

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Dana Davis

Interviewer: Kristyn Scorsone

Date: September 13, 2023

Location: Zoom

Kristyn Scorsone: Okay. Let me help you—Okay. Today is September 13, 2023. My name is Kristyn Scorsone and I'm interviewing Dana Davis over Zoom for the Queer in Newark Oral History Project. Thank you, again, for doing this for us and sharing your story, Dana.

Dana Davis: Thank you. This is an absolute pleasure and I feel honored to be asked to be a part of this project. Thank you (Kristyn), most importantly.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Of course. Easy first question, when and where were you born?

Dana Davis: Oh. I was born and raised in Newark, New Jersey. I don't know. Should I tell you my age? Yeah. Anyways. I'm 41. Went through complete schooling, everything in Newark. I started off in elementary school there, and of course, went to high school. I went to West Side High School. I also went to Essex County College. I'm a graduate of Essex County. I've done a lot of my schooling in Newark.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's really cool. Back in your early years, who raised you?

Dana Davis: I was in a household with my mother and my grandmother until I was an adult and moved out on my own, those are the two people that I lived with. Of course, I had father figures around, but for the most part, my mother and my grandmother are the people who really molded who I am today.

Kristyn Scorsone: Is it your grandmother meaning, Gwendolyn?

Dana Davis: Yes. Gwendolyn Davis. My mom is Olivia "Libby" Davis. Gwendolyn Davis, I'm sure you are very familiar with. I call her the icon. She is my icon. She's paved the way a lot for me to be able to even reach the level of success that I have. I definitely bow down to her, and she is my baby. You guys get to use her once in a while, but she's mine.

Kristyn Scorsone: I think icon is a great word for her. She's, like you, such an inspiration. She's so cool.

Dana Davis: Yes.

Kristyn Scorsone: I know you have an oral history with her, because of her work with HIV/AIDS activism in Newark. She's amazing. I am jealous of you.

Dana Davis: Oh. Yeah. I get that all the time.

Kristyn Scorsone: How about your mother? What did she do for a living?

Dana Davis: My mom has always worked in healthcare. She's worked at Beth Israel hospital for many years, then transitioned over to St. Barnabas. She's had a lot of hats there. She started off as a unit clerk, then she worked as a unit clerk in the burn center, then became a burn tech. She was a part of the Seton Hall fires, making sure everybody was okay. She took care of that whole group. She was featured in *Star-Ledger* and everything about the work that she does.

From there, she went to engineering. She's still there Saint Barnabas) but she's an engineer at the hospital, now, doing a different type of work. She's one person who's been around and able to touch every area of the hospital, which is rewarding for her. It's good.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. You come from a family of powerhouses.

Dana Davis: I do. It would've been a shame if I wasn't to follow behind that.

Kristyn Scorsone: What part of Newark were you all living in? Did you move around a lot? Did you stay in one house?

Dana Davis: Pretty much stayed in one house. It's a little history there. If you listen to my grandmother's oral history, then of course, she talks about getting up to the place that we ended up being raised. That was Vailsburg area of Newark. My great-grandparents lived in the Weequahic section of Newark.

When I was about 16, we moved to the house that my great-grandparents owned and believe it or not, I wasn't in that home very long. I left early at 19. I'll tell you about that later. I left early, around 19 years old, but I ended up moving back to the Weequahic section to do exactly what my grandmother did for her mom. She moved to help her mom, and then I moved in to help her and stayed there. We just recently sold the home in Weequahic. My great-great-grandparents lived in that house.

Kristyn Scorsone: Wow.

Dana Davis: It was a rich history in that home. I grew up in Vailsburg but moved over to Weequahic at about 16 or so. Pretty much been in and out of there for most of my adult life as well.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's really awesome. What are one or two of your earliest memories of Newark at the time?

Dana Davis: Growing up or as a teenager? I think, teenager, I felt very sheltered. I wanna say up until about 13 I really didn't have a lot of experiences. My experiences were playing around the corners and doing things like going to a friend's house. I think my world started to shift a little bit. I was exposed to a lot of the work my grandmother was doing, which was excellent.

It didn't feel strange to me because she's always talking about it. Everyone would come to the house. My mother's friends, everyone would come to the house and ask my grandmother for weird stuff like, "Hey. Do you have any condoms or do you have this or you have that?" It was so normal to me. Does that make sense? It was normal to talk about, to understand safe sex and protecting yourself and things of that nature. It was just conversation.

That really helped. I don't know if it was a sense of maturity, getting to be a little more mature and having a better understanding, which I think it really did at the time. I can't talk to that. I think it helped to understand what sexuality was about, what sex was, things of that nature. I wanna say, early on, being exposed to the work that my grandmother was doing gave me a different perspective as a teenager.

I knew what they were. I saw the things. She would talk to us really freely and frankly and in our language, obviously, to explain how we needed to protect ourselves and what was important and this is how you do this and if you need help, this is how you put on a condom and all those things of that kind. She didn't know that I was already liking girls. Those conversations didn't occur. Around the ages between 13 and 16, is really when life started to look a little different for me and also for Newark itself.

I wanna say, I may have been one the first of very few kids in West Side that came out as a lesbian. That was between 1990—oh. It sounds so old when we say 19 now. Right? 1996, I wanna say, was my freshman year. I think I came out openly in '97 or '98, for me it was normal. I was around it; I saw women on women, men on men and it wasn't a decision that was made because of what I saw, but

more or less it was something that just felt normal. It was okay for me to feel this way. Does that make sense?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Where did you see women on women? Was that at high school or at home, like people coming by?

Dana Davis: I was in the Ball Scene as well. I didn't know that's what it was. It was fashion shows. I was attending fashion shows. My grandmother was doing an event that consists of houses that were putting on these shows. I was working the doors or doing little things in the back or bringing water to the models. That's what I did. I wanna say, I did that prior to teenage years. I was doing that. My mom modeled for a long time.

It was all a part of the same world. I used to model. I was a kid model. When it came to the Ball Scene, it didn't feel any different than anything else. The only difference was these were gay and lesbian people. I'm using that terminology now because that's what it was then. All right? Gay and lesbian, it was just LGBT I think at the time. That's what I knew.

I was drawn to women early. I already knew that I really liked women. I just didn't know what to do or how to get into it. I wasn't ready, but I knew that I liked women. When I realized that's what it was for me, that's pretty much where it took off.

Kristyn Scorsone: When did you—I have so many questions.

Dana Davis: Go ahead. Ask away.

Kristyn Scorsone: When did you come to understand that about yourself, your identity? How would you define yourself if you do?

Dana Davis: Yeah. I define myself as a lesbian. I am more of a feminine lesbian, even though I have a lot of masculine energy in me. I am femme, I'm a lesbian. I want to say that it was just really an attraction to women. I felt very comfortable. Before the age of 13, I never dated a woman or anything like that.

Janet Jackson is the reason for that—I would tell people that. She is my reason that I decided that I needed to explore. When she did The Velvet Rope concert, for some strange—I could not stop staring. I just thought she was the most beautiful woman. It wasn't just beauty; I was in love with this woman, in love with her. I realized that maybe I really like girls.

There was one girl in my school. She was older than me. She was a sophomore; I believe I was a freshman. She was the first woman that I saw that I just thought, possibly—she was so beautiful. I was so nervous around her. The feeling was mutual. She liked me. Yeah. When I found that out, it was a go.

That was a really fast transition for me. It really wasn't a lot of time put in. I didn't have a moment of feeling like I hid it all. I just felt the moment of, "Ah-ha." Okay, let me go ahead and see how this is going. I dated men as well at one point to see if this is the right thing to do.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. Yeah.

Dana Davis: We all had to figure it out. Right? But I felt a lot more comfortable with women. Even when I started to date more of the AGs and more aggressive, more masculine, it was a perfect fit. It felt like a blend of what I liked from guys, what I didn't like from guys, but I can get in girls as well. It was perfect. It was a perfect set. That wasn't until I was about 17.

Prior to that, yeah, I knew. I came out and I didn't talk about it with my grandmother, surprisingly. I didn't say to her, "This is what I want." I didn't even tell my mother. Somebody else told my mother. It's interesting because I didn't realize my mother struggled with it. I just knew that our relationship was changing.

My grandmother was the one like, "Of course. Whatever she wants to do. I'm here to support her. I'm here to support you." But my grandmother said it in her own way. She's not gonna openly say that. She'll say, "You know you can talk to me. You know I don't care. I support you whatever you decide to do," almost hinting to what the issue may be, but not really talking about it. My way of introducing it was introducing someone.

Kristyn Scorsone: When was that?

Dana Davis: I wanna say, 16, officially 16. I was like, "Okay. This is my girlfriend."

Kristyn Scorsone: You came home and were like—

Dana Davis: Uh-huh. "This is my girlfriend." My mother's like, "Oh. Okay." I think she felt better with that at the time, even though she wasn't okay with it. I don't think it had anything to do with her being

homophobic or whatever. I think it was different for her. She just didn't expect it, nor did she understand it. She's not a lesbian.

My mom was a young mom. She had me at 18 or 19. She was a young mom. We lived different lives. Even at that age, it was just different. She was struggling with the balance of what I was actually doing. She can't really give me too much advice on what to do. It strained our relationship a little bit during those years.

I was very similar to how I am today. I'm asking questions. Why? This? Everything a parent does not want to deal with as a teenager. I wasn't rebellious, *per se*, but I need an explanation. I needed to understand why I couldn't do something or why a decision was made, which is in my culture, we don't ask why. You just do what you're told. You be quiet. You do what you're told.

The combination of my teenage years, me exploring and finding out who I am, and all of that is what brought the tension between the two of us. My grandmother was a great referee. She would say what she needed to say when the time was right and keep everybody in check around what was happening, which was a blessing. Go ahead. I've talked now, so go ahead.

Kristyn Scorsone: What kind of teenager were you? It sounds like you were pretty outgoing.

Dana Davis: I was. It's weird because most people believe that I am an extrovert. I am more introverted than extroverted. I have a lot of energy, yes. It comes, but I have a meter. When it's up, it's up. Okay I think I played enough or, "Nope. I'm not answering the phone for a week." I realize I was like that as a kid as well. The back and forth was always a little confusing for people because they expected me to be up, to be this(extrovert).I just didn't have it in me to see. I struggled with that, to understand myself.

I've always been a leader and headstrong to a fault. If you read my book, you'll be able to read a story about when I was in high school, we had this great project that was going on. I went head-to-head with my teacher, because I wanted to take my group to practice in the library.

It was completely against what she wanted to do. It was a real debate. It wasn't a disrespectful approach. We're friends today. We talk about it. It wasn't that I was being disrespectful. My delivery was just so strong in the fact that my teammates were confused on who to listen to.

That was the issue. If I stood up, they stood up. When I sit down, they sat down. She said, “Sit down,” they would sit down. I stand up, they stand up. I walked out of the room and they all followed.

She said, “You were going to be a problem. You’ve gotta use that influence that you have in the most positive way.” I’ve always remembered that, and it’s contributed to most of my career today, being able to be a great leader under the right circumstances. I was a little fresh. I shouldn’t have been that way. For the most part, It was early and I was learning. I hope I get a little pass around that.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. Definitely. You’re working the Ball Scene—

Dana Davis: Yes.

Kristyn Scorsone: - and figuring out your identity at the same time, I guess. Right?

Dana Davis: Mm-hmm.

Kristyn Scorsone: What did you make of the Ball Scene?

Dana Davis: For me, this is the time when I was really working with and being exposed to James Credle, Angel Claudio was still around. Those are the names that I knew because we would be there. It was Stephanie Kuiper, I don’t know if you know her. She was a part of another organization that my grandmother was with called AAWUCA.

They were there and available. It was work for my grandmother. It was me assisting my grandmother. I didn’t have that feeling of connection in the same way that I did when I got old enough to understand. I think back and I really wish that I could have enjoyed those balls—those early Fire Balls in a way that I could appreciate it today. Did that make sense?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah.

Dana Davis: I can tell you; they were fascinating, to see groups of people put on these shows. The balls are nothing—they’re similar to what they were, but it’s a different level. Now it’s more fashion forward, I want to say. There’s more fashion, more dance, more performance. Then it was a message. At the Fire Ball, you would see messages around AIDS and HIV and protection.

