

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Shohreh Davoodi: You are listening to episode #77 of the Redefining Health & Wellness podcast. Today, three fire signs are converging in conversation so you know it's going to be lit. I am delighted to welcome back Alex Locust, AKA Glamputee, to the show along with his friend, kali diwa. Alex and kali are co-hosting a new podcast that's dropping in 2021 called Fluid Bonding, all about queer connection and intimacy. In this episode, we chatted about the abundance of queerness, why queer timelines look different from straight ones, the privilege of only requiring internal validation, and the importance of healing in community. To access the show notes and a full transcript of this episode, head to shohrehdavoodi.com/77. That's shohrehdavoodi.com/77.

This podcast is brought to you in part by support from listeners like you! While this podcast is completely free to enjoy, the time, energy, and money that I put into crafting each episode is costly. Thankfully, there are multiple ways you can show your support to help the podcast continue to thrive in the months and years to come.

Joining my Patreon community at shohrehdavoodi.com/patreon is the best way to offer ongoing financial support and get extra members-only perks in the process. If you prefer a one-off contribution, you can tip me for my work through the payment links located at the bottom of the show notes for each episode. Lastly, even if you're unable to support the podcast financially, you can always subscribe, rate, review, and share it so that more people can find and benefit from the show.

However you choose to invest in the podcast, thank you for believing in me and tuning in each week.

[Music plays]

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Welcome to the Redefining Health & Wellness podcast. I'm your host and resident rainbow glitter bomb, Shohreh Davoodi. I started this project because I saw how black-and-white messaging about health harms everyone, and I wanted to paint a more honest and vibrant picture. This podcast is a space where we can reimagine health together by confronting limiting misconceptions, delving into aspects of well-being that are often ignored, and prioritizing conversations with marginalized individuals. I encourage you to take what you need and leave behind what you don't. Are you ready for this? Let's fucking go!

Y'all, I have such a special treat for you today. I am bringing back one of your favorites, official friend of the pod, Alex Locust, coming back to Redefining Health & Wellness to shower you with all the gay vibes once again. And Alex has brought with him a lovely friend in the form of kali. Welcome everyone!

kali diwa: Hello, hello, hello.

Alex Locust: So good to be here. Wow. Described as a "special treat" and a "favorite." You're just playing to my Leo ways very early.

Shohreh: I'm here for you! I'm here for you!

kali: [Laughs] Absolutely!

Shohreh: For those who haven't heard your episodes before, Alex, which I will link to in the show notes, maybe you could give a brief reintroduction of yourself. And then kali, since you're new to the show, we want to hear all about you as well.

Alex: Absofruitly! My name is Alex Locust. I use he/him pronouns or anything said respectfully. Out on the streets I go by Glamputee. You know, I'm a

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

disability justice organizer, catalyst, a conduit, you know, a provocateur. I'm trying to think of other—

Shohreh: Icon! [Laughter]

Alex: Icon, you know, I'm trying to earn that status, but yeah, just thinking of ways to describe myself outside of work. I think just really trying to celebrate disability culture in so many new ways that I've seen others do, and I'm trying to kind of forge a new path for myself in that journey as well.

Shohreh: Fabulous, thank you. And kali, who are you?

kali: My name is kali diwa, I use they/them pronouns. I am a post-binary, faggy femme bro [laughter]. That is my official gender identity, don't fuck it up sweeties [laughter]. Yeah, and in the real world I really move through as like a storyteller, that's the main kind of title that I like to akin myself to. I'm also a sex health educator, a heaux at heart. I'm also an improviser of sorts. I improvise everything in my life 'cause you just kind of have to, right? And I'm also trying to become a great listener.

Shohreh: Mmm. Can I say that I want to see "heaux at heart" emblazoned on like a Christmas sweater? [Laughter]

kali: Always, always. It's a good, good moniker [laughter].

Shohreh: Ugh. I love it.

Alex: Ho-ho-ho at heart! [Laughter]

Shohreh: Yes.

kali: She took it.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Shohreh: So delightful. And one of the reasons I wanted to have the two of you on together is because you are in the works to create [audible gasp] your own podcast, which I can't wait to listen to. Can you tell me a little bit more about the podcast and your inspiration to start working together in that way?

kali: Yeah, absolutely.

Alex: kali, I'm going to kick it to you. You came up with the name. I feel like you were the spark for this, so I can't wait to hear our origin story.

kali: [Laughs] The origin story really is that I got fucked real good one day right before work, and then I ran into Alex going to lunch, and I was just on it like, [sings] I feel so good in my body [laughs]. And sometimes when I get into these, like, prolific spaces, just like love to talk and be like, this is what I learned and this is what I'm saying. And then Alex was like, you should have a podcast, and I was like, I actually want one. And then Alex was like, I actually want one! And we were like, ooh, let's talk about shit.

But honestly, at the core of it, our podcast is really about exploring intimacy and vulnerability within queer relationships and connectivity. As a queer person myself, I yearned for connection my entire life and really struggled to be able to gain it. And it was only until I was queer that I really understood what it meant to have community, have connection, and also be really empowered within my sexuality and that power and that magic that comes through it. And it's because I had spaces to be able to talk about it and like lessons and time to learn about it.

So, Alex and I just have such a great rapport and being able to look at things, see through things, and explore them, and I want to be able to do that in a way that feels held, and accessible, and educational for young

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

queer babies to understand, right? And then also, for anyone to really hear what queer narratives sound like because we don't have a lot of queer love story narratives out there. I had a dear friend who is a historian be like, you should write down every single sexual exploration you have. And I was like, that's deeply personal, why would I do that? [Laughter] He was like, because us as queer folx don't have those stories out in the world. So even if it's boring or even if it is run of the mill, just being able to have it visible is important for us.

Shohreh: Damn, that's so true.

Alex: Mmhmm. Yeah. kali knows I will sing their praises every day that I can, and I feel like to that invitation, right, of you should have a podcast, right, and then kind of like, hearing that return serve of like, *you* should have a podcast or we should do a podcast together, I feel like that, what kali you just ended on, is like, archiving, right? Or like creating documentation of our history. Rana and I just had a conversation on my Sippin' Saturdays series about like, preserving cultural and community history, for instance. So how do we leave our mark? I know so much of what I try to do with Glamputee is just creating more representation right, whether it's about me showing my body as like a queer, disabled person of color of Black lineage. Like showing I exist, I'm out here, here's how I want to be seen rather than waiting for mainstream media to create that representation because news flash, it's not happening. If I keep waiting, this pandemic will be over before I see any representation that I relate to and I feel like this pandemic is never ending.

So I feel like it's us kind of taking the driver's... we're at the driver's seat, right? We're trying to show how we want to be represented, what these conversations look like from our identities and our lived experiences. You

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

know, kali and I, I feel like, have such beautiful overlaps and foils, right, where it's like, sure, we both identify as queer, sure we both identify within the BIPOC umbrella, and at the same time, for kali to identify as post-binary, you know, and I'm a cis man. I'm also dealing with disability. And, you know, I think there's just a lot of ways that we fit together and challenge each other in these really healthy ways.

So to have like a, almost from like a social learning theory model, right, of like, rather than us having a podcast where we're like, on this episode we're going to educate you about duh-duh-duh-duh, or like, here's these, like, five points, or we have a lecture or these slides, it's like, let's just be in conversation and show people that this is how you talk about these things. This is how I lead with curiosity. I'm like, kali, I don't know what kink is like for you, but I love to hear that. Rather than kali having to give me lectures, it's like two friends, two community members, two chosen family, just being together. And I think I just don't see that enough.

