

Paula: Hello, and welcome to the Cosmic Business Salon, where we are talking about how you can build your ethical and equitable, spiritually aligned and financially successful business so that you can bankroll the change you wanna see in the world. I'm Paula Crossfield, your host, Ayurvedic Astrologer and business coach helping spirit-led entrepreneurs leverage their cosmic blueprint to make more money and impact and I'm here today with Dr. Giavanni Washington, who is a Hay House Author and creator of the Black Goddess Oracle Deck. The Black Goddess Deck is the only Oracle deck that features photos of black women embodying the goddesses from Africa. Dr. G comes from a long line of educators, moonshine makers and medicine women who took away the pain even when the rupture left them with only whatever was in the pantry. She is a diviner, an intuitive healer with a knack for recognizing the best version of you. She fervently believes you can reach the next level and stands at the threshold gently supporting your migration from one plane to the next. When she's not talking with the ancestors, she's out hiking with her husband's son and pup Pumpkin. Welcome, Giavanni. It's so nice to have you here.

Giavanni: Thank you so much. I love it. That pumpkin gets a shoutout. That's lovely.

Paula: I know I'm like, should I keep my dog in, in my bio for future reference? I love it.

Giavanni: A little humanizing.

Paula: So you and I talk a lot about you know, business and one of the things that really made me wanna bring you on was to talk about aligning with something bigger than our business. As you know, it's not just about commerce, it's about like a bigger purpose, or it's about a bigger you know, something connecting to the divine. So maybe do you wanna just talk, talk a little bit about that first, and I know you, you had a quibble with the word alignment. Maybe you wanna start with that.

Giavanni: Yeah. It's a recent, I'm a word nerd and I love to look up the etymology and the origin of words and when I looked it up alignment, there were two things interesting. One is that it at some point came from the copulation of dogs and wolves, which I found really interesting, not pertinent to this conversation, just an odd thing but the second thing was that it literally means an a line. It's to line things up and I think that spirit and ancestors don't work in a line. I think a lot of my work is actually based in circle and you know, the powerful geometry of the circle and, and in spirals, right. I think the work that we do with ancestral with ancestors is very it, it looks like a spiral. It feels like a spiral. We sometimes come in around to the same topic or the same obstacle or the same whatever the same lesson, but we have more information as we move up the spiral, for example.

Giavanni: And I mean, if you, if you forced me to give you a definition that sounds mean. I know you wouldn't force me, but if you, if you really, if you really pushed me, if you really wanted me to give you definition, I would say that alignment is pursuing your divine mandate without obstruction, like in an unfettered manner and I think that that is what divination or ancestor work can help you do. It can help you one, identify what your purpose, your divine mandate is, and then two work put you in the place where you can move toward it in an unfettered way without, without obstruction. I think that's really that's really what's, that's I think what alignment can mean.

Paula: And how does that look when you combine that with actually making a living, you know, like you're, you're running a business and you're trying to stay aligned.

Giavanni: I think I'm actually in the middle of what I'm calling an ancestral vortex where I think it's three weeks ago it started, and I won't detail like every single point. There's been about 12 things that have

