

Kieryn:

I'm Kieryn.

Eve:

I'm Hannah. This is Kitchen Table Cult.

Kieryn:

Where two Quiverfull escapees talk about our experiences in the cultish underbelly of the religious right.

Kieryn:

Hey, Hannah.

Eve:

Hi, Kieryn.

Kieryn:

How're you holding up?

Eve:

I haven't murdered anyone yet.

Kieryn:

I'm impressed. Good job.

Eve:

Me too.

Kieryn:

Fine. Very many points for not murdering people.

Eve:

I've been actively avoiding men this week, so it's like that-

Kieryn:

That's also good.

Eve:

... makes a difference, but-

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

... yeah. How're you? You're alive?

Kieryn:

I'm all right. I'm alive. I also haven't murdered anybody. I skipped school on Thursday, because I was like, "I can't deal with people today right now. No." But no murders. No murders have happened. I wanted to murder but I haven't done anything. So, I'm proud of myself.

Eve:

I'm very proud of you. This is progress. Honestly, I don't think the dudes have any idea how angry we all are.

Kieryn:

No, and what gets to me is something that I've seen a lot of people saying on the Internet, but where are the cis-dudes? None of my cis-dudes friends have reached out or said much beyond, "Oh, my God, this is horrible." Which it is horrible, but my dudes-

Eve:

Are you trying to get us to-

Kieryn:

... where are you?

Eve:

... empathize with you? Is that why you're telling us that this is horrible? We know.

Kieryn:

Right? It's disappointing. It's disappointing and it's not surprising.

Eve:

So, I have one cis-dude friend check in on me, and I had one gender non-conforming assigned male birth friend check in on me. And then I had a third who's an assigned female birth trans-man, who he checked in on me. So, I've had some dudes checking in on me, which has been good, but it's also the cis-dude that checked in on me, he's somebody I've educated this whole time. I'm like, "I made my friend."

Kieryn:

Yes. Yes.

Eve:

I did this work.

Kieryn:

You knew the rules.

Eve:

Thank you.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

He knew the rules, because he wanted to stay in my life. Good job.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

Good job. It's just not something that happens organically.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Yeah, all of the masc types I've seen talking about it and being passionate and empathetic about it has either been queer or trans, but are definitely not straight, and cis, this is extremely questionable.

Eve:

Right. So, given this week with ... What's his fucking face? Kavanaugh, the broke asshole, and Dr. Ford's testimony, I think that swearing this week is going to be a major part of this episode, and if you have a problem with that, you can bail, and your loss, because it's going to be a great conversation.

Kieryn:

If you have a problem with swearing at this point, please no, go deal with that and come back.

Eve:

Usually, we try to make this pretty open and accessible to everybody, because it's a broad topic that a lot of people are interested in, but this time we got a little angered to get out, so just-

Kieryn:

There are times-

Eve:

... I don't care.

Kieryn:

... when anger and swearing is necessary and good and healing, and this is definitely that time. But we have someone with us today to help talk about this, and join us in the swearing.

Eve:

So, what are we talking about today, Kieryn?

Kieryn:

Purity culture and rape culture and all of this bullshit that is happening right now.

Eve:

And how purity culture is rape culture? Is that right?

Kieryn:

Yeah, how they are exactly the same thing.

Eve:

That's not too strong of a statement to make, I don't think.

Kieryn:

No. No, they are the same thing.

Eve:

Okay. All right.

Kieryn:

One is just [palated 00:04:27] better.

Eve:

All right, so dear listeners I know these are bold statements to make, but we're going to back it up, and let's welcome our guest, Jamie Lee Finch.

Jamie Lee Finch:

It was so hard for me to not just start swearing already while you guys were talking about the value of swearing. It's like our rage is important.

Eve:

Swearing is my favorite post-evangelical activity.

Jamie Lee Finch:

It's also one of-

Kieryn:

Mine too.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... those things where I get it but I don't get it when people choose to be more offended by the swearing than the behavior that we're swearing about-

Kieryn:

Right?

Jamie Lee Finch:

... because that's the whole reason why we have to fucking swear. Yeah, it's upsetting. It's upsetting, so be upset about what we're upset by, not about the fact that we're upset, so.

Eve:

Yeah. So, Jamie, why don't you take a second and introduce yourself to our listeners if they haven't seen your work before and haven't run into your online before and your beautiful angry [inaudible 00:05:33]?

Jamie Lee Finch:

My swearing? Yes, hi, I'm Jamie Lee Finch. Every single time I have to introduce myself and explain what I do I have to try and figure out how I'm going to explain today what it is that I do, but specifically I am a coach as well as a couple other things; I'm a poet, a sex witch, which is a fun thing to confuse the right people, terrify the right people, and draw the right people in.

Jamie Lee Finch:

But as far as being a coach goes, coach healer. The main area that I do work in specifically is in helping people to recover from the trauma of fundamentalist religion generally specifically evangelical Christianity. For a lot of us people, the primary issue or experience that they're having in their body relates to the relationship towards our sexuality and how that was cut off from them because purity culture, rape culture, virginity culture, just the religious and cultural suppression that occurs in general.

Jamie Lee Finch:

And so, kind of holding that space for reorienting people back to their bodies, and doing it within the framework of reframing the experience and reality of embodiment and as it relates to overall wellness, but reframing that through the language of relationship. So, you're kind of being in a relationship with your body. So, the two things you'll notice if you follow me on any social media outlet is that I definitely swear a lot, and also that I will consistently refer to my body with a gendered pronoun as opposed to an "it", because of that kind of reframing of the language of relationship, so.

