

# Finding Our Way Podcast

hosted by Prentis Hemphill  
with guest  
**Alexis Pauline Gumbs**  
**Transcript**



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## Legend:

[actions]

\*mhhmm\* other speaker talking at the same time.

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[intro music]

Prentis: [Intro music] I'm going to be honest. I don't really know how to talk about what it is that Alexis Pauline Gumbs does. It's writing, yes, but it's also swimming; it's also portal; it's also remembering; it's also ceremony. This conversation is as much a celebration of our ancestors as it is an invitation into an even deeper experience of right now. "Where could we ever be other than in the unfolding of love?" she asks. "What other time could it be then always?" We are in and entering a portal. Things are changing quickly and some completely. In her work and in her way of being, Alexis illuminates the black feminist's path forward, which is the path of our ultimate liberation. Alexis is a queer black troublemaker, a black feminist love evangelist, and the author most recently of *Dub: Finding Ceremony* but also of *Spill* and *M Archive*. I highly recommend that you get all of them, work with them and let them work you. Excited to share this conversation with you all today.

Prentis: Alexis, I'm so excited you're here today. I'm so excited you said yes to being on this podcast. It feels like an incredible gift to have you be here today. So thank you.

Alexis: It's a gift to be here. Yeah. This is exactly exactly what I need today.

Prentis: Thank you for that. I always say that, um, the impetus for creating this podcast was to open up a space, to have visionary conversations about where we're going, how we're going to get there. And so every person that we've invited to be on this podcast to us feels like a person who holds a really critical piece or sheds an important light on what that journey is. And you are absolutely one of those people.

Alexis: Well, I'm honored, honored.

Prentis: There's a way with your work that you are able to not only kind of point the way to the future, but write through and across time. There's a way that it feels like time folds in and also it expands through your work and through your writing. So, you know, when we were thinking about who could be on here to, to help point us in a direction, I was like, you know, I don't even know which direction Alexis is going to point us in, but I know it's somewhere that we need to go. \*laughs\* My first question to you today is the question I ask everybody here on this podcast, which is how would you describe where we are? How would you locate us collectively? Where are we?

Alexis: I love that. I love that. And I just want to say it feels really powerful to be trusted as a compass. Like what you just said about one of, one of the compasses that you're gathering for this Finding our Way process. I think that that's amazing. And I see a compass, I see a sundial. I am hoping to be this landing place of ancestral light so it can guide us. That is what I'm hoping for. That is what I'm actually in a daily practice training for the possibility of that. So yeah, compass.

Prentis: You absolutely are. You really are.

Alexis: I never actually thought of it that way, but I love that. I really love that. And yeah, so where are we is a good thing to, to be thinking about if, if I'm taking on a compass role and it is interesting compass, sundial, time and space, I was thinking about how Grace Lee Boggs asks: What time is it on the clock of a world? And then I was also realizing just how queer my relationship to time is because I am just wanting to be synchronized with everyone, with whales that are extinct right now with stars that are light years away. Maybe I can see them and they'd actually aren't even there anymore. You know, like there's a, there's a wanting to be

together. And I think that is actually my core question is how can we be together? Which actually the answers to that question in my life, the really profound sense of feeling, accompanied the realizing through my creative practice and spiritual practice, which are the same practice that I can be with all life is really what, what actually proves to me beyond my training and linear time that time really is not what capitalism says it is. So I like the word that you used unfolding because I do feel like where we are in this moment, but also every moment: we're in the possibility of love; we're in the unfolding of love. We have access to that. Am I always aware that I'm in the unfolding of love? No, sometimes I think I'm like in traffic or in a boring meeting, \*laughs\* you know, like something that sometimes that's where I think I am.