You would see the big signs. It was a production, a movie scene. I miss seeing things like that. It was fascinating to me. I'm sitting there watching like, "Wow. These people put a lot of work into it." In my mind I thought they were stars, not celebrities, but they were performers. They were out and doing these things. The makeup and the design, everything was so grand and beautiful. That was my take. I thought it was beautiful. They used to happen right at the Robert Treat.

Kristyn Scorsone: I was gonna ask. I thought of the Robert Treat.

Dana Davis: Yeah. The Robert Treat. The house was packed. It was packed.

Kristyn Scorsone: Do you have any memories of any outfits that you saw that stuck out to you?

Dana Davis: The one that I remember the most, which had the signage—I'm not sure if it was spray painted or handwritten, but the signage and the condom. It was safe-sex message. It had all white and the signage was the color. How they spray-painted—It was a lot of them. I want to say they all lined up onto the stage. There was one, the mother of the house would paint, "Out," and it had this grand—I don't know why, it reminds me of the look that was in *Alice in Wonderland* when they had the suits on with the cards—if I can think of it that way.

I want to say, I didn't see faces. I want to say they covered their faces. I can't recall exactly if that was the case. I remember it was white and it was beautiful. Every single house that performed had a message. It wasn't just introducing themselves as a house. It was a message around HIV and AIDS. It was a message that was coming through with each one. I remember the balls having that type of feel to it than just putting on a performance and dancing.

It was about honoring and connecting. This was around when we had the big quilts that were being made. Do you recall that time period? People were actually making the quilts for AIDS. The epidemic was huge at that time. The message was around that. Those are the things I remember. Yes. There was the competitions, but it was the grand walks that stood out to me around that time

Kristyn Scorsone: Did women walk as well or was it mainly gay men?

Dana Davis: I think it was a mix of both, but mainly gay men. I don't remember. I don't recall any masculine women at all. I do not



recall it, not walking the balls. Maybe in the categories, but not walking as a whole.

Kristyn Scorsone: How about trans-women?

Dana Davis: Yes. I know, because I had so many aunties who would come by the house, some really lovely women who are no longer with us, a few of them, more than I would like to count, because of AIDS. That was another thing for me and for my grandmother as well, the population we were really working with, or she was working with and I just happened to be around, were suffering from HIV or AIDS. They're not here today to talk about the experiences in the same way.

It is my grandmother's history or James' history and everyone else's history that brings their story to life. I wish I could contribute a little more about them, but really, I just remember gracious and happy people. That Ballroom Scene provided such a safe space. Everybody knew everybody. Of course, there would be some nonsense once in a while, but that's everywhere. Right? For the most part, this was their moment to just be.

I can remember people being drawn to tears with certain performances. There was always someone to remember, a moment of silence, because we've lost another person. That is another emotion I can recall around that piece of the Ball Scene that's not really present today. You don't get that today.

Gladly, but it's a part of history and a part of what was happening in the world that we don't want to relive. If you lived it and you understood it, it will stick with you. It has stuck with me. I was young, but I understood the impact. I understood what it felt like. I understood when that person isn't here anymore and the reasons why.

Kristyn Scorsone: How did you do with losing folks around you?

Dana Davis: It was difficult. Even today, I don't necessarily know how to say it, but death is a very scary thing for everyone. Right? you don't get very comfortable with it, especially when you don't really understand the story. It was more scary for me to watch people dying than it was for them to no longer be here. When they came to my house, like I said, everybody came to my house. When I say everyone came to see Aunt Gwen, everybody came to the house and I would notice the scars on the face or the sunken-in eyes, just

looking ill and I know that just a couple of months ago I'd seen the same person and it wasn't the case.

It was hard to watch people go through the—what's the word I'm looking for—digressing or dying *versus* seeing them gone. That was extremely hard. My mom—a lot of the people were around her age. They were coming to see Aunt Gwen but hanging-out with my mother. We would take a quick walk somewhere and I would tag along.

I developed relationships with people, and then they were gone. It may have given me a little bit of PTSD to think about it that way now that I'm processing it, because death was really close to me. Being a part of that world, it was really close. Closer than anybody else would be able to experience.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you ever feel at risk of contracting HIV?

Dana Davis: No, because I had a great educator. My grandmother explained it, "You can't catch it this way." At the beginning, we were like, "How?" "You're not gonna catch it sipping off a cup." The things that were so scary to people, I was educated. I can educate someone else on what not to do or, "You're fine. You can hug somebody. You can do this."

Certain things you need to be concerned about, the wounds and things of that nature, but we weren't really exposed to that. I never had a fear factor. It gave me a sense of empathy. It humanized people and did not make them demonized. A lot of people would demonize folks with AIDS and HIV or any type of disease that is claimed to be nasty or whatever it may be, or sexual.

It really allowed me, as a kid, to have an understanding. I don't know if another part of my brain was able to work that out because of it. I'm able to deal with things that people are just not able to deal with today as it goes.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did it politicize you in any way? I know for some people the AIDS crisis did.

Dana Davis: For me, not really. I was okay with being in the back. I was okay supporting. I wasn't the one that was gonna rally. Even though I am a rallier when it's necessary. I can get in front. I do what I need to do. I will fight to the end, but I never had the drive to do it. No. Not really, I would just ask, "What do I need to do?" That was always my role.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. Yes.

Dana Davis: I'm gonna mute myself, so I can go ahead and get that out real quick and I'll be right back. Okay?

Kristyn Scorsone: Go ahead.

Dana Davis: I've been trying to—sorry.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. No. Don't worry about it, it's fine. Were the balls every year? Were they more often than that?

Dana Davis: I remember a few, so I think at one point, there were, over a course of a few years, a few of the balls. I wanna say at the least—Yeah. I wanna say the balls are every year. I feel like there may have been more, but I'm not 100-percent sure if it was more than once a year. I know there were a few of the balls. Of course, James had attempted to bring the balls back. We had two balls recently.

I don't know if you remember those two balls that we did recently. I was in the background. I did all the décor for the one. Then in 2014 I believe and 2015, those are the two— Did we do one in '15? Yes. We did back-to-back, 2014 and I think the other one was in '15. Then there was another ball after that. I don't know if I was able to attend that one. I didn't do the décor for that. It was just the last two of those.

I can't recall. I want to say it was a few. They may have been before I was old enough to really be a part of it to be honest. I believe that Jersey balls came secondary to New York balls. They were doing balls in the city first, then we brought the Ball Scene here. I want to say that's the case. I can fact check myself though.

Kristyn Scorsone: That sounds right to me. That makes sense. You also said you were one of only a few people that were out in high school. What was that experience like?

Dana Davis: It was interesting. I want to say I found that people were coming out to me a lot. I was the person to talk to when people decided they wanted to come out or even talk about anything, because I had a girlfriend. My girlfriend did not go to school with us. I was popular without trying to be popular around that. A lot of crushes, that's how I would find out people were gay or thinking about it, because everyone was like, "Dana, I like you."

It would be one of those types of situations. I think it's because I had that courage, and I was out. Oddly enough, there were way more aggressive women or AGs that were out, were in the closet, but kind of out. Does that make sense? They would play on the basketball team. I was knowing the stories, but for the most part, there wasn't a lot of feminine women who would come to the forefront and be out, to be honest.

It wasn't until my senior year that a lot of women would start to talk about things or try out something. After high school, I'm like, "Really? All that time you were saying you weren't, and now you're married to a woman or you're with a woman?" I think it's timing.

I have always been mature, even in high school, from freshman year, my friends were seniors. (When they left) Then juniors were now my friends. I was always ahead of everyone else.

When I graduated in my senior class, I knew a lot of people, but I wasn't friends with anybody, really. All my friends left.

Because of my maturity level, a lot of the times, people would come to me and talk to me about how they were feeling, what they were thinking, and it was such a normal part of my life. It never felt like a stigma or a thing. Thinking back, in middle school, I struggled with it, because I really didn't know.

I remember one really bad situation. I used to get picked on in middle school, a lot, because I was a mature kid, quiet. I was mature. I developed early. I was confusing to little boys; I was confusing to little girls. They liked me, but they didn't want to like me, because all of the reasons why you have the little pettiness. I remember one in particular, one young lady, I was really skinny when I was in middle school. She had really thick thighs, a nice shape, and I looked over to her and I said, "I really like your thighs. You have nice thighs." Then she started to say, "Dana's gay."

It became a bullying type of thing *versus* simply just being a compliment. I'm thinking this is my friend. You know how kids are. That was the only experience I ever had in school that made me feel that way. When I was in high school, I don't know why, but I never had the fear factor. It is what it is, this is what I am now, and I embraced it completely.

It could be because I had older friends. My girlfriend at the time was 19 and I'm in high school. It was a norm over there. It's weird

to say. Some of her friends struggled more than I did. I was helping them through it. I would coach—I would just talk to people. I would say, “It’s okay. You can do it this way. You can talk to your parents.” I guess at that time, coaching and mentoring people through the process of coming out and being themselves—nothing can happen.

That was my biggest thing all the time. Nothing can really happen. It’s just you, people are gonna feel how they’re gonna feel regardless. You can date men and they’ll still feel the same way. You can date a woman and they’re still gonna feel the same way. That was me. It’s really interesting. I really never struggled with being a lesbian.

Kristyn Scorsone: That is cool because I went to high school in the 90s and I did not find it easy. It sounds like you were really, by being yourself, unapologetically, you created a safe space for the people around you to be themselves. I wish I had known you back then. That’s really awesome.

Dana Davis: Yeah. Come on. Let’s talk. That’d be great. My wife says the same thing. She didn’t come out until—Weirdly enough, she never really came out to her parents until a week before we got married. I’m sure everybody knew. I’m sure everyone knew. She didn’t officially come out to her dad.

She is Dominican. Born in the Dominican Republic, up until the age of five, I believe, and she came to New York. You just don’t talk about it. She’s Hispanic, you just don’t talk about it. You don’t say that I am this, it’s just that. Right? She came out to her friends in her 20s. She’s known all her life, but she didn’t come out till then.

It was difficult for her as well, she said. That’s not something that she felt comfortable enough to even expose. I can remember conversations—and we’ve been together almost 20 years—I can remember conversations that she was having with her friends about her coming out. I’m like, “Are you going to really talk about this. You didn’t know?” I’m looking at this like, “You’re so not making any sense. Are you really serious about that?” It’s really interesting to say the least when you say that. A lot of people have that experience.

There are even people who were in my school that just never said anything to me that are now openly gay. I thank my grandmother. I really do. The exposure—I talk about this now—when you expose

your children to things and have them understand it—not just the exposure, but the understanding of how things work. The fear factor of being exposed to things that would change their mind and change who they are and all of that, to me is just all your fears and your thoughts and has a direct effect on kids.

The fact that my grandmother exposed us early to things, down to sexuality, really helped in my adult life, in my teenage life. Did I always use all the tools? No. Was I smarter than I should have been when it came—should I have been smarter? Yes. I can always go back and think about, “What if I didn’t have it?” I don’t think I would have been able to be as comfortable if I didn’t see it. If I wasn’t in the Ball Scenes, if I didn’t get exposed to lesbians and gays and LGBTQ, if I wasn’t in that world, my understanding about myself would have varied. It would have been different.

Kristyn Scorsone: A hundred percent. Were there other places that you associated with LGBTQ people aside from high school and the balls at this time?

Dana Davis: I’m sure there were.

Kristyn Scorsone: And home, I guess.

Dana Davis: And home. It’s so crazy because it was really my life. I don’t think I ever took the time to feel like I was in a particular area, it was just what I did and who I was. I’m the type of person that has so many different types of friends and people. I go to different areas all the time. I have little cliques of individuals that I hang out with for certain things. I don’t know if I can speak to a lot of additional exposure other than what I’ve been exposed to recently or as an adult and that still connects back to James.

It still connects to my history, really. We’re still talking about Newark. We’re still talking about Jersey. I want to say no, not really, nothing different, because it feels like it’s always been a continuation. I’ve always been a part of something. When the Ball Scene was popping up again, my name was mentioned, I’m there. If there’s an event going on, if there is something that I need to support, I’ll be there.

If there was an organization that needed help with something, I’m gonna show up. You may not always know that it was Dana Davis doing things, but I’m walking around in the back. I’m in the Scenes, peeking and doing and helping and supporting in some way, whether it’s through publication or maybe I throw a website

together for somebody or something that I would do to support. I don't know if it will be anything that I can really say that stands out outside of I feel like I've been into so many things.