I hear people feel uncomfortable, I hear people like bathing in stigma or embarrassment or insecurity, and it's like, if we just kind of like let a lot of that melt away, find safe containers or secure containers to explore those things, that we can do so much more growth and exploration. But when we're in that, ooh, I don't wanna say the wrong thing, or I don't sound smart enough or I don't know these quotes, it's like, that's where people shell up, right? And we're trying to kind of like, disrupt that a little bit.

kali: Absolutely. Everything that Alex just said.

Shohreh: Okay, well one, I look forward to my future guest spot on your podcast and being elevated to a friend of the pod on your podcast 'cause obviously that is gonna happen. Throw that Sagittarius energy out there and tell you what is going to happen [laughter].

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Alex: Pre-VIP status.

Shohreh: That's right, that's right. I'm planning it in advance before anybody else can get to it.

kali: A Sag to love.

Shohreh: Mmm yes. That's my Christmas sweater! [Laughter] I also think what both of y'all were talking about gets to this whole idea of, you know some people will say shit like, it's fine if you're gay or it's fine if you're queer, I just don't understand why you make it your whole personality? And like, what you were just talking about is why it's our "whole personality," right? Because it affects every piece of our lives and our lens, and what kind of history we have, and relationships and community that we're able to have, and so like, that's why it's our fucking personality.

Alex: Mmhmm.

kali: Yeah! I was actually just re-reading your bio Shohreh, and I was hearing about how you had like a work personality and then like a home personality?

Shohreh: Yeah, back when I was a lawyer. Yeah.

kali: Yeah, and then how it was like really difficult to have that separation, right? What I really think about is it's capitalism and it's heteropatriarchy that forces us to really have that divide in our bodies. Like you have to show up this specific way, here, and you have to show up this specific way there.

Whereas as a queer person, my grandma once asked, I got a flobotomy license and she was like, "Oh, you can work at the hospital now." And I was like, I'm not gonna work at the hospital. She's like, "Why? It's a good job, you could make money!" And as a person who's not working right

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

now, I was like, I'm just not gonna do that. And she was so flabbergasted as to why I wouldn't just make money. And I really had to explain to her because I was like, there's no separation between me and the work that I do. The work that I do permeates every single thing that I just move through and have to exist in because of the fact that I have to consistently unlearn a system that wasn't made for me. I mean, it wasn't made for any of us unless you really wanted to just be a workhorse, right? [Laughter]

But yeah, the system wasn't made for me, so I spend every single moment of my life trying to unlearn what was taught to me and cultivate a different path for myself.

Alex:

That quote that you offered reminds of flavors of like when I hear people say like, "Oh, I don't see you as disabled," or "Sometimes I forget you have a disability." It's like, it does this two-fold harm where on one hand you're erasing the oppression and the marginalization that I experience.

If you're the kind of person that says, "I forget that you have a disability," you're the same kind of person who's gonna invite me to a venue and not look up the access information, right? Or you're gonna be surprised when I'm like, well I'm not comfortable here because there's nowhere for me to sit or I feel really othered because the only access space is this like tiny booth in the corner, like away from everyone else. And at the same time it also erases the positive experiences that I have with disability where I'm like, this is my cultural pride, this is my community, this is what really matters to me.

And so that dissection is like separating an integral part of yourself out. It's so violent and so painful, and also fully erases how heterosexual culture is rife with like, shoving it in your face, right? [Laughter] It doesn't matter what we're watching or what ads—I'm like, how is this ad about vegetables

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

sexual? Like I don't understand. Do you know what I mean? Or like a Charmin commercial. I'm like, why am I looking at bear butts? I just don't understand.

kali: Yeah, and then it's like bear butts, but it's also like a family of bears where it has to be like a mom bear and a dad bear? But they're Charmin clean so it's okay!

Shohreh: But that's the problem, right? Is that they think that we're shoving our queerness in their faces because queerness is other to them, and they don't see that the "normal" that they live in is like heterosexuality being shoved in everyone else's faces. Like that's the crux of the problem.

Alex: Totally. And I think that's what I'm really drawn to with what kali and I want to do with this podcast is just normalize a queer BIPOC lens for intimacy and connection so that other QTBIPOC can listen to this. And, you know, obviously it's more like a possibility model. kali and I aren't asserting that our experiences are everyone else's.

Unlike what heterosexual people often do, we're just trying to explode and complicate this idea of like how people connect, how people are sexual or how they're intimate, so that everyone can explore what that means in terms of their wellness and really just be that invitation to say like, "Hey, your queerness is making the way that you connect and are intimate with other people better." Like queerness is inherently a step towards liberation in health and wellness. Your racialized experience, your cultural experience adds value to the way that you connect to other bodies, right? Your disability, your fatness, all of these things add, and I think when we view it less of like you're shoving it in our face where it's like, oh, we're talking about your queerness again, it's like, I will take every opportunity to

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

talk about my queerness because it is how I am unburdening myself from these things that harm all of us.

kali: 100%.

Shohreh: Yeah. I love that so much. Do y'all want to reveal the name of the podcast or do you want to keep it under wraps?

kali: We definitely did not say it.

Alex: Oh my god. We're this far in and we forgot. Yes, please help us with our podcast professionalism [laughter].

kali: I definitely thought about that and then I was gonna make a pun and then I was like, mmm, not right now [laughter]. So our podcast name is Fluid Bonding. What I really love about this name is that it really encapsulates queerness to me, I think. It's like, we're trying to figure out how to bond with each other in a very fluid way, right? There's so much fluidity in queerness. There was just that video that came out on TikTok where that really cute, little, Asian queer was like, there's no such thing as gaydar, there's only straightdar. Have y'all seen this?

Shohreh: No, but I need to.

kali: Oh, it's one of my favorite videos, if not my favorite video on the internet. Where this person is really talking about how we assume that we have a gaydar, but it doesn't actually exist. You can't just assume that you know what queerness looks like because queerness is so, I think they say beautiful and mysterious and unknowing that to say that you know exactly what it looks like is to be a mistake or something like that. But I know exactly what straightness looks like because it's been shoved down my throat.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Shohreh: Yeah.

kali: And it is so good. But with Fluid Bonding, it's like the fluidity in being able to understand how to connect with each other, how to create intimacy and vulnerability with each other, and then fluidity and queerness in general, that it looks like so many shapes. And also, it is actually, like, a sexual health term. To be fluid bonded with your partner is to no longer use barriers because you trust your partner so wholeheartedly that exchanging fluids is not a risky behavior to the relationship. So, that's what we called it [laughter].

Alex: That's it.

Shohreh: The end.

Alex: I love it too because we were sending imagery back and forth and like what would, even just like what are inspirational images for, like the podcast, you know, the icon or the photo, right, or if we tried to commission a piece, like what would we send to the artist, how would we communicate what we're looking for.

