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>> All right. You are listening to KCOU Columbia,
88.1.
>> It's 3:00 P.M. on Thursday. This is InsideOut
with DJ Excellence.
>> And DJ Discovery. We're here for real talk on
basic topics facing the LBGTQ and ally folks at Mizzou.
>> Yes. And we're talking about Thanksgiving this
week.
>> We are. Happy Thanksgiving for all of you out
there who celebrate Thanksgiving.
>> Yes.
>> And you know, happy you're almost done with
this Thursday if you are not celebrating this holiday.
>> Right.
>> It's 3:00 o'clock already. So if you're celebrating,
you're over halfway there.
>> If your celebration includes tears then, you know,
this isn't such a celebration. It's more of a you're
getting through, you know, sometimes when we go
home and visit our families and we're figuring out our
identities or coming out or we just came out and now
we're at home, it's not such a happy and great,
wonderful to be at home.
>> Yeah. And we're going to talk a lot about that the
majority of this show, while I'm sure we will make
mashed potato and pumpkin pie jokes and references.
>> Yes.
>> The majority of the show is going to be validating
and talking about why sometimes going and being

with your family of origin isn't the greatest. That doesn't mean that if you have a fabulous relationship or even an okay relationship with your family of origin that you shouldn't listen. We want you to listen.

>> Right.

>> And really try and think if I have a friend who isn't having a best time, how can I be an ally to that friend? How can I be a better friend and support?

>> Absolutely.

>> So one of the ways -- I like to not try and reinvent the wheel. There are so many smart, brilliant people who have said so many smart and brilliant things.

>> Yes.

>> So we're going to start the show with Harvey Milk. If you don't know who Harvey Milk is, he was an LGBTQ activist. He was a political figure in San Francisco. He was the first out elected city council person in the country. That was back in the Seventies. And we are going to play you his -- a short clip from one of his speeches, and it's about hope, because we hope that you have hope.

>> All right. Enjoy and listen up.

>> Somewheres in Des Moines or San Antonio, there's a young gay person who all of a sudden realizes that she or he is gay. Knows that if the parents find out, they'll be tossed out of the house. The classmates would taunt the child and the Anita Bryants and John Braydons are doing their part on TV. And the child has several options: Staying in the closet, suicide. And then one day that child might open a paper and it says, Homosexual elected in San Francisco. And there were two new options. The option is to go to California.

[Applause]

>> Stay in San Antonio and fight. Two days after I was elected, I got a phone call and the voice was quite young. It was from Altuna, Pennsylvania. And the person said, Thanks. And you've got to elect gay people so that that young child and the thousands upon thousands like that child know that there's hope

for a better world. There's hope for a better tomorrow. Without hope, not only gays, but those blacks, the Asians, disabled, seniors, us-es, without hope, the us-es give up. I know that you can not live on hope alone, but without it, life is not worth living, and you, and you, and you got to give them hope. Thank you very much.

>> Okay. I hope you guys liked that.

>> You got to give them hope.

>> Yes, you do.

>> Every time I hear that I'm like, yes. You get the chills. It's really good. If you haven't seen the movie Milk, I also would recommend that.

>> Absolutely.

>> It's got feelings. It's not the happiest of endings, but they keep it inspirational.

>> Totally. And you were saying there's also a documentary. Right?

>> Yeah. So before the James Franco/Sean Penn movie titled Milk about Harvey Milk, there was a Harvey Milk documentary and it is all about his life. And I don't know what to call it except the Hollywood version, but that seems like I'm cheapening it. It was a really great movie.

>> No, totally.

>> Fictionalized?

>> It's based on a true story. I don't know what you call that.

>> We'll put that link on our website to the documentary linked to the name or whatever and also the movie in case, like, so you can just look at that. I'm not sure you can go to Blockbuster. They're all shutting down, so I don't think you can go to Blockbuster anymore.

>> Netflix? Maybe Netflix has it if you have a Netflix account or Hulu? Maybe we should have a Resource Center. Educational rights are expensive, but we would like to get it totally so people can watch it and learn about it. And there is a documentary that features him and shows --

>> All the things.

>> -- all the things. Okay. So Thanksgiving. Well, listeners, first I would like to say, as corny as this may sound, that I love and I care about you. If you're listening to this radio show, then probably you matter.

>> Yeah.

>> And you have worth and value. And I think it's important to point out, because sometimes when we go back to our families of origin, how good or not good it is when you go back there, you're back. It's like a weird time warp zone. It's like this weird warp in the time/space continuum when you go back and everything feels the same, but you're different, so that makes everything feel different. And you're like, whoa, like, I still drive to the grocery store the exact same way, but I haven't done it in six months. That feels weird, you know? Just even these basic things of going back somewhere that you used to live that you don't live anymore, it's very strange. And the people haven't seen you so, like, whether it's your friends or your neighbors or your parents or your grandparents or whoever you're around, they haven't seen you, and so they imagine you how they last knew you and not with any of the changes that happened. And like we were talking about on our show last week, you come to college, you learn new stuff. You're exposed to new stuff. Like, you change and figure out more of who you are. It's just a weird time warp, because people, I mean, how could they? You can't see what's changed about your parents in six months. If anything happened with them, you don't know. They're still the exact same to you.

>> Right.

>> You're still the exact same to them, but you're not the exact same to yourself. It's interesting.

>> Holidays are -- I mean, I think to wrap holidays up in one word would be bizarre. And then there are several other words you could wrap it up in, but that's, like, definitely one of them. I think you made a really good point there. Like sometimes when you go back home, especially when you're going back, like, as a freshman and you've had, like, your first semester

of college, I know it's not completely over, unfortunately, but like, you know --

>> Study hard. Get sleep. Drink water. Eat real food and vegetables.

>> Do all of those big assignments that are due Monday after Thanksgiving.

>> Yeah. Get those done now. Don't wait until Sunday.

>> Right. But you know, you go back and you've gone to bed whenever you wanted to for the past, like, three or four months.

>> Yep.

>> You hung out with who you've wanted to. You've said things you've wanted to say that maybe you didn't even think to say when you were back home or believe or even know, and then you go home and you kind of test that water among your family, and sometimes it's not received so well.

>> Yeah. I mean, like, the little stuff, like what time you wake up or what you have to drink with dinner at the dinner table. What do you mean you're not having a glass of milk? You're like, I haven't had a glass of milk in six months. I have a glass of water or I have soda.

>> I actually hate milk.