Eve:

Do you have a-?

Kieryn:

That makes a lot of sense.

Eve:

Yeah, it does. It really does make a lot of sense. I was going to ask, do you have a background in therapy? Are you professionally trained?

Jamie Lee Finch:

I'm a coach, so because I gave about 10 years of my life to Christian ministry, I'm just now finally finishing up my undergrad degree and I'm 30 years old, but I feel good about it because what I thought I wanted to do first was-

Eve:

It's okay.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... study fashion design or some shit, so-

Eve:

You're in a great company here.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes. Yeah. So, I do have a certification as a coach. It was a year long certification, and currently right now in finishing up my undergraduate I'm going to try and decide what to do after that point because I really love being a coach. I would love to be a therapist, though I feel like there's so much more that you can do, but to put it really bluntly I'm terrified of getting more debt than I already have. So, that's the whole thing, you have to-

Eve:

Welcome to being a millennial.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. Yeah, so I really don't know. I'm really grateful that I get to hold space when perform a service that is helpful. A lot of people work with me on tandem with working with a therapist, and then there's a lot of people too with after working with me then they go on to work with maybe like a trauma therapist. I really see what I do as kind of entry level 101, let's just get you on the same page as your body, and then your body is going to take it from there and tell you what it is you need to further. For a lot of people, what they need further is people who can do the things that I can't do.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I used to work with people on six-month programs. I've shifted it down to four. Now, for that reason of like I was like this is entry level stuff. I want to get you to be able to hear your body and know that that's allowed and that's possible and that's good. For the most part a lot of what I noticed that people would tend to need next is some pretty good solid, stable trauma therapy like I needed to, so.

Eve:

Yeah. So, how did you get started on doing all this?

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, it's interesting. I was reading back over some papers before we decided to talk today. I started out as an integrated health coach. So, I was doing integrated and holistic nutrition and wellness, that kind of stuff. Then I got that certification, and I was just doing it pretty part-time, very, very part-time like one, maybe two clients at a time while having other jobs. I started to notice something. I wasn't only working with women and female-identified persons, because I've had that structure and myself, they're just the only ones asking.

Jamie Lee Finch:

And so, what I started to notice what was happening was I was noticing this link between women who had the same experience that I did coming up inside of purity culture. Those were just the people that I was in contact with, and then had previously been inside of communal environments with. I noticed a link between them being raised with the same kind of sexual ethic that I was, which is lack of one. And then also the same conditions; the manifestations of physical conditions and the balances and diseases in their body that I had had, predominantly auto-immune and intense digestive issues.

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, I started to notice this story between auto-immune disease and sexual suppression within the bodies of women. And so, I was like, "This is really curious." I was googling shit and no one had really studied that too much, and so long story short, I started to go back to school to start studying that, and also finish my degree.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I enrolled in a school called Goddard College, which is an amazing, amazing institution, where you can design ... Not entirely, but it's self-directed. The people who are on staff, they're equal parts academic as they are activists, which is awesome. So, I was given a lot of accountability but a lot of freedom to study what I was there to study.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Just for the first year and a half I was there I just consistently researched that and wrote papers on that, put my coaching work on pause for a bit, and then jumped back in last summer predominantly from just being interviewed on podcasts about it. And then people hearing what I was talking about and hearing that link and realizing, "Oh, my God, that's my experience too." And so, now at this point I don't just work with women. That's even I know we're going to get to a conversation about consent from purity culture.

Jamie Lee Finch:

It's been really interesting working with men too, and hearing from them. My suspicions confirmed that you all didn't hear anything about consent. We certainly didn't hear anything about consent. It's really terrifying. Anyway, so yeah, it kind of happened that way.

Eve:

Let's say that was your working definition of purity culture before we go any further. Kiernyn, you've thought a lot about this. Why don't you take a stab at it?

Kiernyn:

Yeah. Yeah, fuck.

Eve:

Yeah, what is purity culture?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Fuck.

Eve:

Fuck.

Jamie Lee Finch:

That's it. One word.

Kieryn:

Physically, fuck. Yeah, so it's basically the way that I absorbed it was very sort of [Auler 00:12:12], Josh Harris, and I kissed dating goodbye, which is [Godfrey 00:12:15], this animal that we've talked about that before. But you can't think any impure thoughts. You can't allow yourself to be attracted to people. So, I didn't have crushes. I shut that down when I was like 10. I just did not ... Also, I was queer but I didn't know it, so both of those things. I was like, "Dudes, all right. Dudes are boring. What?" Yeah.

Eve:

Yeah, I know. I remember all my friends being super obsessed with guys. I was like, "Well, if I really thought about it, I might be interested in this one because he's really smart but I don't actually know him at all." And like I'll just pick that as my crush so that I have something to go off of.

Kieryn:

Right.

Jamie Lee Finch:

For good.

Eve:

It's like-

Kieryn:

Yeah, like [crosstalk 00:12:55].

Eve:

"... Yeah, hello. I'm queer."

Kieryn:

This makes so much more sense now, and I'm like, "Obviously, it's because I was queer, and physically-"

Jamie Lee Finch:

I have so many clients who are like-

Kieryn:

"... and being stuck."

Jamie Lee Finch:

"... In retrospect, I had crushes on all of these people, and didn't know it." Yeah.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

Yep.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Eve:

No, having to realize like what a crush was, it was a whole purity culture process for me. It was like, "These are what these feelings are. This is how this works."