And I also just loved the fluidity of how we're talking about queerness and fluids in sex. So it's not just about, like, that assumed penetrative, like, there's a penis going into a vagina. You know, it could be any kind of body, right? As long as fluids are being exchanged, even that, right, like kali talked in conversation with me before about sex doesn't have to be penetrative, it doesn't have to be insertive. So just like really celebrating the expansiveness of sex invites or widens the discussion to be inclusive of all bodies without assuming what body parts are present and how they're, you know, the chemistry is happening.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

And I just really like terms that almost create a sense of accountability, you know what I mean? Like that's why I came to Glamputee or getting creative, but I'm finding this out over time, is that Glamputee, like there's an accountability for me. Like I got to show up and show out. If I'm showing up in this space it's because I've adorned myself, it's because I'm communicating this queer, disabled, fabulous, like, the faggotry of that experience.

And I think Fluid Bonding offers us that opportunity to say, like, let's make sure that we're not being really homogenous in the conversations that we're having. Let's make sure that we're challenging ourselves to think about how other bodies experience it that aren't ours, so that way we're not saying, oh, this is a show about queer intimacy, but then all I talk about is sex with men, you know what I mean? I'm trying to think about how I relate to my sexuality and my queerness in being attracted to people who don't identify as cis men, right? Because they haven't had a lot of opportunities to act on that. Or I'm working to find opportunities. Of course, the pandemic is causing a lot of problems with that. But like, engage with bodies who don't identify as cis men. And so if we're doing the same in our podcast title, I think it's a good reminder for us to be accountable for that and that exploration.

kali: Yes.

Shohreh: This reminds me, Alex, of a conversation that you and I were having once about the white, gay men who will post jokes about the gay experience, but it's about one very specific gay experience. [Laughs]

Alex: Oh my god. I included kali on that meltdown, They were very present for me having a reaction to that whole thing. Yeah, if you call, like, a video "Things Only Gay People Will Understand," it's like, are you addressing

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

that gay is like a spectrum of things or are you just showing imagery from like, white, gay, men's porn? You know, like that inherently you're not in an alignment with what you're saying. And so just like, be more specific.

I'm gonna quote The Four Agreements even though I haven't read it 'cause I'm a millennial. That's how it works, right? [laughter]. So like, being impeccable with your word, you know? if you're saying this, like, say what you mean! You know, be really specific. If you want to be like, "Things Only Gay Men Will Understand," that feels more accurate.

It's not like I'm saying your content is bad or that this isn't a joke you can make. It would be very different for me to be like, "Things Only Disabled People Will Understand" and then just talking about amputee jokes. It's furthering this idea that white, gay men are the norm, and I find that really exhausting. So yeah, I appreciate both of you supporting me as I tried to offer any sense of education in the moment and absolutely was not supported in response and definitely mildly attacked, which was like, LOL at the end of the day. But dang. TikTok is a place I have not ventured to for that very reason.

kali:

I think it's also something that's really important in our lives because living in San Francisco, and especially working in the Castro too, even though our main office is downtown, we do still have to go to the Castro to work, and having it pushed in our faces all the time and being people who don't fit into that mold, and then also being in community with so many people who don't fit into that mold, it just feels, again, like white supremacy [laughs] comin' back atcha, doesn't it?

And me now generalizing it, right? But taking this subset group of white, gay men and them being like, well, I've been oppressed and I have this narrative and all gay men will understand it, and then us being like,

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

actually, can you include us? And then be like, why are you so mad? And it's like, because you're not including us!

Shohreh: Right.

kali: Yeah. Like I grew up in San Francisco, and in high school my nickname was like, "Queen of the Gays" because I was still like straight and cis back then. And I really identified with gay men in like a very strong way. And then always had to feel othered because of my female body, "female body" at the time, right?

Like, we would go out. We'd go drinking at the Castro and then people would get drunk and make out in the back of Lyfts, and all of them making out with each other, but I couldn't do it because I had boobs and a vagina. And then I was like, but I'm one of you, you fuckers! [Laughter] Give me some tongue!

And then it's also hard [laughter] because you don't want to negate their queerness, their gayness, or anything of that, but it's also like, this experience also makes me feel really othered and different. So really just knowing that this kind of behavior is perpetuated all the time is really frustrating. Especially 'cause there's so many of us who have a different expression.

Shohreh: Yeah.

Alex: And that's what I love about your work too, Shohreh. You're redefining health and wellness, literally. You know, like, you're inviting us all to move away from a monolithic idea of health and wellness and really centering how people find agency and autonomy in their bodies and their definition of those things. I feel like that's such an important aspect of sexual health. It's like whether you're asexual or a full-blown kinky slut, how do you

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

define what that sexual health is for you, right. And that there's no hierarchy there. It's non-hierarchical. It's that everybody's experience is valid and we should be celebrating, again, that galaxy of ways to connect, and less of like, well, this is the best way or these people are doing it right and you should work to want to get to that space.

Shohreh:

Yeah. Well thank you for saying that about my work. We were talking about before we started recording, we are getting to the point of quite a lot of episodes here. In fact, your episode is going to be episode #77, which is auspicious because seven is my favorite number. So an excellent episode for y'all to be. But yeah, I mean that's a lot of conversations about health, and well-being, and all the different aspects of it, and all these different people who have come in with different lived experiences.

I mean, it has completely opened my mind, even beyond just coming to the podcast with understanding, like, I wanna be having these conversations and they're important. But I've gotten so many perspectives I never even would have thought that I would have gotten at the beginning of this, which is something that y'all can look forward to with your own podcast as well, especially if you bring guests on, is just like, you end up having these conversations and learning things that you would not have otherwise been able to if you didn't have the platform to do it. So for me it's been like a real gift that I'm so grateful for, that at the end of the day, even if I never make a dollar off of my podcast, I've gotten so much wealth from it, outside of any kind of monetary amount because of that.

And I do wanna move to talking about the connection and vulnerability and all these wonderful things we want to talk about, tell me though, when do you think the podcast may be available so that people can look out for it?

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

kali: Ooh!

Shohreh: And if you don't know, that's okay.

Alex: No, this is a good, more invitations for accountability.

kali: I literally, yes.

Alex: Yeah. Aiming for early 2021, you know. We also, to that like anti-capitalism approach, are trying to explore what feels good for us and our plate. You know, thinking about maybe doing, more like a season, you know, get that moment out, give it a try, feel it out, and then explore from there. 'Cause, you know, just like mad props to you for this continuous work that you've done.

Shohreh: It's hard.

Alex: Yeah! Exactly. And I think kali and I both recognize, like, with everything else that we're doing and with the healing that we're embarking on, you know, your girl's in therapy for the first time consistently, ever, and so I—

Shohreh: Love.

Alex: It's very healing, that emotional openness and rawness, so I know for me, taking our time with it and really being thoughtful about when we put it out, let's do it, let's do it right and then kind of give ourselves that ooh, you know?

Shohreh: Mmhmm.

kali: I think Alex and I do a really great job of trying to model what we say. We're trying to be impeccable with our words. We've never [laughs], neither of us read The Four Agreements but just know that's a thing [laughter]. Gay culture! Ahaha, just kidding! Not everyone does that, ha ha!

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

We just talked about that [laughter]. But yes, I would definitely say early 2021.

We are really trying to be kind with ourselves. Everyone knows that 2020 hasn't been a joke. Ascension year, 2020, right? And so, we are in a space of like, at this end of the year, really clearing what needs to be cleared in preparation for our rebirth in the spring for all of us on our personal journeys, right? This year asked a lot of us and so we want to be kind and we also want to be resources, right? We want to be resources to our community. To be a resource to our community we also have to show up for ourselves first. And Alex and I are doing a great job of doing that in our spaces.