>> Whatever. I hate it. All right. Well, I'm going to share some personal stuff on this show, because I think it's going to be really hard for me to genuinely talk about the holidays without saying that holidays were traditionally, in my life, for the majority of it, just the worst days of the year. Just terrible. And I've mentioned this on a show before and I'm pretty public with it. I am not in contact with anyone of my biological family, so no one I'm biologically related to do I speak with or have a relationship with. And you know, I tried to make that work for a number of years in college and post college, because in college was when I first moved away. And so I have some pretty, you know whatever adjective stories about Thanksgiving and about going back for holidays. And what I really have is how I kind of dealt with it,

because it was awful times. I just want to put it out there. This is not everyone's experience, by any means, but it is some people's experience.

>> It's also an experience that people don't talk about, you know?

>> No. They talk about, like, everybody wants to talk about how incredible the holidays are and how, you know, oh, your family is a little silly, but you always have a great time and it's warm and you're by the fire and everybody really, once it comes down to it, loves each other. Yes, that is some people's experience, but we also need to recognize and validate there is a completely other side to this story and experiences.

>> Yeah.

>> And I think that, you know, looking back on some of my college days, that was some of the hardest parts was I didn't feel like I could be honest about what it was like within. Well, I had a small amount of friends, mostly around Women's Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center here on campus where I could say, like, I don't want to go back there. I'm so nervous. I'm so terrified. I'm going to hate it. I'm going to cry. I'm going to go back into all of these unhealthy ways of thinking, because I know that I am and I know that I shouldn't, and I still am going to. Like once you get back there, it's like that time warp zone and you're back to being the person that you used to be. You lose all the strength and happiness and, like, emotional tools that you have. It's a strange thing. So I guess I'll start with some of the things I did to get out of going back there, because I realize, this isn't a great thing for me. First and foremost, I worked. Like I had to work.

>> Yes.

>> And that is such a valid excuse. Like if you have a job, volunteer to work that week. You'll get holiday pay. All of your coworkers will owe you, because most of them do want to go back and relax and have that kind of Norman Rockwell idea of Thanksgiving that probably -- I would say that is the biggest

minority is the Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving. Like nobody has that perfect kind of Thanksgiving, but a lot of people have wonderful times and really do enjoy the holidays. And I've learned to, you know, enjoy the holidays and I've had wonderful experiences that we're also going to talk about and kind of how to replace holidays and how to make them your own.

>> Yes.

>> But before I was able to do that, I had to -- well, first, I kind of had to endure. We had some things about once you're home how to make that a better experience if it's not something that you're really looking forward to, and then -- so ways to get out of it is, you know, work. Like I had a job and I would always say that I need to work that week. And then when the biological family would talk to me, I'd be like, oh, I can't, I have to work. Now, that's much harder over the longer winter break, especially with res halls closing and things like that, but one thing about if you're losing a res hall is dog sitting or cat sitting or house sitting.

>> Yes.

>> You get paid. Usually they have better cable than you do. They have comfier couches. I used to have dog sitting gigs all over this town and they always ruled. They always paid. They usually supplied you with food. You hung out at somebody's house. It was great alone time.

>> You played with somebody's dog, like went on walks, which is really good for you.

>> Yeah. It was fantastic. So I will say -- so, okay, friends of people who might not enjoy holidays. Here is what I want to say to you. When I would go back to my family of origin and have whatever holiday I would have, I would not enjoy it whatsoever. And so spending a holiday alone seemed like the greatest thing ever, and no one would believe me that that's actually what I wanted to do. Everyone would look at me with the biggest, saddest puppy dog eyes. Like, Oh, you're alone on Thanksgiving? And like, I have such a distinct memory of being in Megan and

Stephania's apartment which was an awful, terrible college apartment, and I won't tell you where it is, because maybe the owner would get mad to me. It's close to campus. And staying there and eating leftover pizza on Thanksgiving day and watching movies and it was, like, the best Thanksgiving I had ever had. I was 19 and it was the first Thanksgiving I'd ever enjoyed, and it was leftover pizza and movies by myself. It was so fantastic. I can't express enough that that wasn't missing out on something. That was giving myself time and space and enjoyment and a day to be with myself, you know?

>> Right.

>> Like it wasn't -- so allies out there who maybe have friends who don't have a great relationship or don't have a place to go back to that's safe or loving or whatever --

>> Or don't have a place to go back to period.

>> Period, yeah.

>> Because they came out in whatever facet and the parents were like, nope, you're not allowed in our home until you pretend to be somebody else.

>> Yeah.

>> Or whatever. Like go to church or do things, like, that are against your will and they've left you no choice but to not come home.

>> Yeah. There's lots of -- I mean, you know, if your parents moved internationally or if you never had parents, if you came here from, you know, kind of like a foster home or a single-parent household or a grandparents' household.

>> Yes.

>> Or wherever you're coming from and now that home isn't there anymore and maybe you are the lone survivor, you know?

>> Yeah.

>> There's loss in this world. Sometimes family members pass away and that's really sad sometimes, most of the time, and so it's just really important to acknowledge that there's lots of different reasons why someone might not want to go home or have a place

to go home and that the perfect solution for you as a friend isn't to say, Just come to my house. Just come to my house. Just come to my house. Just come to my house. Could you tell what I'm saying? Just come to my house?

>> Yes. No, totally. I feel you.

>> But to let your friend decide what's going to be best for them.

>> Yes.

>> Because there were times when I would get invited to go places and it was so uncomfortable, because everybody else, like my friend loved me, no question, and I've gone to some places where the entire family loved and accepted me and brought me in and was so happy they could have me, but then there were other times when, you know, the rest of the family looked at me like, who is that poor orphan child and what are they doing here and why do they look like that? You know?

>> Yeah.

>> Where it just feels so uncomfortable. Or there's all these traditions that are happening and you don't know what's going on. And sometimes it just makes, you know -- when I was eating leftover pizza and watching movies and having a grand old time relaxing and being on my own, I wasn't looking at someone else's family and thinking, I don't have that, or thinking, why don't I have that? Thinking, what's wrong with me that I don't have that? And you know, that's self-blame. There's nothing wrong with you if you don't have that, but it's easy to go to that place. I used to go to that place. So it's just important to know, like, ask your friend what they want. Maybe they really don't want to be alone. Maybe someone else out there is going, DJ Discovery, you are crazy. Why did you want to eat pizza? And like, it's just about honoring someone's true experience and what they're interested in.

>> Yeah. And what you said, like, I think it's such a good point. Not badgering someone with an invite.

>> Yeah.

>> I mean, should you invite your friend home if they don't have a place to go? Yes, once.

>> Yeah. And make sure it's okay with everyone else.

>> Exactly. Also, like, have some, like, critical thinking skills and be, like, what's my family? How are they going to react? Is my friend going to be comfortable? My friend has had tons of, like, horrible experiences with past holidays. When I drag them into my family situation, is this going to be tossed on the pile of horrible experiences or is my family, like, super dope and this is going to be so fun and they're going to be, like, we love you no matter what. Get over here, you know? And just really take a moment to reflect on that. Like yes, your family may love you. Are they going to accept and love your friend who looks, you know, really gender queer?