happened in these last three weeks that have pushed me toward this latest thing that I'm offering, but it started with a request of my ancestors to, you know, I'm doing this work. I created the Black Goddess deck because as a protest to black police violence against unarmed black people, I really want black, black people, black men, black boys, black women, black non-binary people, black trans people to be safe in the world and black bodied souls to be safe in the world and it doesn't always make like a linear sense with making money, but I know they keep giving me the charge and they keep they keep laying out in front of me what, what the next step is and there's no resistance, like from the outside when these things happen, right. It doesn't necessarily always equate to a one-to-one money exchange, but the money always comes, right and so three weeks ago I said, hey, what's next? I don't know what's going on. I know that I'm in this work with you and that I'm working with the black body and the black goddesses and, but I also have these earthly obligations, you know, like a mortgage and club soccer, and, you know, coaching and whatever, all these food and water and shelter, all of these things and through a series of events which involve dreams, which involve me, like a quote hitting me it was like, it just came out of the earphones and onto my, it just started beating me up. The quote was so profound a sentence that a coach said to me, a couple of dreams that I had working the dream with my dream group and reading of some numbers that showed up in the dream and then my, literally my great-great-grandmother, my mother texted me a picture of my great-great-grandmother who we've never spoken about and I've never seen texted me a picture of her and with, on the back of the picture it said that she was born in West Africa and was stolen as a child and brought over on one of the last slave ships and disembarked their mobile Alabama, which is, I don't know if you're familiar with the Clotilda, but this is the last slave ship they founded. There's a Netflix on there's a documentary on Netflix called Descendant, which is about the ship and the Africa town that came out of it in Alabama afterwards. It's likely that my great-great-grandmother was on, if not that ship, one very quote. It was, you know, anyway, so to start with this quote that I found with Sony Renee Taylor that says that black bodied women and fems have been taught by colonialism to martyr themselves to f to become valuable.

Giavanni: They, we find our value in becoming invaluable and I just was like, oh my God and then two weeks later to receive really out of the blue a picture of my great-great-grandmother and my big genealogical question has always, like, I wanna know the ships that my people came over on and to have that literally just drop into my phone one morning but when I'm in this thing, and there's this other thing happening, and this also happened during the week that Tyree Nichols video came out and you know, that we really live in this society, that it really gets off on watching violence against black bodies and has for hundreds and hundreds of years and so the next offering is, I don't even know what I'm calling it, but it's an exploration of the black body, or it's an explanation. It's an exploration of the stereotypes and the vilification that has been levied for oppression, right, in the name of oppression, but four hundreds of years. Like we're studying the history of it, we're going to look at how, as black people, how we carry that or how we, how that the wound of the stereotype is in on and through our bodies and then as non-black allies, how are, how is your body interacting with those stereotypes that are being levied on other people's bodies and then we're gonna try to rewrite those narratives, try to create new narratives about the black body because it's not safe in this world and while the message I kept getting was, well, who's gonna pay for this, who's gonna, well, that's what I was asking. Who's gonna pay for this, who's gonna pay for this and they just kept saying to me, shut up. It's not your business. It's not your business. It's not your business and I was like, okay and when I tell you in the last three days, like, the money has just come out, I'm just like where is it coming from and it's wild to me and it's not even just with, it's not even just sales from this particular program, but other monies have shown up and it's when you know, look back in my past and when I've manifested money, it's like, sometimes it's, it's the, it's the manifestation of something that I put into place a long time ago and sometimes it's just like new pathways that I had no idea were being set up because the ancestors are always working on our behalf.

Paula: Right.

Giavanni: Always you know, and I think that it's really easy to forget that, right. I know I forget it and I have to be reminded of it and so that's what I think alignment is. It's like I'm, I guess I'm listening, I try to avoid the word obedient, but I'm being obedient to what, you know, what they're telling me to do and even though it's continent a program I haven't done before. I'm completely qualified to I haven't put it together in this way, but I've definitely been in parts of I mean, my degree is in culture and performance, right, like it's, I have a dance based degree. Like, it's about the body, right, yeah. So I guess being reminded one that when they give me the gift, they also give me everything I need to bring it to fruition. That was a very long answer.

Paula: That's so powerful though. I, I just want people to sit with that, you know, I think there's a lot of talk about like ancestral healing and there's so many ways that that looks, and maybe you can talk a little bit about that but you just gave us such a beautiful picture of how, you know, to receive that healing in a more intuitive way and you know, that it's a gift. It's a full and you know, beautiful gift

