Muslim friends, I have Buddhist friends, most of my family is Christian. But I practice more of a personalized version of Christianity and spirituality. I don't know if that would make sense to someone, but I believe that there's a higher power. And I believe that the higher power is always supporting me. The higher power always wants the best for me. And that it is my responsibility to find that within myself. That I can be a caring, and loving, and capable, empathetic, compassionate, patient person. That's what I have to do. And if I do that with myself, it automatically extends to the rest of the human beings that I meet. So that's my religion, I guess.

Katie: Yeah, yeah. Starting with yourself and then having compassion and everything for yourself, and then it's easier to have it for other people as well.

Oly: Yeah, because I think I remember, I used to think that I loved my neighbors. But looking back, it was just a lot of people-pleasing. It wasn't coming from an honest place of love because I didn't even really know what love was. How can you love someone if you don't even know what that is? And so yeah, looking back, I realize a lot of it was just conditioning, acting like what we're supposed to act because, "Oh that's how Christians are supposed to act." But that wasn't coming from a place of truth within me, and once I discovered love for myself and compassion, and accepted myself as I am, it's so easy now to love other people. Love my housemates who

are quite annoying sometimes [Katie laughs.] and my family. So yeah that's, I think that's what I discovered about starting from within.

Katie: Was that a hard journey, to start within?

Oly: Yeah. Because once I went to therapy for a few years all of my behaviors were survival. I was in constant chronic survival mode since I was a child, based on my childhood. And so, I didn't - I never really had time to actually care about me. I was trying to stop something frightening from happening, I was operating from fear. Everything was coming from fear. And so I never really got time to actually take care of myself, so I was practicing a lot of self-abandonment, I guess you'd say. So once I started to realize like, no I matter. I am worthy. I need to take care of myself. And the more I took care of myself, the less fearful I was of life and people and situations. And so it was quite painful, it was a painful. Discovering who I was came through pain, which is essentially one of life lessons. You go through pain, to go through a very deep depression, to have some anxiety, that led me to seek help the proper way - before I was using other ways of self-soothing, numbing. So yeah it was quite the journey but I am so grateful, I'll eternally be grateful for that journey. Funny now, I would not change a single thing about it.

Katie: Wow. That's powerful.

Oly: Yeah, I would not change any of the pain I experienced, any of the suffering I experienced. Because I am so, so, so content and so, so happy with who I am for the first time in my life ever! Like I truly, truly am friends with my mind and my body and I'm not fighting them or trying to control them. I'm accepting. And if it wasn't for that journey I wouldn't be here.

Katie: Yeah. Wow. I am glad that you've gone through that journey because I can tell just in how you speak about yourself and of your story that you have done the hard work, you present yourself with confidence, you do truly love yourself, and see the beauty in the people around you because you know it in yourself first. So thank you for going through that and being willing to share about it with us.

Oly: Oh no, thank you for giving me the opportunity to share that with other people! I hope your listeners, someone, takes if anything, they take away that they're okay. They're enough, just the way they are. And that will always be my message, even with my clients hopefully in the future, is: you're okay. You're perfect just the way you are.

Katie: Absolutely. Do you have like, a website or Facebook or Instagram or something you want to connect with people on?

Oly: Yay, thanks for asking. Yes, everything is at @OrganizeWithOly. You can find me on Instagram, I have a Facebook page, and I have my website. @OrganizeWithOly.com.

Katie: Perfect, we will link to all of those in the show notes as well.

Oly: Please reach out to me! I'd love to chat. If that's all you want, or if you need help decluttering, or talking about some goals you want to achieve, I'd love that. So yeah, thank you for sharing those in the notes and asking.

Katie: Definitely. So I've got one final question - oh first of all I don't know if anyone else can hear this, the tornado siren is going off here because they test it at this time every week. I'm totally fine, totally safe. I just heard it go off, and I hope that it's not showing up in the audio but if people are hearing it it's fine. It's just the test, it's just a test. [Katie laughs.]

Oly: Okay!

Katie: One final question for you: if you could be any inanimate object what would you be and why?

Oly: Does it matter the size of the object?

Katie: Not at all!

Oly: I don't know if these still exist, but I'd like to be a lighthouse.

Katie: Ohhhh. They do still exist.

Oly: Oh okay good. I'd like to be a lighthouse. One main reason is because of their proximity to the sea. And I love the sea. Love, love, love, love, love, love the ocean. So being near it I think would always humble me and bring me a sense of calm. And then they're literally – I guess – light. So those, that's, that's the reason why I think a lighthouse.

Katie: Yeah, and it's the protector too, right? It's showing people, "This is dangerous, be careful." And being that warning too.

Oly: Exactly.

Katie: I grew up near a lighthouse so you can see the light over the trees at night when it's going off. It is peaceful and calming and beautiful, and also recognizing that I'm on the land side. On the other side, like it's warning you of danger. So just the two contrasts of the land side versus the seaside is - I could talk about that all day.

Oly: Ahh, woah! I'd love to hear more about that.

Katie: Yeah absolutely. Well Oly, thank you so much for coming on the show and sharing your story. This has been so helpful for me. It has been great to get to hear your perspective, to learn from you, and to be both challenged and encouraged by some of the things you said and some of the things that I need to do differently in my life, so thank you.

[Transitional music interlude plays, an off-beat electric riff.]

Katie: As always, big thanks for listening. Again, I apologize for the audio situation. We are working on it, I have got a game plan, it's going to get better. I'm crossing my fingers here, praying over it, it's going to get better, because it's a problem now, I will acknowledge it, admit it, we're working on it. I loved getting to talk to Oly, and I hope that you listened to her voice instead of reading the transcript, because she's so peaceful, so beautiful. I learned so much from her. I want to encourage you to take what you've learned in this conversation into your everyday world. Use it to start some conversations with people in your world. Maybe ask the question, "What feels supportive to you?" Because sometimes what I think is supportive is not

always what somebody else thinks is supportive. And I want to make sure I'm supporting them in a way that's actually helpful instead of a way that is just whitewashed, for lack of a better way to describe it. My friend, I am so glad that you are here. I would love it if you would hit subscribe so you could always be here with us, we're here about every two weeks, every other Monday or so. If you wouldn't mind also leaving a review, so people like Oly know that their stories are safe here. It's how they know that they can come on the show and share their perspective, that we're going to listen, and we're going to learn, and we're going to do life a little bit differently based on what we learned. Be blessed my friend, I will see you again soon.

[Theme Music: upbeat smooth jazz bassline.]