Shohreh: Absolutely.

Alex: And I feel like to your question, like, about how the connection, you know, the being in a pandemic, being in a physically distant, the aspiration is the physical distance, right, and just being really thoughtful around who you're connecting with physically. I'm like, being intentional and not saying socially, but physically, just to speak to my experience, like, I am really excited to do this podcast with kali because it feels like a continuation of conversations that we just have, like in our text thread. Gonna give a shout-out to the baby Adrian, right, in our text thread. And phone calls that kali and I have where this has been a really painful experience for me in terms of my relationship to intimacy and connection.

Early on in the pandemic I just had a realization where the trauma and the violence that my body has experienced related to my disability, you hear that phrase where people are like, you don't need outside validation, you need it inside first. And it's like, whoever said that probably had a lot of privilege [laughter]. Right, or probably sees themselves represented very

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

often. And for me, it is so vital and healing to be naked and intimate with a partner, a lover, a date, anybody who we both...that intimacy, that vulnerability is a way of, almost explicitly saying without words, like, I'm attracted to you, your whole you, your whole body. Like all parts of you.

Not despite this or, you know, in spite of that. I wanna be here with you and to feel that kind of affirmation when sometimes I can't find that in myself. Or it's in there, but it's like deep and there's a lot of bullshit to wade through. Like getting to just let that melt and be with someone else who I feel sexy around, who I really enjoy getting to not have to be an organizer mind. I don't have to be this person where people are seeing Glamputee. I really get to be Glamputee in a different way. And recognizing that this is a period of time where I haven't had access to that because of being in a shared home.

I live with three other people. These people are my chosen family. I deeply care about them. And so, we have a threshold that we've agreed upon as a house. Like who we connect with has to also meet these standards. And being in San Francisco and so much shared housing, it's like, even if you find one person who's down, the other three people that they live with also have to be down and pods just explode in numbers so quickly. And so, to have this time to reflect about what intimacy means to me, what sexuality means to me, what connection means to me, what I want to take from this experience moving forward. Not that like I want to go back to normal. What was normal wasn't working. That's how we got here. And so how do I translate this healing that I'm doing now into the way that I connect after this, or when things become safer or less risky to connect in person.

I think kali's just been such a vital sub-source of support and an anchor in that because I have felt very lost. It's been very intense to not have any

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

kind of affection, like sexual or intimate affection for clocking in at like eight/nine months. Like, I'm a very affectionate person. It's been really hard to lose that as a consistent thing in my life where I've worked so hard to access that and feel a sense of agency. And didn't feel that for so long in my life. So to then finally feel like I was like picking up the pace. I was like, yeah, I'm gonna be a slut when I want, and I'm gonna build out that hotation, right?

kali: Yes.

Alex: And the kind of people in my life who really offer me the sexual freedom and liberation that I've been yearning for, for so long, to feel like that was yanked away, it has just been so hard.

kali: Yes. Absolutely that. And I also want to just support Alex's narrative and story, and I want to thank you for saying that I helped you through that. Because when I think about that experience, I also think about, in conjunction to your healing, how hearing your story really healed a lot of stuff with me and felt like, really validating that we're in community with each other 'cause it felt like parallel narratives in very different ways.

I think at the beginning of pandemic I wasn't really listening to Alex when he was expressing these needs. Like everyone else, I was like, well maybe it's just a time to work on you! And Alex really beautifully held a boundary for himself and was like, I don't like when people say that. And I heard that and I was like, oh, I'm so sorry. And then it took a while for me to fully hear it. It took me about three months. And it took my journey with understanding how the violence that has been enacted on my body as a person who has a lot of experience with sexual violence, and then also someone who has been perpetually single for a good portion of my life,

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

I, in pandemic, was in a relationship with someone who I really trusted in a way that I never trusted before. And then I found that there was still so many barriers to be able to have connection in a way that was authentic and vulnerable. Because I thought in this world that if you just get a boo, things work out for you. That's how it's supposed to go.

Shohreh: I wish!

kali: I know, don't we all? I've been working so hard to get a boo who I could actually trust and be with, and then I got it, and there were so many more challenges that I did not anticipate. And then I remember when Alex would talk about his experience, I'd be like, yeah, no, I've been there before, I've been there before, I've been there before. But then I really saw how it is very different to be able to have that access. That privilege to be able to see the challenges that happen. I think Alex said something along the lines of like, you can always work on yourself while you're in a relationship. I've worked enough on myself by myself that I need to challenge myself to understand how do I work on myself with someone else.

And then in a time where we really want some kind of easy access love and support with someone we trust, 'cause it's not as accessible as it was before, then really saw what Alex was trying to tell me. And then I was like, damn. That's what happens when you prejudge, right? And you don't just sit down and listen to what someone's trying to say. And I'm just thankful that you shared that story with me and your experiences with me, always all the time, because I love you [laughter].

Shohreh: I wanna highlight this concept in general that you've mentioned, Alex, because I think it's important and I think people don't talk about this enough. Because I do hear people all the time say, internal validation is where it's at. And look, I'm all about cultivating our own self-worth, and I do

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

think that's important. *And* this suggestion that that means that we don't also benefit from outside validation, like you said, it's a very privileged concept.

Because for people who are living in bodies who don't just get validated for existing, right? Like you do need to get that from other people. You do have to be taught that that worth exists and that people can see you as attractive, or want to even be your friend, whatever it may be. You need to get that from outside of yourself. You can't conjure it up if you've literally never seen it before your eyes before.

kali: Yeah.

Alex: Mmhmm.

kali: People can't see me because it's a podcast, but I'm a fat person [laughs]. I identify as a fat hottie.

Shohreh: Yes!

kali: And yeah, like it took really long to cultivate the understanding that I'm hot as fuck. And it took a lot of self-validation, it took a lot of learning and un-learning. And then I got a boo who got spaces to really see all of me. And on the subject of desirability politics, in heteronormative gaze their desirability is a lot higher than mine. In queer spaces we're both really fucking hot. But like, in the regular world, right, [laughs] a different kind of breed. But I love that and I've always wanted that. But being in a relationship with someone who had a "higher desirability" affected me and in some moments really erased everything that I learned and brought me back to a space of really feeling insecure and unworthy.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

And I was so confused because I was like, didn't I just spend the last 18 years of my life trying to build this up? And then in one fell swoop, in the span of a week it could go away. And it shows, yes, self-validation is absolutely real and necessary, and it needs to work in conjunction with community uplifting.

Alex:

Yes, that "in conjunction" part, it's like, "yes, and." Right, like, I love Grace Towers in the Bay. Like, I got to live with that beautiful angel and their "yes, and" is integrated in my mind now because it's rarely one or the other. It's both. And talking about if you haven't seen those possibility models. Like I think about walking through the Castro and there are all these signposts for party promotion, and it's just like ripped dude after ripped dude after ripped dude after ripped dude. And so this conversation of like, you just need to find that internal validation first, I think, really erases the fact that society, pop culture provides so much external validation for specific bodies already, that that internal validation is being resourced by the outside world without any effort.