Giavanni: Well, I mean, I'm, I'm clear your earlier question was like, you know, it's not just about money. It's socially driven, right, like, this is I mean, to answer the question you haven't quite asked yet, but like, what is ancestral healing. It's healing of the ruptures that can be created in a number of ways. The ones that I typically deal with have been created by colonialism and the separation that colonial create colonialism created particularly for black people and people of African descent and the diaspora but really many Americans also suffer from this wound, we suffer from the refusal to acknowledge that this country was built on blooded land and you know, of Africans and of indigenous folks from this from this country and our continued refusal to acknowledge it, right. It's like we con we continue to see that it's happening. We continue to have evidence that it's happening, evidence is being uncovered, and we just, we just keep on trucking like nothing has ever happened and that's what was happening in these dreams, like these big tragedies were happening and I was the only one who was aware of it, right and I was like, trying to raise the alarm, and no one, they would just be like, oh, do we're getting our breakfast, we're moving on about our life and I was like, this is the problem with the country. The structures are falling, the stories are collapsing, and no one cares. We just keep moving on forward and so there's, it's a really if I believe if you are dutiful or at least dutiful is a big word, a big sort of responsibility late in word but if you were aware and conscientious and like, you know, on a daily or weekly basis, I believe that the messages are all around and it's just a matter of tuning into them and then putting them together and I think it also really helps to have a community with whom you can sort of decode the messages you know, and everyone's community will look different of course, but for me, it's a community full of dreamers and diviners you know, for you it might be a community of astrologer that makes sense to me for other people is gonna be other things, but to have your community that can also hold this with you and elders who can also.

Paula: I have so many questions, just like, bubbling up right now. Let's do it and like, so I was wondering when you were talking like, how much is ancestor work , like how much has that differed from intuition? Because you, it sounded like you were using your intuition?

Giavanni: That's a really good question. I mean, when I get a message to take my umbrella even on a sunny day and then I don't take it and then it rains, I don't think that's necessarily ancestral. I think that's intuition. I think maybe the ancestral messages come in some people say they come in threes, but I think there's like they come and they constellate, right, they create a story or a container that you can be in,

whereas the umbrella one because that actually happens to me all the time. I'm like, oh, it's not gonna rain and then it rains. That's, I feel like that's the, for me intuition is it feels a certain way in my body as does the ancestral work, our ancestor messages, but they feel different and there's an urgency a lot of times and urgency is not the word, like an inconsistency like, no, no, no, no, no. I need to listen to this. It's not like, go faster, but it's a, hey, hey, hey, okay, you didn't get the first dream here. Let me give you another dream. Okay, that's still not clear. I'm gonna have the elder call you and tell you these things about your dream and I'm like, okay, fine. I'm listening, right, got it and so I think that there's a way that ancestral messages constellate versus sort of like the hairs on the back of your neck or, which could also be ancestral, but I think that's the major difference. It's, it's like a one-off versus a mini, a mini angled mini. There's a piece of my divination kit called the sophistication piece, and it's like a, a Merkaba but it's got more than, it's got like 24 sides or something and it's, you know, it indicates complexity and so I feel like there's a complexity and also often like a poetry in the messages.

Paula: So then my next question was, why should we prioritize connecting with the ancestors Understanding like, what, I just want you to like underline that. Why is that so important?

Giavanni: Well, again, I think this depends on the frame. Like, what are you, is it important for your life, is it important for business and is it important for relationships and my answer to all of those is yes, it's because it impacts the way that you show up. Like, I think when there are ancestral wounds or ruptured that need tending you tend to show up in a fractured way, right, you tend to go through your life in a fracture or to feel fractured or feel like you don't have all your pieces, or to feel like you don't belong or to feel like you're spinning or you keep replaying the same stories in your life. Or, you know, you'll hear stories about your grandmother or whomever you know, two generations back and you're doing the same things they were doing, right, there's these cycles that come to play, there's self-limiting thoughts and behaviors that also come into play and so all of that is gonna impact the way you show up for your work the way you show up for your relationships, the way you show up as you're parenting, the way you show up as a pet parent you know, the way you show up for, if you're holding, if you're a space holder, if you're a service provider, if you're a healer, if you're a coach and you're fractured, that is 1000% going to impact the way that you're able to hold space for other people, right and it's like you'll be able to do it but you, you won't be as effective as you could be and I think it's going to be particularly draining on you, right. It's like whatever you're putting into yourself to feed yourself is just dripping right out that fracture.

