

Friendship Village - Marlee Grace - 7/19/20

[Music]

That was Alison Krauss with "When you Say Nothing at All." Before we heard Claudine Clark with "Party Lights." This is Marlee Grace, you're listening to Friendship Village. We've got some great questions today for the show. If you've got a question, call in while the music's playing at 505-473-9696, you can also email [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com). Questions about creativity, love, life, being a person, there are no rules, give me a call!

[Music]

You're listening to Friendship Village. And we have our first question of the show. We've got a couple great questions today. This caller says "My partner and I are leaving a studio space we've spent a lot of time in over our relationship - it's charged with a lot of memories, associations, and tender feelings - and moving in to a brand new (to us) studio in a part of town we're not very familiar with. Do you have any rituals or practices we could do to thank the space before leaving it and also to bestow blessings upon a new one?" What a beautiful question. I was actually just processing this with a friend who lives in Oakland who has run a very sweet little gallery out of the kitchen nook of their apartment for the last five years and they're about to move and go to grad school in another state. So we were talking about how we honor a space before we leave. I think we, as humans it's so natural and easy for us to not attach as much love or gratitude to a space as we might to a person, or to an experience or to a city as a whole. I think I've gotten a lot more conscious of this because for four years in Michigan, where I'm from, I ran an artist residency and gallery space and when I left in 2016 I was just so anxious and ready to leave that I didn't really have those rituals or gratitude blessings, and I think the pain was so intense that it took me a while later. Later, I had to face some of the grief that was sort of unresolved from not really thanking it. So this is a question personal to my heart. When the space is empty - I did do some final dancing in my old space. I think movement can really bring about joy, it can move grief or sadness or happiness through your own body and is a way to bless the old space, and maybe the new space too. You can even pick a song, like this is our last song that we're going to listen to in this space and either play that as the first song in the new space, or pick a new song that's sort of

like, how do we bless and dance in the new space in that moment - a song is only a couple minutes - before you move all the stuff in. I'm picturing the old studio space maybe emptied out, if you have that space empty, build almost a little sacred space in the middle, altar like, put maybe a few objects that represent how you feel about the space, maybe write words on a piece of paper, take turns sharing a memory - I loved this day, or that art piece you made, or this an experience we had, or wasn't it funny when this happened. Or even the hard parts - I'm so glad we grew through the experiences we had in the studio in this way. And then maybe to close, have a little mini dance party to a song. I think it's also important to remember that ritual and blessing doesn't have to be so serious, you don't have to light a million candles or cast a million spells, but what can you really do to shift psychic energy in a space, to feel good in it together. It was suggested to me once by a mentor that every time you unlock a door to a studio space - could be your home - but I always used to do this in my shop space. Take a really deep breath in and just say "I'm so grateful for this space," before I turn the key. You could have that before you walk out the door for the last time, doorways as passageways or portals from one place to the next, both physical and energetically, just really keep finding the moments where either you can say outloud to your partner or in your heart, "I'm so grateful" and share a memory. Maybe leave a secret thing behind. I always think of those movies where they hide things in a brick. So if there's a brick you can hide a matchbox racecar, that's my last idea. Beautiful questions, many blessings on your move. I'm sure the new studio is going to be so amazing and bright and abundant and beautiful. If you have an advice question, call the station at 505-473-9696 while the music is playing, or email [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com) while the music is playing or during the week. Here's Sleater-Kinney with "A New Wave."

[Music]

That was The Selector with "On my Radio." You're listening to Friendship Village, advice and music with me, Marlee Grace, every Sunday from 3-5PM. We've got another great question. Dear Marlee, I've been noticing in this uncertain time that I'm struggling to put down my phone. The days in front me of me feel exceedingly anxiety-riddled, while also being pretty slow and sluggish. At the same time, the energy on social media is so charged, and I am now identifying my attachment to checking it to be more of an addiction than just a small distraction. It doesn't feel good, and yet I can't

stop engaging, checking, and ultimately, feeling bad. I know you've talked and written about this, so I'm just wondering how you're navigating your own social media woos as we all weather the many storms raining down currently. Thanks in advance. Anonymous caller. As you all know if you've listened to Friendship Village or have ever read any of my writing, I focus a lot on social media addiction, specifically to the app Instagram and the way it affects our brains and minds and the way we live in the world. So yes, I'm happy to share a new thing that I'm trying and maybe this will be helpful for some of you out there. This is something I first read about in *Rookie* magazine - Tavi Gevinson, a young, fashion, blogger, she was a child when she came onto the scene, wrote an amazing article about handing her Instagram password over to someone on her team so that she couldn't log in. When you go to her Instagram, it feels like her, it's all content she builds, she doesn't have someone making it up, but she doesn't have the password. And then I have a dear friend who has been experimenting with this herself, so this week I am trying that. I handed over my Instagram password to my amazing assistant, Isabel, and Isabel is also amazing at running social media accounts - that's part of what she does for jobs with other people - so we're only a few days in, we're experimenting. I want to say that this maybe isn't available to all people, to pay someone else to run your Instagram account, I'd like to honor that's maybe something that's hard. But let's say you're even trying to take a week or month off, if you're using it for your business or just socially and you really need a break, and honestly the addiction is so intense that you can't even keep yourself from re-downloading yourself an hour later, see if your partner can maybe change the password for you and be like, sign me back in in a week. Maybe it's just a friend. Maybe just a dear friend across the country who you can't go to their house and knock at the door. We're really at this point where we have to ask ourselves - how do I keep myself away? Because I find that so many people I work with, in my life or colleagues, they delete an app - maybe an hour or a week - but they re-download, they check it on the browser, there's some sort of hook that takes us back in. I could literally spend the next hour and 13 minutes of the show talking about this but I don't want to do that because I have some really good 90s country to play in a little bit. But I will say that already, a few days in to not even having access to the feed, I'm experiencing a lot. I'm definitely experiencing the withdrawal of what feels like a self-soothing drug, that's what scrolling a dopamine app that is designed to manipulate our behavior will do, it'll act like a drug. So I think that I've had to find some new