Alexis: But when you ask where we are collectively, I do know that's where we are collectively. And I think it looks really interesting at this particular moment where, where we are physically, where we can be, how we can and cannot be together in some ways that we may have been used to in the past is shifting. I think it's actually offering everyone some rigor around the idea of where are we, because a simple answer: I'm at home, I'm at work, I'm at school. Those don't even mean the things that people meant when they said them a few months ago. \*agreement\* I think that where we are is learning how to love as usual, but we're learning in such a profound way right now. And, you know, learning what it is to be at home if we are able to have stable, stable, home. Learning what's at stake in being at home with the rising rate of evictions that we're seeing in this time. I think that actually all of this is really, I know it's asking this of me and I feel that it's asking us, what is it to actually be home on this planet? What is it really? Because whatever we thought it was, we are really being called to learn it differently and to let go of the definitions and assumptions that we had. So yeah, I think that's where we are. I mean, I know that we're in the unfolding of love. And for me in this moment, I'm grateful, I'm grateful for that. I'm grateful for the fact that while everything else is just showing its impermanence, you know, flaunting its impermanence. \*agreement\* I would say love is constant. And so if I can know how to be in love, then that's the, homefulness, that's the most profound homefulness that we can have. And I want that for us. And it in fact is not, love is not homefulness unless it's all of us.

Prentis: What you just shared is so settling and profound and orienting. Those questions of: How do we be with one another? How can we be together? That we're in the unfolding of love; that we're learning how to

be at home on earth. It's it's so settling in in many ways. And there's a, it feels like I feel this in your work a lot, that there's not a kind of, uh, joining with the urgency necessarily of any particular moment, but there's also, it feels like this profound commitment to kind of showing what it means to be alive and loving in the midst of catastrophe or apocalypse. It feels like both of those things, in my opinion are happening inside of your work. I, I feel settled and clear and also connected to the generations before and after through your work. And I, I wonder if that's part of part of how you hold it.

Alexis: Absolutely. Absolutely. I mean, I think that that's what my work is. I think that it is, it is space to be together. I think of it, I understand it to be ceremony and I'm always asking, what is the ceremony? What is, I know that it's possible for us to be together. Just what's the ceremony for it? And I may not have found the ceremony yet, but it exists. You know, it can be found, it can be invented or remembered, which I think is sometimes the same thing. Like we think inventing it, but we we're remembering it. \*agreement\* And so, yes, I love the way you described it. I do, I do hold it in that way. I think that that is important. I mean, what you said about not necessarily coming from the perspective of urgency is true because it's important to me that I don't relate to my life as something that is scarce. Very important to me because this is capitalism is exactly that. You could say that's like one tagline for capitalism. \*agreement\* Capitalism: because your life, because your life is scarce. \*laughter\* You know like, that's like, that's, um, that's pretty much what it teaches. And I know that my life is not scarce because I know that my life is not even only mine, you know, like it is, it is such, it is an energy that has flown through for so many generations in so many forms and will flow through in so many forms that I can't even imagine. Though, you know, I try. You see me trying to imagine what forms might exist. \*laughter\*

Alexis: Um, and that's important. That's very important. And so while I do think it's very important to show up while I think it is very important for me to listen to, um, yeah, to what, what is, what can I possibly learn in this moment? And what is someone trying to teach me with their, with whatever they're doing, however they're showing up? I think it's very important for me to be present to that and tune in. And there's so much abundance and love that's possible when I'm doing that. And I'm, and I'm remembering that this is, this is part of something so infinite that we could never even reach all the sides of it. And this is something that has the potential for, for healing beyond what we could even describe.

Alexis: That's why I'm always asking Fannie Lou Hamer, what I should do, you know, \*laughter\* like when it comes, when it comes to especially electoral politics, which seem so linear and so scarce because it's either this one or this one, you know, all of this. I'm like, you know what, Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker, they were like, we're going to create some, a whole other thing. Like we can actually, we can actually create from our vision and just, they might not have language'd it like this, but just like make the people jealous for the world \*mhm\* they deserve, through just showing a piece of it. I feel like that's what they did with the Freedom Democratic Party. And I'm so inspired by that.

Alexis: And so, I mean, okay, it doesn't take much for me to talk about Fannie Lou Hamer clearly, because I'm thinking about her all the time. I love her so much. And she teaches me not to think of my life as scarce. And so she looked, Fannie Lou Hamer, not everybody thinks about Fannie Lou Hamer as an archival researcher, but she was, and she looked at the ledgers in Charleston that said, that listed the people as if they were property coming into this land. She, she looked, she looked at the handwriting, she looked at the lists, she looked at the charts. And so when you think (I have goosebumps right now), when you think about what she was really saying and singing to the people at the mass meetings, when she was saying, what's at stake for us to get our names on the voting rolls? \*agreement\* It was not about electoral politics as it existed, then for sure, and even as it exists now. It was not about, because the thing about, you know, I know that there's, there's so much about voting and not voting.