Paula: So say some of those things again, like where you would notice if something sure was up, you know, maybe an ancestral issue that could be dealt with.

Giavanni: Some of the feelings that people say is like, well, I'm at a crossroads, but they feel stuck. It's like, it's not just, oh, there's a choice in front of me. It's like, oh, there's a choice and I cannot make a decision they feel plagued by self-limiting doubts, our thoughts and behaviors. They're stuck in cycles. Some people have told me they feel like they're operating in a fog and this is usually like when they've tried everything else, right, like, therapy is not working more, exercise isn't working better, sleep isn't working. Often, I often things I think they, another thing people say to me is that they feel like they're breaking apart, right and they're having to squirrel away pieces of themselves in order to fit in a box or show up in certain places, right?

Paula: Yeah and so tell me also because we've talked about this before, I think this will be helpful for people, it's to talk about it's not just your ancestors that you were literally born from, right, so can you

Giavanni: Explain that? Sure, sure. I like to work with the conception that there are at least three kinds of ancestors. I think there's definitely more, but at least three kinds where you've got your blood ancestors, who are the ones who are related to you know, genetically you have your milk ancestors, who are those who nurtured you in some way and then you have the spirit ancestors who are so milk line, bloodline spirit line and the spirit ancestors are those who may or may not have been human at some point but they walk with you and they offer you guidance and protection. So this could be spirits or beings who just, they show up in your dreams or they show up in your journeys, or they show up in your waking visions. It could also be like the wind, it could be the elements water. It could be certain animals, fire, you know, it's people, it's, I'm sorry, entities or beings that from whom you get guidance and direction who are not related to you and didn't necessarily take care of you in a way. So milk line, bloodline, milk line, spirit line.

Paula: Okay, so this kind of like brings us back to why it's, it's absolutely. I mean, aside from the social reasons, right why we should all be aware of what's going on to the black body right now and how, you know, horrific it is, and do whatever we can to change that. But doing this work with you is also working with our greater ancestral body, so to speak.

Giavanni: A hundred percent absolutely and here's the thing, the ancestral work is not different than making the world safer black bodies especially for Americans, right, because if you're not a black body, then you are a person who's benefiting from the structures that are harming black bodies. It's just really simple, right, if you're not an indigenous body, then you are a person who is benefiting from the harm that has been levied against indigenous bodies and therefore we all need to work together. We need to do our internal work so that we can change the world. It's just, it's sometimes it's so clear, yeah, you know, it's like, it's undeniable.

Paula: Yes. So tell me, so somebody hearing this, they're thinking, okay, I wanna do this work. I feel committed, where do I even begin like, they have the intention, but then what, what's the next step if somebody wants to get in contact with these different types of ancestors?

Giavanni: My first or my universal reminder is that we all have ancestors and that we all have ancestral traditions. I do feel like in the world of ancestor work, there's like an ownership that only we and whoever that we is, but only we can do ancestor work and you don't, you know, you don't deserve to do ancestor work, or you can only do it through me and it's not true, right. Like, you have ancestors, you have direct communication with them. If you don't know them, you can find out about them, you can have like proxy ancestors, you know, its ancestors seen and unseen known and unknown and so the first thing I would recommend to people is research your own lines, your own lineages, right and tap into traditions from your lineages and I would say they should be traditions in a format that makes sense to you. So if you're a dancer, maybe you're gonna go look at dance traditions from your lineage, and we have multiple lineages, so you can just do one at a time, right. Like, don't I do email at once. Do one at a time. If you are a painter, maybe you're gonna go look at visual art traditions from your, your lineage. If you're a writer, maybe you're gonna go look at, you know, 300 year old poetry from your tradition and I think it's also important to remember that I mean ancestry can go on forever, and it's just as valid to work with your grandmother or your great-grandmother as it is to work with your nine times great-grandmother right. They all have information and knowledge to you, and they're, I mean, they're all your two times great-grandmother is holding what your nine times great-grandmother is holding or at least part of it, right and so that would be, that's where I would say start like, look, look at traditions in a format that makes sense to you. So for me as a percussionist, a West African drummer as a dancer, I, that's where I look first and I think food is also a great one to start with, just as a way to invite them back