neuropathways and just be gentle, like watch some reality TV and numb out a little. I'm not trying to live a world where I don't have any guilty pleasures, but I think something that's been really big for me is that when you're on a social media app - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram - I had a friend point this out to me the other day, you're receiving hundreds of directives every day. You have hundreds of people saying read my book, donate to this thing, come to this event, read my blog post, link in bio to hear my new single, go watch this movie, go read this, go think about this topic, go to this therapist, go think about this animal, I don't know. You know where I'm going. Go look at a dog meme, that's enjoyable. But even if it's joyful things, you are receiving information and direction from dozens if not hundreds if not thousands of people every day when you log into an app, and that in the last few days of not even having any access to looking, has been really transformative. I feel like I get really teary-eyed a lot, my heart feels open. I'm only tuned into myself and the people around me. I want to share that as sort of the win. If you can take a break yourself, that's great. It's sort of in my long-term goal, career-wise and strategy wise, to exist all together. I'm in the space, I'm thinking about it, wondering if it's possible. I don't know if it's possible. I'm interested to know what you think. Call into the station. Maybe you have an idea of how to manage your own social media intake, or if you have a question, call me! Or email [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com). Here's Kevin Morby with "City Music."

[Music]

That was Japanese Breakfast with "Everybody Wants to Love You," this is KMRD, you're listening to Friendship Village, I'm Marlee Grace. If you have a question, call 505-473-9696 or email [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com). We're going to start the next hour with some of my favorite 90s country music.

[Music]

That was Jo Dee Messina with "I'm All Right" before that we started out with Tanya Tucker, Patty Loveless, Alan Jackson. As you've noticed here on Friendship Village I love to play country music, specifically of the 90s era. It seems like everyone was cheating on each other constantly because they all have these amazing anthems about cheating and leaving each other. So I don't know what was going on in the 90s, specifically, I wasn't an adult then - and I know a

lot of songs will always be about cheating - but 90s radio really gave it to us with the cheating. They could've tried non-monogamy, I don't know, I don't have the answers. But we did have a caller who has some answers. I don't usually say, "if you have thoughts, call me!" but I said that and we had a caller! I wanted to offer a little devil's advocate feedback because as we know, I obsess about leaving social media forever, and this person reminded me of a reason I often don't leave, which is connection. We connect there! They talked about keeping in touch with friends new and old who are far, this person feels like they can call on and these friends can call on him if they need anything. I love this idea, they offered the advice of retraining the brain to skim. Yes, Instagram does tell you a million things, but so did plazas with gazebos in Europe in the 70s and 80s, you go up to this telephone poll and it has all this information and you have to learn how to skim and take what you want and leave the rest. I'm a believer in this, I don't disagree. So for those of you who are still on social media, learn to skim! This caller also talked a little bit about accepting it all, chaos and order, and then the other option - don't accept anything, just watch and listen and be. Thank you, to this caller. Thank you to you who are listening and thinning about your own relationship to social media. It's not easy and I think the more we talk about it, the clearer and more in alignment we're going to be, both digitally and physically in our bodies. This is Friendship Village, we've got more questions. If you have a question, call into the station or email [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com).

[Music]

That was Nelly Furtado with "Turn Off the Light," before that, Madonna, before that we heard "Lights Out" by Santigold. Lots of things about lights in that pocket of music. You're listening to Friendship Village, advice and music with me, Marlee Grace from 3-5. We have our next question! This person has explained a few things - most of them are asking questions about if I have noticed, I'm so curious if others have noticed, information about queerness being clearer or louder in certain parts of one's menstrual cycle. This person is saying, during the luteal phase of the month - the week before their period, they're really feeling their queerness. This person was in a lesbian relationship before, now in a committed relationship with a cis man, they also own a business together, so they're in this wave of unpacking what does it mean to be in touch with their sexuality. They talked about going to therapy again and