>> Yeah.

>> Or insert whatever.

>> Yeah. Or like even when I was a younger student in college, I did not yet look gender queer. I looked kind of sporty and tomboy-y and I looked ridiculously unfab. I had zero dollars, so I had hand-me-down clothes still. Like I didn't have any money to buy cool clothes. And I think that that happens a lot that we had to pick and choose what we spend our money on, especially as college students, and learning to budget for the first time.

>> Yes.

>> And it's hard. And sometimes I think that as college students, we're irresponsible with our money, because there's that pressure to look cool or have the new thing or have that Mizzou hoodie that everybody else has or wear the newest style, whatever, whatever.

>> Right.

>> And like, I don't know, so are they going to be okay with someone who is not formal or someone who is formal? That's the other thing is, you know, when you get back next week from having been on this Thanksgiving break, talk to your friends about what

their holiday was like. I had no idea that Thanksgiving was, like, a relaxing lay on the floor kind of holiday. Like everyone I know is like, no, you just eat until you feel so full and then you lay on the floor and watch movies. And I'm like, what? I remember getting super formal, linen napkins, candles lit, fancy china, ridiculous dishes. You have to eat some of everything. Like just so formal and all the etiquette rules. And other people are like, no, it's Thanksgiving. You eat all day. You pick at stuff. You wear sweatpants so your stomach has room to expand.

>> Yeah. You fall asleep, like, at the table.

>> And some people, I've found it's a very Midwestern thing that you eat at noon or you eat in the afternoon.

>> Yeah. I think we do.

>> Everyone else I know eats at, like, 7:00 P.M. Like the West Coasters that I was with.

>> Really?

>> You eat at nighttime. You eat at dinnertime.

>> Oh, no. We eat in the afternoon. That's interesting.

>> Right?

>> I think it's to have time for seconds.

>> Yeah, which I like. I like eating. Well, and I prefer, instead of getting super full and being uncomfortable --

>> Totally.

>> -- which is for a lot of people the tradition, and I'm not going to shame anybody for their eating habits, but I hated that full, uncomfortable feeling. I love eating all day long.

>> Grazing.

>> Grazing, yes.

>> Totally.

>> Especially because it's all so good and there's so much of it. Everybody can just graze all day long and different courses come out at different times. After you've had the big meal, you bring out the sandwich bread and the condiments and then you make the leftover turkey sandwiches instead of just turkey.

>> Yes. I love leftover turkey sandwiches.

>> Yeah, with cranberry sauce. Here is the question. How do you take your cranberries?

>> I do not take them. No thank you. Keep them away from me.

>> No cranberries at all?

>> My aunt made this cranberry salad that's actually passed down from my grandma on the other side, if that even makes sense. But she makes it and I ate that for the first time and it was very orangey tasting, and I really liked it, but like for the most part, our cranberry consisted coming out of that can and I was like, hey, no thanks.

>> Yeah.

>> I just looked at everything else on the table and that looks disgusting.

>> Yeah. There's people who absolutely love that canned cranberry. Can-berry.

>> Can-berry.

>> And if you're one of those people, awesome.

>> Right.

>> I am not. I do like --

>> How do you like them?

>> I do like cranberry that's like -- well, so we'll get to this, some of my other Thanksgivings, but I've been to so many different Thanksgivings that I've had all different flavors and types and sorts and whatnot. I really like the kind that kind of looks like jam, because it's, like, got the chunks of cranberries. I think you boil the cranberries in sugar water and it turns into, like, a cranberry goodness. But I love the cranberries. I absolutely am, like, get that gravy away from my turkey. I want it covered in cranberries.

>> Very interesting. Very interesting.

>> DJ Excellence just gave me a shocked look.

>> I did. I love the gravy. I would say, too, like there was -- when I was first coming out, there was, like, you know -- and you can only know so much retrospectively, because you don't know how much is blurred by, like, what you put on it or whatever.

>> Right.

>> But like, I know I was very uncomfortable when I was first coming out with my family. Not with my friends. Like with my friends, it was just like, oh, yeah, for sure, no problem. You're awesome. And that's one more part of me that is so cool and you're awesome, but with my family, there was like, you know, it's family. There's so much, like -- not in everyone's family. I'm speaking for myself, but there can be so many expectations, and then when, like, you start to change, like DJ Discovery had already kind of talked about, like they haven't seen you in four months, so you're both kind of at this standstill of where you left each other. I don't know. Like I just remember the worst parts of Thanksgiving were just, like, being a new person, having all these new ideas, having some new identities, and having to, like, negotiate that with people who have known me since I was in diapers.

>> Yeah.

>> And, like, getting, like, shamed, you know?

>> Yeah.

>> For several different things. And generally not by my mom but, like, by extended family members. Like we come from a religious family, and the one side is just, like, devout, devout religious. And I just -- I remember feeling very judged. And like, I don't know how much of that I'm putting on them and how much of that, like, really happened, you know?

>> Yeah.

>> Like how much I was projecting but, like, at the same time I think that it says something when the family members don't go out of their way to make sure you are comfortable because, like, isn't that what people always brag about? We love you and cradle and you accept you.

>> Yeah. They love you no matter what.

>> Yeah. They love you no matter what.

>> Sometimes.

>> Unless you're, insert identity.

>> Fill in the blank.

>> And you know, it's just that is a lot of what I had to deal with. A lot of scrutiny for, like, clothes I was wearing. I come from a really big family on my mom's side and it was a lot of like, why are you wearing that? Like from a random aunt. It was like, I'm going to dive this way and not talk to you for the rest of the day, you know? So even if you have, like, you're still going home to see your family and maybe it's not the best and also not the worst, you're still allowed to feel sad or hurt when your family judges you.

>> Yeah. When we're talking about LGBTQ issues specifically, coming out is a huge deal.

>> Yeah.

>> And sometimes you're not out yet. I wasn't out for a long time and most people -- I mean, I don't know. There was just unhappiness and terribleness all around, so I wasn't often asked this question, but it hurt a lot of other people. And my one grandmother who I actually love quite a bit, she would always ask me about my beaus. Do you have a new beau, instead of boyfriend, because she's from that age. I would always be like, no. Just, no, I don't.

>> Never gonna.

>> Nope. Yeah. That's not going to happen. Yeah. But like, people will ask that.

>> Yeah.

>> It's not always in that funny way. Let's make fun of your age. Not that we're making fun of your age, but you know what I mean. But they'll say, like, do you have a boyfriend? Do you have a girlfriend? How is your dating? Especially I think some of those extended cousins or uncles and aunts, because your parents, like, don't want to hear about you dating or liking someone. Well, some people's parents do, but a lot of people's parents are, like, we're not having the birds and the bees talk. Just ignore them. And then that one aunt or uncle is like, so, you found anybody to date yet?