Kristyn Scorsone: Makes sense. Yeah. You're in high school—when you finished high school, you went to Essex Community College. Right? You said Essex—

Dana Davis: Not in that particular order, but yes. I ended up going to Essex. I went to DeVry, and then I went to Essex. Then I went to Georgian Court University. At the time when I was in Georgian Court University, it was an all-girls school. I was older too. I was about 25 when I decided to go to stay on campus for a semester or two semesters, which was very interesting. I think the most interesting thing I've ever seen in my entire life.

Remember, although I was only 25, I was always older in my head. It was a different feeling for me to now be amongst these young, 18 to whatever age, 21-year-olds who are loud and going crazy. Again, I guess, now that I think about it, I was a lesbian, the token lesbian, and had the kind of energy that people would draw to me at that time too. I met one of my closest friends today, she's a lot younger than me, but I met her literally at the college.

It was the weirdest thing, because she came to my door, and she knocked on the door, and I opened this door, and she has in this towel. I'm like, "These things really happen like this in college? Is this how it works? I'm engaged." I wasn't married at this time, but to say the least, she was upset about something, I don't know. Something that my roommate had done, and we became friends from there. I always tell her the story. You came to the door with a towel. I don't know about you, but I was confused, I didn't know what was happening.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: Yeah. Excuse me. Hold on one second.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Go ahead. I don't know Georgian Court University.

Dana Davis: Oh. Georgian Court University is in Lakewood, NJ.

Kristyn Scorsone: Okay.

Dana Davis: Now it's co-ed, but it was an all-girls school when I went there. I always said I wanted to go to an all-girls school. I thought I was

going to go to an all-girls high school. I don't know what I was thinking, but in my mind, that's what I was gonna do. Now that I think back, a lot of it was because I wanted to be able to explore girls, so an all-girls school was a perfect set-up for me. It just never happened until I decided to go to college.

I just happened to fall into—I don't know why I even ended up choosing Georgian Court University, but I did like the fact that it was an all-girls school as well. That was really cool. When I was there, I did a few things along with LGBTQ as well. Nothing huge, but I was always support. I was always attending or signing a petition, or whatever work they had to do, I was a part of it.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's in South Jersey, right?

Dana Davis: Yeah. South Jersey. Mm-hmm. It's in Lakewood. Now it's co-ed. I'm sure they've done a lot more. I went to Essex County College for about a year and three months or something. I fast track education all the time. For me it was, "What do I need to do to get in and out?" Unless they're paying me to go here, I'm not staying.

I was able to get scholarships, so that worked out great. I love learning. I love school. I really do. I just know that I'm not going back until someone else is paying for it. As long as that is the case, I'm there for it. I love to learn. You can pay me to be a student, literally, I'll do that. I'm fine with that. At Essex, I worked out my plan, and I was able to get out really quickly and transfer over to Georgian Court and I finished my education there.

Kristyn Scorsone: What did you go for?

Dana Davis: Interesting—this is a long story. When I was at Essex, it was—Well, let's go back to DeVry. DeVry, it was business information systems. Then I went over to Essex and early childhood education is what I got a degree in. Then, I was gonna be a psychologist, a school psychologist or my other thing was, I was going to be a teacher. Right? I was an English major as a teacher as well.

I love chemistry, so I was taking chemistry. I decided to be a chemistry major. Then realized I would need to do an extra year in school, so I didn't want to do that. I had so many psychology classes, that I would take as electives, because I love psychology. It was the thing I loved to stud, so I would take that. I looked at all of my credits—I could graduate this year with a psych degree. That's



what I decided to do. I took a few more classes and I was good. I was able to get out with my psychology degree.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: That was the best decision I made. Actually, everything, every bit of schooling I apply today. Every bit of it, literally. From business information systems, you can give me a computer application. I will be able to look at it, learn it, digest it, and teach it the next day. That's my superpower. Everything I learned there I continued doing it. Graphic design, I continued doing it.

Working with kids, I loved working with children. I just felt very suffocated with school systems, so that wasn't going to work for me. I took a position, when I was still at Georgian Court, to be an administrative assistant at the a Union, Downtown Newark. I don't know if you know where that is. It's 1199J; it's down across from Penn Station. They had a training program.what did they call it—training fund—a place where they would do training for the nurses and the medical field.

I started there. They asked me if I could train the senior citizens Microsoft Word. I never did anything like that. Kids, yes, but I've never done this. I was like, "You know, I can probably work it out." I fell in love watching them learn how to do things and I'm teaching them and I'm coaching them and showing them. It was like, "I want to do this. I want to do more of this." It started with Microsoft Word, down to all kinds of applications. I started training at Essex County College.

I started to train at other county colleges as an adjunct. That's really when my world opened up. I was exposed to soft skills and started training soft skills. It really took off from there for me. I became assistant director at the training fund while I was still in school. From there, my career just went crazy. I don't know how many years ago that was. It was in 2008. We're now in 2023, so I've been doing it for a while.

Now I am a VP running organization development and training for the whole footprint of a corporation. It's really interesting work that I do.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. I would say, I don't mean to jump around, but even your television show seems to me like education. You're using your platform to educate people.

Dana Davis: Yeah. With the show, the goal is to have entrepreneurs. I want to feature entrepreneurs who are in the business of transformational services and products. I look for people who are, literally, when someone uses their service, transforming them somehow. They're changing their lives and how they're having an impact on their life. I really just have them come up and talk about what they do and provide tips and tricks for people and for my audience to be able to walk away feeling like they've been refreshed.

You'll see the topics are like career development and we're talking about spirituality and we're talking about—I don't know if you got a chance to watch the one called "City Stoop", which is literally featuring me as well as my guest. there's three of us. I'm hosting, but I'm also a part of the conversation in this particular episode. I have a psychologist and a psychiatrist. They're both in the life (LGBTQ) and we are talking about growing up in inner city and being successful. How did we make it? The story is really great.

I am also in the midst of creating my own network. This is something that's ongoing right now for me, a big, huge project, and I plan to feature a lot more around our community and what's going on. I'm a little limited where I am now. I can do way more. I plan on doing way more. I just like to give people a platform. My voice is my voice, but we make change and make moves when we can support others, give other people the same opportunities that we have.

I have the opportunity to have a platform. I don't want people to just come and listen to me. There's so many other interesting people in the world that I'd love to feature and give an opportunity to talk about things.

Kristyn Scorsone: What's the name of your show and where do folks watch it?

Dana Davis: Yes. It is *Refresh with Dana*. Currently, it is on ZondraTV network. Soon, it will be on the Dana Davis Network. You can go online and look up ZondraTV, or you can actually find it on an App, ZondraTV, Once you have the app, you can watch the show.

I think it's on Apple TV, Amazon, Roku. I believe we are going to have the show featured for a short, limited amount of time on Hulu,

Kristyn Scorsone: I don't know if this is too big of a question, but how does one create a network?

Dana Davis: It's a streaming network. It is literally going through the process of finding a few things. One, it is finding your actual platform that will host the information. Two, being able to have some sponsorships so you can stay alive. The other piece would be, where you're gonna record your content or where you decide to get your content from.

For me, I really want to record content. I have shows that I would like to produce. I am actually the producer of my show as well. I produce it and host it. I am looking forward to producing more shows. I have some people already lined up to actually put some content on there. It will happen. Am I gonna be my own channel? I don't know, but I'm getting there. That's the goal.

I'm trying to sit in Oprah's seat. I'm like, "All right. Move over a little bit. I've got a little extra, you know, leave room for me." This network just gives me freedom to do the things that I love to do, which is feature entrepreneurs, Talk about the things that some people are afraid to even talk about and Have people like you featured.

I know this is about me, right now, but you are amazing. I want to be able to give—the platform is important, and then I can give you a seat at my show, or I can give you a space on the network.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: That's the goal.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's really cool. I'm wondering too, what I've noticed a lot particularly in Newark, but I'm sure elsewhere too, it seems like it's been entrenched since the 90s, where black women in general, have turned more and more to entrepreneurship. The statistics are really big for black women.

Dana Davis: Right.

Kristyn Scorsone: In Newark, often the black, queer women that I speak to, are entrepreneurs and have different businesses that they're working on, or even entrepreneur endeavors in terms of art or profits and things like that. Why do you think that's the case, I guess?

Dana Davis: That's a really interesting question, a really important one, I think. One thing that, for me, I can speak for me, because I am an entrepreneur at heart, but I think my driving force has always been that sometimes I'm not offered the same opportunities. Right? For

instance, I'm currently in a industry, it has a certain look. I am one of very few African-American women, or even minorities, at my current job.

It takes a lot longer, unfortunately, for us to get to where we need to be or would like to be or get the recognition in the same way. For instance, there's certain things asked of me or that people ask me that they won't ask my counterpart, my male, white counterpart. For example, when I was hired there, the main question I got, more often than not is where do you come from? What did you do prior to this? Where did you come from? Where did you go to school? What did you do prior to this?

I thought that was a really interesting thing. I always had to tell my whole story about why I'm qualified to do the job, because that's really what it comes down to. Whereas my whole entire staff, my whole team is white. I am the only black woman on my team and I'm leading the team. None of the male, white counterparts have ever been asked that question since they've worked with the company, not any of them.

I ask. I have other friends who are there, African-American women and they say the same thing, "Yeah. They asked me where I—" It's almost like we're questioned quicker about how did you get here *versus*—especially, the higher you go in the organization, "How did you end up making it?" *versus* someone else who they're never asking the CEO, "Where did you come from?" or asking one of the regionals like, "What was the—How did you get here? Who hired you?" that type of feel.

I get it way more often than not, way more often. People will say I'm interesting, or this and that, and I'm asking you, but I'm like, "No. You're asking me for a different reason." It's not necessarily just that. It's not asked to them, to me, it's inquired about. I can see almost a, "Let me lead with the explanation on where I found her. Let me validate her through introduction," which I find to be really interesting as well.

"Dana has a background in this. She has a—" I'm like, "Yeah. We don't do that for everyone." They're not the first organization and I know they're probably not going to be the last organization, but I think that has a lot to do with it as well, being able to have the opportunities. If you can't get where you need to get, you're just gonna create the avenue for yourself. That's my thing. I'm just going to create it. I can't sit around and wait.

If you're at a company for five years, and you're watching everyone around you get promoted into these other leadership positions, when you're more than qualified, my capability statement is huge, the impact I've had, but I find it a lot harder. I have to prove a lot more. It can be disheartening, so instead of sitting in it, I know I've got other work to do.

I'm just gonna do it. You guys can just watch me do this. I'm gonna be here until I can't afford to be here no more. I'm losing money while I'm here. I gotta go. That's the mentality that I try to keep. That's my story. I've spoken to other women who have decided to do the same thing. They may say the same thing. That trapped feeling of not being able to get to the point where we can control our lives in that way. That was huge for me.

Kristyn Scorsone: Absolutely. When did you start to make entrepreneurial moves for yourself?

Dana Davis: When I think back, I've been working since I was 14. I think I wasn't even supposed to be working at that age. I remember going into Wet Seal and getting a job.

Kristyn Scorsone: I forgot about Wet Seal.

Dana Davis: I don't even know how I was working there, but I was. I literally had a job. I've always wanted to figure out things on my own. I've always been very independent as a child too, growing up. My first entrepreneurial for anything was with graphic design. I started making pamphlets for someone who was going on a trip.

When I look back at what it was, it was so corny, nothing exciting. I learned computers from my grandfather early when Apple was still Apple Macintosh. I remember learning computers early. I knew that I love computers. I was fond of graphic design. I would use Word documents. That was my earliest.

James Credle was essential in helping me become an entrepreneur and do more things. He would make me take money from him for everything I did, every little publication or letter I had to put together. I've been working with him for years, since I was young. "I need you to do this," or "I want you to do this," or "You sort this." He'd be like, "I have to pay you." I'm like, "No. That's fine." "No. I have to pay you."

I established my company which was PR Designs, and I started working with him, designing. I have all my books and stuff that I

started doing with him. He was my kick-off to being an entrepreneur. I used to do hair in high school for money. At prom, I did everybody's hair. I'd do twists and locks and I would go to different places.

I've been an entrepreneur for a very long time. I've been making my way a very long time. He was really the driving force by telling me to establish myself. It was okay to take money. "How much are you worth?" I would tell him a price, and he would double it.

