

Friendship Village -- Feb 7, 2021

You're listening to 96.9 FM KMRD-LP, Madrid, New Mexico. I'm Marlee Grace, and you're listening to Friendship Village.

[Music]

That was Smokey Robinson with "Cruisin'." This is Friendship Village, I'm Marlee Grace. What a gift to be here in the studio today, broadcasting through the airwaves. Today is dedicated to my amazing great-aunt Thelma, the last living sibling of my grandfather, who just turned 98 and is from the small village of Portage, Wisconsin that this show is named after. Friendship Village by Zona Gale. So shoutout to Aunt Thelma, many blessings, an amazing painter, an amazing sister to my grandfather, and 98 freakin deakin years old. Friendship Village, music and advice. Sundays from 3-5 here on KMRD. We've got our first question. We have some juicy questions today, and I can't wait to share them with you. It is a gift to receive these questions via email, via the phone line. I will do my best to answer them. This caller says: "I recently got out of a toxic relationship with someone I loved for many years. This person and I tried to part ways several times over the last year of our relationship, only finally ending the cycle when I decided it was best for us to no longer be in contact in any way. That was a couple of months ago, and since then I met someone new who I am really excited about (my first queer relationship, its been so healthy and I'm learning a TON!). Last week, a friend from the city I used to live in contacted me to say that my ex is spreading some pretty serious things about me throughout our community. While I no longer live there, and my ex does, I can't stop thinking about how many people might think ill of me in the place I called home for years. I am trying to find a way to balance the new love I have in my life and the pain, fear, and powerlessness I feel in response to the things my ex is doing now. Do you have advice on how to grieve/process this while also making space for someone important and new?" Well, dear caller, what a complicated but so normal, common question here at Friendship Village, like, I was in a toxic relationship, it ended, now my ex is speaking ill of me, what do I do next? It's interesting, you named powerlessness and how that feels like it's shaky ground. Bu tI think that's actually what you can lean into - you're powerless over what this person says about you and other people's opinions of you. That's actually amazing, because you can't control the narrative. And that's what can exhaust us, I so often get into this space of I have to do x y and z totally right to control the narrative about me - publicly, privately, in my current relationships, in my past relationships -

and just really pausing to know that there's nothing you can really do because there are certain people who are going to believe x, there are certain people who are going to "believe you." All you can do is take care of your side of the street. How beautiful to have new queer love in your relationship. How can you lean into that new relationship without losing yourself, right? Because a lot of this is about not abandoning yourself and trusting that you can be true, you can be so true to yourself, to this new person. I was just texting a friend last night - there's no specific situation in my life, but I could feel that feeling coming up in me like, what do other people think of me and how can I control it? This friend said, I always try to remember "who are you and whose are you?" I don't belong to people who think ill of me. The "whose are you" is like, I belong to my higher power, to my fellows, to my dear friends who see me, even if I have caused harm or not been my best version of self. I want to belong to myself and to others who see me as a being worthy of acceptance and love. Surround yourself with those people. Many blessings on your new relationship, surrender to that which you cannot control and I think you'll find a lot of freedom. Many blessings, daer caller, thank you so much. We have some amazing questions on the show today, I'm dressed in all red, my mic cover is red, there's an extra mic cover on the window sill that's red - you know I don't know. The play button on YouTube is red, maybe red - the beautiful, giant, KMRD flag in the other room is red. Maybe that's a colorful theme here, stay tuned for more answers on relationships and love and creativity. Here's "Have you Been Good to Yourself?"