Alexis: And the problem that I have with the idea of the vote is that it tries to, it tries to say, I'm an individual when I know I'm not an individual. \*oooh\* I know I'm a multitude. But Fannie Lou Hamer knew that! You know, she was like, my name isn't going on here because I feel like I, as an individual person need to buy into this particular thing, um, called electoral politics. No, she was saying we can relearn the significance of our names. \*mhm\* She was saying, we can be together with those people who we weren't even supposed to know who they were because what those whole just huge churches full of people who risked their lives and risked getting fired to go vote were doing was not about reifying the idea of voting. It was being able to have the knowing in their bodies, right? You might say the somatic knowledge \*mhm\* that what was said about them in the context of racial capitalism could not limit their action.

Alexis: That what their name could be, could be a compass. It could be a sundial for the light of all their ancestors. It was not property of so-and-so. It was not employee of so-and-so. You know, it was what it was really for, it was so that like all the spirit that could ever love them could find them. That's, that's what I am studying. Like, I'm trying to be like Fannie Lou Hamer, who...That's time travel! I mean, what I'm doing, you know, I, I feel like it's, it's the best I can do, but like, that's time travel. \*laughter\* I don't know, I don't know, to bring the vibration into your voice and it'll get people to just do exactly what their whole life training and capitalism told them it's not possible for them to do, they'll do it. Come on Prentice. I just, mhm Fannie Lou Hamer forever!

Prentis: Alexis. There are 85, I'm writing notes right now because I have so \*laughter\* many thoughts, questions, poems that are coming out of me right now with what you're saying. It's just, it's giving me chills. It's giving me chills. I had a question here that I was going to ask to you, and I feel like you're in those waters right now. This question of individualism and the ways we do or do \*mhm\* not buy into that and what it teaches us and how it's reinforced in this electoral system and all these different ways in the culture we're seeped in. It so shapes our concept of what freedom is, that I wonder if you have any insight and I feel like you're, you're, you're speaking to it already, but what is freedom if we're not situating ourselves in a kind of individualistic framework around life or humanity? What are the possibilities?

Alexis: Yes, that's the real freedom. That's the real freedom. Ooh. Yes. I feel like Fanny Lou Hamer just really wanted to be with us by the way. Cause I'm now realizing all day, she's been like pointing herself out. But, um, so yeah, that's the real freedom. That's the real freedom I'm thinking about because I'm still thinking about Fannie Lou Hamer. Um, you know, Fannie Lou Hamer was like the youngest child of her parents. And there was a lot of them. I don't want to say the wrong number, but I feel like there was like 12. And therefore her mother, the songs, her mother taught her, which by the way, Bernice Reagan, Dr. Bernice \*agreement\* Reagan has, um, collected for the Smithsonian and you can listen to Fannie Lou Hamer singing the songs that \*agreement\* her mother taught her.

Prentis: Wow. Everybody do that right now/

Alexis: Song that her mother taught her/

Alexis: Please do. Please do. It's called Songs that My Mother Taught Me, Fannie Lou Hamer. And mhm, the songs her mother taught her were

taught to her by her grandmother who that already stretched back to the time of enslavement. And these songs these songs were so radical. Y'all also go listen to it. I mean, they talking about how white people going to go to hell if they, if they don't come around and stop with their oppressive ways. I was like, are you, come on? Okay. So she held that. So there, there is something for me in ancestral connection in particular that shows me the freedom that's available beyond my idea of myself as an individual and beyond my participation in a capitalist democracy, but also capitalism more broadly in a unit called the individual, which was just created for that to function. Not created for wellness to happen. It was not created for \*oooh\*, um, you know, for my family to be happy. It was created so there could be a unit through which we could be extractable. \*oooh\* We could be understood as scarce when we're not, like we are so infinite and we are all the time part of something infinite. And so, yes, so that is the freedom that's available when my life is not scarce because this is the thing. My partner, Sangodare has been, um, you know, nerding out, this is what we do, this is we just nerd out. Um, but about cells, like cells, the cells that our bodies are made of the cells that plants are made of and has been teaching me that a cell cannot protect itself and grow at the same time. \*laughter\*