From there, I've been working with him forever, literally, until he was gone. Until he left this earth, he was a big part of that. I knew, once I could manage money and I could manage this piece of it, I just went for it. I had a school as well before COVID happened, I closed the doors, maybe a couple of months before COVID. It was called Project Refresh Adult Learning Center in Kearny.

Kristyn Scorsone: In Kearny.

Dana Davis: Mm-hmm. I had been consulting for many years before I got back into corporate. I didn't get back into corporate until 2018.

Kristyn Scorsone: Where in Kearny? I'm from Kearny.

Dana Davis: Kearny Point. Do you know Kearny Point?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yes. Isn't that the new area?

Dana Davis: Yeah. Uh-huh. I opened up a school there in 2016. I kept it open until a little after '19. Yeah. Right before the world shut down. It was perfect timing. I probably could've waited a little while longer, but I couldn't do both. I was having a hard time managing both.

Kristyn Scorsone: I took a really cool soap-making class there. I remember that.

Dana Davis: Oh. Yes. With LaShauna. Right?

Kristyn Scorsone: I think so.

Dana Davis: Yeah. She was on the first floor. I was on the third floor in the same building.

Kristyn Scorsone: I bought so much soap-making stuff. She did a really great job.

Dana Davis: I was a part of Rising Tide Capital as well. I don't know if you are familiar with them. They're in Newark as well, down off of Broad

Street, but originated in Jersey City. There they had a couple of programs that feature entrepreneurs as well. They have a community business academy. I went to their community business academy to help take my business to the next level and understand business. It was a 12-week course and very beneficial.

I literally went there and they helped me open up the Project Refresh. I went back to Rising Tide teach. I was one of the instructors and taught there for a year. Now I am hoping to start a leadership program there, eventually, working with them to teach leadership for entrepreneurs sometime in the near future.

That program was really great. I think there's a lot of people in Newark who *benefit from* that program, a lot. It's a really good resource as well for people who are, women especially, entrepreneurs and trying to figure out what way to go, where to go. They're really good for that. I just did a little plug for them.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: They were essential to me, so I wanted to pay a little tribute for the work that they've done.

Kristyn Scorsone: For James Credle, is that how you started getting involved in—When did you get involved in Circle of Friends?

Dana Davis: Yes. Through James Credle. I want to say, I've been with Circle of Friends for as long as I can remember. I wasn't an active member at the time. I was pretty much doing everything in the background. If it came down to understanding the finances or understanding mailing lists and communications going out, I was always in the background with that. I handled a lot.

I was like his assistant really. It wasn't just with Circle of Friends it was with MACT and with a couple of the organizations he was a part of, I was in the midst of all of them. The Circle of Friends was and is really dear to me, because I won my first award through them for the work that I've done. Yes. That was huge. I really believe in what James' vision was and is. Right?

The way he would love on us, I say everyone that he was able to touch, was next level. Everyone has a special story with James, I believe. I don't think I'm unique in that way. I could say that I benefited from being very close to him and being able to work with him so closely, to learn a lot from him in how things should be and what to do and the grace, that connection around that and turning

up when you need to turn up. He would tell you off in a second if he needed to in his very nice way. I learned a lot about the Ball Scene as well, because I took part in the planning. Whenever we get back in that, I'll be front and center with that as well.

James introduced me to Circle of Friends. I didn't miss a Circle of Friends event. I was there. The older I got, the more I would do. For the most part it was anywhere, whether it was a boat ride, whether it was at his house, whatever was going on, I was going to be a part of Circle of Friends. I really truly believe it worked.

Kristyn Scorsone: I remember the boat ride. I was on the boat.

Dana Davis: Were you on the boat? Yeah. I was on the boat too. I think I received an award that time too. You don't see my face. I think people see my face a lot more now, but you don't see my face, because I never really wanted to be seen. I just wanted to do; I wanted to support. That was always my thing.

Whatever I can do for you James. Whenever I can, I work it out. That is my gift. Whether it's fixing up a brand-new computer or helping you pick out one. Whatever it is that's going to get you close to the cause, was my thing. I was always there.

Kristyn Scorsone: The Circle of Friends, did he run it out of his home or did he have a space?

Dana Davis: Yes. Circle of Friends, for the most part, was run out of his home. There were places we would go to have meetings and he would always be going to events. His home was almost like his office. Everyone went there for meetings. Everything that you can think of that he was planning on doing, there was a meeting, somehow, in his home. You wanted to be there because he would cook.

If we're meeting at the house, come with an empty stomach, because he's going to set us up with a feast. No one complained about going to James' house. It was better than going to a restaurant. It was better than going to somewhere else. You knew you were going to have a nice, warm, home-cooked meal from James with all the little fixings. He loved to put on a nice catering-type of event. Even if it was just a meeting and we were just attending.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. Do you have any favorite memories of working with him?



Dana Davis: Because we had such a personal relationship as well, I don't have a favorite *per se*. It was always something. We were always laughing about something. We were always joking about something. He supported everything I did as well. He didn't miss a beat. The last time we were together, the last time I saw him, the last thing we said to each other outside of a phone call was at my premiere for my TV show.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh.

Dana Davis: I had a memory that came over my phone recently—the sweetest message from him. He stood in front of everyone. I remember that, because I kicked it off saying things about him and telling him how grateful I was for how big of a piece he played in what was happening at this premiere party. Then he got up and said some amazing things. I want to say that may be the best memory because that was the time when I heard how he saw me.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah.

Dana Davis: Does that make sense? Prior to that, I knew he was always proud of me. He would always say that. He would always show up at every single thing that I did or any event that I was having. He was drawn to tears with what he said, that was just so powerful. One day I can share it with you.

It woke me up to know that I have to continue all the work, not just mine. Especially, when we lost him, I was like, "Okay. The show must go on. That's exactly what he's saying. The show must go on. We have to continue this." Jae and I have been without question, we've been keeping it going. We're trying to elevate it, elevating it to the next level, to where I know he wanted to go, but he was completely satisfied with what he was doing. I know he would be, now that we have it, he would be excited about things, where we're trying to take it and what we're trying to do with it.

Kristyn Scorsone: Circle of Friends is currently you, Jae Quinlan, and your grandma. Right?

Dana Davis: Yes. She's retiring from it. She's like, "I have to retire." We're keeping her on as a consultant. She comes and she consults, but we're definitely open for additional members. We've had a couple of people come to us and say they would like to be a part of it. We're formalizing a few things now. It may have been very informal because it was James, and James was like, "Hey," and people would just say yes to anything James asked.

People are not that fond to say yes to us automatically. We're formalizing a few pieces of this. We do have some key people that are deciding to join, so that's good. We are looking to have a good, kick-off meeting in the new year.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's amazing.

Dana Davis: Yeah. It's really good. We're gonna keep this going. It has to. It cannot stop here. It has to go. I know that you were one of the awardees.

Kristyn Scorsone: Thank you.

Dana Davis: You have no idea how special, you in particular, your ceremony was. It really was extremely special. It was our first one without him.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah.

Dana Davis: More importantly, the awards were personal and meaningful. We had, hands down, the most amazing people that we could honor that day, including yourself. You were a part of history, definitely. You were a part of history.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. That's always going to be a good, fond memory for me, that evening. That was a great evening. It would have been better if he would have been there.

Dana Davis: Right.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. It was really special.

Dana Davis: It really was. It was really special. One I won't forget. I remember my first. I remember the ones where I received awards, and I will remember this particular one.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. It felt magical. It was really amazing to be a part of. I thank you all for that.

Dana Davis: Of course. You deserve it.

Kristyn Scorsone: Maybe I should ask you—you had mentioned something about being 19 and leaving, and that there was a story around that.

Dana Davis:

Oh, yeah. I have this thing where, when I was a kid, I didn't understand it, but I just really had this drive for independence. I really needed to find my way. I decided at 19, I was just gonna have my own place. I was gonna move out. I was gonna start life. I probably could have waited a few more years, now that I think about it, cause life was just life. Right? It was gonna happen.

The story is, I think I told it already, it was leaving and literally saying, "I'm never coming back. I'm moving out on my own," to literally coming back. At this time, me and my wife took over the first floor of the three-family home, so we could help my grandmother. That was extremely rewarding in a sense, when I think about it that way, because I didn't ever think that I would end up back there, that I would be a part of the family home, that I would do those things.

I always looked at my grandmother as giving up her whole life for everyone else. Right? I was so against it, like, "I'm never giving up my whole life." Even if I have kids, I can figure it out by this time. That was always my thing. That's exactly what I did, like, "Okay. I need to go back." I talked with my wife, "Oh. What are we going to do? Okay. We have to go back." That's what we did until my grandmother recently moved to where she's living now. She's very happy there.

Yeah. That was the story. I told a little bit about having to turn and come back home, but being in that home, in the center of Newark, I've watched it change from literally being cobblestones on the streets. Across the street there were no families on the block. Across the street was a tire shop and there was homes, to now it being completely a dairy company, factories, surrounded by industrial fields now. Now they're building up the homes again.

All the homes were falling apart. Now they're buying them up and building them up. Newark looks completely different. The Newark that I knew there growing up as a kid going to my great-grandmother's house during the summers, because my mom worked, we had a fish market and properties and everything. Riding on the cobblestones and making all kinds of funny noises when we were kids. We liked the cobblestones. All of that is all memories because it's all different now.

Kristyn Scorsone:

What do you think about the revitalization?

Dana Davis:

I think it's a great thing as long as the opportunities are still awarded for the people who are there. That's the disadvantage. I

can speak to that being that my great-great-grandparents lived there. My great-great-grandmother lived in the same place that I slept. I never met her, but I know I can feel her energy in that space. The fight to keep the house up and do those types of things for people to just come in and be able to raise the property value so high that you can't even afford to live in those areas anymore.

It's a bit of a disadvantage. If people have the opportunities to still be in Newark and raise their kids and their grandkids and even their kids are able to raise their kids, I think that's a blessing. I'm one of the lucky ones, even though I did sell the property. It was for a good cause. It was my gift back to my grandmother. Now she can live the life that she's wanted to live all these years.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. That is so great.

Dana Davis: Yes.

Kristyn Scorsone: How did you meet your wife?

Dana Davis: I met her at work. I was working at a company in Newark. We met in Newark, downtown Newark. I kept seeing this woman passing me with two cell phones on her face. She always looked mean. It was really interesting. She always looked mean, but she had two phones, so she had to be aggravated always doing this(busy). She would go in a conference room that was literally right by my desk. At that time, I was in customer service in this particular company.

I'd watch her come out and I'm like, "Oh. She's really cute." Now, I wasn't available at the time and I don't know what she was doing, but I wasn't really looking to meet her. I thought she was adorable. It's so funny. I had to go to her department to look for someone. I asked her if she knew this particular person and she asked me to pay her then she would help.

From that, we laughed about it and she finally told me who the person was and that they weren't there. When I got back to my desk, I had an email from her. I'm like, "Who is this Ana Medrano [01:21:21] person?" I literally had to go up the stairs. It wasn't even that far of a walk before she emailed me to say it was nice meeting me.

How did she even know my full name? I don't remember giving her my full name. How did she know that was me? She asked around, and apparently, she already knew about me and who I was. She emailed me and it started from there. She asked me out and I

said, “Whatever.” The rest was history. We ended up falling in love and being together for 19 years this year. Actually, we just celebrated our anniversary on the fifth of September.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. Congratulations.

Dana Davis: Thank you. Yeah. That’s how I met her, at work. She was a different type of woman. I’ve never really known anybody who culturally was like her. I didn’t know that she was Dominican when I first met her. She had locks at the time and so did I. I had locks at the time as well. She was quiet but outgoing at the same time. She has such a nice calm manner to her, calming manner.

She took me on dates and we explored. She took me everywhere, literally, everywhere. I wanna say, in the first year we were together, I was in Vegas. I was in Puerto Rico. She would take me everywhere. It was refreshing to meet someone who wasn’t from my original circle. She’s from New York. She’s only in Jersey because of me. I was able to explore her world and get to know her world. It was nice. She explored my world.

We have this funny story that we talk about when it comes to rice. Her family is Dominican. Rice is the main attraction. It’s a pile of rice and then meat and a little vegetable. With us, my grandmother, we cook rice as a side that we have once in a while. we may have rice today, we may have a potato. Rice is never the star of the show.

I think my grandmother cooked for her and I served her a plate.