>> Yes.

>> You know, like they're so interested in hearing it.

And that can be a really awkward conversation to have.

>> Moment? Yeah.

>> Because it is hard to lie to someone. Like that doesn't feel good. It makes you feel sad, and the reason you're lying is because you feel like you can't say it safely. So you have to say, no, no, I'm not dating anyone, when yes, you are dating someone. It's just not someone that you think would be accepted to be dated.

>> Exactly.

>> It can be hard. I mean, if you have a good relationship with your family, I think this is not good advice, but -- necessarily. I really am a fan of not making your coming-out story a Greek tragedy. It does not have to be a terrible -- you know your family better than anybody else does, so you know what your family is like. You know that. Like, don't ever let anybody else tell you how your family is, because you're the one who knows it and no one else really can know it. We can give each other support and care, but no one will know exactly what it's like. So if you need to have, like, a sit-down conversation and talk to whoever in your family, you can, but if your family is, you know, probably going to be okay with it or doesn't have big sit-down talks or whatever it is, you know, like do you have a boyfriend yet? No, but I have a great girlfriend.

>> Yep.

>> I don't know. That might not be a great way to do it, or it might be the best way to do it. Just leave it like that and maybe people will think you've been out this whole time. How come nobody in the family told Dad? Then it's whispering off to someone else and all you did was be honest and drop it into conversation like no big deal.

>> Yes.

>> Which might, you know, who knows, get the mashed potato thrown across the room.

>> Yeah.

>> Or be fine.

>> Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I remember I came out right before -- it was either at Thanksgiving or Christmas, but it was right before a holiday, and I came out. And my mom is one of nine. She's the oldest of nine children. And it was really easy coming out on her side, because I told my mom and then my mom just called the one sister and was like, Tell everyone. And like, I don't remember, in retrospect, if she asked me, and really, I didn't care, because at that point I was like, I don't give a care in the world who you tell. I'm so happy, you know?

>> Yeah.

>> And it was like that. It was like snap of the fingers. Every single one of my aunts and uncles knew. Nobody -- I mean, you know, people had, like, you know, people had some things to say, but they weren't mean. They were just like not, like, maybe I don't even want to say PC terms. Not like terms that we would use, like, in the community.

>> Right, yeah.

>> But it was overwhelming and overarchingly support, and it was a really cool way to come out in the sense of, like, it was very efficient.

>> Yeah. I mean, I think that, listeners, I think that's a really good bit of advice or something to learn from. It's yours to tell and acknowledge. It's tiring to tell, and sometimes you don't want to hear people's reactions.

>> Yeah.

>> Like how your aunts and uncles react to one another. And by the time they get to you they only have nice things to say hopefully.

>> Exactly.

>> We can't guarantee that, of course.

>> Right.

>> Let them get all the crazy initial statements out of the way: But I thought you had to have short hair to be a lesbian.

>> Exactly.

>> Whatever those statements are that people have, let them say them to each other and get that out of

the way, and then by the time they get to you, hopefully they have nothing but care and love and support.

>> Yeah.

>> And I think that while that is not happening yet across the board, I have hope, like Harvey Milk, and it's getting better and better and better. And if it's not better for you yet, there's plenty of places where it can be better.

>> Yeah.

>> Okay. So let's say that you are back there and it's not fantastic. Let's talk about ways that you can do that. Or even if it is pretty good most of the time, lots of us find family and holidays to be a stressful time. So I've found that the best way to, without causing more conflict or drama, to get some self-care time is to do things that the world and our society at large and usually your parents or family or whoever you're with respect as a smart thing to do. If you're like, this is stupid. I'm going to go wherever, to the movies and get away from you all, that might not be something that's respected.

>> Right.

>> If you're like, you know what? I really care about my school and I need to go get some homework done. I'm going to go to the basement for two hours and shut the door and work on studying.

>> Or the local library if you want to get out of the house.

>> Or a coffee shop. So ways to give yourself that alone self-care check-in, take some deep breaths, be okay with yourself. A great way while you're a college student is homework. You have to do your homework.

>> Yes.

>> Listen, college students, do your homework. Do your reading. Do your assignments.

>> Right.

>> That will be helpful. And also, it is a great way to get some alone time if you need it, because that is a respected thing. Nobody is going to get mad at you

for doing your homework, I hope.

>> Right.

>> Like, that's something that's really accepted and respected and people will just think of you as better and you get the added bonus of taking a break away if you need to. Another thing like that is exercising. Nobody gets mad at you for exercising. Like I'm going to take a walk. I've started to walk. I walk to my classes or I go to the rec center or whatever it is. I'm going to go for a run. If you're lucky enough to go to a place with a better climate, I'm going to go to a pool. I'm going to go swimming.

>> Right.

>> If you frame it in the way of I hate you guys. I'm leaving, that's, like, a huge fight and something you have to deal with when you get back. And if you frame it in the way of I really want to get some exercise. I have a great routine going. I care about my body. I want to be healthy.

>> Yeah.

>> They're like, awesome, great. Now, maybe they'd want to come with you, so you'll have to be prepared for that. Know your own family and think about, would that be okay with you? If you come from a family of, like, triathletes and you want to get away, maybe not the best idea is to say, You want to go for a run? Excellent. They might say, Excellent, set your timers -- if you drop a family of, like, triathletes and you want to get away, maybe not the best idea to say you want to go for a run. It might be like, excellent! Let's all set our timers and jog. I don't know what triathletes say.

>> Competitive thing which maybe isn't what you're trying for, but that can be a really good thing. Another thing that is so helpful and I didn't think of it until earlier is doing the chores that nobody else wants to do. The whole family is so happy with you and you do not have to deal or interact with them whatsoever. You're like, I'm going to do all the dishes. And everybody is like, Great! And they run to the other room so they don't have to do the dishes

and you get that alone time where you stand in front of the sink with your hands in warm water. It's a chore, but for me at least it was always way better than having to lie or interact or be shamed or reprimanded for being who I was or for whatever reason. Who knows why.

>> Right. Taking out the trash.

>> Exactly. Taking out the trash. Cleaning the bathroom. Who wants to do that?

>> Not me, but it's better than sometimes the alternative.

>> Absolutely. Think about that. Doing the grocery shopping. Oh, do we need something? I'll run out and get it. Always be the person who volunteers to run out and get something. Now, this can get tricky, because if you're like, yes! I'm gone! I'm going to be gone for, like, two hours to run and get some milk, they're never going to let you leave again, because they know you're going to be gone forever, so you have to do it pretty genuinely. You have to go get milk and maybe take an extra five minutes standing in the parking lot or sniffing the coffee aisle at the grocery store or whatever you want to do that makes you feel better.