learning about the term pansexual - my understanding is that would be being attracted to someone regardless of their gender. Finding yourself attracted to all people, and yeah, this person talked about now that they learned about this term and are learning more about themselves, they're feeling back in the closet in some ways. So they're trying to figure out how do I open up about this new discovery of themselves with their partner, that feels scary, especially building this life and business together. The media paints them as this cute hetero couple living and working together, so where is this person's place in queerness in this relationship and other things? They also talked about having been in a lesbian relationship before but feeling in that relationship they quieted some of their sexuality because they didn't feel "gay enough" for the woman they were dating. So first of all, many blessings to this beautifully vulnerable question. I get a lot of questions very similar to this one - in the same vein that are usually from women or non-binary people assigned female at birth who date cis, straight men. These people are queer and they're trying to find a way to carve out queerness in a really straight-passing relationship. Every time I get a question like this I just want to celebrate you and remind you that you're queer. You know that about yourself. Who we are in partnership doesn't prove our queerness, right? How many people do we know who are in relationships with trans people who look extremely straight to the outside world, and many of them prefer to pass and be straight. And other ones really struggle with some of the invisibility of their queerness. There's no right way to be or look or pass or not pass as queer. I think, of course, we are all navigating different levels of safety. When I am in the world in my partnership with another woman and we both look like two women who date each other, whatever that means - what is gender, et cetera - we present queer when we're in the world. We have less privilege in terms of that. Obviously, a Black queer person would have less, a Black trans person would have less. We're looking at privileges in terms of how we present in the world, but I think it's still important to affirm that if you are queer, you are queer. That's a complete sentence. Who we are physically intimate with or in partnership with doesn't define that for us. I get that it's terrifying, I think that the other really amazing thing about charting your cycle is for me, in my weeks 2 and 3 of my cycle, post bleeding, pre luteal phase, I tend to have a lot more energy, a lot more clarity. I wonder if you're already tracking your cycle - if those could be times where maybe you decide to discuss things with your partner. Schedule a special picnic or walk - a time to talk. I think wanting to make it clear to your partner, I

want queerness to be a part of our business. If that's part of your politic, to be like "this is a queer-owned business." And then making that balance between how much space do you take up in a hetero-passing relationship - I still think your own queerness can be integrated into running a public space. In terms of who you fundraise for, who you work with, collaborate with, who your vendors are, who your employees are, what kind of signal you're giving your community? Just being open to - I think people can be monogamous and happy and queer in hetero-passing relationships. I also think it can be an opportunity to just talk about - even if it's not opening up your relationship but like, maybe there can be girl crushes where you send cute pics to or like have flirty texts with. Redefining what are the boundaries within your relationship and are there ways where you can explore and tap into that? Maybe it's going to a queer dance party with or without him. That's something I've seen in other couples of friends where the woman is queer and maybe her partner who's a cis man is not. And even if they're not open, she's really into being in queer social community separate from him. That's so important for any relationship - how do we build spaciousness? How do we build autonomy? And still be in partnership. All of that stuff could really feed you and feed that part of you that it sounds like has really been buried for a while. And how can the two of you come together actually stronger? I think your queerness can make your partnership stronger because it's you, it's you being stronger. As you're navigating this is scary, this is intimidating - remember, it also sounds like you've built a really special partnership with this person. Trusting him, there were so many times in my marriage or in different partnerships where I didn't give that person enough credit to hold my stuff with me. More often than not, whether in friendships, family relationships, or in partnership, the scariest things - what I'm so afraid to tell someone - are usually the things that a.) person already sort of knows, or b.) they're not nearly as scared as I thought they would be. Usually when I'm urgent and say things really fast that I'm more bound to hurt someone or cause discomfort. You've already been so thoughtful about this - reaching out to me, probably talking to others. Read a queer novel! Read a new queer history book! Keep surrounding yourself with queerness to really keep affirming and leaning into who you are. That's what I did when I was married to a man. I really feel like I - whether shirts that I'd wear, or things I'd read or places I'd shop - it doesn't have to be so public. Just little things to really affirm my identity and learn about it. Many blessings to being in therapy, to my therapist - who I'm pretty sure doesn't listen to this radio show,

but I love her - keep looking within. The answer I give to so many queer people who call into the show is I hear you that it's scary. Just remember that being queer is one of the most beautiful things in the entire world. To celebrate that as you move forward, sharing more of this with your partner, your community, and yourself. We have to come out to ourselves over and over again, the internalized homophobia that lives within us, even those of us that are out and gay and happy, is still really real. Be gentle with yourself and be excited! You're re-finding this really special part of yourself and dear caller, who I know personally, when we met it was such a big part of you - a part of you that I loved and I love you and I'm so glad you called and I can't wait to see all the ways this blossoms within you and within those who love you and those who you shine a huge, amazing light on. I see you as queer! That's the other thing, we think people don't see us because of who we're in partnership with - I remember when I was married and I would tell people I was queer, they were like "yeah, we know." So taking some of the pressure off of it, being who you are. Many blessings as you explore queerness and partnership and community with those near and far! I'm Marlee Grace, you're listening to Friendship Village. We have a little time left, if you have a question you want to call in. Email me [friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com](mailto:friendshipvillageradio@gmail.com) this week. Go to my website [marleegrace.space/home](http://marleegrace.space/home) to listen to past episodes and read the transcriptions.