I gave her two tablespoons of rice on the side. The main thing is the meat and everything. At that time, my grandmother made the rice with butter. It’s Southern style, the way we make the rice. She gets the rice and she’s staring at it. She didn’t want to be rude but said, “Is this it?” She saw the pot was small. She knew it wasn’t enough rice for her to ask for seconds. She’s calculating in her head; how many people are eating out of this one pot of rice. She was like, “Can I have a little bit more rice? Just a little bit?” I said, “Sure.”

I gave her a little bit more rice, I mean a little bit. Interesting thing is, she ate the rice and was like, “What was in the rice?” I was like, “Just regular rice the way everybody cooks it.” She said, “Was it butter in the rice?” I was like, “Yeah. It was butter.” She said, “Oh. Okay.” She never said anything. It wasn’t till later that she tells the story to someone else, “You know. First of all, she gave me a

tablespoon of rice and she put butter in it. I don't eat butter in my rice."

Kristyn Scorsone: She was panicking.

Dana Davis: She was so polite about it, but the reality of it, she was devastated that she had to eat rice, and it wasn't even good rice to her because she had all this butter and stuff in it. I probably put extra butter in there trying to do a little more for her.

Kristyn Scorsone: *[Crosstalk 01:25:36]*

Dana Davis: Right. Then the flipside of it is, I go to her house and her mom cooks for me. Her mother didn't speak English at all. I met this woman, her mom, and she's talking to me. She's gonna serve me this plate of food she cooked for us. Well, when she puts that plate of food in front of me, my eyes went really big, because it was like a mountain of rice. A mountain. Like she literally took the pot of rice that my grandmother made and turned it upside down and put it on a plate. That's how much rice was there.

Then there was two pieces of chicken and no vegetables. There were fried plantain that they call maduros. Right? I was so nervous that I knew I could not eat but a little bit of this rice and I felt like I would be disrespectful to not finish the plate. I was almost crying because I'm stuffing myself to eat. My wife said, "You don't have to eat it all, that's fine." "I can't."

I only ate a little bit of this rice and a piece of chicken. Well, I'll tell you, by the end of that summer, I was literally taking my finger and grabbing the last pieces of grains of rice, because I was now accustomed to eating that much rice. I changed the way I cook rice, everything for her. Our relationship was built on—the biggest challenge — figuring out the rice in our life.

She'll say, "I can't have a house without rice." I had to figure out how to cook the rice the way her mama cooked it and make the rice so I can stay married. That was the big thing. Don't make rice with butter, make sure it's a lot, and you'll be happily married.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you throw rice at your wedding, or was she like, "No. You don't waste rice."

Dana Davis: You don't waste rice. It can only be served cooked.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: That's our story. We always talk about the rice story. It's two different, opposite feelings around this rice. In this house now, I cannot go without. If I don't have anything else in this house to eat, we have to have rice.

Kristyn Scorsone: I love that story. That's so cool. Definitely you guys love each other because you've both suffered rice problems.

Dana Davis: Yeah. We've suffered. I've gained a lot of weight, eating a lot of rice, just like that. I kept saying, "I don't know too many skinny girls that have all these rolls in their back." "No. You're no longer skinny. You used to be skinny prior to meeting a Dominican woman. Now you are nice and healthy. You eat."

Kristyn Scorsone: I always know when I gain weight because my butt starts knocking things over.

Dana Davis: You're like, "Oh. Wait."

Kristyn Scorsone: I don't know how I'm sized anymore to get through things.

Dana Davis: Right.

Kristyn Scorsone: I'm trying to think if I have any other questions for you. Do you feel like there's any topics that I haven't touched on that you wish I had?

Dana Davis: I think we've talked about a lot. I told you about history with my grandmother and me growing up and my exposure, especially around Newark. We haven't talked about anything around—I've had some uncomfortable situations around my sexuality, having conversations, especially in college. My earlier years in college, before I went to Georgian Court, I remember having really hard conversations. Not even having conversations but being told how terrible I was as a person, because I was gay.

Kristyn Scorsone: By students?

Dana Davis: Students. Uh-huh.—this was when I was at DeVry. A lot of the people at DeVry were all ranges of ages and all kinds of individuals, most people traveled. Again, I'm very open. I never really dealt with any hate before in that way. If I did, it wasn't enough to make a difference. I had the experience a few times being told that I was gonna go to hell.

One student said things that were really terrible that had me sit for a second, because I didn't know how to deal with that. I will always let things fall off my shoulder. I can still see him, hear him. I know exactly where we were. I remember the tone. I remember the emotions. I remember the anxiety I felt, being in that space, I didn't feel safe at all.

It takes me back to what's happening currently and how our people are feeling very unsafe in certain circumstances, because of things that are happening, the laws that are being passed. The ability to outright be hateful. Not only just hate somebody but take action on that hate. If I have the ability on my platform to bring awareness, that is something that has always been important to me.

To know that someone could just look at you and say just because you love another person that is the same sex, that you are in a position of evil or wrong or filthy or all the things that I heard, that's been said to me. I've known people who are openly—not openly gay, but are gay, that have not said that they are, that refuse to admit to it, but will tell you how wrong you are, if that makes sense, because it challenges their beliefs and what they've been taught, or how they've grown up, to the point where I had a gentleman, literally cover his ears and sing out loud gospel songs to not hear what I was saying because I was making too much sense.

Those types of situations remind me that I've been lucky to have the support system, to have the ability to be as open and free as I have been the majority of my life, if not all of my life. I don't want to take that for granted because people are having these struggles today, because it could be me. Just because it hasn't been me, it could be me. In any way that I can support the cause around that, I am here for it.

Any way that we can push forth ways to protect—that's the only thing I wanted to add. I've had great opportunities. I'm blessed to have grown up in a part of the world that I was exposed to, that allowed me to feel as free as I feel today. I am definitely aware that my situation is not the most common across the board.

Kristyn Scorsone: Mm-hmm.

Dana Davis: The more I can teach myself, the more I hear, the more I see, the more I can do. I want that to be known that I get that I was privileged to have been exposed and grew up in it. It puts a different type of perspective—I'm hoping that parents and anyone who may read this, hear this, understand that what my grandmother



did, was because she cared enough to expose me to a world that most people saw as different, evil, and misunderstood, or a horrible choice. Right? Because of that, I'm able to pass it forward and do those things.

My godchildren, my nieces, and nephews, they're exposed. I talk to them. Whether their parents like it or not, they're gonna know, because this is important. The kids that I can talk to right now, that are going into their 20s, their thought process is a lot different. Their acceptance, their understanding, their ability to be empathetic is completely different because their Titi Dana and Titi Anna have always loved each other and didn't hide who we were. They knew.

Kristyn Scorsone: What about with Sakia Gunn were you around when that happened?

Dana Davis: I was. That was really difficult. As a feminine woman, I don't have to worry about men attacking me in that way or thinking about—I didn't have that type of experience. At first, I was like, "Really? That doesn't even make any sense that this would happen." But it does make sense, because women who are more masculine-facing deal with a totally different bias, and a totally different energy than we do. Of course, we have our own issues as well, but it's different. I was extremely empathetic toward the situation and what can I do. I was still young at that time as well myself. What can be done? And to see that it's still happening today—

Kristyn Scorsone: What do you think the issues for femmes—What are the most pressing issues for femme-identifying?

Dana Davis: It's more the harassment of men not understanding why. You had to be hurt by somebody. You had to be this. You had to be—There's always a reason why it is. It's almost like being a lesbian as a femme-woman was a choice made through hardship or some type of disaster or being hurt in some way by a man.

We tend to get a lot more questions and challenges and men pursuing more, because it's not accepted that I don't like men. That's it. You don't have what I want. That's sometimes very difficult for men to accept.

I've had male friends and people I've worked with that literally will, "You get it though. Right? We're friends. You should understand what this is about." It's still challenging for them to understand that you would prefer a woman *versus* them. It's difficult.

That type of harassment—call it what it is, it's harassment when you're constantly having to explain, "No." You're constantly having to have these conversations. They're pretty much telling me what I need in order to go back to what I should have. That in itself is challenging.

I'm not sure women in general, have that issue with men. We're looking at a woman who just got hit in the face with a brick for not wanting to—Did you hear about that story where a woman was hit in the face with a brick, recently, who denied giving her number to a guy.

Kristyn Scorsone: In Newark?

Dana Davis: It wasn't in Newark. I don't know exactly where she was, but she put up—her face was like, ugh. A whole bunch of men stood around and watched. God forbid, she says she was a lesbian. We don't know how that could've ended up. We don't necessarily have no issues, but I know that masculine-facing women are way more susceptible to violence because of that.

In my mind, why does it even matter? There's so many fish out here in the sea they say. Why should it even matter what I want and who I want and why does that bother you so much? Those are the questions that they find hard to answer.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yep. That's really interesting and aggravating.

Dana Davis: Very much so. Those places I find, when I'm researching to go on a trip, I am asking about their views, their thoughts, is it safe? Some places will say gay-friendly, but that may be in one little area. To me, one little area means that that's a vulnerable area. Anything could happen there. I don't want to go somewhere to a resort where that is okay. There is a chance that I will be attacked coming out of that resort or going to that resort or something could happen to me.

With my wife as well, we stay away from places that we don't feel comfortable at. We know that the reality of it is, even though we live our lives openly, some people just can't take that. We are not going to certain places, certain countries, certain islands that have very strict laws or are putting things into action against us, because that is something we have to think about and worry about unfortunately.

Kristyn Scorsone: How is the transition for you to have entered the world of media as a queer-black woman?

Dana Davis: Interesting. I will say, I've had very uncomfortable conversations around what I want to present as content and not. Being an activist, not in the front. I'm in the back. I know what's happening and I'm supporting. I'm involved. It matters that I am able to present on a network, on a channel that supports the people who follow me and more importantly, my interests.

That has been one of the major things for me, to be able to go and say that this particular network or this channel or this media outlet supports me, number one, because I am exactly that, I am a gay woman, I am that. I want to be comfortable. I've had some conversations that, "Okay. I get it. Your network, your thoughts, your feelings, but the reality is, I have to do what's right for my audience and I have to do what's right for me."

There's places I don't eat at because they don't support. I know when I buy something I'm supporting something that is against me. We're not doing that. That's silly. Right? Why would you do something that is literally putting money toward a fight against you? It just doesn't make any sense. I ask those questions. How do you feel about this? That's why I'm creating my own network, then I don't have to worry about a lot of that. If I don't have an avenue that's clear, I make one.

Kristyn Scorsone: Do you feel like this work is a form of activism for you?

Dana Davis: Yes. It is. I think that is the case with all that I do. For me, my actual goal in life, my purpose, is to give and to be able—what's the word I'm looking for—I'm supposed to talk to the masses. My message is supposed to be for the masses. That's my purpose. It's not even a question of what I'm supposed—this is what I'm supposed to do, whether that is being able to encourage someone to literally take their next step into their goal in life, whether it's to let someone know, at this point in time, it's okay that you're here and you're going to be okay.

You're going to be supported through this. Whether it is literally to bring a laugh and smile and a giggle to somebody who's having a bad day, my voice, my presence, my gift is for others. It's powerful in that matter. If I'm not doing that, I'm not living. You can talk to my team. I'll tell you; my team is amazing. The one thing that they say that I find to be interesting is they're miserable when I'm not at work. They're not happy that I'm not there. No

one wants their boss there. Right? People don't want their boss there. That to me let's me know that I'm doing something.

I'm doing something where people want to be around me and hear what I have to say and take what I'm saying and able to grow from it. Just like I said, just that little step, even if it's just pushing someone in the right direction, giving them that first pedal that they can't see, giving them the guidance that they need. Whatever it may be—

Kristyn Scorsone: Permission.

Dana Davis: Yes. Give them permission. Yes. That's what I live for. I literally live for that. I spoke at NASDAQ at the beginning of the month and the one message that I had was really being able to empower yourself. Having a moment—I'm very vulnerable when I speak because it's not about all the information. I can give you a whole bunch of information, but it's the experience that makes the difference too. Right?

I talked about depression and having depression and being able to pull out of that. One of the stories that I told was my real-life story. It literally happened to me this year. I talked about being extremely depressed and not realizing how depressed and how much anxiety I was having. There was so much going on that it became unbearable.

I woke up one morning and I realized that I couldn't get out of bed. I didn't realize was that I already struggled to get out of bed. I hadn't been feeling good. It had been so long that it became a norm of an emotion. It just happened, that this day it was terrible. I literally said out loud, "This is what death must feel like. I have nothing. I don't feel anything. I'm miserable."