Jamie Lee Finch:

And also, the thing that I realized at a certain point, only just a couple of years ago, was that the main thing that navigated me was my deepest fear, which was rooted in this idea that the way to succeed was to be totally and utterly unsexual until the moment you got married, and then it can all turn red on.

Eve:

Right. Zero to 60.

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, a lot of people ended up finding themselves interestingly strangely being drawn to people that they literally weren't attracted to. My deepest fear, and it was a fear that I didn't really acknowledge because I thought that it was what was going to happen because it was what was supposed to happen, is that God was going to force me to marry someone that I didn't even like, and I wasn't attracted to.

Eve:

I know that's not uncommon. I've heard that story so many times, and I've heard of people who've done that so many times.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes, right. Yep.

Kieryn:

I was also worried that would happen.

Eve:

Okay, so purity culture is this mindset of your sexuality is only-

Kieryn:

Is bad and immoral.

Eve:

... something that is a base impulse. It is animal. It is only good for reproduction, and so therefore it needs to be contained within marriage and be used for those purposes. If it gives you pleasure within marriage, that's like a side perk. That's not the point.

Kieryn:

That's not the point.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Generally, just for men too. They don't really care if it gives women pleasure.

Kieryn:

Yeah, women don't have orgasm.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Right. Right. Well, with those men we certainly don't, no.

Kieryn:

Right. Right.

Eve:

And so, then it comes down to this idea, and I recommend our listeners go read Jessica Valenti's *The Purity Myth*. I think it's a really good primer on all of this. She talks about, and this is really eye-opening for me, the concept of purity here and the concept of virginity. Virginity is a medical myth. It doesn't exist. If you need receipts on that, I know Laci Green is super problematic now since she got red-pilled, but her little video on how a hymen works is really informative on this. It's a very good-

Kieryn:

I changed my life.

Eve:

Yeah, that was a really good moment, but *The Purity Myth* talks about how when humans stopped being nomadic and they started living in cities and land started passing from father to son, in order to ensure a lineage-based inheritance system, they had to ensure that the sons were actually theirs. The only way to ensure that the sons were actually theirs were to make the women only have sex with the men who owned the land.

Eve:

And so, virginity was a way of establishing inheritance and keeping property in the family. It doesn't exist outside of that myth. So, the idea of you become used goods. That was about making sure that a bastard didn't get the house. So, this concept has existed as long as humans have been living in cities and been practicing capitalist principles.

Eve:

So, purity culture when it comes into the church is just it echoes this, and it's really something that doesn't need to exist, and because it existed for so long and because Judeo-Christian beliefs are coming out of that culture and that time, and the historical problems of that time are transposed onto the church today, we're operating with these super primitive assumptions about how bodies and people work, rather than actually looking at how do they function? What is actually happening rather than this is just the way it's always has been done?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, and this too somebody asking about this morning is a big reason why you see this kind of moral panic within religious communities or the evangelical community, and therefore the religious right political community. This moral panic over preserving the nuclear family, because anything that isn't that nuclear family, it steps outside of that commodity model of the women are owned as property. So, that's why they're having a hard time with 2018.

Eve:

Right. And when you look at societies that are collectivists rather than individualists, you see the family unit is preserved in importance but it becomes part of a web in a community. And so, the community's survival, and the community's priorities go first rather than the individual's. And so, what we've got is this moral panic around the nuclear family, and it's constructed within an individualist culture. So, it's very, very specific to our intersection of time and place and the ethic system based off of this historically out of date religion.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yep.

Eve:

And then this gets into what we were talking about with Kiernyn just struck me, like how the uterus was what made us valuable, and our ability to reproduce was why we were treasured or protected or whatever. The very existence of having a uterus and being able to procreate for someone else means that you're rapable. And so, that's why chivalry exists, because that's your vulnerability.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah.

Kiernyn:

Yep.

Eve:

What were your experiences with purity culture, guys? Where do we come from? Why do we talk about this? Why do we care?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Why do we care? Or ask yourself, "Why are we authorities on this? Why are we experts on this?" Well, personally for me one of the things that I write about a lot and connect with my client work a lot is the way that it cause me to internalize the sense of not only fear of but actual hatred for my own physical

body. Because what's particularly problematic about the language of purity culture, which is steeped in just the language of the evangelical belief in sin nature at all, is this idea that your flesh is bad and your body is evil because of the things that your body draws you or tempts you to do. And so, there's this separation from-

Eve:

It's a Cartesian divide.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Girl, look at you just right in there? Just [crosstalk 00:19:59].

Eve:

So, this separating the mind and body. This is why you get narcissism in the church happening and being recreated evangelical culture because we don't have a theology of the body in evangelicalism and so it's really easy for us to just distance ourselves from the bodies and live in the mind.

Jamie Lee Finch:

In the mind and then also within evangelicals and that specific language of the spirit is good. The spirit is good, so this idea of ... That's a big way in which they can control you as well, because they can classify certain actions and behaviors that's sinful, and certain actions and behaviors. Not even actions and behaviors alone, thoughts even which is real scary. So, they're tell you you're sinful or you're bad or you're being trolled by your body if you're even thinking certain things.

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, that causes this deep panic, deep fear, and for a lot of people manifests as hatred for even their own physical body, and there are consequences to that. There are then further psychological and physiological consequences to that through the ethic and belief of my body medicine and the way that that's going to internalize in that kind of level of panic stress is going to manifest in your body.