>> Yes.

>> But if you, you know, just as, like, a point of clarification, if you're like, sweet, I'm going to go over and get some milk, and you're gone for two hours, that one might not work consistently. If you consistently say, I'm going to be gone, I'm going to get back, you get the break in the car to listen to the music you want to listen to. Or sometimes you can do that with the person in your family who you're closest with, because I had people who I considered to be better than others, you know. They weren't fantastic, sadly, but most people have at least one good ally in their family where they can be, like, Let's go. And maybe it's a sibling. Maybe it's a cousin. Maybe it's a close aunt. Maybe it is your mom or your dad and you're like, Hey, let's go get that stuff at the store that we need. Or pick a project. I really want to

make a pumpkin pie. I really want to make chocolate chip cookies. I really want to try this. I have lived in a res hall room, which means I've had no kitchen. I'm so excited to bake. Let's figure out something to bake.

>> Absolutely.

>> The other thing about going to college is you have the power. Even if you're never baked before, why not try baking something?

>> Right.

>> You follow a recipe. I promise it's real easy. You stir stuff up, throw it in the oven, set your timer. When it beeps, you take it out.

>> I did a lot of, like, just in general when I would go home, like, for too long is the only way I can say it, sometimes Thanksgiving break is too long and don't even get me started on Christmas break or holiday break, you know?

>> Yeah.

>> Like winter break, like how long that can be. Like a month with my family?

>> It's like five weeks.

>> Yeah.

>> I think it's just one of those things that, like, you're also completely valid in the fact, like, to be, like, hey, I'm going to a friend's house for awhile. I haven't seen them for a semester, you know? Like I really want to go see, you know, my best friend or I really want to go see some friend. And you can either go to their house or that could have been a lie that you told and you go drive to some parking lot and sit.

>> And call your girlfriend and ask her, What's up? How is it going for you?

>> I can remember trying to find the secret place where I wouldn't be heard on my cell phone to call my girlfriend, because I couldn't actually talk to a friend every night. It's like, Why are you talking to them? It's like, I miss my girlfriend. Usually we talk every night. Usually we sleep in the same bed every night. Like maybe I want to find a way to go call and talk to her.

>> Yes.

>> All of these little alone times, driving to the store and back would be a time when, you know, what I really want to emphasize is one of the best things for me was trying so hard to remember my Mizzou life, because I would go back to this other life and suddenly Mizzou and college and who I was just didn't exist anymore.

>> It seemed so far away.

>> It was back in this vacuum of, like, sadness and deceit and meanness to one another and just, like, bad. And it was like there was nothing else ever existed. I just fit back into this mesh of bad. And so remember Mizzou. Take photos home with you, you know? Like set reminders on your phone that are, like, stupid things that pop up on your phone and you look at it and it's like, chocolate milk at Rawlins. Oh, yeah. There's a whole dining hall that exists with people who eat meals with me everyday with people who enjoy my company. I should remember that. Do things like that. And yeah, call your friends. Text your friends, you know? Figure out how to do it so you aren't going to, quote/unquote, get in trouble with your family, because that doesn't help. Have your friends send you a reminder. I had a friend who we used to send each other a poem a day during breaks, just because it was like, I will not have the emotional capability of sending you a real e-mail, because I will be spiraling in a world of trying to survive this but, like, I can send you a poem a day or you can send me a poem a day and that sounds really good. Hey, I got an e-mail. Somebody cares about me.

>> That's another great way to be an ally to a friend who you know has a really bad time at home.

>> Yeah.

>> Just being, like, I'm going to send you a text or two everyday.

>> Yeah.

>> Or an e-mail or whatever.

>> This is like, you know --

>> Or a picture of something.

>> A new technology. Like send a ridiculous tumble. What do you call a post? Tumbler?

>> What's a single one?

>> Come on. We don't have anybody under the age of 27 in here.

>> DJ Shane, where are you?

>> We are old.

>> But Tumbler has great pics. Send a funny photo or send a YouTube clip or tweet to somebody or be in contact and help your friend not forget that a better world exists out there if they're going back to a worse world.

>> Yeah. Also, like something I do with my family is, like, and is accepted in my family and might not be accepted in all families is taking a nap. You know, like that's something that you can be, like, and you get to go in your room and you get to lock your door. I don't nap. Like my parents didn't know that, though, and so I would be like, oh, I've got to go take a nap. I've gotten so used to naps in college. I napped, like, twice in my life, you know? And I would go -- nothing against naps. I've heard they're incredible.

>> I'm not a good napper either.

>> I'm just too, oh, I'm up, I'm up.

>> When I nap, I wake up and it's existential crisis. I can't tell if it's day or night, who I am, what I believe in. I'm just in such a weird, woken-up funk.

>> It's like being in a zombie film. Bizarre.

>> Like a stupor.

>> Totally.

>> A lot of people take naps and it's a wonderful way to love your body and do self-care if it works for you, because you wake up rested. Your body needs sleep and rest.

>> Exactly.

>> I just am not good at it. So say you're taking a nap and take a nap, or say you're taking a nap and go in your room and lock your door and sit there and do whatever you want to do. If you want to bawl for 20 minutes, cry for 20 minutes.

>> Sometimes I do.

>> I, like, have a relatively good relationship with my family, whatever that even means. Right? But when I go home, I still --

>> But there's love.

>> Yeah. But when I go home, I still feel the need, and especially in undergrad. I felt so alone and there were so many times when I just felt so sad. And give yourself, like, that time. I had plenty of time to cry in my dorm room. I didn't have time to cry at home.

My mom is like, What are you doing in there? When I was in the bathroom. If you don't get away from me, I'm going to freak out. And so, like, going in your room and locking your door, like naps and sleeping in general are pretty, like, validated around the world.

>> As, like, humans sleep sometimes.

>> Yeah.

>> So, like, that's a good way to try to get away from people.

>> And you know about whoever you're going back and staying with, and I know that a lot of stories I've heard are that parents don't like sleeping in. They think you're wasting the day away. So go to bed early.

>> Yeah.

>> You're probably not going to bed but, like, you're going to your room by yourself or to whatever room you're sleeping in.

>> Exactly.

>> At whoever's house you're at.

>> That's such a good idea.

>> I'm really tired. I'm going to bed early. And they think, what a responsible adult you've become.

>> Yeah. You go in your room and put on your headphones and watch 3000 internet videos of, like, queer stuff that you always look at, and then when you're in your room, like half the X out button ready and your mouse on it for when your parents walk in and you can throw your head back and pretend you're sleeping.

>> Or read a favorite book. Maybe you don't have a laptop. A lot of students do these days, but maybe

you don't. I never did. I didn't have access to a computer. Read a book. I wrote a lot and I'm going to talk about some things, but that doesn't work for everybody. Also, like I'll do pushups, but that also doesn't work for everybody.