I hadn't eaten for days. I hadn't showered. I wasn't going to work. It was just terrible. I thought about when you're in a hospital in ICU and your heart stops and you are code blue, you have a whole team that rushes in to save your life. The alarms go off. Everybody comes in, everyone is going to do everything that they can to resuscitate you.

When you mentally die, there's no alarms that's going off, unless someone can see it or you talk about it, or they're exposed to it or they're watching, but for the most part there's no alarms going off. You're just in it. You're just in the dark. You're just in that

emotion. Some people make it out. Most people make it out. Some people don't. We know what happens then. Right?

Being able to tap into your own ICU team, knowing yourself, understanding what you're really, truly made of, because this is just one version of ourselves. The other piece of this is a higher self. The other piece of this is our childhood. The other piece of this is our warrior self. The other piece of this is that graceful self, and being able to touch into them and hear what they have to say when you're in those moments.

I imagined myself, I literally felt like I was in a hospital bed. I had grace come in and hold my hand and tell me to forgive myself and I'm fine, I'm okay. It's okay that you feel this way, that you've done this, it's all right. The childhood version of myself grabbing at the bed sheets and saying, "You can do it. You can do anything. You can conquer anything. You're creative. You're this. You're that."

You have the warrior pushing everybody else aside helping me put on my armor and telling me, "You've gotta fight through all of this. You got it." My higher-self walking into the door saying absolutely nothing. This is an eight-foot woman made of gold. She has presence. She walks in and light is there.

You cannot miss her. You're gonna see her. She says nothing, but everything in her movement and the way she looks and the feeling that I get when I imagine this higher-self, just holds my hand and I feel better. I start to feel better.

I talk about that and being in this space where you have to learn and understand yourself. You can't do it alone, but you can start there. When you start feeling like life has taken over, it's okay, go into your hospital bed in your ICU, protective moment, and talk to the team to help bring you back to where you need to be. That was my message. Talking to 75+ people in NASDAQ.

It was amazing because I didn't talk about all the stuff that I know. I talked about what I think a lot of us don't want to say or don't know what to say or how to even get to that point of what should I do. That is literally a conversation I'm having in my head that helped me stand and be ready for a premiere of my show four days later.

Kristyn Scorsone: Wow. That's amazing. Who were those people in the room, the 75 people?

Dana Davis: All different types of people. We had doctors and lawyers. I had financial advisors. There was a millionaire and his whole crew came from Mexico. We had an ex-military person there. They were all there to be a part of this millionaire, business-type of association that I'm a part of as well.

Kristyn Scorsone: Millionaire, business association?

Dana Davis: Say it again.

Kristyn Scorsone: Millionaire, business association?

Dana Davis: Yes. It's a coaching program that I'm a part of as well. I try to surround myself with where I want to be. You have to be around the group to be able to get there. Yeah. I had the opportunity to speak to them. That was really nice.

Kristyn Scorsone: When was this?

Dana Davis: Say it again.

Kristyn Scorsone: When was this?

Dana Davis: This was August 28th, I want to say.

Kristyn Scorsone: This just happened.

Dana Davis: Yeah. Just happened. Mm-hmm.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's amazing.

Dana Davis: Yeah. It just happened.

Kristyn Scorsone: Is that how—

Dana Davis: You had to ask that. Yeah? Seventy-five feet in the air. Actually, that was my second time being on a Times Square Jumbotron and I received an award that day and everything—an outstanding speaker award.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: It was really great. It was great. I do a lot of those type of things as well. I like to go around and speak. I've spoken at Cambridge University in London. I went to Oxford University and spoke. I've

spoken at a few different stock exchanges, NASDAQ, the New York Stock Exchange. I've also spoken at London Stock Exchange, which was really cool. I've spoken at a lot of different venues.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's really awesome to think of you, as a queer-black woman, speaking and holding—I don't know if holding court is really the right term—but you know what I mean? Being able to speak and help and mentor and teach folks that are doctors and millionaires. You wouldn't think that they'd need to hear from you. You have this intellectual, almost a theoretical, radical view of the world that they can gain from you, that they can't see for themselves, because they have a different worldview.

Dana Davis: Sometimes, it's difficult for me to even rationalize it if that makes sense. I used to have imposter syndrome, like, "They don't want to hear anything from me." I've been snapped out of that really quickly because I had no other choice. First of all, you're either gonna show up or go home. It's either one or the other.

I want to say that, because I like to put myself out there and I don't have a fear of speaking. I always get nervous, but I don't have a fear of speaking to people. I've done the work to make the connection. What do I mean by that? I'm not just talking to talk; I tell a story. I connect to the audience. I know who I'm speaking to. Even if they may be a range of different types of people, there's something that everybody needs.

There's a message that every single person in that audience can benefit from. That's what I think about. What would they want to hear? How can I connect the dots? Right? In itself, that's going to bring the conversation. What do you do? How can I get in contact with you? I made so many connections during these times. I'm still trying to get down the list. People want to see real people. Doctors listen to talks all day about medical stuff. You know how interesting it is or how good it feels or refreshing for them to be able to sit and listen to a story that doesn't talk about what they already know?

Kristyn Scorsone: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Dana Davis: Doctors are one of my favorite clients. There's things that they just don't think about that I can help them with. It's really interesting. I am very grateful to be able to have it. I call it a gift. I feel like it's a gift of mine to be able to speak to many.

My dream is to fill an arena. That would be ideal. When that happens, I'm gonna tell you, Kristyn, you know I said it. I'm filling an arena. I think that my voice has to be heard, that's my gift. I need to put it out there and not just talk. I'm action-driven as well. I put a lot of what I talk about into action. That is a part of it, being able to deliver, not just talk the talk.

- Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. I want to underline that. Your face, your likeness was on a jumbo screen in, where was that?
- Dana Davis: Times Square.
- Kristyn Scorsone: Times Square.
- Dana Davis: Times Square, across the street—let me give you some reference. Where the—I was just at the restaurant. What's the burger place? Hard Rock Café.
- Kristyn Scorsone: I was gonna say Hard Rock.
- Dana Davis: Yes. Hard Rock Café is right here and the NASDAQ building is right there. I was there.
- Kristyn Scorsone: That's amazing. How did that feel?
- Dana Davis: Great. I've been blessed to be on there twice. This is the second time. The first time was in 2020.
- Kristyn Scorsone: Wow.
- Dana Davis: Mm-hmm. It was a different set up, but the first time was in 2020 and then now, in 2023. I was like, "Oh. How many people can say that they've had their picture 75-feet up in the air in New York Times Square on the jumbotron?"
- Kristyn Scorsone: Yes.
- Dana Davis: "Twice, let alone one time. Right?" That's a huge accomplishment. Yes. I will brag about it.
- Kristyn Scorsone: You should. Absolutely.
- Dana Davis: I will brag about it. Yes. Twice. Not just one time, but twice. I love it. I'm very happy. I feel really good. It was a moment because everyone's watching. We're in New York and I am filming in front



of it and talking about certain things in front of it. I'll show you that video when it comes up. Yeah. It was magical.

Kristyn Scorsone: That is magical. Not once, but twice. It's NASDAQ, which is representing a whole global economy. You know what I mean? To have you represented there is huge. That's a huge thing. That's really important for people to see.

Dana Davis: That's it. I always say, I am born and raised in Newark, New Jersey. Urban girl who went to public school, went to the county college, all the things, and look at me, I feel pretty successful. I feel like I've achieved a lot and I'm still going. People say what they want to say about public school, it works. Say what you want to say about a lot. Say what you want to say about Newark, this is what Newark is producing. I'm okay with that.

Kristyn Scorsone: It reminds me of, I think you're friends with her, Tamara Fleming.

Dana Davis: Yes. We're friends. Uh-huh.

Kristyn Scorsone: It reminds me of a story she told me about taking photos on the floor of the Stock Exchange, and she needed to get up on a table in order to get the shot. Do you know what I mean?

Dana Davis: Mm-hmm.

Kristyn Scorsone: I remember her saying, "I had to tell these white people that are very powerful, you get over here, you get over here, get in the shot. I'm telling 'em what to do and I'm standing on the table where these big, financial transactions happen that affect the whole world," and here you are as well, another black, queer woman from Newark, on the jumbotron. The beauty of it all is really cool to think about. Oh. You're muted, I think. Wait. What happened? *[Pause 01:59:33 - 01:59:41]*.

Dana Davis: Can you hear me now?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yes.

Dana Davis: Okay. I think my mic may be dying.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh.

Dana Davis: Yeah. I think that's what happened. If not, I can switch to the other mic.

Kristyn Scorsone: No. You're still fine.

Dana Davis: You can hear me? Okay. Let me know if it goes out again, 'cause then I'll switch it to the other mic.

Kristyn Scorsone: Sure.

Dana Davis: It died. Right? You can't hear me?

Kristyn Scorsone: I can hear you. Yeah.

Dana Davis: You can still hear me?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah.

Dana Davis: Okay. It's dying. It's telling me that it's not working. I'll switch it over. Let me see if it still works. It may not be as clear as this.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's okay.

Dana Davis: How about now? Can you hear me?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yes.

Dana Davis: Okay. I'll take this one off.

Kristyn Scorsone: No problem.

Dana Davis: You can still hear me, though. Right?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Loud and clear.

Dana Davis: Okay. Perfect. One thing, I've always told myself, when I was younger and I started to travel to companies and train, as an entrepreneur. I did contracted work through other companies, colleges, and I would train for them. Right? I would go into these leadership trainings and I'm younger than everybody. I'm this black woman with blonde hair and these nails, and I am walking into the door and I would feel intimidated, because I thought they won't listen to me. Why would they listen to me? What do I have that they see?

I would have that imposter syndrome. That was a big to-do for me. I realized that they're here to learn from you. Everyone in this room is here because of something they need to learn. You have it.

What are you intimidated by? You have the power for right now. They are in the position to listen. They have to listen.

That really helped me in my career to deal with any and everyone, once I understood that titles are titles. We all have them. It doesn't mean levels of importance or seniority over you as a person because I have this title. Right? I joke a lot, when I first got onto this new job a few years ago, they sent me to Florida. It was for the board of trustees, the board of directors, their whole little spiel. It was beautiful.

I checked because I wanted to stay an extra day. I checked the rates. They were ridiculous. I could not afford it if I wanted to. You can just imagine. It's on the beach. It's beautiful. I was training. The CEO of my company was on his phone. I told him very nicely in a very nice way, not even just nice, it was just the way I did it was really smooth, to tell him to put his phone away.

I didn't say, "Can you please put your phone away." I said, "You know how he's on his phone right now." I incorporated it into the message. He put his phone away and everyone else decided to tuck their devices away as well. I didn't think anything of it, because I would've done it regardless of who he was and his title.

Well, when I got back to the office, the president came into my office and told me how great of a job I did. He said, "You know what the most amazing thing you did? Was telling Chris to put his phone away. No one would have ever done that. No one would've ever said that." I was like, "I did ask Chris to put his phone away. Right?" He said, "Yes. You did."

Then another guy came in and said the same thing to me. "You know the best part of that? Is that you told him to put his phone away." That was the highlight of everyone. I think it set a tone of who I was and what I was willing to accept in my classroom.

When you're in my classroom, you are my student. You are not the CEO. You are not the president. You are not the boss. You are the student. That helped a lot with processing when it came to certain things like that, thinking about title and seeing people as people.

Kristyn Scorsone: Mm-hmm. After you gave that talk at NASDAQ, you said four days later, you taped your show, your first episode?

Dana Davis: No. I was saying, the day that I gave the talk, I was saying in the talk, that after I was able to give myself that peptalk, I went and

had my premiere for the show. I almost canceled that premiere party, because I could not imagine how I was going to do it. Mentally I wasn't there. I just wasn't there. I had already made my mind up that I wasn't gonna do it. I was just gonna send out the link to say it was up. I wasn't gonna have a party.

After that day, it took some work, I had some additional work. I didn't tell the whole story. There were some additional things I had to do to get myself mentally prepared. I was able to stand in front of a crowd of people. I wanna say, I had over a hundred people RSVP for this event, and that was online. I had 75 people, 70-80 people in person.