Eve:

I want to pause on that before we get to ramifications. Let me talk about the reasons why, and sorry for this dog barking in the background. I can't really control it. There's three of them back there. There's this reason for why that's effective. Once you start distrusting your body and distrusting your senses, you are more inclined to believe the authorities that are telling you to distrust this body. It's a really useful control tactic to keep you from trusting your gut or questioning what you're told.

Eve:

It's a really easy way for the patriarchy to reinforce men are rational, women are not, and this binary of women are emotional. You have to trust men. It plays into the headship, teachings that we were talking about last time. So, what do you have when you have these feelings like, "I'm just being an emotional woman. I'm going to trust the man to do this?" It's a super useful crowd control tactic to keep people not just repressed, but actively gaslighting themselves-

Jamie Lee Finch:

Themselves.

Eve:

... and keeping themselves-

Kieryn:

It makes us complicit-

Eve:

... surprised.

Kieryn:

... in our own oppression.

Jamie Lee Finch:

It does. Yep. Yeah.

Eve:

Okay. So, why is purity culture, rape culture, and I think that will tie into the ramifications on the body that we're talking about, or?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). I don't want to just answer every question. Kieryn, thoughts? Thoughts, Kieryn?

Kieryn:

Yeah, so the way it kind of panned out for me, I'm going to tell a story here because that's the way this makes a little sense. It's because my mom was explaining how sex worked to me. I was 16, and she described it as, well, it was the first time I'd heard the words "penis" and "vagina" in my life. I had no idea what she was talking about. She was like, "So, when you make a baby, the man puts his penis in the woman's vagina, and then ..." I don't remember how she described orgasming, and-

Eve:

No, actually-

Kieryn:

... whatever.

Eve:

... he ejaculates.

Kieryn:

Yes.

Eve:

Orgasms don't exist.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, right.

Kieryn:

Yeah no, no, no. Yeah, and so she's like and then a sperm comes out and implants the egg, and then it feels really good for the dude, but the woman doesn't really feel anything.

Eve:

Oh, my God.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Wow.

Kieryn:

I was horrified. Yeah, and so I realized it was shortly after that point that I started reading [Skyler Teen 00:23:41] and I learned about orgasms, and I realized my mom had never had an orgasm. I also realized that my mom has probably never had consensual sex with my father.

Eve:

Which, let's just-

Kieryn:

That is how that relates.

Eve:

In purity culture, the more I have dug into this and the more I have dug into Quiverfull narratives and the more I've heard these stories about these women who have submitted themselves to this culture because they believe that this is what God is calling them to do, the more I hear that, I think that many, many women in this system have been sexually assaulted and raped, and haven't acknowledged because one, they are taught not to trust their bodies or to trust their experiences or their senses. Two, rape in marriage doesn't exist in this rubric because your body belongs to your husband.

Kieryn:

And if you're not available and he leaves, that's your fault. So, you have to be sexually available at all times.

Eve:

Right.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah.

Eve:

Right. We've talked about that before too. So, there's all these layers of ... I think I'm going to tell a story that sort of relates. So, I've been in the Peace Corps in Kazakhstan, and I think I've talked about this before where there's this documentary by Vice about bride kidnapping in Kazakhstan.

Eve:

Now, Vice is shit and this documentary is not well done but there's this great scene where all these old women are talking to this young woman who's crying. She's sobbing, and if she puts on the headscarf, she's officially agreed to the marriage. That's a sign of her consent. She's just fighting them putting the headscarf on her. She's been kidnapped, and she doesn't want to get married to this guy. They all look at her, and they're like, "What? Do you think you're better than us? We were all kidnapped."

Jamie Lee Finch:

Wow.

Eve:

It's that sense of like, "Well, we had to experience this, so why do you think you should fight for anything better?" Because it means that they would have to acknowledge that they were violated also.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Right.

Kieryn:

Yep.

Eve:

And we have that happening with Quiverfull moms when we leave and we start talking about our experiences and how we were violated, they get really defensive really easily, because it's like, one, they were complicit in all this, and two, they experienced these abuses and they don't want to name them.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yep. Yep. Yeah, I think that that's something too we see ... What was it? I keep seeing different numbers floating around, but I think 53% of women voted for Trump. There are somewhere around that same figure of white evangelicals just in general said that even if it came out that all of the allegations against Brett Kavanaugh were true, they'd still vote for him. It's stuff like that, so it's like you've divorced yourself within yourself from a part of yourself that has the ability to tell yourself the truth about what it is that you've experienced, which is why you have to continually gaslight other people's experience because it's so hard for you to face it within yourself.

Eve:

We've seen this played out this week on national television in Dr. Ford's testimony. This is why she didn't come forward. She was gaslighting herself for all those years until it came up in therapy, and she had to ... They pushed an issue about why she was claustrophilia, and she had to double down about why, and finally acknowledge why she didn't use that second front door.

Eve:

That's that system of gaslighting yourself until it becomes absolutely necessary to save your life or someone else's life. Usually, with these white women, they're going to go for themselves, because they have enough privilege that they don't need to defend anyone. It's not going to cost them anything to ignore the suffering. So, I'm really grateful to Dr. Ford for coming forward, because she's someone who has enough privilege that she could've probably been not affected by Brett Kavanaugh being on the Supreme Court personally.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Right. Yeah. Yep.

Eve:

She's using her privilege to protect people with less privilege, and that's really good. Let's talk about this body stuff that you work with.

Jamie Lee Finch:

This body stuff.

Eve:

How does this affect the body? This body stuff, like I don't have a body. I'm just a brain.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I'm just brain-

Eve:

What are you talking about?