Alexis: So \*agreement\* we're, we're in this, right? Like all of our cells are actually in this and you teach so much about like how, how can we be safe enough to grow? \*agreement\* Right? And what, what does our, what does our growth look like? Um, what do our boundaries need to be? What I know is that understanding that my life is not this like small thing, you know, it's not this, it's not this however many decades, you know, this form gets to exist. It's not what my life is. What can you do, capitalism? What can you do? If I don't believe that? You know, this is, this is what the black Panthers were saying, right? This is what, this is what it means for Fred Hampton to say, you can kill a revolutionary, but you can't kill a revolution. It's what it meant for Huey Newton to say prison, where's thy victory? \*mhm\* You cannot hold my spirit. You know? And that is, that is a, um, freedom. And this is, I mean, this is what, you hear this across our history, right? You hear Ida B. Wells say it. She's like, they can shoot me; I'm going to fall forward five feet towards justice, however tall she was, right? You can hear Fannie Lou Hamer saying it like, this is not about me trying to protect some scarce thing called one human life unit. \*mhm\* If it was, that's not, there's not freedom in that. There's not freedom in that. Where I see freedom is the expansiveness of what love is teaching us, which is that we are so connected. We cannot be destroyed. We can not. We are being

transformed. That's what's happening. And yeah, for me, for me, that's true freedom.

Prentis: Are y'all listening? Are y'all, \*laughter\* are y'all really listening right now to what sister Dr. Lex is...are you listening to this? Because I am sweating over here. \*laughter\*

Alexis: I mean me too. I got goosebumps. I'm like, you know, it's not just me speaking, right. This is, \*wooh\* this is flowing through.

Prentis: That's right. That's right. Oh, okay. I feel like you, just, in what you shared, you showed us something that I wanted to ask you about, which is how you remember? This remembering. You were talking about creating the, the, the kind of ceremony that is going to ensure life, that life can flourish and be. And I'm like remembering is such, uh, a skill and a part of your practice. And I think about this political moment that we're in and the desire to forget, or the desire for ahistoricism. \*mhm\* The, the impulse to deny, the practice to deny what has happened, what is happening. And your practice of remembering feels, it's not even counter to that, it just feels like it surpasses that those impulses. And so I wanted to talk to you about remembering.

Prentis: And one thing I wanted to say to you is that, you know, my, my prep, I prep for these interviews and my prep for you was I woke up this morning and I sat with my great, great grandmother. And I tried to remember into her existence and into her life and listen to her, connect with her. And it felt like one, I just love to be with her. I feel like the picture I have of her, which is mostly what I have of her teaches me so much. She says so much to me through that image about how to be with joy, how to commit to life and aliveness. How to take myself seriously, not in a rigid kind of way, but really be attentive to and inhabiting this life. I feel like I see all of that. And so it felt like the way to prepare for my time with you. \*mhm\* And I also feel like related to that, I feel like your remembering is you remember those that this system has tried to erase: black women. \*mhm\* And, and your, your commitment to black feminist texts, teachings. It's so incredible and profound. So I wonder if you could talk about the act of remembering, but also who and how you remember who you do, who you're in relationship with.

Alexis: Oh, that's so beautiful. Um, I'm actually really moved and I'm actually grateful that you said that twice. Like you said that earlier to me, cause I'm just really getting it, that someone would prepare to speak with me by sitting with their own great grandmother. That is, that is everything. I feel so honored by that. I feel, um, I feel that that honors honors my

ancestors, that that is that, that was your impulse and that that's what you did. And so that means it also just puts our ancestors in communion. \*agreement\* You know, like how you get, you get to me through her? What an honor for all of us, for this, for this whole multitude. I just really had to reflect that back. That is a really big deal to me. And so I would say I'm grateful for her. I'm grateful for her face in the way that she looks at you through the image. I'm grateful for her, whatever it is, you know, whatever it is that she had to do to put the energy forward that you would hold that you would be, that you could share it. Oh my goodness. I'm just, I'm just overwhelmed with gratitude is what's happening right now. Um, so much so that I'm like, I don't even remember the rest of the question, but, um, I do feel it has to do with remembering of who, who do we remember? Yes.