It's just like, even if you aren't doing that work, the outside world is doing that work for you if you have a normative body, and it's also usually not from an intersectional lens. Like kali's talking about, being fat, being a person of color, being queer. Like to see ourselves when we are margins within margins within margins, it's like, you know, I was joking in a conversation recently it's really sad that sometimes the best representation I've seen of myself is Tigger and like, Mr. Turnip-Head from Howl's Moving Castle. I'm like, that queen is a dapper dresser, he hops around, he's very chivalrous. You know what I mean? I so rarely see a hairy amputee with painted nails and big hair. Like I don't see myself in these representations.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

And so to have lovers, and friends, and to have a person in my life like kali where I can be like, I look really cute in these undies, can I send you a picture, and to feel like that's safe and to feel like it's divorced from that transactional nature of sex, right, where it's like...there are lovers that I send pictures to, and it's not about, like, I hope that this makes you want to have more sex with me or that this continues our sexual relationship, but it certainly still is in the context of, I would like to continue having sex, is that going to happen? And so it's so nice to have chosen family, community where that interdependence can shine and it's like, there's that glimmer, right?

Like, I wouldn't send that to kali or I wouldn't say, "Hey, I look cute," if I didn't feel like I looked cute. But it's just really nice to hear someone outside of me be like, dang girl! You know? [Laughter] Just to get that celebration. And finding people in your community where whatever you're looking to feel in terms of your wellness, your body, and getting to have those conversations. Or even pushing back against that, like I'm having an insecure day or I'm craving that external affirmation. It's so different to respond to that with like, I hear you, that sounds like really hard, right? Or I hear you, what do you need in this moment? Versus, no, you're hot. Or like, you don't need other people's validation, you got you. Those are so invalidating. You're not listening to what someone is saying.

Like kali said, we learned through that together to just respond more to what someone is offering rather than imposing your agenda of like, as an external opinion or perspective, like, I find you hot. It's like, that's not the point [laughs]. Someone's not saying, I don't feel good in my body today because they want someone else to say, "Yeah, but you look great." It's like, can you just say, "That sounds really hard. I'm sure that's weighing on you. What do you need? What would make you feel good, or what support

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

are you looking for? Do you just want to be held in that? Do you want to process it?" I think those are all very different questions to respond with.

Shohreh:

Because maybe what they do want to hear is, you're fucking hot, but the only way to find that out is to, instead of just offer it, to ask, "What is it that you need right now?" And they might say, "I just need you to tell me that I'm gorgeous," and then let that compliment train begin. But yeah, you don't know unless you ask.

And I think this also gets to an important point, which is that I have wholeheartedly found that in my queer relationships, and this is friendships, anything, that the intimacy is deeper, and usually more quickly as well. And it sounds like y'all have experienced this as well. And why do you think that is? Why do you think as queer folx we're able to get to that place with each other?

Alex:

I love this question!

kali:

I know! I think it's a double-edged sword. I think there's a lot of different reasons. There's like, multiple truths that are happening, right? I think we as queer folx have not been shown the love that we deserve in this world, so when we see us in community with each other, we just wanna be able to give it to each other so wholeheartedly because you deserve it. Because we all deserve it. And we know that we are like the shunned children of the world [laughs].

We live in the middle, I think, as queer folx. Again, we talk about this binary, right, that you have to be straight, or homosexual, or whatever those things are. I don't think that queer people live on one end of the spectrum. I think we are the spectrum. I think we live in the middle. We're

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

all encompassing. So to think in polarities does not make sense for us as people.

I think we want to give love because we understand that, or at least I understand that if I give love, I can get love back. Someone recently told me that I show up hard for the people in my life. Like my lovers, my friends, my boos. And they said in a way that felt a little bit, like, judgmental in a way? Like it was like a, whoa, this is overwhelming, which is fair because sometimes we're not taught to fully be able to accept that kind of love, right? But for me, I had to stay neutral on that and be really inquisitive about why that struck me so bizarrely, and I realize and recognize that it was because I never was like this before. I was never this loving before. And it was only until I had queer communities show me that love could exist that way, that I could fully, deeply lean into it. So I really think that that's a big part of it, is being modeled that and having the love that we didn't get to see in our family lives, in our childhoods, and spaces like that.

And also, we already talked about them, our sweet baby Adrian clocked me very early on in our relationship. We were...I'm gonna say a sentence and it's gonna be a fire sign sentence. But we were working on a music video together [laughter]. And I just remember we were like joking around, I think we were singing Little Mermaid or something of the other, but we said something, and I said something that was very, very intimate to Adrian with no hesitation. And that fool just went, "Oh, are you expediting intimacy? Aren't you an Aries?" And I was like oh! [Laughter] And I was like, yes, I do expedite intimacy because I, yes, am an Aries [laughs].

So I think that there is a very big desire to want to love fast and also I think there's a necessity to be slow that maybe is harder to cultivate. And that is

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

talking from my perspective, I'm not generalizing everyone. But yes, that.
[Laughter]

Alex:

That part. I love all that. I can't remember if I mentioned this in our past conversations on the podcast, but queerness to me, like the most evocative metaphor that I can think of feels like, you know, we get that Willy Wonka's golden ticket and it's like a ticket out of heteronormativity. The heteronormative life has set up all these paths and queerness feels like a ticket out. I don't have to participate in that anymore. And I feel like for me, once you get that ticket out, it can provide the snowball effect where you're like, and also this doesn't work for me either, and no, that doesn't work either, you know?

And I say it can because—no one can see me, but I'm lowering my glasses so some of the queer community can hear this—if you are queer, there are other things that you can be queer about other than your sexuality.

Shohreh:

Whaaaaaat?

Alex:

So I feel like, to me, I'm drawn to other queer people who are committed to that process of unburdening everything. I find that really magnetic because I do find that some people, when they're committing to that process of queering their liberation, it exudes. It's really palpable. And so I feel like I'm drawn to other queer people because not only do we now build community around what liberation looks like, I'm challenged to liberate myself in ways that I wouldn't have been able to. I think that's what kali does for me so often.

Just the things that they talk about, the healing that they're doing. There's a way that you create your living space, right? Like I won't put you on blast, kali, but people can watch our Sippin' Saturdays, right, and just the things

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

that you celebrate in your space, the way that you approach sex and kink and intimacy. Those are things that I'm not necessarily pursuing myself directly, but I'm like, wow, that exists right? That is something that people work on. And I find that people who are steeped in heterosexual culture or heteronormative culture just are not challenging themselves to think outside the box at all, and we are so expansive.

And so, I'm really drawn to that excitement of expansiveness. That sense of like, who I can be is so much bigger than what life has prescribed, and I'm excited to expand and burst at the seams. And I think that's why I find it easier to be intimate with queer people because queer people who are also in that journey are just like, let's fucking tear it down. Burn it down. Whatever walls are up, let's get rid of them because if they're not serving us, then why keep upholding it? I feel like queer people challenge me to do those things. And I say queer people, again, queer-minded people. You don't have to identify as queer in terms of having sex in a queer way. If you are straight and you're thinking queerly about heterosexuality, like, I'm down. You know, let's explore that. But yeah, I think that's the magnetism that exists for me.

kali:

Yeah. Queerness is the whole spectrum. I just had a friend from high school, which is so funny that we're still friends, but, I didn't like anyone in high school ha-ha-ha! [Laughs] Just kidding. But I have a friend from high school who I do love dearly, and I think growing up in San Francisco, when you go to high school in San Francisco, queerness is something that is around you all the time, but you don't necessarily know how to interact with it off the bat. Like everyone meets it at different times in their lives.