into your life, right as a beginning, as an opening of the door. Like, make the foods that your grandparents are your great-grandparents or whoever back in your lineage make and like with intention, you know, call them in, ask them to ask them about maybe this is a little more than just a be a beginner thing, but ask them about how, like how much salt, how much time, how much sage, how long you know, ask them to help you. If you don't have like the actual recipe, ask them to guide your hand and they will, you know, and it's not necessarily about the taste or the outcome or the presentation as much as it is about the action of being in communication with them.

Paula: I love that. So what is the intermediate. Obviously there's some, you know, there's things that could happen in our lineage or that we perpetrated in our lineage, you know, so there's stuff that's confronting and absolutely. Are you saying like, just even tapping into their energies will start to bring that stuff forward to work on or we have to be conscious in, in our way of like, you know, meeting that?

Giavanni: That's a really good question,

Paula: Sorry if I tossed one at you.

Giavanni: No, you not. I'm not, I'm not stumped. I think it's a lit, I think it's legitimately a good question and I think about my work and my work with my own personal lineage and almost everything I've done has been certainly for my family, but on behalf of those who lost their lives in the middle passage. It's like, that's what mean, like, it's a proxy like sure I'm working with I happen to have three brothers who have passed, like I'm working with them and their energies and they were, two of them were buried without headstone and so we went through the whole process of finding them, naming them and then getting them a headstone and it wasn't just for them or just for my mother, or just for me. It was on behalf of all the people who were lost in the middle passage. Either they jumped or they died, or they thrown through, were thrown over whatever happened, or who made it to be shores and were buried without ceremony and I didn't, that wasn't my goal when I started. That's my point. My goal was just to find my brothers right? Like, I knew that I had brothers, I knew that they were somewhere, I just didn't know where they were and 40 years had gone by and I had no idea where they were and it was time to find them again, this is another moment of like insistent, they were insistent to come and find them. So I would say you start where you can and then you keep going and they will see this is the interesting thing about ancestors. They move in their own time, in their own speed and so sometimes it feels like it's taking forever and, but then they'll come with a vengeance with, you know, okay, well here's the whole kit and caboodle. You're like, wait, wait, wait, wait, what else on for them and so I just think it's important to remember that you know, it's not a hierarchy. We're in a relationship with them and if right, you open the door and they decide to plague you with dreams, you know, like 87 dreams every night and you're not getting any sleep, you can say to them, Hey, hey, this is, I need one dream a week. You know, our one dream a night, whatever it is like, we can be in relationship and we can walk this and I can maintain my earthly obligations while also healing this rupture in my, in my lineage.

Paula: I love that. Thank you so much. I think this is really valuable for people and you know, just like coming back to where we started, you know, for me, I feel like having an alignment to something greater is my foundation. Yeah. Like, I wouldn't be able to do my business without it because it's my north star, right. It's like the thing that guides me. I make moves in my business based on the astrology, my intuition, the information I'm receiving, you know, and I'm trying to do it in a way that is, you know, in a mirror with that divine energy so that I'm, you know, in good, in integrity you know what I mean, so I feel like it's so important, so maybe you can bring us back around and talk a little bit about how being in connection with that bigger force is that essential, do you feel like that's essential to your business?