Jamie Lee Finch:

... and a spirit and an enigma floating through the world inside of this capsule. It's a disposable capsule, and it means nothing. Well-

Kieryn:

Suddenly, things make sense now.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Right? Yeah.

Eve:

Let me just say this real fast, and this is like Enneagram adjacent. I'm a five, and I've never resonated with the disembodied brain thing. I'm like one of-

Kieryn:

I'm extremely disembodied brain.

Eve:

Yeah. I am an extremely sensual, physical person. I really identify with all of the [Thoro 00:28:43] stereotypes.

Jamie Lee Finch:
You're a Thoros too?

Eve:
Yeah.

Jamie Lee Finch:
Hey, girl. What's up?

Eve:
Yeah, so hello. I want good food, and I want naps and comfort and good fabric, and I love good sex. But having good sex is really hard about purity culture.

Kieryn:
Oh, my God. Yes.

Jamie Lee Finch:
Just a smidge. Kieryn, what's your Enneagram number?

Kieryn:
I don't know.

Jamie Lee Finch:
You don't know.

Kieryn:
I think I'm a nine or a two, but I don't remember which one is winging the other.

Jamie Lee Finch:
Okay. Fair.

Kieryn:
I'm a Pisces, though.

Jamie Lee Finch:
Interesting. Okay.

Eve:
Yeah, and they are very, very Pisces.

Kieryn:

I'm extremely Pisces.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Interesting.

Kieryn:

I'm a hardcore Pisces.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Hardcore Pisces.

Kieryn:

Which is clearest to me.

Jamie Lee Finch:

[crosstalk 00:29:27] funny.

Eve:

So, you're a softcore Pisces.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I know. This is a funny statement on its own. Just funny words grouped together their thought. Okay, so body stuff. To your point of I know what you were saying about negating our inner experience, and then when Kieryn said we're actively contributing to our own oppression in doing so, one of the things that I've written about before and talk about is this idea that we were thought that our feelings, emotions and inner experiences are shameful.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Shame, honestly, within purity culture, shameful at best. A lot of times we're taught that those feelings, emotions and inner experiences don't even exist at all, or they're not worth paying attention to. So, unfortunately, the only thing that really validates their existence is when we're like, "Those exist, and they're horrible. Don't have them."

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, when we're taught that they're shameful, we learn to mistrust that inner guidance of our bodies, and we're forced to be out of touch with what we know, how we feel. We're trained out of our nature of fulfilling our desires and saying no to what we don't want, and even saying yes to what we do want, because we have no idea of what it is that we actually fucking want in the first place. And then the whole how that links back to the body. What we're discovering within trauma research these days is that unexpressed emotions tend to stay in the body. As Christian Northrup says as "small ticking time bombs". They're like illnesses in incubation, so-

Eve:

Yeah, everybody should go read *The Body Keeps the Score* if you want to learn more about this.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Oh, my God. So good.

Eve:

Because that's not the only book to read on that subject. There's a whole lot, and some of his findings, Van der Kolk's findings are disputed, but it's a really good introduction to how this works.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, definitely. I actually was talking with someone else, and they're like, "Where should I start?" Because I talk about this shit all the time. I was at of show in Nashville. They're like, "Give me a book recommendation. Where should I start?" I recommended that one. Same thing where I was like, "There's other ones that's just he distills so much information down into this really easily digestible format."

Eve:

He kind of spearheaded this avenue of investigations.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes, particularly with the adverse childhood experiences study. And then he's also been trying to pioneer to get with a number of other folks, getting complex PTSD put into the DSM. There's been a lot of resistance.

Eve:

Right.

Jamie Lee Finch:

There's been a lot of resistance-

Kieryn:

That would be good.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... because you can't medicate it. So, that's not too easy. But yeah, so all that idea of I remember seeing a quote once, and I refer to it a lot. A neuroscientist wrote something once, it said, "When you sweep an emotion under the rug, you sweep it into the nervous system." So, there's this idea that the more that we're trained that the right way to be, the right way to live, is not only to divorce ourselves from our feelings, our emotions, our inner experiences, but also where and how our sexuality and our sexual expression and our arousal and our desires and pleasure, how that's all married with the two.

Jamie Lee Finch:

The idea that the right way to be a human person is to live separate from that. There are physical consequences to that that directly affect your body and not only like I said, the way that you're able to

feel what your body needs, what your body doesn't need, and so on and so forth, but that chronic stress, that is developed by way of consistently sweeping those things under the rug and back into your nervous system. That's going to have effects on your endocrine system, your central nervous system, your immunological response. A lot of chronic illness is related to the chronic stress state in your body. The thing about chronic stress and trauma-

Eve:

What's it like? It kind of starts with adrenal fatigue, and then it just goes downhill from there.

Jamie Lee Finch:

It keeps going. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. The thing about that chronic stress and the development of chronic illness in your body, it's one of those things where, again, unfortunately, you don't really have a lot of people ... It compounds on itself because you're experiencing that thing in your body, and you like you know something is wrong. You know something is wrong, but again you've been socialized to not know that you know that something is wrong, and then you can't get any answers from allopathic medicine either, because they're not using a mind-body medicine model for the most part.

Jamie Lee Finch:

And then also there's such a lack of understanding about what complex PTSD, chronic stress, religious trauma, the fact that it is a form of complex PTSD. A lot of people that I work with, they work with me in tandem with their therapists because their therapist knows nothing about the nuance of purity culture and religious sexual suppression and how that's inter-playing and contributing to what they've experienced in their bodies, and how that's manifested in their bodies.