And I remember we were talking about sex and sexuality because everyone wants to talk to me about that because I guess it's my favorite

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

subject. Just kidding, it is! [Laughs] But he was like, I don't identify as queer because I know at this moment I'm really attracted to women, and then went on to talk about how he rejected heteronormativity. And I was like, well that's queerness right there. Like I can really hear and see you as a queer person, and it just so happens that you're attracted to women at this moment in time. Heteronormativity isn't necessarily just about sexuality; it's about the system that creates this idea that that's the only thing that exists.

Shohreh:

Yeah. It's interesting because you mentioned how growing up in San Francisco, you know, your experience was that queerness was all around you in a lot of different ways. Growing up in Texas, not my experience [laughter] to have at least open queerness around me. Everyone that I know who eventually came out, came out post-high school. And I think that's different now, but at the time when I was in high school, which was between 2004 and 2007, nobody was out. Everyone was just throwing around the word "faggot" as an insult at that time. It was not the place for that.

And so this kind of brings up this idea of the, sort of this queer timeline and how we're on a very different timeline than the straight world in terms of what our lives look like. And Alex, when we did our Pride Panel, you got to interact with Erica Smith, who has also been on the podcast a number of times and is a sexuality educator. And Erica talks about how a lot of times when people come out later, they almost have, like, a second adolescence experience because you didn't get that. You didn't get that sort of queer upbringing. And so, it can happen later in life, whether that's your twenties, or your thirties, or your forties.

And it's something that I've experienced for myself in coming out later and starting to see what expansiveness that it's created in my life, and I just

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

think it's so interesting and it's so different from the straight experience, for sure.

Alex:

Absolutely. And what I also find to be really important about that process and acknowledging that, I'll speak to my experience—I feel like I came out later because I didn't feel like I had the safety to do so earlier. I didn't feel like there was the positive imagery or the positive possibility models, right, of gayness and queerness. So I can find myself here at 30 knowing that I had my first sexual thoughts about men at like 13 and being frustrated. Like why didn't I come out earlier? Why did I hold myself back? I'm truly the happiest I've been in my entire life, and so I feel like it's easy to kick myself and be like, why did I deprive myself of this, right?

And it's so unhelpful to turn that anger inward. And instead, I'm trying to just channel that outward and be like, I didn't do that because the culture that I lived in didn't invite me to do so. It didn't invite me to be my authentic self. It didn't say, who you can be is so much bigger than who you think you are, right? And so that's why I'm channeling my energy into trying to create this podcast with kali, trying to do loud disability justice work. I want people to just be their whole selves, authentically and unapologetically, so that way there's less of this inward anger and more compassion.

That these systems don't set people up for success and that it's not your fault, personally, it's that the system let you down. And that we have an opportunity to help future generations, or even elders, right? There are people who still don't feel safe to come out. Like how do we create that invitation? And I think having more compassion for myself frees up that energy to really pour more love, loving energy out into the world, as opposed to being present in community and people can sense that inward anger because I'm here now, the way that I am, because of those years of

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

silencing myself. I'm here now because of those years of turning away from something that felt so true.

And so, I'd rather just celebrate that I'm here and out doing this work than wishing things had been different. Because I wouldn't be on this call with you two if I had come out earlier, you know? I wouldn't be getting to do the things that I'm doing now if things had been different and I'm so grateful for what I have right now.

kali:

Ooh, love to hear it, baby, ooh! [Laughter] Yeah, two of my main mantras in life right now are "divine timing is always perfect," and, "You're exactly where you need to be at all times." I think more and more as I live on, they really resonate with me every single day, closer and closer. Like I said, I grew up in San Francisco and queerness was all around, but I didn't really come out as queer until I was like 24, and that was four years ago. Whoa! That is not a long time! Dang! And this is the thing is that I think that... And then I'm someone who really does love kink and sexual exploration and all of those things. And I think it's because I'm loud, and I'm a fire sign, and I really like to be very visible about all these things that I do love that people have a tendency to label me as an expert, label me as someone who knows all, does all of these things because I talk loud and I demand people to listen to me.

And I will say that I do that because I know that people will listen to me because I can be racially safe. So cute and bubbly that I don't really pose a threat to people, even though I really do [laughs]. And I will take this moment in time to say that everything that I've ever learned that was important in my life I learned from Black queer femmes. Black queer femmes are the soul of the world. I have to give honor and thanks to everything that they do because if it wasn't for them, I would still be

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

straight and dumb. [Laughter] And I'm so glad I'm not. I'm just so glad I'm not.

Yeah, just really kind of making sure that everyone knows that I'm not this queer fag from San Francisco who's been queer their entire life. I didn't understand that I was genderqueer at three and just told my mom that I'm gonna wear jeans all the time and like shave with my brothers, even though I did make my dad buy a Ninja Turtle shaving kit when I was seven and that was great. I loved shaving. I still wish I could do it.

Shohreh: That's amazing!

kali: I mean I could, but I love my body hair too much to shave it. But really talking about this timeline, right? We're all students and we're all teachers as well. But I think there's a humility to understanding that every time that we go through the world, like Alex said, we have to be kind to ourselves about it, right? I didn't understand queerness and the way that I fit into it until I heard the word "genderqueer." And then I was like, how can I really be attracted to women if I've only slept with men? And then also on top of that and I've only slept with men, and I've slept with a lot of men [laughs]—eww [laughter]—I've slept with a lot of men and I do like sleeping with men, and here's the thing though, but I didn't understand having queer sex. I didn't understand having really important sex until maybe the last four years. And I've been having sex for almost half my life.

And that was a big frustration with me when I understood queerness because I really thought that I could enter the community and just keep having sex the way that I was. And then I realized I was having sex in the ways that men have taught me to have sex, which is very separate from emotion. Where it didn't give any consideration to my body, or my needs, or my desires. Where there was no communication. And I'm still learning

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

right now, as a sexual health educator, as someone who does have sex, and who is in kink exploration, that I really am still holding onto a lot of the ways that straight men have taught me to have sex and the ways that it separates me from my own emotions.

And that has been really detrimental for me because I'm like, how have I been fucking for so long and still don't know how to just ask for this, you know? Or being like, I've taught workshops on how to do dirty talk in sex for clear communication. And I think sometimes as a sexual health educator, when I'm doing workshops, people just assume that that is how I have sex and how I fuck all the time. And there's no negotiation, and I'm perfect, and when people come up to me and they're like, "You wanna do impact play?" I know exactly what to do. And sometimes there is and there's sometimes there isn't, right? And it's because we don't have the same timeline as straight folk. Like, we're having expansiveness and that takes time to unlearn and then relearn.

I remember being into kink early because I just loved the aesthetic. In high school, my best friend and I would watch Real Sex on HBO in my room, like late at night [laughs]. Like my best gay friend from school and we would make tea and nachos and we'd watch Real Sex on the television [laughter]. And I remember being like, ooh, I can't wait to do that. Once I turn eighteen I will be able to do that.

And when I was in my early twenties, when I was still sleeping with straight men, I remember this one time I bought a paddle. It was like my first paddle and I was super stoked. He was like mid-thrust and I was like, I have a paddle if you want to use it, and then he stops mid-thrust and is like, uh, I don't really know what to do with that, so we're just not gonna. And I was like, okay! And being like, what, nineteen, twenty, and you're

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

trying to do this exploration, like I felt a lot of shame from that and I was like, okay, maybe I shouldn't do those things, right?