I had a lot of people that I needed to talk to. In my head space, I wasn't attending someone else's event; this is my event. I wasn't ready. Mentally, I wasn't there. Doing the work helped me to get through that. Was it all over? No, but it was the first step to getting started again and being better. Putting myself in ICU in order to heal and start to get better mentally.

A lot of people struggle with mental illness, and it's just a day-to-day thing for them. We don't even talk about it. I think more people have depression and anxiety and we just don't talk about it. We just go through the day. They have all the guilt that comes along with it, because how can my life be so grand and I feel this way. You have all these people in your life supporting you, and you feel this way. You have everything that you can ask for, and you feel this way, which makes you feel worse.

Everyone said, "Go talk to somebody," but it even takes work to go talk to someone. It takes work to get outside. It takes work to get out of bed. Those who have never experienced it, they don't know. They just don't get it. It's not as easy as you just need some fresh air. Talk to somebody; you'll feel better. Call your friends. Have people come over. You don't want any of that when you're in a space like that. You just want to be able to do nothing. Nothing feels better than anything else you can possibly think of.

It was a big thing for me to be able to talk about it. I also mentioned how you do the work prior to. You do the work and you feel fine. When you're feeling good is when you really need to do a lot of the work. Not the moments when you are in it. Of course, you need to put it into action, but learning yourself, understanding yourself, connecting with yourself, understanding your triggers, all of those things play a huge part when you are in the moment, when

you need yourself the most. You can't use yourself if you don't love yourself.

Kristyn Scorsone: Absolutely. I think people don't realize how you cannot just turn it off. That was the biggest lesson for me, when I got very depressed, was that I tried to rationalize myself out of it, and it's impossible to. It just is.

Dana Davis: Yep. It just is. I love that you said that, because what we do is we talk about the feeling, not feel it. We want to make sense of it. Yeah. I know what I'm feeling. I'm feeling this, this, and this, as if we're clinically proving. We're writing down our symptoms and it's not us. We don't allow ourselves to actually feel it.

My message is to allow yourself to feel it. In order for you to feel it, you have to be here. You have to figure out what that emotion is, what that feeling is. It may be nothing you can put your finger on. Okay. I feel it. I know what this is. I'm not going to try to figure it out.

I'm going to try to write it out and put it on paper. I'm just going to feel it until my body says, "You shouldn't feel this anymore," and everything is going to go into play. I didn't do it alone. It's that first step to get you to the next step.

That's my theory in life. I just need one step. I just need to take one step. If I can get through one step, I can get through two. We'll worry about two, three, four, and five later. I just want to get to the one step.

Kristyn Scorsone: Your show too, one of the things that stood out to me was it seems like it's different from other shows where you're interviewing entrepreneurs and getting the knowledge of how they got to where they are. I feel like that must be a component of it, but it also seems really cool how you have people attending to these different facets of yourself that you need to nurture in order to do this kind of work. It looked like somebody that could do meditation or yoga or something.

Dana Davis: Yeah. We did Pilates. What I love to do is we can talk about the work; we can talk about what you do day-to-day. Why you do it, number one? What was the driving force behind it? What does your product or service really do for people? For instance, the Pilates, we move. Maria Angelova teach's people movement, but it's bigger than that. She doesn't just teach movement. It's a way of life and also, it's mental.

With Pilates, you can connect the mind and the body in a way that is so powerful. I am one of her clients. That's how she ended up on the show. I've been with her for two years. She's the same person. When you watch that full episode, I talk about an instance when she just went into instant mode of healing me or helping me through an episode. I didn't feel good. I didn't want to do Pilates that day. I had to do it because I paid for it. I didn't want to. Not because I didn't want to do it with her, just mentally, I wasn't there.

I couldn't move the way I usually move, 'cause I can't tell my brain to isolate this muscle. I was getting a little frustrated. I was tired. She kept asking me, "Are you okay?" At one point, she just told me to stop. I'm doing everything she's telling me to do. She told me to stop for a second. She said, "It's okay. You can feel." At that moment, I just bawled, crying. She told me to lay down. I am crying but I'm not talking. I'm not telling her what's wrong. I'm not having a conversation.

She turns on the meditation music. She's texting my wife to get me a blanket. Do not disturb me. Put a blanket over her. Do not disturb her. Just put a blanket over her. She comes in. She puts a blanket over me. She walks back out. To me, that is the transformational pieces of what she does that go beyond work that we expect. Again, we never talked about it.

I never had to tell her what was wrong with me. She didn't pry. She knew exactly what to do as someone who is in a position to help people connect mentally to themselves, that changed my experience with her. From that point on, no matter how much she raises her prices, I'm there, because I know she cares a lot more for me as a human being and a person than she does just getting her money and her craft. Does that make sense?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yes.

Dana Davis: That is what I want people to see on the show. It's not about her being able to show you how to lose weight and all of that kind of stuff. You can find it a dime-a-dozen. What she does outside of that is why she was on the show. You'll see there's a couple other stories about people who *are magical* not just because of what they sell and what they create or the services they offer, but the work that they're doing is so meaningful.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. It was striking too to see, I'm assuming, I don't know, because I didn't watch the episode, but I assume it was a gay man

talking about gender and being perceived as effeminate and not manly enough. Also, to see another person that I think was queer, or appeared to be queer to me—

Dana Davis: Talking about childhood trauma? Mm-hmm.

Kristyn Scorsone: A masculine looking woman, which is so cool to see because usually shows about business—

Dana Davis: They just talk about business.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Also, mostly white folks that you see or white men. It was so refreshing.

Dana Davis: I have a lesbian couple, the Hollands [02:14:36], that is one the one about self-care. We talk about their lives and how they started. I kick off every show with every guest's favorite cocktail.

Kristyn Scorsone: Hah. I love that. What is your favorite cocktail?

Dana Davis: Yeah. My favorite cocktail? A margarita. You can give me a margarita all day and I'm there for it. For a refreshing something, it's seltzer, I love seltzer.

Kristyn Scorsone: You do?

Dana Davis: Yeah. It's great. I don't understand people when they say they don't like seltzer. I'm like, "What's wrong with you?" A margarita or a seltzer and I'm good. We always toast before we kick off a show. That's my thing. I have the Refresh Lounge; people will sit on the stage. This is actually taped in front of a live audience. Interaction with the crowd and really interesting concept that I came up with. Everyone enjoyed it. I was fearful that my audience would get bored because we taped literally all the episodes at one shot.

Kristyn Scorsone: Wow.

Dana Davis: Yeah. It was a marathon. It's my first time doing anything like this. It was next level. I was like, "Okay. I'm coming back when?" I wasn't ready to do it. Didn't know what to expect. I didn't have any cue cards. We filmed everything that you see in one take. It was really magical to say the least, for me. It was magical.

Having that little kick-off and them getting to tell the story of why it's their favorite drink and having the audience on stage and having the live audience, it was great. Everyone stayed. They loved

it. Everyone was tired but they loved it. Everyone was interested and that was really great. I didn't think that people would want to stay the whole time. It's a live show and it's for hours, but they stayed the whole entire time.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. Did you tape in the City or in New Jersey.

Dana Davis: In Dallas.

Kristyn Scorsone: Sorry?

Dana Davis: Dallas. Wow. I literally had people fly out to Dallas to watch the show. It was a nice crowd too. I had a lot of people. Some people drove from different parts of Texas. A lot of people, Arizona. Literally, around the world—or I mean, around the United States, people came.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's really cool. Why Dallas?

Dana Davis: That's where the studio was. I was taping out there where the studio was. Yeah. I would love to have it here, but you know. That was where it's at.

Kristyn Scorsone: Cool. That's really cool. How did it feel? I don't know. Walking out into that stage, that sound stage or whatever, however you would call it, how did that feel at that moment? That first moment of approaching like, "I'm taping my show today."

Dana Davis: What was interesting is when I got there, what I did was, the night before—which I have the footage, I'm just trying to figure out what to do with it—I held a red-carpet event, which was really nice. I took pictures on the red carpet and everything. I had the guests who were going to be on the show—We had a round table discussion. Everyone got together. We just talked.

I had seen my stage, I had seen the set, but I didn't see everything set up. It was really beautiful already, but I was a little distracted by all that was happening. It was great conversation; I can't wait to release it. I'm trying to figure out how to release it. Day two, which was the day I'm taping, I walk in there and everything is together. Everything is in place. Cameras in place.

I had to cry. I walked on stage and shed a few tears and then I'm like, "Let's go." I was pumped to just get started. I'm looking at no audience right now of course. No guests, I'm the first person there. It's like six in the morning and I was ready for makeup. It was my



moment. I took a few pictures and I took some pictures of me. It was surreal.

I was like, “I did this. I manifested this.” I said I wanted this. I want to tell you, the year before that, I said that I wanted to have my own show. I didn’t know what I was gonna be doing. This was 2019. 2020, I said I wanted to be on television. I don’t know how I’m getting there. I just feel like that’s where I’m supposed to be.

I met my coach Clint Author, and working with him, I ended up being on *Good Day, Sacramento*. Then I ended up on *Fox 5 in Sacramento* as well. I was like, “I love this. I could do this. I could do this television thing. Right? I can have my own show. I think I can have my own show.” I didn’t know how it was gonna happen. I don’t know what I’m doing, but it’s gonna happen.

Everything started to fall in place. I was at the right place at the right time with the right person, having the right conversation. A year later I’m on my own show. I was taping my own show. After that, I’m like, “I can probably do a network.” Yes. I can have a network. I can do this. Now, we’re working on a network. I am huge in manifesting.

If I want it, it will happen. I really believe that you put the energy into that lane and you just watch the magic happen. You just watch it happen. Put in the work and everything just starts to fall into play. That’s a real true story around how I envisioned it. I didn’t know how. I didn’t know the avenue. I didn’t know the steps. It’s just that one. One step.

For me, it was just the dream to say I want this. I’m putting it out in the atmosphere. I don’t know who’s listening but catch it if you can. Everything just happened exactly like that. For me to stand in front of that place, which I call my set, that I designed, is just rewarding. It’s just rewarding. The people, my guests, were amazing. They connect with each other today.

Kristyn Scorsone: Ah. That’s great.

Dana Davis: I think that’s so beautiful. It’s been a year. I had that anniversary of taping the show two days ago. It’s been a year. They still connect. They talk to each other and I talk to all of them as if they’re friends today. That is another great thing that came out of it. There were connections built, there were relationships built. At the premiere, I checked in on everyone to see what they’ve done since the show,

and everybody has done something great or have moved their business in a certain direction because of the show.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. That's awesome. I love that.

Dana Davis: Yes.

Kristyn Scorsone: How did your grandma and your mother react?

Dana Davis: Oh. She was floored. They were floored. I had them both in the audience. I had them both on the actual stage. They came to the Refresh lounge.

Kristyn Scorsone: Love that.

Dana Davis: I wanted them to participate, especially my grandmother. I said, "You will be a part of this." She said, "I don't want to do it." She's always like, "Oh." I was like, "You're gonna sit in the audience. You're gonna sit right there. You're gonna be on film with me." They were really proud of me. My grandmother and my mom say it all the time, "I'm so proud of you, what you're able to do."

Their favorite word is, "I'm not surprised, but very proud, not surprised." I'll tell you, I felt like this for a very long time. Yeah. It took some refining to pull it all together, but today, it's really important to know who you are.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. One of my favorite activists, historical figures, is Ella Baker. Teaching young people, like what to do, how to be activists, how to make change. All this stuff, but she considered herself, behind the scenes. You're reminding me of that, because you've been doing this since high school, creating, giving people permission to be themselves. Giving them license to be themselves and pathways to be and exist in the world, especially for young, queer people. In the 90s, no less, when you don't have anything else to look at. There's really not much representation at the time. Then for you to be that, and now you're being that from this huge audience and bringing other people on that also are facets of other marginalized people that you need to see. It's like that saying, "Make every space a queer space."

When you come into a space, I think about it when I go to places like CrossFit, where the vibe is seen as more of a white people, law enforcement community of dudes. You know what I mean? Well, I'm gonna come there. I'm there and I'm changing the air. I'm shaking up the oxygen in this place. I feel like it's so cool to see

that you started this way back when, being this sort of beacon of a person to now being that for so many more people that need it, because we all need it.

Kristyn Scorsone: I admire you.

Dana Davis: Ah. Thank you. That makes me feel really good. I appreciate that. You know, we don't always look at ourselves that way. I'm just doing my work. I'm just trying to have the impact. I appreciate your words. It is that. You're right. I've been doing it for a while. I never really put the pieces together in that way. Thank you.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. It's important. I thank you. Everything we do is ripples of a better world for all of us. Thank you.