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, there are a lot of tangible consequences to it, but the good news is, is that even in *The Body Keeps the Score*, the latter half of the book is talking about methods to re-enter or get back into touch with your body. And so embodiment, there's a lot of avenues for embodiment that you can kind of start to heal from those things and start to re-associate yourself with your body again.

Eve:

The one that's been really useful for me so far has been yoga and EMDR. I'm just learning how to breathe and learning how to listen to what my body is saying today, and learning that that's a fluid state of being. It changes. EMDR has been really, really good for figuring out how to integrate these things, so if this is something you relate to and you have a chance to get with a practitioner who knows how to do EMDR, it's really, really good.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, I really don't feel like it's an exaggeration for me, because I know how it felt before and how it feels now. It saved my life. Absolutely.

Eve:

Yeah, I would agree. It's been a total game changer. Okay, so two questions. One is if you are a purity culture survivor and you have become aware that impacted you in more ways than just repression, maybe you were assaulted, maybe you were complicit in something that you didn't want to be, it

doesn't have to be strictly a rape. It can be a lot of different layers of sexual violence. How do you deal with that? How do you deal with realizing, "I was sexually harassed, or I was sexually assaulted," or uses an object in ways that really, really messed with me or really fucked with me?

Eve:

And then on the flip side, if you are coming out of purity culture and you didn't get taught about consent, and you realized you enacted sexual abuse on someone partly because you didn't have any knowledge of what you were doing or what was normal or what was okay, how do you recover from that? How do you make amends?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. So, to speak to that second part first, I had have a few male clients of mine bring up situations where they're like, "Okay, I know more now, and the idea of this encounter that occurred, it's making me really uncomfortable and nervous," not nervous in that kind of way, "but it makes me uncomfortable to think that someone else's experience of me, now I'm viewing it in a different light, now that I'm learning more about consent, and I'm not entirely certain that I was holding the proper amount of space or the right kind of space for someone to freely get full consent."

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, there's a lot of confusion and a lot of pain surrounding that too because one of the things that stands out to me is that I'm realizing is a uniquely difficult task in this moment specifically for men who are survivors of purity culture is that we, culturally right now and rightly so, have a very high standard for men to know your shit about consent, but unfortunately we've got these male survivors of purity culture who literally were brought up believing that the right way to be a male, the right way to be a human person was to not know anything about consent. So, they're like, "Where do I start now?"

Eve:

I'll just pause on that and say, I have a good friend, he's in his 80s, and he grew up in a totally different universe, which is very similar to what the purity culture survivors are experiencing. And so, he and I will have lunch weekly and we talk about this stuff. We talk about the news. He'll joke about being, "Man, I'm so much more depressed about the world since I met you." I'm like, "Yeah, well, all those stuff are still happening. You just don't know it-"

Jamie Lee Finch:

You just don't know it.

Eve:

"... because you're a white dude." And he'll be like, "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah." He's dealing with the same stuff, so you have this generational divide that's really similar to the purity culture divide too.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yep. Yeah. And so, that's a hard thing. These men that I'm working with that they're like, "I want to do this the right way, but there's this ..." they're not complaining about this at all. I just noticed it's a thing that they're carrying in their bodies where they're like, "There's this pressure on me to already know, but I literally never learned." And then similarly with women, there's this pressure on women to kind of

like ... Again, I'm glad that this is happening in this very unique cultural moment of we're kind of allowed to own our rage a little bit more, but then women are kind of sitting with it, and they're like, "I don't even know where and how to classify."

Eve:

What counts?

Jamie Lee Finch:

"What counts?" Yes, exactly.

Eve:

Right. So, for example I'm just realizing most of my worst, whatever, experiences with my first boyfriend were not consensual but neither of us knew about consent.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Right. Right.

Eve:

I kind of just went with things being like, "Well, we did that last time and now I'm tarnished in that way, so who cares?" So, it's like I'm already going to have to repent of that later so I might as well keep going. That kind of mindset. Besides, it feels good. You're just like, "It's not consensual but I'm turned on. I'll probably deal with that." And then there's the layers of like, "I got raped when I was a broad and I didn't realize it until a month and a half later." I was like, "That wasn't just bad sex. That was a violation."

Eve:

And that's me being super educated feminist person, having worked on this stuff for two and three years. And then that happened. So, there's a whole lot of room for I don't know how to classify this stuff. I don't know how to talk about it.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, and I-

Kieryn:

There's this memory that is blocked that I haven't been able to access that I know is there, and I don't know what's behind it and I'm terrified, because I have vaginismus, and a huge cause of that is rape or other vice, being violated. There are memories that I just cannot access, and my body is just putting a lot of resistance to it. The awareness of that has gotten stronger this week, and I'm just like, "I don't know how to deal with what I think might be there."

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. Yeah. I think making sure that, well, first of all being really, really gentle with yourself in that process is super important. I think for a lot of us the moment that we become aware of something, we kind of wish it was yesterday. For the most part what our bodies actually need from us is just like ...

Jamie Lee Finch:

And it's the most uncomfortable thing. I'm literally clenching my hands even talking about it because it's so uncomfortable, but the most uncomfortable thing in the world that our bodies really desperately need from us is that consistency, commitment to self-compassion within that process of, "This is probably going to be uncomfortable for a little while but, body, I'm going to stay with you and we're going to keep talking about this. It's I'm committed to understanding whatever it is that you have to tell me the moment that you're ready to tell me, but I'm not going to force you."