And me being like, I should have had more queer sex, I should have come out earlier so I could have used that paddle, etc. etc. etc. But unlearning takes so long, and it takes models of people doing it successfully to really understand that it's something that can happen.

Shohreh:

Thank you so much for saying about the unlearning 'cause that's something we talk so much about on this podcast, that I talk about all the time with clients. Because that does extend the timeline, right? You have to deprogram all of the stuff that has been taught to you that is not serving you before you can even get to the part where you are starting to bring in all of these new things into your mind.

Something that was coming up for me when you said that was how I only came out as queer myself in the last few years. But here's something that I notice did not shift right away, which is that I came to the realization, I was like, oh, like, I am attracted to women. Like I feel attraction, sexual/romantic attraction to women. Exciting, amazing, coming out, all of that good stuff. But it has taken until very recently for my lens of how I view women to actually shift along with that realization. So my whole life, right, I have looked at men and done the mental calculus of, am I sexually attracted to you, and all this kind of stuff. And even after the point of coming out as queer and realizing I was queer, I still had to unlearn that I'm allowed to look at women that way.

kali:

Mmm.

Shohreh:

And that took time. And it's like a switch has flipped now, where now like, I can see my brain is actually able to do that analysis when I am talking to

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

women or looking at women as well. And it's incredible. And I'm like, oh my god! Like, it's like this piece that was missing for the last couple of years, even though I was out, that I didn't even know it was missing. And it's because, you know, my whole life I was obviously taught that this is not how we look at women. This is not the thoughts that we have when we view women. So even if I could look at a woman and say, yes, I find her attractive, my brain was still not in that fully on board absorbing it space. Like, I wasn't embodying it. And now I can feel myself embodying it, and it's such a welcome change. But I never would have guessed at the beginning that that's something that would have taken time.

kali:

Yeah. No, I hear you. Just to support that idea, for me, even as a sexual health educator, I was not considering a lot of the sex that I was having as sex because there was no penetration. Even with men. Even with people with penises. Like, there was a person who I would hook up with time to time when I would visit L.A., and I remember being like, oh well, they didn't put their penis in me, so we didn't have sex. And I was like, then what the hell was all the other things that happened in the last three hours, right? And then when I have sex with people who don't have penises, does that not now equate sex, right?

So it was just that kind of, this like, oh, I'm still really equating sex with penetration, and that is not fair to these beautiful ways that we can all have sex. And yeah, just really takes time to really be like, oh fuck, I didn't know I was still holding on that.

Shohreh:

Yes.

Alex:

Mmhmm.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Shohreh: Yeah, that's so true. I see this in queerness and then also talk a lot about diet culture on the podcast and kind of these things that we're taught as part of our culture that are just hammered into us from a young age, like, they go deep into our brain and into our subconscious. And so, it really is like peeling back layers, where like, you start with one thing and it's awesome and amazing, and you keep going, and over time you're like, yeah, I feel like I've gotten all of it. And then boom, out of nowhere something pops up and you're like, oh shit, there are still some things that are deep in there that I need to contend with. And maybe you're going to find out today, maybe you're going to find out 10 years from now. I mean it's a lifetime's worth of programing, and that it's just not easy to start to eliminate.

And one of the things that I think really helps, of course, is community, which is what we are fostering here in this conversation. And I think that, Alex, you were talking earlier before we started recording, this idea that we have this concept that we have to do a lot of self-healing. Which we do, and self-healing is really important. But community healing is equally as important. So I'd love for y'all to talk a little bit about that.

Alex: Yeah. It's such a draw for me to do this podcast with kali, is to share in that healing process. To name what I'm working through. To help invite other people to witness this healing with me, you know, alongside me, and to model that that's a part of the way that I want to connect with people, right? Not in just this selfish, I'm telling you what I'm working on and that's it. You know? Like I wanna hear what kali is working through and what they're healing around, and I think that just modeling that vulnerability is so powerful because our culture doesn't invite us to do that.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

Like I have friends in my life who have been dealing with, like, anal health issues. And it's not sexy stuff. It's not fun to talk about. I think there's a lot of taboo and stigma around that. And I'm just so grateful that they trust me to tell me that that's what they're going through, both just in terms of our friendship and our relationship, but also, I don't hear those stories and explicitly go, like, well, now I feel safer. But were I to experience something unsexy or something really challenging in my body, that person has shown me that our relationship is deep enough that we can talk about the unsexy stuff.

And that if I'm going through something, I think particularly with sexual health, so much of it is really scary in your body, right? Because our sexual organs do not necessarily make as much sense, or we aren't provided the information to make sense out of it in ways where I can just like talk with somebody and be like, oh my knee hurts today, you know what I mean? I think there does necessitate more intimacy, so when those people have shown me that trust, I feel more secure in our relationship that if I need that in reciprocation later, that that's available. And I think that's what community really provides.

It's not just this inward, like I feel like inward self-care creates that culture where it's like, I'm going to be on WebMD at 1:30am being like, I'm freaking out, this thing hurts, I don't know why I'm bleeding, you know what I mean? And just being anxious. And not being able to text a friend and be like, something's wrong and I don't know what it is and I don't know what to do and I'm really scared. And that's like the negative side.

And the positive side is that celebration. It is kali coming up to me and being like, I just got turned out, flipped around [laughter], you know, like, knowing kali, kali was doing a lot of the turning out [laughter]. We have to

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

have a place also to just celebrate our growth and to be joyful, do you know what I mean? And if I have to keep those celebrations and that pride to myself as well because of shame around talking about sex, shame around feeling like, oh, because I'm talking about it, I'm like, you know, like you said earlier, like shoving my queerness in their face or shoving my sex life in their face. It has taken me a lot of work to get here. Like we said, that unlearning. And I want to be able to celebrate that without a sense of my friends are going to be tired of me talking about this stuff.

Because it is, my concept of health and wellness includes sexual health. So if I can't talk about my sexual health, I'm not able to holistically address my wellness. So I think that's why community is so important in this healing process.

kali:

Absolutely. I think hearing that really makes me want to uplift sharing, right? Like we share our stories with each other. We create our own narratives in our minds, and to be able to witness someone else's narratives and then feel connection to that is just like so fucking powerful. It is. It is a chef's kiss of the world, right?

I'm always looking for ways in community where we can all win, and I think it's because a lot of the times I think that our society has taught us to separate things, you know? That we are privatized, that we are separate. And as we talked about earlier, in queerness, we can't separate things because everything is interconnected. It is intersectional. It is all of those things. So when we share, we all win because not only did I get to hear you and then you feel heard, but I feel this trust that you gave me with the story that you told and really feel honored that I'm the person you chose to share it with, right? That's how I feel every single time Alex and I talk to each other.

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

And then we gain this bigger alignment with each other and a greater understanding of each other, and that way in the future we can just hold each other. And it's just taking care of each other, sharing, and listening. It's those simple things. And it's super important to our health and wellness 'cause I think that when we just go down to like the bare minimum of what we need as humans, we wanna be loved, we wanna be held, we wanna be seen, we wanna be heard, right? It can be that simple. And so, when we tell each other our stories in a way that's fully held, we get to do all of those things together. And that's what community is for me.

Shohreh: Yeah.