[Music]

That was Paul Simon "The Boy in the Bubble." You're listening to Friendship Village, we have another gorgeous question. I've been listening to Las Culturistas podcast as well as their sister podcast, Seek Treatment, and I'm just such a freaking fan of both podcasts. They have been making me laugh so hard and feel so much less alone. Taking myself way less seriously. I always like to say, I take my work - inner and outer = very seriously. I do not take myself seriously. That is an important distinction to me. Lots, as some listeners may know, I deactivated my social medias a couple weeks ago. I have a large social media following, who knows what large is, not a million, but 80,000 or so people follow me there. It's really nice, it's a gorgeous part of my life and career and I needed a break. So some of our questions have to do with how is the break going? This caller says, "as an individual who has experienced the particular journey of becoming known on social media as an artist, to now taking an online hiatus, how does online, word-based,

biographical copyright play a part in your personal experience as an entrepreneur? What has your journey been with this? Is it doldrum-ish or liberating, both?" Well, dear caller, let me see if I can answer that question. I'll tell you what's coming up for me, I don't know if it'll exactly answer your question. I have noticed that my website is lacking in clarity. So I think what I've noticed is I used my social media account as one should use a website, like every project, every quilt, everything just existed there. And so now I'm looking at my website like, wow, it doesn't look like I've done much in the past 9 years. I mean, it does in some ways but what I'm realizing is that copyright and proving myself to the world really only existed on the Instagram app which we know is designed to steal and sell our attention. Which is such a bummer. It's really making other people billionaires and it's only making me poorer in time and foccus, attention, and the creative practice. Much is yet to be seen about my income without social media, but I had a lot of people in my newsletter today, I'm following faith. I have noticed that a lot is trapped in the Instagram space when maybe I should have a blog or an archive of my creative projects instead of having it just live there and now it's disappeared. I'm like, who am I? Which is both an amazing invitation, to be like "who am I?" AND it's sad, to be like wow I let so much of the copyright of who I am exist in this thing that I don't own. And so that's interesting. Many blessings, dear caller, thank you for that question, thank you for helping me think about my practice and where I exist digitally. I'm not anti-social media per se although I am pro-the experience of having total deactivation. Here's the Pretenders, you're listening to Friendship Village.

[Music]

That was Vince Gill "Don't Let our Love Start Slippin' Away" before that we heard Ricochet, Shania Twain, Randy Travis. I love to give us just a little 90s country. I recently purchased a Tricia Yearwood t-shirt on the internet that I'm patiently waiting for it to arrive because I love Trish and I love all of the 90s country, as you may or not not know, my father worked in country radio for many years of my childhood. He was a country radio writer album reviewer, I just - it's in my blood, literally. You're listening to Friendship Village. I have more questions from my amazing listeners all around the country, probably listening live on kmrd.fm/listen or tuned into 96.9 on the airwaves. We're going to talk more about Instagram, the social media app. "hi marlee. i, like you, am on a break from instagram. for me, it started around 9/18, the weekend after rbg died, during the wildfires on the west coast which were very close to where i live. it

just so happened to be perfectly timed with a short road trip i was taking to a place with poor internet, which was helpful because as i impulsively tapped the app every quiet moment, it took long enough to load that i could close it before i saw anything. (truly addictive behavior, i know.) so, my question is this: now that you're off social, what parameters will you set for yourself before you return? i haven't gone back on because i don't want to get back into the bad habits that i've really tried to break while i've been away. i feel that i need to set a time limit or a following limit or something to keep space for myself with it. to be clear, i only use instagram as a way to look at things people are making or doing & i very inconsistently post. it is not a part of my personal business or brand, just a means of escapism via looking at pretty pictures." Ugh, dear, dear caller. I just, I don't know and it's scary and you'll have to truly stay tuned. As many of you know, I do not drink, I am sober, goddess, universe willing, 10 year, one whole decade sober. Which I can't believe, tbh. And my experience trying to quit drinking was so similar to trying to not be on Instagram all the time, right? Like I'm only going to drink after 5, and then it's 5 o'clock somewhere. I'm only going to drink on Saturdays. I'm only going to drink IPAs brewed in my hometown. That didn't work. It just always led to getting shwasted passing out, doing bad bad things. I couldn't return to the drink so I just had to have no drinks ever for a literal decade, almost. So yeah, do I want to return? Do I want to use it as a tool for my business? Yeah. I really do. I've put a lot of energy into it, and a lot of people appreciate me there, which I appreciate in return. And I have tried most of it, I've tried to just not look, I've tried to put a timer on it, I've tried to just truly so many different things. None of them work. So that's where I'm at, but listen. It's two weeks into my hiatus, and I committed to four months away. So I'm two weeks in. I committed to four months because I knew I wouldn't be able to vision returning and using it again until I really took a break. Right now I'm just noticing, noticing how I feel, noticing what it's like to be without it, I don't have the plan for the parameters yet. But I appreciate this question and I'm dedicated to continue researching what in the heck is going on with my brain and social media and how to return. Many blessings, dear caller, I wish you nothing but the best. Reach out if you have some parameters that work for you, let me know. I did read Cal Newport's Digital Minimalism. I hated so many parts of it and I loved so many other parts of it that were just beautiful. He talks a lot about recreation, hobbies, active leisure, so I am planning to do that. Planning to learn to ski next month, hoping I'm so obsessed with skiing that I don't even want to look at my phone. I'll report