Jamie Lee Finch:

It's funny even getting consent from our own bodies. Like, "I'm not going to force you to tell me if you don't feel safe, but also know I'm here for whenever you're ready to start speaking." That's why trauma therapy, EMDR, with someone that is trained and you feel safe with is really helpful for that.

Eve:

Yeah, that's some of the work that I'm doing in the EMDR right now is if there is this younger version of me who's just super upset and clamped up and not going to talk to me until I have to build trust with her so that she'll talk to me about what happened.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, absolutely. Yep. That's something where our bodies, they're not pissed with us because they get it. They went through the same things that we went through, but at the same time that trust has to be built. We can't just expect that, "Hey, I'm sitting here ready to talk to you now." And our body is like, "Wait a minute. You've been negating my existence for 20-fucking years. I'm not ready to talk to you yet."

Jamie Lee Finch:

I have one client who her conversation with her body, really it's very conversational in her writing. It's like very back and forth. It's been amazing, fascinating to watch to her hearing the voice of her body slowly trusts her with more information steadily because of that same posture, that kind of originating posture, which was like I'm not ready to talk to you yet. I need to know that you're safe enough that you're not going anywhere for a long enough time before I'm ready to start opening up with the stuff about you.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I think that's the value too of storytelling as a healing modality. It's a big thing that I utilize in my coaching work. And so, not just storytelling as a healing modality for the sake of ourselves and the relationship that we are in with our bodies, but then also a lot of times hearing someone else's or observing someone else's story once they're ready to share it can give us a whole lot of language of permission to really own what's happened with us. So, that's something too that just ... And not putting pressure on anybody to be vulnerable to a level where they're not comfortable. I saw someone say something like that yesterday.

Eve:

That's an area of consent too.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

Kieryn:

Yeah.

Jamie Lee Finch:

You've got to take a really, really good care of yourself first before, again, shoving your body out into this display of being like, "I want to do good in the world." It's the best way for you to start doing good in the world is to be really, really good to yourself, and make sure that your body feels safe enough to start talking about these things with you first. And then if you feel good about that, then sharing and possibly releasing that permission to other people too.

Eve:

Do you have anything else to add to our conversation? I know you have to go in a minute here. In terms of concluding thoughts or things you'd recommend people read or how they can get in touch with you if you want to. I know you said before you're booked up for clients for the next year, or other recommendations that you have?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, so book-wise, places to start, you actually literally already mentioned the two that I always mention which is *The Body Keeps the Score*, if you want to learn about the way our body hold trauma, and then *The Purity Myth* by Jessica Valenti. Also, her memoir, *Sex Object*, is really great too. It's just kind of vignette, the story. So, it's really great. She's just a phenomenal writer in general.

Eve:

Okay, then I'll add to that one other, in terms of how men and women are both emotionally really damaged by the patriarchy and not really capable of understanding what has happened to them, and not understanding how love works. It's *All About Love: New Visions* by Bell Hooks.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. Yeah.

Eve:

I think that paired with the *Purity Myth* were the two biggest books that got me out of things and really helped me come to terms with what had happened.

Jamie Lee Finch:

That's good. So, those are really good places to start for people to learn about this stuff. I will say that what is likely that might happen with a lot of people, which is exactly what happened with me is I started studying this stuff, and then I started getting extraordinarily triggered in my body. That's the moment when I knew, this isn't just living up here in my brain. This is still living in my body. That's what ended shaping my entire coaching work is recognizing that my body has her own memory of what happened.

Jamie Lee Finch:

So, seeking out, I know it's hard because I know for a lot of people it's really unaffordable, and they really hate the inaccessibility of mental health statuses, but doing what we can to seek out people who are not only trained in trauma therapy, the techniques, but also remember that your therapist works for you, your coach works for you, your counselor works for you. Interview them about whether or not they have an understanding about the nuance of evangelical culture and purity culture itself, because if they don't, it might be double the work for you to try and explain it, and then work through it, but-

Eve:

Just as an aside, this is why I'm doing EMDR rather than talk therapy right now, because I'm not explaining to her anything. The trauma encoded in my body is going to be the same for me as for anybody else who is a sexual assault survivor, so it's really easy for her to just jump on in where I'm at with my body and with my only EMDR. I don't have to give her backstory or context or anything.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. Super helpful. Yep. Yeah, and as far as I go, I am pretty booked on clients at the moment through the end of the year, but I have a waitlist on my website. My website is just jamieleeefinch.com. It's currently undergoing a bit of construction, but it's good enough for now, and people can sign up for that waitlist.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Not much is going to come to you right away. I'm, again, going to start working with someone about possibly just creating some content, but the main work that I do is in one-on-one client work. So, that's my primary focus, but if you want to follow me on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, any of those things, Jamie Lee Finch on all of those. Like I said before, I'm just pretty much consistently mad and screaming into the void, so it's entertaining.

Kieryn:

Yes, join the club.

Eve:

Let's give the anger an outlet for a second. We've got four minutes left. What do we have to say to dudes this week?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Do fucking better.

Kieryn:

Own your fucking shit.

Jamie Lee Finch:

God. Oh, my God. The fact that-

Kieryn:

For fuck's sake.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... I'm going to have some really hard conversations just to men in my life this week because they have said nothing, and we're not doing this anymore. If you can get on the Internet and post your dumb shit like you always do anyway but then pretend like you don't have fucking time to talk about this or pay attention or you just don't watch the news, like no, absolutely not.

Eve:

The person is political. This stuff affects everything, and you are irresponsible if you're not paying attention.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes, 100%. There's just like no-

Eve:

And I don't trust you-

Jamie Lee Finch:

No.