Alex: Yeah. And I love that sharing that abundance, right? Queerness is very abundant to me. And so, it's like in a very big spiritual sense, it's like you know, when kali wins, I win. It's not the scarcity model of like, well kali's having, you know, the type and amount of sex that I wish I were having and so that makes me jealous. It's like, no. I want to imagine that kali having this like beautiful, queer-ass, kinky sex is like rippling out in the way that the people that you're having sex with are now better for having engaged in that. And that those people hopefully have sex with people that maybe I'll have sex with someday, right? And are like more open-minded. You know what I mean? Or like me as a queer disabled person, having sex with someone who may have not had sex with somebody with a visible disability, with nails, who's like gonna cuddle and talk about racial justice afterwards. I want those people to go out and like spread the good word, you know? [Laughter]

That to me is that abundance and community of like, now I know that it's not all for naught. We're not in this really pessimistic zone of like, hearing kali get to have the kind of sexual health that they are looking for is really

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

like uplifting and energizing for me. Because I'm like, fuck yeah! Like, we're out here, we're doing it, we need some people we deserve. And I think that sharing really inspires me to keep going and to be excited about what's to come.

Shohreh: I love this. I love all this talk of sharing. And excuse me while I insert my Sagittarius energy again, but—

kali: Yes, always, always! We want it, we want it, we want it!

Shohreh: Here it comes. I look forward to the future fire sign group chat that is obviously coming so [laughs] all the sharing there. Will be delightful. I adore you both. This has been a fabulous conversation. I cannot wait to share it with people. I cannot wait for your podcast, which as soon as it is available, I will update the show notes to make sure that it's in there so that future listeners can find it. And of course, also send me all the promo info because I'll post it all the fuck everywhere because the world clearly needs to hear your voices, like in conversation. Before we wrap up, is there anything that you want to leave people with in terms of your experiences, your authenticity, your queerness. Like anything you want to throw out into the universe for people to have?

kali: It's okay to go slow and be kind to yourself is really what's hitting me right now. We're allowed to be slow in a time where everything feels panicky, where we need to solve problems, where we need to get more money, or you know, feel safe. It's okay to go slow. And it's okay to be kind to yourself and everyone around you.

Alex: Damn. You gonna make me follow that up? [Laughter] Yeah, I just, that kindness, I think that compassion is absolutely what I would leave with. We only have so much energy, we only have so much. You spend that energy

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

to take care of yourself, to support yourself and community. And I think that pleasure principle, right, like adrienne maree brown, Pleasure Activism. I think the more that we gear towards pleasure, in whatever form that is for you, the better our world will be.

kali: Yeah. Alex reminded me recently that one of my favorite things that adrienne maree brown said is, “Move at the speed of trust.” And you can trust yourself and move when you can trust then too.

Shohreh: That speaks to me as someone who literally bills herself as a self-trust coach, so I love that [laughter].

Alex: Yes!

kali: We love to see it!

Shohreh: Incredible. Okay. Well then, lastly, for listeners, where can they find you and also is there anything specifically that they can do to support your work?

kali: Yes. So I am on Instagram. I don't really do the professional thing. My Instagram is @jizzebel. I know. When I got it I was like, damn, this is good, [laughs] and I've never turned back.

Shohreh: You've pissed off so many people who have gone to try and get that username to only find that you already have it.

kali: Oh, I know. I know. But I'm the only jizzebel. Just kidding, we can be so many of us. Abundance, sweetie, abundance! And then I also have a blog that's on Tumblr because I'm a 2000s baby [laughs]. Which is www.brutfemme.tumblr.com. We also have an Instagram for our podcast.

Shohreh: You do? What?

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

- kali:** Yes! It is not set up at all. It just exists [laughter].
- Shohreh:** Excuse me while I go follow it.
- Alex:** You will be the second follower!
- kali:** I don't even follow our own podcast.
- Alex:** I was going to say, I being the first [laughter].
- kali:** And that happened today. Mere minutes before this podcast was being created.
- Shohreh:** Amazing!
- kali:** It's @fluid.bonding on Instagram. Yes.
- Alex:** I've had the privilege of being on here several times, so I'm not going to plug myself.
- Shohreh:** Yeah, 'cause Alex, you know, he's just so wonderful, he's been here so many times, you know, just—
- Alex:** It's like, if you're not following me, what's going on?
- Shohreh:** What are you doing with your life, honestly?
- Alex:** I'm glad you said it! I just wanted to shout out Sins Invalid.
- kali:** Mm yes.
- Alex:** They're just a group of Black and Brown disabled queer performers that celebrate all of that integration and really like are the leaders with Patty Berne of Disability Justice. And I think just have utterly and unequivocally provided me those possibility models that I've always needed. And so, just in the scope of this conversation, I couldn't recommend them enough for

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

people to turn to, to really aspire to, right, and celebrate all the work that they're putting out into the world.

kali: Love them. Love to see them.

Shohreh: Awesome. I will put all of that in the show notes so that everybody can find it easily. And thank you both. This was such a wonderful conversation. You're welcome to come back on the podcast literally any time, just let me know. And I am so excited to listen to Fluid Bonding whenever it is out in the world.

kali: Me too.

Alex: Oh my god. It was so good to just like, kali's like tanked. This was great. Thank you, Shohreh. We really appreciate you.

kali: Yes. Thank you so much.

Shohreh: Of course.

kali: This was really kind.

Shohreh: All the kindness, right? Kindness and compassion. We are cultivating it right here.

kali: Yeah, it is. I mean I love the word "kind" because I really have to distinguish between "kind" and "nice" for a lot of people. Because niceness is not kind.

Shohreh: Oooh! A word.

kali: It is not. Being polite is not kind. And I just went through a wild situation where this, a landlord type person who is a family friend thought she was being kind, but all she does is operate in politeness and niceness. And I

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

tried to advocate for myself and she then became not kind [laughs]. And it just goes to show, right, be impeccable with your word, baby.

Shohreh:

A lovely note to end on.

If you've been enjoying the podcast's Self-Trust Series and want to take your self-trust to the next level, I invite you to join Follow Your Arrow, my brand new membership program for 2021. The 12-month membership experience will guide you through my Pillars of Self-Trust Framework so that by the time the program is over, rather than strictly being shaped by the world around you, you'll be able to step into your power and shape the world right back.

Through group coaching calls, educational and practical components, and an online community, you'll work through self-doubt and shame so you can come home to yourself with confidence. Follow Your Arrow starts on January 4th and you have until December 31st to sign up for the program.

To get all the details about the membership and sign up, head to shohrehdavoodi.com/followyourarrow. That's shohrehdavoodi.com/followyourarrow. I'll also include the link for the program information in the show notes for this episode

And that's our show for today! If this podcast has taught you anything or helped you in any way, I hope you'll consider supporting me in my effort to keep it going. You can join my Patreon community and receive members-only perks by going to shohrehdavoodi.com/Patreon, or you can tip me for my work through the payment links located at the bottom of the show notes for each episode. I would also encourage you to subscribe and submit a rating and review through your podcast provider of choice. I love hearing from listeners, so feel free to screenshot from your podcast player,

Redefining Health & Wellness

#77

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Alex Locust & kali diwa

post on social media, and tag me. Finally, if you're looking for more information on what I'm all about and how to work with me directly, head over to shohrehdavoodi.com. Hope to see you for the next episode.