>> Right.

>> Figure out what works for you. See what makes you feel better. I'm going to do 27 jumping jacks right now. God, that was awful. Or wow, I feel so alive and in my body.

>> Right.

>> Figure out what works for you.

>> Or be like, oh, I want to go play with my dog.

Can I take the dog on a walk? I mean, it fits with the whole walk thing.

>> Yeah.

>> But that's, like, also a socially acceptable form of exercise, you know? And also is helping out, you know, if your mom is, like, baking the turkey and your dad is making the mashed potatoes and they're like, somebody needs to walk the dog. And you're like, that's me.

>> Yeah. Or if you have money and access to a car, you can get your holiday shopping done early.

>> Yeah.

>> Be like, when I get back to school, I really am going to have to focus on my studies. It's not going to be as easy to get a place. I'm just going to go to the mall or the department store or downtown and vintage shop or wherever I'm going and I'm going to get some holiday shopping done. They're going to assume you're buying them presents, so probably they'll be okay with that.

>> Right.

>> That does mean that you have to have money to actually purchase things and you would have to have access to get to, you know, like cars or buses or whatever, to get to the place that you're going.

>> Totally.

>> But a lot of us do, so that's an option. So one of the very last times I went to my family of origin for a

holiday, I had a new strategy and it worked wonderfully and I'm going to share it with you now. I kept tally marks of anything that was just, like, ridiculous. So I had this huge sheet of paper. It was pages long. It was like number of drinks I was offered. Number of drinks I was offered within five minutes. Number of drinks my grandfather had. Number of times homophobic comments were made. Number of times I responded under my breath. Number of times I was heard with my under-the-breath response, you know? Like number of times they yelled at each other. Number of times a dish got broken. It became instead of -- it was a way of taking me out of the situation.

>> Yeah.

>> It was a way of altering my lens so that I was in the situation, but I was observing it as if I was a journalist or as if I was, you know, an author researching a story that I was going to write.

>> Right.

>> I was no longer a part of what it was. I was observing what it was.

>> Yes.

>> And for me, it worked easiest through tallies. And it happened. It was also, like, one of the few -- that grandmother that I talked about that I liked, one of the memories that I have that aren't bad, one of them is playing the card game, Oh Hell. I don't know if people are familiar with that card game. We played the card game Oh Hell. So it was like number of games of Oh Hell we played. Number of times that I won. Number of times that people cheated. Number of times that grandpa yelled at me because I put my hands in my lap, because I don't know the rules that you have to keep the cards above the table. I am not cheating at this game. I'm just getting through. But you know, like, number of times I found a way to leave.

>> Yeah.

>> Like number of times I got up to go to the bathroom to avoid being around that one person, you

know?

>> Number of times I went to the garage for a soda.

>> Yeah. Like all of those things sound really depressing now that I repeat them, and I wish I had the list for me that I prepared in front of me. I did prepare, I just didn't find it to bring it with me, but I don't know. Like I think, as sad as it sounds, it was a really, really useful and helpful thing, and it made it a lot easier to then come back, because my friends did care about me by that time. I had a Mizzou support system. I had friends. I had people who genuinely loved and cared about me, which was the first time I'd ever had that, because I didn't grow up with that. I went back to the place where I didn't have it. So it's easy to fall back into, that's not really -- that's not what I have. So it was a simple way to try to explain what it was like there. It was a way for me to say, well, this is what I took tallies of. This is what occurred during that time. This is how many meals we had. This is how many times I got in trouble for formality or this is how many times I was asked to change my clothes or how many change we did change our clothes. We had to change for dinner. You weren't allowed to go sit down like a normal night. It was, like, Time to go change for dinner. Put on your skirt. No thanks.

>> Right. But like sometimes that's not a choice. Or it's like a choice, air quotes, but it's like, if you make the wrong choice, they're going to be -- there are going to be so many repercussions --

>> Severe consequences.

>> -- than if I just put on the stupid skirt and get through dinner.

>> Right.

>> And that's a hard choice to make and it sucks. And it might be one that you're having to make this break. Like do I put on my cool jeans I bought in the boys section or do I, you know, just put on this skirt so my grandma does not corner me and ask me why.

>> Yeah.

>> Why I'm cross-dressing or something.

>> Do I do my hair and put on eyeliner like I usually wear or do I not do my hair or do I not shower so it looks greasier so I look more as I'm supposed to look as I'm a man? I'm not supposed to look pretty. I'm going to wear my clothes to fit in with what they want. And listen, listeners, listen, whatever you do is the best that you can do and good job.

>> Yes.

>> Just make it back to us. Just come back to us. Come back to Mizzou where we love and respect you, whoever and however you are, because we do. I want to talk about some of my reclaimed holidays and how I did it. So one of my favorite ones ever, which is just so ridiculous, is the Thursday before Thanksgiving, I believe this is my junior year of college, the Thursday before Thanksgiving, because everybody was gone by Thanksgiving time, I threw myself a Thanksgiving that I wanted to have, and it was the exact opposite of what Thanksgiving was supposed to be. So you weren't allowed to dress formally. Like jeans were too formal. Like if you could have, like, holes or stains, that was recommended and, like, pajama pants and sweats and old beat-up stuff. We couldn't have any fancy food, so instead of mashed potatoes, we had potato chips. Instead of a turkey, we had turkey sandwiches. My friend Dan, shout out Dan, he lives in L.A. now, he brought candied yams, which was literally a raw yam in a bowl of M&M's. He's like, I made candied yams and we ate M&M's. The dessert was those single serving wrapped in plastic gas station pecan pies. I didn't even know they sold those. My friend bought them and brought these things. We went around the room and instead of saying what they were thankful for, we went around and said something we were angry about. The TV was on the entire time, because where I came from, the way it was celebrated, the television was never on. Everybody -- no one was allowed to sit at the table. Like I made the rules, and it was a way that I was reclaiming that holiday, because everyone talked about here's what it is and

here's why it's good, and so I did what I wanted to do. And I had enough people who loved and cared about me who were like, yeah, I'll do what you want. I'll come over to your house and do whatever this crazy thing is that you're planning. People respected that and people allowed that and people knew that it was for me and it was to show me love and what I wanted.

>> Right. And anyway, like besides, like, it being funny, was it really the antithesis of Thanksgiving? In my opinion, no.

>> Looking back, not at all.

>> Being surrounded by people who love you and respect who you are and are willing to celebrate like a reclaimed holiday with you and do it the way you want to do it, that is Thanksgiving.

>> Yeah. And I mean, I look back and there were some of my friends who I'm not in contact with anymore. I was friends because we happened to be on the same floor.

>> Right.