back. You're listening to Friendship Village, I'm Marlee Grace. It's an honor to answer your advice questions here on KMRD.

[Music]

Thank goodness for Bonnie Raitt, that was "Angel from Montgomery." We've got our next question on the show. A classic Friendship Village show, which is some of you know that I identify as a lesbian, formerly married to a man, John, who is my family, my dear friend. One of the great loves of my life, one of my true life partners. So I get questions similar to this one a lot, and I will do my best. We're all so different but I'll do my best. This sweet caller says, "I question myself a lot. But over the last couple of years I've been realizing that I think I love women. I've never had a relationship with a woman. I've never even kissed a woman. But I want it bad. The thing is, I also have a beautiful, amazing boyfriend whom I deeply love. I don't want to change our relationship and definitely don't want him to feel uncomfortable or to doubt my love. I do share my exploration with him and I've very open about what I feel and think but I'm also very awkward about it and have a lot to figure out. I wonder, having heard you talk about your marriage in interviews, if you have any advice on how to be open and express who I am and how I feel while caring for my relationship. Best, confused & loving." Dear, dear caller. I mean here's the thing about sexuality and queerness, it is so vast and fluid and abundant. Here's the thing, I can't really even give - there's so many options. I feel like I have friends who are queer and are in - I saw someone recently, instead of heter-presenting or passes as hetero to "hetero-assumed" because we're trying to smash the idea that anything looks queer or looks gay or looks straight. I just want to honor that I definitely am someone who has said, this thing passes as straight or cis, we're trying to reimagine. Something one of my friends says is, if you're queer, your relationship is queer. It's not straight. It doesn't pass for straight. And there are certain privileges one might walk through the world when you look like what certain people want it to look like in straightness. It's complicated, nuanced, doing my best to explain this. Alas, what I'm hearing is something I know - I have so many friends who are open and bisexual women who are with men and are like, polymary is not the answer for everyone. They're monogamous and they explore their queerness in other ways. They might read lesbian erotica or really go to queer spaces, or be really surrounded by other women loving women or non binary people or queer community in general, outside that heter-leaning relationship, if you will. If you love your boyfriend and you're connecting intimately, spiritually, emotionally, sexually - you can have both. We can exist in both. Here's the thing, my marriage did not end because of my sexuality. I

came out a few years later. I can only speak of what was true for me - I uncovered a lot of my own closeted experience of my sexuality, going in the closet as a teenager and being ashamed of my own experience as a woman who is attracted to women. Some people in my experience might be like, I'm pansexual, I'm bisexual, I'm fluid. For me it was really clear, but it also took a while. There was a year and a half where I was only dating women but sleeping with a lot of people and experiencing my sexuality in a lot of ways, but then something shifted and I was like oh I think I'm actually just gay. And so, I don't know, who knows, I'm 32, maybe some other shift will happen. That feels true to me now in my mind, body, and soul. This is true - I hope it feels fun that you're like, I want this thing! I'm also hearing that you're ready to go - for people who haven't had the experience with women yet but they know they want it, you're probably going to love it when it happens. There's a truth to yourself - we don't just come out to other people, we come out to ourselves. Which is so beautiful and really complicated. It really depends on what kinds of things you and your partner want to explore in the container of your relationship. It sounds like there's a beautiful queer future ahead for you. It doesn't have to be so complicated, there can be abundance in your relationship container. It sounds like you have a really loving and supportive boyfriend, I want to celebrate him today and celebrate you and just say it's one day at a time, you can celebrate your queerness in your partnership, both of you can celebrate it, and you'll see what happens as it continues to grow and bloom and emerge. Many blessings as you navigate this part of yourself. Here's a song by one of my favorite queers, Emily Ritz. This one's called "Doorwatcher."