Dana Davis: That's right. Yes. Ah. That's great. You're gonna be on my show. I'm just telling you that right now. I'm gonna come on your show.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yes. I've gotta make a show. Yes. I'm gonna have a show, and you're gonna be on it.

Dana Davis: That's right.

Kristyn Scorsone: I am manifesting that.

Dana Davis: You definitely have to bring this energy out to the world, which you already are with your podcast, but you know what I mean. You know exactly what I mean.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Are there things that I haven't touched on? In terms of Newark stuff too, have you ever gone to any queer or LGBTQ+ spaces, bars or clubs, or anything like that?

Dana Davis: Man, I used to. The whole thing is my mom, when I was a lot younger, I don't know if I should say this. I don't know if she's listening today. I don't want to get in trouble. No. I would always go out. I've been in the scene for a long time. At that time, we called it the scene.

I was always the young one. Everyone was aunties and uncles to me. I was too young to be where I was at, at the time. Yeah. The Armory and Globe Trotters and The Globe and Murphy's and all the old school places that we would hang out in Newark. Yes. Name 'em, I've been there. Yeah. Name 'em and I've been there.

Kristyn Scorsone: I've heard of Murphy's and I've heard of The Globe.

Dana Davis: Mm-hmm.

Kristyn Scorsone: What was the first one? Armory?

Dana Davis: The Armory. Mm-hmm. Armory was a small bar, I want to say on Sussex Avenue, was a small bar and it was just the scene. It literally was the scene for gays and lesbians. We would go there all the time. It's off Sussex Avenue. I don't think it's still open. Theresa used to have parties there all the time. When she did, we went. That was a really cute little spot.

Kristyn Scorsone: What decade was this?

Dana Davis: That was—Yikes. I wanna say late '90s.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was it a gay bar?

Dana Davis: Yes. It was a regular bar but it had open gay nights.

Kristyn Scorsone: Okay.

Dana Davis: I think gay nights were Fridays or Saturdays. We used to go there during the week. They used to have a day. I remember The Guitar Bar at one point had a few days. I was a party promoter for like five minutes. Five minutes. Nothing to brag about. However, my wife was a really good party promoter in the city. They used to fill houses. She can tell you a lot of the places in the city like Lovergirls and all the places that they used to go out to where she would promote.

For me in Newark, The Guitar Bar had two nights, I believe. One women's night and a man's night for the guys. Do you remember The Guitar Bar? That was downtown as well, I think, for a while too. I haven't really been out in a long time. Everyone has the teeny boppers now. I don't know anything about the teens or what they do. Yes. I hung out.

Kristyn Scorsone: The Guitar Bar, was that in the '90s too?

Dana Davis: The Guitar Bar was more early 2000s. Yeah. It wasn't too much in the '90s. We had The Globe Trotter. We had The Globe. Globe was in downtown Newark across from Lincoln Park. I wanna say Lincoln Park, across the street. It was a brownstone that we would have a gay night in. Then across the street, they opened up The

Globe. We called that Globe Trotters and then they had The Globe which was downtown Newark on Broad Street.

I don't know if it was the same people. I believe The Globe had a younger crowd. Globe Trotters had the older crowd. We would be there. That was in the same time frame, the late '90s, early 2000s that was around. I'm trying to think of any other place. There was The Armory, the Globe Trotters, there was The Globe. I didn't hang at The Globe much because, like I said, that was a younger crowd.

Kristyn Scorsone: That was men and women, The Globe and Globe Trotters?

Dana Davis: No. It was mostly lesbians, but they did have a gay night as well. Murphy's was very popular. You know what Murphy's was. I don't know how long Murphy's stayed open, but I know I had my first date with my wife at Murphy's.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh.

Dana Davis: It wasn't even a real date. There was another place too that was around the corner from—she probably won't—I don't remember the name, but there was another place that we would all go to. Was it Lover—no. Lovergirls was in the city. I cannot think of the name right now. There was one other place that was fairly new. This was in 2003, 4. Maybe 2000 to 2005 it was open. I just don't remember the name. I remember going there because we went to Murphy's. After that, we went to that spot.

We had a long date. We weren't supposed to have a date; she was just a coworker I was meeting at this bar. It ended up being a date. I wore a turtleneck, a brown one at that. She was like, "Oh. Jesus." You wore a turtleneck. She said, "You didn't want anything to do with me. I thought that was a sign right there."

I don't know why I wore a turtleneck. I didn't even think about it. It was cold outside. I just decided to wear a turtleneck. It was February. Every time I saw you, you had a little peek-a-boo something. A little V-neck something. Then we go out and you have to be like all the way up to your chin! *[laughter]*.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's hilarious.

Dana Davis: Yes. That's the part I can think of. I can't recall any others. I'm sure there were.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. That's interesting, 'cause it gives us a geography of queer space, especially for lesbians, because you hear more about gay male spaces than you do—I want to talk to Ms. Theresa too, because obviously, she holds the key to all of this.

Dana Davis: Oh. Yeah. She knows all the spots. She can tell you. Every spot that I've ever gone to, she's held the woman's night. The majority of the time, she was the promoter, or there were some other people who would promote, but really popular at that point, she was the person, the main promoter.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. In Newark, everybody, the LGBTQ community, or at least from what I can see, I know it's not everybody, I don't know everybody, but it's like so many people support each other in different ways and show up for each other. Do you think a lot of those networks were formed at the clubs or the bars?

Dana Davis: Yes. Of course, you would have someone who would bring you, but once you go once or twice, maybe even three times, you're almost a regular there. You start to see certain faces. *The L Word* was the best. *The L Word* really gave a real description of what it felt like in Newark as well. Everybody could be connected to somebody. There was such a connection.

Kristyn Scorsone: Alice's chart.

Dana Davis: Yeah. Alice's chart. That's how we formed our community, through knowing who knew who. My wife was refreshing, because she was the one person that didn't know anybody else, so I thought, then I found out she knew two people I knew already. I was like, "Okay. Well, I almost got—" I was that way. That's how close our community is. Everyone really, truly knows everyone.

I hang out with Tamara and a few other people, some folks that are a little older than me, that I am now pretty close to. I connect all kinds of dots with them as well. "You know that person?" "Oh. That person—" and everyone knows we're at the same party. I'm thinking all the people that I know are these two people and there's ten other people that knows me through someone else who used to date somebody else.

There's such a connection there, which I find to be beautiful that we have that. I always said I was gonna be the one to connect the Alice wall in Newark. I think the wall would be too big. It would never stop. It'd be a whole social media platform all by itself. Whoever's listening, that's something that you could do.

Once FaceTime came, I mean Facebook came, then you really were able to see who knows who and connect to other folks. Social media helped a lot as well, once it started to flourish past college students. I was able to get Facebook because I was in college.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. You were one of those. Yes. You were the OG.

Dana Davis: Yeah. I'm OG. Yeah. I'm an OG. Did you have one from college too?

Kristyn Scorsone: No. I did not. I had to wait.

Dana Davis: Oh. Yeah.

Kristyn Scorsone: I was out in the cold, waiting until—

Dana Davis: You could be let into Facebook Clubs. Yeah. I had mine. Yeah. You're right. There was a lot of people like, "Oh. Wow. I don't have Facebook. I can't," until they opened it up to everyone. Yeah. I was one of the originals. I was able to change my address. Everybody has my school address now. I was able to change it and get the first of those. I've been on Facebook a long time. You can't say that too often. That's all for real.

Kristyn Scorsone: I'm getting off Friendster.

Dana Davis: Yeah. MySpace. Did you have a MySpace account as well?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yep.

Dana Davis: MySpace and they had Black Planet for a second. Everybody was on Black Planet. I don't know if you were on that at all. That was a thing. Yeah. Social media. We went from chat lines to Facebook and those types, but now we have full-fledged social media.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Are there any spaces now in Newark, that you associate with LGBTQ people?

Dana Davis: Not too often. I think it's literally because of my lifestyle. I'm so busy. I don't get a chance to really—I get excited when there's an event happening. That's when I get to see my people. Does that make sense? I don't get a chance to get out as much. If I'm not working, I'm working on a project. Social life just doesn't exist in the same way. I have to find it.

Kristyn Scorsone: You were at Peggy Miller's fashion show. Right?

Dana Davis: Yes. I almost didn't make it because I had something to do prior. We were like, "We're going to be able to get there." We almost didn't make it. Anything around New York Pride, I try to do at least one event or something. I'll always do Circle of Friends but outside of that, I always try to do one more thing before I hang it up.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. I know Peggy's show is more masc-women, but have you ever been able to walk for her?

Dana Davis: I walked in that show, unexpectedly. I literally went back to say something to Jae and a designer said put this on. I'm like, "What? No problem." But no, I have never been a part of her shows. It's always masculine energy.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's so cool.

Dana Davis: I love it. It's always a great show they put on. Watching them from years ago, when it was a lot of them, they would put on these elaborate marching-type of vibes at certain events to seeing them now, it was really nice. It had been a while, so I'm glad that they're coming back, getting some fresh blood, getting some new people, which is always great. You're gonna be in the next show. Right?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Right?

Dana Davis: I'm already recruiting you for the next one.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. Yeah. Awesome. Have you ever been to Unity Church or anything like that?

Dana Davis: I have. One time, I did go to the church. I'm not a huge church-goer. Very spiritual. I just don't do a lot of church. That's another whole conversation we could have. Not too often. I love my Jae. I support them in any way that they need it, but I'm not—Sunday mornings. I have my routines those other mornings. I have my stuff that I do, but it's more of a personal connection than more of a social element to it for me.

Kristyn Scorsone: True. So true. Same. Okay. I think that's everything I wanted to ask you about.

Dana Davis: Okay.



Kristyn Scorsone: Is there anything else? Sometimes, I miss things. I'm looking over my own questions too.

Dana Davis: Okay.

Kristyn Scorsone: *[Pause 02:41:31 – 02:41:37]*. I don't know. I think that's pretty much all I have. I know your goals are to create your own network. You're gonna win. You're gonna go win EGOT, right?

Dana Davis: EGOT, there you go.

Kristyn Scorsone: Is there anything else you're looking forward to in terms of future?

Dana Davis: Yeah. Circle of Friends is extremely important and dear to my heart, I mentioned already. I'm really looking forward to seeing where it goes and where it blossoms. I'm a visionary, I already told you that. I see things and I'm like, "It's going to happen." I would love to make this effort way bigger than just Newark. Not that it isn't currently, because we do hit other places around the world, but we really need to make it a staple, a name. That's a huge goal of mine and Jae's is to push forth James' mission. I have the bandwidth to do it, we're going there.

Kristyn Scorsone: We're all going there.

Dana Davis: Mm-hmm. We're going there. That's my biggest thing. I am on a mission to get my voice heard and my message out. It comes through me from wherever it needs to come from and touch who it needs to touch and keep doing the work.

Kristyn Scorsone: I love that.

Dana Davis: However, wherever it comes from. Today you're talking to me about this, the next time we speak, you'll be like, "Dana, you're doing that too?" "Yep. That's what I was called in to do." It all connects to me being able to do what I'm meant to do, which is communicate my message and to help.

Kristyn Scorsone: How can people help Circle of Friends? Do y'all look for donations?

Dana Davis: Yes. All the time. We're redoing the website, but there is currently a website to go to. It's very long, the name is very long. What I would say is you can actually look up Circle of Friends. I believe it's in conjunction with Pride Alliance as well. You can look up Circle of Friends and we have a donation bot. I'm gonna have a

link on my page as well to link to it. If you go to *danadavis.tv*, you'll be able to see Circle of Friends and link from there as well. That should be up within the next couple of days.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Dana Davis: Yeah. Anything I'm doing, you will see Circle of Friends somehow, somewhere around. Yeah. That is definitely the baby and looking to really blow it up.

Kristyn Scorsone: Nice. Very cool. Thank you so much.

Dana Davis: Thank you. This was fun. I had a great time. Look, it was actually three hours.

Kristyn Scorsone: Nice.

Dana Davis: We talked. I hope this is great content. I hope that it is going to be an enjoyable listen or read. Thank you so much for inviting me.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Thank you. Thank you for all you do and put into this world.

Dana Davis: Thank you. All right.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh. Yeah.