Alexis: This phrase that we've been using in the house ceremony is how we remember to remember. And I think that that really speaks to your question of a dominant culture of forgetting, which is very predictable because why would we have the impulse to forget? Well, because if I'm an individual, I can't hold it all. \*agreement\* I can't hold all this history. \*agreement\* If I'm an individual it's too, it's too much, I can't hold it, but I'm not an individual. \*laughter\* So, um, therefore the capacity is not about what can I individually grasp onto how much pain can I individually transubstantiate into something else? That's, that's not the question. The question is, what do I need to remember? What do I need to remember that will give me access to the love that is there waiting and whatever it is that I feel like I can't hold when I think I'm an individual?

Alexis: And so I love that your, your ceremony is very similar to my daily ceremonial practices because I do, I do sit with the images of the ancestors who I'm blessed to have access to images of. I do sit with the names of those ancestors, who I feel blessed that their names have been held in our lineage. And then I also reach to those whose names I don't know, and may never know and whose images I may never see. And I ask myself that that's what my meditative practice is. I ask myself, what ceremony do we need to have? \*mhm\* And we have it. We just have it, you know, I mean, and it has looked all kinds of ways. Today? Today, it was like this wide path actually very wide path. And it was like a bunch of us. And I don't even know all these ancestors, but we were there and it was like, we were dancing in this wide expansive path. And that was the ceremony. That was what we needed to do. And I think that that was what I needed to know about like the way, you know, the

way forward in this moment is actually wider than I thought. It's more expansive. And there is joy and like ancestral support and rejoicing in that. And it is, it is all there for us to remember.

Alexis: And so what, what that means is that whatever it is that I feel like I need, if I can remember it, if I believe that it can be remembered. Remember is a, is a particular type of word. That means it's part of my body. What happens when I remember is that whatever else I'm remembering, what I'm really remembering is that nothing is separate from me. That's what I'm remembering, because it's a, can't be remembered if it's not a member, right. It's \*laughter\* part, it's a part of, it's part of, um, this. It's part of this and I can reach it.

Alexis: And black feminism for me is such a space. Like I see black feminists have consistently done this. They have looked at and looked for their great-grandmother's, whether that's their literary foremothers, \*agreement\* whether that's in their, in their lineage, whether that's in terms of their legacy of activism, that has been the practice. And they've done it with a commitment to the through-line of that energy, such that, such that it includes me, such that it embraced me when I had to understand myself as not an individual. You know, like I was like, \*mhm\* how, what, the expansiveness that I've been talking about this whole time. That's what I see in black feminism, because it was like, when I looked, who did I see practicing? Who did I see saying: oh, we're going back. We're going back to look at Alice Dunbar Nelson, who was this? Who was there? Like we're going back to look at that. We're keeping it in print. And this is something. And Barbara Smith says this specifically, Barbara and Beverly Smith said this in 1978. They were like, this has to be in print because this is how we know to make it available to those coming in the future who are going to need it. Which means it's what? It's an act of love to me. \*mhm\* It's an act of love to us. \*agreement\* They did that because they were loving us before we even got here!

Prentis: Come on.

Alexis: That is, that's why I'm a black feminist, because that that's the practice. You do, you do not, you do not live the life these folks lived make the decisions that they made prioritize what they prioritize, if you don't have a cosmic belief that the energy that you are stewarding has a significance and a loving purpose in a future that you, you may not even get to see it and touch it. Now, you know, praise be, I've gotten to thank Barbara Smith. You know, I've got, I've gotten to meet her and tell her that, you know, she, she got to see that she was like: Oh, so these ideas

that I was saying like, this is your religion? I was like, yes, that's my religion. The things that you said. Um.

Alexis: So that's why, you know, that's why black feminism. And it's also, so it's this time, but it's also this, yes, beyond this. You know, like it's in the Combahee River Collective statement, when they say for black women to be free, all people would have to be free because our freedom requires the destruction of all systems of oppression. What does that, that's a version of what I was just saying. \*mhm\* We're not individuals, we're black feminists. \*mhm\* Our very lives are a call for the freedom of all people. That's what they're saying. And so, yeah, I, it, there's just such, there's infinite possibility in that for me. There's no, I mean, this is why, you know, I got this, I'm writing about black feminist lessons from marine mammals. \*laughter\* I'm like, these things are not, these things were never separate.