[Music]

That was Jackie Shane, "Cruel Cruel World." You're listening to Friendship Village, we heard Sam Cooke, Fleetwood Mac, Dottie West, and we started with Emily Ritz. We have one more beautiful question here today on Friendship Village. This caller needs some advice. "I am a fellow gemini sun and capricorn moon (though scorpio rising) and I can tend to put CRAZY pressure on myself to have certain things done before I can "enjoy my life" or take a break. I am really wanting to take a holiday for 6 months for the spring and summer from work as a whole. I am a recovering workaholic for context...I have slowly titrated into really cool things in the last year: I'm no longer on social media 24/7 and no longer logging in 12 hours of screen time per day, I have office hours and I have changed up my lifestyle so life costs less so I can work less. I am so proud of myself, but I still feel like I need a total break as a gift to my

body after years of adversity. I feel it's the correct aligned thing I need in my own recovery - I will be 4 years sober on May 21st. But most days I don't know what to do with the fear about taking a break that I talk myself out of planning for it. Thoughts?" Well, dear caller, in my own social media holiday, I will say I certainly have not taken time off of work because I love to work, and as the author of a book about not being obsessed with work, I relate. Here's what I want to say about my social media holiday. It was really math in a lot of ways. I have my newsletter, I have my Patreon, I have avenues of creating revenue and marketing myself. But social media is really where I went to do that. I had to ask myself the question of, if I deactivate and don't use it for 6 months and somehow I make 0 dollars, can I save up for 4 months of making zero dollars? I wasn't taking 4 months off of work, I was only taking 4 months off of social media. So I didn't - to me, it's a math game. If you want to take 6 months off work, do the math, sounds like you've already made shifts to make your cost of living be less. How much do you need to have to live comfortably each of those 6 months? Here's the thing, if you're a creative, inventive person, I would imagine that more income streams and answers are going to come to you. That amount saved might be half of what you need every month. So for me, deciding to take that break, mine wasn't about not working, but as I vision it for you - for me it was about taking breaks from certain parts of my work, which was oversharing on social media, I needed a break from that. My mind has been able to expand in these other ways creatively that I think naturally will generate income down the line. Asking questions like what are my priorities, what does taking a break look like, how much do I need to take that break? And the faith that when you jump, the net will be there. That's been a big theme for me the last couple of weeks. Why do I have such a scarcity mentality, well, the government and the world teaches us that that makes sense. The structures that are not set up to catch us but how can we make sure that the universe and spirit and community will catch us. That has proven to be true for me over and over again. Looking at the nuance of where does my white privilege afford me access to certain things, cis privilege, and then at the same time, where does being gay or being a woman stop me from certain spaces? I think honoring that there's many different parts of us, our identities, that afford us the ability to take certain breaks, and how can we be of service if we're burnt out? And exhausted? We can't be, it's building that resilience for availability and rest at the same time. I think it's a little bit of a math equation for you, dear caller, that's all I can say. What's the math? What do you need to have six months of bountiful freedom of time and maybe it's an inventory of where is your time going right now? You mentioned you're not spending 12 hours

a day on the screen, but are there other places you're spending more time than you might want to? That would be a thought from me. So those are my thoughts, many blessings, dear caller, as you figure out what's next and what you want to do and how you want to do it. I'm going to leave you with one of my favorite pop songs. This goes out to anyone who needs a little dance energy, movement through your body. We don't know what's going to happen. Here's a little Ellie Goulding because anything COULD happen. Excited to see what happens with this real break, a gift to yourself.