>> Some of the people I was close friends with were kind of friends with them, but they still, like, I don't think they understood it. I think it was kind of weird that I was being anti-Thanksgiving, but they came, you know? They put on their sweats and they brought some potato chips and they, like, hung out for awhile and then they went back to their house.

>> Right.

>> But it was, like, I did it the way I wanted to do it.

>> Yeah.

>> So that was the way I reclaimed it. I think having that leftover pizza and movie watching on Thanksgiving was excellent.

>> Yeah.

>> I used to have a kind of side gig where I would rake this woman's leaves and do yardwork for her, and she didn't have anything to do Thanksgiving, so we took her dogs for a walk. I'm still, like, acquaintances with her. I'd call her a friend, but it's not like we talk all the time. I don't know her very well, but we spent a Thanksgiving together, you

know? We walked her dogs.

>> Right.

>> I think we went and saw a movie.

>> Yeah, movies. Like you were talking about, like, you know, it's all how you frame it. But movies are an acceptable thing, like, in American culture to do on the holidays.

>> Yeah.

>> So take, like, let's say, like, you can't stand anyone in your family, but you don't really mind kids. Grab that one cousin that's, like, eight and all they want from you is to be, like, hey, what's up? Let's go see that cartoon movie and just zone out and text the whole time or write or whatever you want to do.

>> Or watch the cartoon movie.

>> Exactly. Totally. Like just have fun and, like, that's, like, your aunts and uncles again are going to be, like, oh.

>> That's so great.

>> Look at them being such a good, you know, whatever.

>> Yeah. Kids are really an excellent -- like go and sit at the kids' table or play hide and seek. Oh, my God. Do you know what you get to do when you play hide and seek? You get to hide.

>> Yes.

>> You're so removed from anything else.

>> And if you're good at it --

>> It's childcare, which is kind of work, but it's so much easier than the work of trying to be someone that you're not in order to gain acceptance that you don't really have.

>> Exactly. Totally. Let's talk about -- let's tell stories and talk about surviving partners' holidays. Holidays at your partner's, girlfriend, boyfriend, whatever's house, because they're different than what you expect, yes. They have different traditions, even though everybody thinks their traditions are the same. And you're doing it as however you identify but, like, let's just use queer as an all-encompassing term. Like you are queer. You're walking into this place that

may or may not accept you that way, but when your family doesn't accept you that way, I feel like it's different than when your partner or whatever's family doesn't accept you that way.

>> Well, and I think one thing is you're already set up for failure when you're going into their family --

>> Right.

>> -- because the way the family is going to see it, especially if they're not accepting of your partner, is you're the one that turned them.

>> Yes.

>> They wouldn't be like this except for you.

>> Yeah. You did this, yeah.

>> And we try to be as inclusive on the show as we can, but I think it's worth acknowledging that we both have similar gender expressions and similar identities, and so, like, when I go in, I am the stereotypical lesbian who turned the pretty girl.

>> Yep.

>> Which is not at all true, which is not at all true in actuality, but in their minds of how they view it and how our society shows it to the world at large to be understood, I'm a stereotypical lesbian and here I am walking in and my partner doesn't look like a stereotypical lesbian, whatever they think that means.

>> You are canvas to put upon all the hate and stereotypes.

>> Yeah.

>> And not all the time, but that can be --

>> Or even positive stereotypes. I think a lot of gay men, quote/unquote, positive stereotypes, I think a lot of gay men going in, the sister or aunt or cousin is like, yeah, now I have a shopping buddy. It's like, seriously, gay men don't just talk about fashion design.

>> And some people hate Black Friday, the shopping day.

>> Oh, yeah.

>> Like some people, like, you know -- and that's, I think, just something as a gay man you could get pigeon holed as, like, you must love Black Friday.

>> Let's go shopping together tomorrow.
>> It's like, I'd rather sleep in and watch football.
>> Yeah.
>> Or not. I'd rather eat leftovers and, like do, a puzzle or play games.
>> Exactly.
>> I don't know.
>> Video games.
>> You're a college student.
>> I feel like video games are, also, a good way to take breaks and cope. Those are pretty acceptable.
>> Speaking of video games, I've been playing Mario Kart on my Wii the last weekend. It's such fun.
>> The Wii is awesome. Get your hands on a video game system, even if you don't know how to play. Again, grab that little cousin. If you say, like, I'm going to go play video games, they'd be like, You bet you're not. If you go, Hey, I'm going to grab this cousin and going to play, they're going to go --
>> Ah, look at that.
>> It's all how you frame it.
>> Yeah. I mean, why don't you tell some stories of partners and I might tell a really Happy Friends Thanksgiving, Happy Thanksgiving stories that I've had.
>> Okay. I'm trying to think of a good -- like I feel like -- okay. I'm going to tell a happy one, because there's -- the bad ones are from a long time ago.
>> And we're getting towards the end and you've got to give them hope.
>> Yeah. I think this is time for hope.
>> Because listen, I'd never thought I would enjoy holidays, especially with a lot of the stories I've told. Now holidays are, like, they are kind of a relaxing time and they're still things to work through and I'm surrounded with love, because I've done a ton of work to figure out what trust means and who I'm going to choose to surround myself with and you can, too. I mean, I think, like, one of my biggest --
>> Absolutely.
>> And you can, too.

>> Absolutely. I think one of my biggest things with my girlfriend has been, you know, we've been dating for six years now.

>> Congratulations.

>> Thank you. Has been her little sister. Like, you know, like her family, she has a really small family on her mom's side, and it was, more than anything, the learning curve was that it was really small and my family is really big. And so, like, that cultural kind of difference of, like, trying to negotiate that. Like I'm a pretty, like, loud person and, like, boisterous at times, and so, like, they're not. And so, like, I was like, oh, I don't get how to act here.

>> Yeah.

>> And like, when it's a smaller family, it's more like, longer interactions and it's, like, mine is more, like, hey, hey, hey, you know, and you talk to everybody for a second and then when they ask you something that maybe you don't want to answer or is uncomfortable, there are so many people around that you can pretend like you got sucked away by the crowd and they won't even notice.

>> Yeah.

>> And a lot of my family drinks. Gen's family, a little bit, but not really. So a lot of it was the learning curve of holy crap, big family to small family.

>> Yeah.

>> And so her little sister, Maddie, was like, that was, like, my saving grace over the holidays, because, like, and Genevieve, of course, but it was just like, I just hung out with Maddie. That was totally acceptable. It was negotiated how much I could touch Genevieve or, like, negotiating, like, do I get to do PDA? I should be able to do PDA, darn it. But then it's like, well, okay, yes, I should be able to. Do I want to? Is that what I want? The whole meltdown of Thanksgiving to be surrounded about --

>> Will there be consequences? And even if it's not about fairness of the relationship, is that a family culture where affection is shown?