Alexis: \*laughter\* You know, for me, there is nothing that is not loved on, contributed to, blessed, \*mhm\* nurtured by this practice that they called black feminism. So I call it black feminism really to say, thank you. And, and as a shout out and as a, uh, a beam, you know, like a beam back, cause they asked for a future in which more would be possible and we are living it. I just, yeah, I, um, I could, I could forget that. And maybe I do, you know, in moments, in moments of stress and fear and anxiety, I forget that I'm connected to all that, but it's like, it can't hold, you know, that fear and scarcity can't hold. And when I think about them just sitting there in 1978. When I think about Fannie Lou Hamer saying what she said, doing what she did, experiencing what she experienced, holding what she held in her body. There's no interpretation of that does not ultimately get to love. \*mhm\* And there's really nothing. There's really nothing that can lie to me, tell me the lie of fear when I actually remember that. So that's why I practice remembering.

Alexis: \*Laughter\* I just love your face.

Prentis: I've been doing my best to, to organize, uh, myself into a podcast host and \*laughter\* I'm feeling all the things right now. It is all filling me up right now. So I'm going to let that be. And I guess from there, and again, I feel like there's just, it's, there's such a richness in what you're sharing and there's, it's rearranging things for me inside, in my own body. It's also identifying things that last bit that you shared about Fannie Lou Hamer and that that being loved, how she held what she held in her body. \*mhm\* It's actually revealing to me, I'm like oh, there's love, guides

my work so much. I feel so in that lineage, I feel so grateful and I feel \*agreement\* so, I feel so much like that is the work I'm trying to, we're trying to love us into the future, into the past, love us \*agreement\* in all those directions. It's just such a beautiful, beautiful offering.

Prentis: It also, this is not exactly a question, but it just revealed to me some, sometimes I experience your work and I I've been following your work for a long time. I think since uh Mobile Homecoming project. And I'm often like, how does Alexis offer so much all the time? It just feels like things are pouring out of you all the time. And now I \*mhm\* feel this force of remembering history-connection and I'm like, oh, that seems, that's how. That's how. \*laughter\* The channels open. I get it. My question, maybe this is starting to be one of the last ones here. I feel like you shared so much in this vein, but if you could share what it is you think we, we should be practicing right now. If we are in the unfolding of love. If we are answering the question of how to be together. What, what does it look like on the day to day? What could we be doing, practicing, exploring reading perhaps? But what could we be doing?

Alexis: Yeah. I love that. And I also just want to affirm that you 100% are in that Fannie Lou Hamer lineage. Like you are absolutely channeling love through. You are. You are. That's why I said yes to your podcast. I was like, we finding our way? Yeah! \*Laughter\* I'm going where Prentis is going. You know that, that is yes. That's the that's the yes. So you don't got to thank me for saying yes. I got to thank you for being yes. I just love that.

Alexis: Um, yeah, the practice, I love this question of practice and you teach so much about practice. I mean, I just, I feel really loved by who you are, your rigor of practice, how you generously share the aspects of it that you decide to share with, you know, not just those of us who have even ever met you, but just beyond, you know, beyond. It's so, it's so powerful. And I do think it is exactly, it is exactly connected to Fannie Lou Hamer's practice of freedom.

Alexis: So, what should we practice? Yeah!/

Prentis: \*Mhm\* Okay. We might have to, we might end the podcast on that note. That's too much for me. \*Laughter\*

Prentis: I receive it/

Alexis: So like practice being like Prentis, you know what I'm saying? \*laughter\* Like, I, I feel like the thing, the thing about it is the people listening to this podcast are so wise because they're listening to your podcast. I feel

wise for saying yes to being on the podcast. You know, like it is this, it is to make space for the ceremonies that we need. And for me, what that looks like on a daily basis is sacred time for that. You know, like the time that you said, you said I'm going to sit with my great-grandmother. That is a daily priority. So for me, that's, that's first in the day, because that's where I really learn. And remember that this is what I'm in the practice of, right. I'm in the practice of being beyond space and time. I'm in the practice of being with love. And so whatever that looks like, it looks several ways for me. It looks like the meditations I was talking about where I'm like with my ancestors skipping around in a wide path.