Eve:

... if you're not paying attention.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah.

Eve:

You're an idiot.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Also, you don't get to call me your friend. You don't get to publicly own a relationship with me, or tell people that we have a relationship with one another because that makes you accountable. I'm leaning hard into my ape right now, that makes you accountable for something, so if you're not doing the work to actually care about this shit, I can't own you as my friend either, because it just feels slimy to be.

Eve:

This is not us being vindictive. This is like normal healthy boundaries after having had them violated for 30 years of our lives.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Casual.

Kieryn:

Yep.

Eve:

So, shut up and stop complaining. You had not lived our lives.

Kieryn:

Do the fucking work.

Jamie Lee Finch:

And that's something too. When I was yelling at him at the other day, I was just like, "You're not busier than this. We're fucking busy too. I don't want to hear it. I just don't want to hear it."

Eve:

We're busy and we're traumatizing. You're busy and you're not traumatized. Kieryn, you and I have talked about this before, guilt versus action.

Kieryn:

Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Eve:

Let's give them that rant again.

Kieryn:

You go. I'll join.

Eve:

So, we always have people coming up to us and they're like, "We're so sorry for being complicit in your suffering. I feel really guilty now. I get it now." We're like-

Kieryn:

Where were you-

Eve:

"... I don't care."

Kieryn:

... the whole fucking time?

Eve:

Do better. I don't want to hear you be guilty. I want to see you changing.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, and-

Kieryn:

I'm glad that you're sorry but don't send your sorry to me and act like I'm going to give you a hug and pat you on the back for it when you were the fucking adult in the situation.

Eve:

Why do I have to comfort you for hurting me again?

Jamie Lee Finch:

Don't be sorry. Be better. I have a friend who a teacher of hers used to say that when she was in high school. Whenever a student would come and be like, "I'm so sorry, I did this." And like, "Don't be sorry. Be better." It's that whole thing too-

Eve:

I've been saying that for a couple of years now.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... about like once you click into guilt, then now I'm fucking consoling you. So, no, I don't want your guilt. I don't want any of it. It's all performative. I don't fucking care.

Kieryn:

Don't make me do the emotional labor.

Jamie Lee Finch:

No. Double.

Kieryn:

Don't give me your feelings.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Double the emotional labor.

Kieryn:

Just do your fucking work.

Eve:

Just do it. Yeah.

Kieryn:

Hold your own feelings.

Eve:

Yeah, I had to do emotional labor to come to terms with what happened to me. I don't want to have to do the emotional labor for you to come to terms with what happened to me.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes.

Eve:

Shut up.

Jamie Lee Finch:

That's growth-

Kieryn:

Exactly.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... right there. Just bottle that. Just bottle that. It's perfect.

Kieryn:

Yeah. Yeah.

Jamie Lee Finch:

All right.

Eve:

Okay, so thank you so much for joining us.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes, this was wonderful.

Eve:

Your time is valuable, and I appreciate it. You all, if you want to Venmo your favorite woman educator some coffee or your favorite non-dude-educator some coffee this week, please do that, because we've been through hell.

Jamie Lee Finch:

You all bet. And none of us are sleeping-

Kieryn:

It's important work.

Jamie Lee Finch:

... so we need the coffee. It's very important.

Kieryn:

Yep.

Jamie Lee Finch:

I did have a cis-male friend Venmo me coffee money. I woke up to it yesterday.

Kieryn:

Nice.

Eve:

I would accept a case of wine if somebody wanted to send me that.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Wine money too.

Eve:

That would be perfect.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yeah, that's good. Yeah.

Kieryn:

Wine is also good.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Yes.

Eve:

Beer is ruin. Beer is canceled.

Jamie Lee Finch:

No more beer. No.

Kieryn:

Yeah, no. No, beers. Fuck beers whatever. Fine with that sale. Thank you.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Oh, God. I'm only drinking tequila now. That's it. That's all. Yes.

Eve:

All right. Okay. Thank you, Jamie.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Thank you. I appreciate you guys. Thanks so much.

Eve:

All right.

Jamie Lee Finch:

Bye.

Eve:

Bye.

Kieryn:

Bye.

Eve:

How're you doing?

Kieryn:

I'm good. The rant, five minutes was great. That was necessary.

Eve:

Yesterday in therapy I laid on my therapist's floor the full hour. I came in and I was like I can't do EMDR this week, so we're going to do breathing, yoga stuff. She was like, "It's okay." I was like, "I'm taking off my shoes, and I'm taking off my bra because I can't breathe if I have a bra on. I'm going to lie on the floor." I just ended up crying for the entire hour. That was really good.

Kieryn:

That's good. Yeah, I was in Boston this week so I did not have therapy, and I was not great. So, I have it Monday, and Monday will be-

Eve:

Okay, good.

Kieryn:

... good. I'm like, "There are so many things, everything I stepped on this week, and I'm just like this is fine. This is not fine."

Eve:

Well, I'm going to conclude with the thing that got me crying so hard, something my therapist said to me. It was really hard to hear and accept. You're working really hard. We're both working really hard.

Kieryn:

Fuck.

Eve:

We're all working really hard.

Kieryn:

We are working really hard.

Eve:

And it's good work, and everyone who's here who's survived sexual assault, we're really glad you're here. You're working really hard. Thank you for being here.

Kieryn:

We'll see you, and you matter.

Eve:

All right. Love you guys. Talk to you next week.

Kieryn:

Bye.

Eve:

Bye.