>> Exactly.

>> Because some families, you know, like my best friend's family, Autumn Rose, her parents still wrestle fight tickle each other and it is adorable. And she calls her husband Handsome and that is his name to her. And it's like this shockingly PDA parent times that, you know, like that's what they do. And a lot of families are like, okay, honey, kiss on top of the head and that's all you get, or not even that.

>> Or no touching.

>> So is it about the queerness or is it about the culture of this family is you don't show affection in that way?

>> Totally, yeah. And so I guess that's really -- that's kind of the extent of mine was hanging out with Maddie for so long, and now it's gotten to, like, we've been dating for so long, I really -- it's kind of one of those things, I don't really remember the bad. I know there was bad. I know there was.

>> Well, and it's important to not focus on it.

>> Yeah.

>> You know? Like when you're out there, listeners, if you have any of this hardship or if you have any of this stuff where you're like, wow, it's not like what they're talking about on the radio. I think I said something about a sea of terribleness earlier, so maybe that's not what you have, but if you have that discomfort or if you're trying to figure it out, don't be afraid to go to the counseling center. We have a program coming up. Well, I'm going to tell you about the program, but that's for anybody and everybody, of course, but the counseling center is really for anybody and everybody and they will help you kind of negotiate and figure out what your family culture is and figure out what those norms are and figure out how you maybe fit in there, how respect and disrespect happens among your families. But the program we're having is for people. It's called I Hate the Holidays, and it's for people who want to have the time and the space to feel validated and not enjoy holidays. Like you were saying earlier, DJ Excellence, it's really taboo. And it is. It's true. And the problem

is that so much is taboo and not enjoying holidays is taboo, and then once somebody says, why? Usually your reason is extremely taboo. Like they hate me because I'm queer or they hate me at all or I got beat up all those years or I've been sexually assaulted and I don't want to go back and be around that person who did that to me.

>> Exactly.

>> Or we don't have any money.

>> Right.

>> Or one of my parents is incarcerated or both of my parents are incarcerated or my parents have taken off or, you know, like all of these reasons that our society doesn't value those experiences and it's not fair, because those experiences are true and are happening and should be valued, because they're legit and they're hard a lot of the time.

>> Yes.

>> And you've survived and you're here and you're at Mizzou and you're doing it and you're not allowed to say, I don't want to go back there, because I don't want to get smacked, you know?

>> Right.

>> And that is a valid experience, and yet you are so looked down upon for, quote/unquote, airing that dirty laundry.

>> Right.

>> Or, you know, whatever it is.

>> Well, like you don't want to tell people.

>> Of course not.

>> You know? And they are, like, oh, why don't you want to go home?

>> You should just talk it over with them. Have you tried writing them a letter?

>> And then you tell them what happened if they get you frustrated enough and then they're like, Oh.

>> Oh. And then they look down on you or they give you the puppy dog like, now I must pity you forever.

It's like, no, I'm still me. It's just that's the experience I have. Those are the memories I have.

>> Just validate it and move on.

>> Also, it's going to be helpful for friends if they want to go to the I Hate the Holidays program. If they feel like they're having a hard time being an ally to that friend or being a good support system.

>> Or understanding what they're talking about.

>> Yeah. So let's go over some of the reasons why, or maybe you just don't like the holidays because your holiday isn't being celebrated.

>> Right.

>> Like this isn't a time of year that my faith is deemed as important as other times, you know? Like our big holiday is at this point in time and I don't get school off and I don't get a break from my studies and I don't get the whole world buying presents. I don't get the whole world, like -- I don't know. I think that's --

>> Or maybe you just took a history class and you were just, like, Thanksgiving is crap.

>> Yeah. It turns out that's not the brightest part of our history --

>> Exactly.

>> -- As Americans. And yet, we still celebrate it. And then, you know, find the balance for you.

>> Right.

>> Find what you do like and try and enjoy that. We don't want this show or our program -- it's December 6 at 12:30 in the LBGTQ Resource Center, and we'll have that information on our website; to be anti-holiday. Like we are not anti-holiday, but we are anti not allowing people to feel how they feel. And we want to acknowledge that some people feel bad around holiday times.

>> Absolutely.

>> So we are pretty much out of time. So I want to end with just a couple happy stories.

>> Yeah.

>> Really quickly.

>> Let's have them.

>> Kevin and E are my absolute ambassadors of joyous love at holiday times, and I've spent multiple Thanksgivings with them. My first Thanksgiving with

my partner was at Kevin and E's house and we call it Friends' Thanksgiving and it's just so fun. We will just, like, start randomly singing some song. I wish I could remember. There was some song we started singing and got up and we danced around and, like, did interpretive dance to this song that made no sense. Oh, Kevin is such a good cook and he made this grilled pineapple and shrimp thing.

>> That sounds so good.

>> All of these crazy stories. They showed me love. When I showed up with, like, clearly I'd just been crying face, they just hugged me and it was like, all right, you want to talk about it or do you want to, like, move on to whatever stupid movie we were watching? And I got the choice and they gave me that space and time and I just had love. And I don't have to go anywhere I don't want to go, you know? And age helped a lot with that. Graduating from college helped a lot with that. Timing, you know, like I hate how long it takes, but sometimes it just takes time. But now I absolutely love my life. Thanksgivings and the holidays I go back to, I am still, you know, the odd ball out with my gender expression and, like, going back to the farm and, you know, I don't fit perfectly, but I'm absolutely accepted. I'm absolutely loved. I am valued for making my partner happy in the world, you know? And it's kind of like, wow, I'm back now. And I also would be remiss if I didn't, on the Thanksgiving show, thank Sarah Wolkin and her parents. Do we do first and last names? Usually we don't. Her parents took me back, and I will say -- she took me back to Thanksgiving one year and it was the Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving. I mean, it wasn't, because that makes it sound like a cartoon of itself, but it was just wonderful and amazing and joyous and full of love and laying on the floor and watching -- I think we watched a Die Hard movie. I mean, it was American. And I shot a gun for the first time.

>> Yes.

>> I shot a rifle at an onion can and I hit it, thank you very much.

>> Ding!

>> And her mom kissed me on top of the head and it was more love than I think I'd ever felt from a friend figure maybe before. Definitely before and maybe even since, you know? Like such -- I gave myself the space and time to figure out who was good for me in my life. It wasn't like I met Sara and I immediately went home with her for Thanksgiving. It was years before I ever shared that with her or she shared it with me, more likely, and it took a long time. And there is love out there and there are people, listeners, who are going to find you and love you and celebrate you for who you are, because you have value and worth. I just can't express that enough.

>> Absolutely. Thank you, guys, for joining us this week. Have a good holiday.

>> Yeah. Enjoy the rest of your time. And we will see you next week back on campus.

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