\*Laughter\* Um, it looks, it looks like looking at myself in the eye and, you know, listening to Jamila Woods and just like \*agreement\* really, you know, like looking at my own face and being like, what, what do I need to know? You know, what do I need to know about the energy coming through here today? It looks like writing about the sky and understanding that I'm writing about myself. You know, like what I want to say, what these clouds are, oh, that's also me?

Alexis: So I think that there are infinite ways that people can make space for that, but it's a priority. So I recommend it being the first thing that happens in the day, because it teaches me how to, how to be with the whole rest of the day. You know, it's like what I said about it's so meaningful that your preparation for this was your ancestral practice, because this is my preparation for this too. I want to show up for this conversation as a person who looked herself in the eye, who listened to what her ancestors needed to teach her this day and who let herself be as expansive as the sky. If I can show up as that, then I want to. You know? \*Laughter\* And that's just the practices I've thought of so far, you know, I haven't really thought of all the ones I'm sure I'm going to need for the, for all of life. But I think that we, we can trust, we can trust that. Everybody listening to this can trust that there is, there is a sacred time that they could have. That it's not just, it's not just about showing up for the rest of your day and the other people who you might engage. But it's also about, for me, like if that's all that happened today, like for real. You know, if the sun explodes, like \*laughter\* \*mhm\* after that happens, it was a good day. You know? I was living the life that I decided to live because that's, that's what I prioritize. So practicing priority in the most literal sense. Like 'What is my priority?' actually happens first. That has been crucial for me. Because it really does shape, it really does shape everything else.

Alexis: And it is, this is why listening to this podcast is so wise of people to do, because it's also a practice of surrounding myself with wherever it is that I see, I feel that love energy that I, that I know I need to remember. I'm surrounding myself with it, you know? So I got Sharon Bridgforth's oracle cards with me that I can look at every day. You know, I can listen to the, you know, Freeland's voice. And, you know, like I I'm learning what allows me to tap into that and really understanding that I can just have it right there. You know, like I can just have it accessible to myself first thing in the morning, I could just do that. I can listen to um Sonya Renee Taylor speak on your podcast. I could listen to your conversation with adrienne and understand that what I'm nourishing and nurturing within myself when I do that is paying to what I want to be my whole life. This loving conversation that you, that you had with adrienne, I want, I want that. So I can actually put that vibration in my whole kitchen while I cook my food, then it's in the food, then we eat it. \*Laughter\* You know, like all of that. It's like we have so many tools available to us to practice the very basic, very basic wisdom. And I think it's a queer wisdom of following our desire. \*mhm\* You know, saying, I want this, I want to be with my ancestors every single day. I want it. And it's possible. So yeah, I would, I would say, that's what we need to be practicing. And I think that valuing those practices is, um, is true freedom. Because you do it so you will be free. You do it because you are free.

Prentis: That's right. \*Exhale\* Alexis, thank you. Thank you so much. You, um/

Alexis: Thank you.

Prentis: I hope folks listening can feel that this is a conversation with a channel, a genius. I don't know what else you call yourself, but it was all/

Alexis: Two channels. Two geniuses.

Prentis: \*Laughter\* Thank you. Thank you for sharing/

Alexis: At least!

Prentis: Right, right. Thank you for sharing what you've, what you've cultivated, what you've grown in yourself, what you've learned and what your practice is. It it's, I feel transformed even through this conversation. So I, I can only imagine how this is going to ripple out and transform all of us. Let us mix it in our food. Let us eat it, let it grow. \*agreement\* Let it bloom, blossom. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Alexis, for your work, for your commitment, for your remembering, for your generosity. Thank you.

Prentis: \*Mhm\* Thank you for your wisdom, Prentis. Thank you for saying yes to yourself. So, so grateful to get to be a part of this.

Prentis: Oh boy. Eddie, we got to stop it. Cause I have to go cry now. \*Laughter\*

Prentis: [Outro music] Finding our Way is co-produced and edited by Eddie Hemphill. Co-production and visual design by Devon De Lena. Please make sure to rate, subscribe, and review wherever it is that you listened to this podcast. You can also find us on Instagram at [findingourwaypodcast](#) or email us with questions, suggestions, or feedback, and [findingourway pod@gmail.com](mailto:findingourwaypod@gmail.com). You can also help sustain the podcast by becoming one of our Patreon subscribers. You can find us on Patreon at [Finding our Way Podcast](#). Thank you for listening to Finding our Way.