Giavanni: Well, 100%. It's essential to my business. I wouldn't be, you know, when I have those moments or when I have had those moments in the trajectory of building this business where I'm like, oh my God, this isn't working. I have to go get a job. Like, it is, it's not just, oh, I'm not, I can't, I failed or I can't make it cause I have to go, you know, get outside work or get a job. It's like, there's nothing interesting, there's nothing that's moving my soul about the employment situations and then if I look at having a different kind of business, you know, if I had, I don't know, one of those drop ship businesses where, and they're like, no shade on the drop shipping, right. Or where I'm selling lip gloss or whatever if I have, for me, if I have no sort of social connection, I mean like social justice connection is what I'm trying to say. If there's no, if I'm not substantively bringing healing to the world, then what's the point, right you know, like that's, for me, for me, it doesn't make any sense. So I mean, I have spent 16 years in school after high school. I have four degrees. Like I'm, I am trained to do a lot of other things none of them are to have an ancestral business, right, none of none of them were for that and I can't even to say I have an ancestral business, even sounds kind of wonky. Like I am following my spiritual mandate, my ancestral mandate. Like it was, it's been read, it's been, it's clear to me. I've been given dreams. I'm like, oh, this is what's happening yeah you know, and I feel, I feel like it's the same thing about sort of denying your feelings like you can deny your feelings if you want, but they're gonna come back and kick you in the right and that's how I feel about this. Like, I can deny this very, what I consider to be a very clear clarion on ancestral call, or it's just gonna come back and kick you by my you know, like, like no, this is what I'm supposed to be doing and everything is unfolding in the way that it's supposed to be unfolding and when I am again, conscientious enough to I track my dreams, the, but what I don't track is how do I say this I don't, I don't always pay attention to our track, like the ancestral happenings with the income yeah, right and, but when I do actually start to say, okay, this happened and then this happened, or this happened and then this happened like, I just looked back at the last four months of last year and I was like, oh, oh, right. I'm a powerful manifestor and it's because I'm doing this work and when I went to try to do this other work, everything all fell apart, yeah. Like it became a problem. Like there was, I, you know, the word is unfettered, right, but it became fettered. It was fettered everywhere. Yeah. There were problems everywhere. I had to knock down things like just go back and do the thing you're supposed to be doing yeah, right and I think we live in a world a society you know, western culture that does not privilege destiny or fate or you know it privileges production, speed and money and yes, we need money yes, it's the currency of, you know, American adulthood or this world adulthood and also I don't think they're anathema. I think you can do them at the same time. I think you can pursue your divine mandate and also create structures that generate income.

Paula: Yeah. I feel like when you're pursuing that divine mandate that everything else kind of falls into place.

Giavanni: Cause they're gonna take care of you yeah, right. They're gonna take care of you and I just, I, you have to, it's something honestly that I have to say to myself all the time. It's like, oh, that's right. They're not only do they gimme this charge, they're gonna also take care of my earthly needs.

Paula: Yeah.

Giavanni: And I need to get the out the way like just get outta the way, right.

Paula: It's very powerful when you get outta the way. Totally well, is there anything else that feels like you wanna share it right now before we wrap up?

Giavanni: No, I mean, no, no. But yes, I feel like you asked, you know, about the intermediate ancestral step. I think that there becomes a time, there comes a time when it's useful to bring in someone else to help guide you on this journey. To hold space for you to maybe help you interpret some of the messages you're getting or use different methods to bring you other messages and so, and community, that's, those are the two things I'd say. Like take the first step, get some focused help, and make sure you have a community.

Paula: I love that. Perfect. Well, I guess we'll end there.

Giavanni: Fantastic.

Paula: So for all of you listening, if you love this talk, please do share it by sharing the cosmic business salon.com link and make sure you sign up for the upgrade, which allows you to keep lifetime access to these talks, as well as get a free integration call with me. We're gonna talk about what we learned in the summit and you can also ask me questions, 100% percent of the profits from that upgrade go to Soul Fire Farm, which supports indigenous and black farmers. So what are you waiting for you can sign up on this page, also join us in the cosmic businesses on Facebook group where we're gonna have live discussions each day and there'll be a chance to win prizes. So thank you Giovanni, for being here.

Giavanni: Thank you so much for having me, Paula. Love it.