

AI TRANSCRIPT FOR BRAAAINS PODCAST EPISODE 005 - SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE AND GRIEF (BRAAAINSPodcast.COM)

00:00:10 - Sarah Taylor

Welcome to Braaaains, a podcast exploring the inner workings of our brains and how film and television portray them. Hosted by me, film and television editor, Sarah Taylor.

00:00:18 - Heather Taylor

and by me, writer director Heather Taylor, aka the Taylor sisters.

00:00:26 - Heather Taylor

Before we begin, we wanted to acknowledge that the lands from which we recorded this podcast are part of territories that have long served as a gathering place for diverse indigenous peoples. And we are thankful as guests on this land to be able to live, work, and gather here.

00:00:39 - Sarah Taylor

On today's episode, we'll be talking about grief with Rachelle Bensoussan and Michelle Williams of being here human. Their work aims to decrease the harm and isolation that is often associated with being bereaved. We hope our discussion today will challenge and deconstruct some of the common myths and misconceptions about grief, and also give you new language around recognizing and honoring your own grief and the grief of those around you.

00:01:03 - Heather Taylor

A quick reminder to our listeners that this interview should not be taken as medical advice, and it is for informational purposes only because everyone's brain is different. Please consult your healthcare professional if you have any questions. We'll be talking about death and dying on this podcast, so please be advised. Rochelle and Michelle, thank you so much for joining us here today on brains.

00:01:29 - Michelle Williams

Thank you for having us.

00:01:30 - Heather Taylor

The first question is, I guess, easy and complex. Just can you please tell us a little bit about yourselves and being here human and why and how you started focusing on grief as part of your work?

00:01:42 - Rachelle Bensoussan

So I never intended to come to this work at all. My whole young life, I only had one dream. It was very, very singular. I was a singer, and my dream was to be on Broadway, went to a program, a musical theater program at NYU in New York City, and was really happy with my life, really loved it. And while I was in that world, I met somebody named Diane, who also was a singer and who was the understudy for Christine in Phantom of the Opera. She was a member of the Canadian Opera Company, and she very quickly became one of the central people in my life. And in a very unsanitized version and short version of the story, a couple of years after we met, she was diagnosed with stage four metastatic melanoma in May, and by November of that same year, she had died. I had not ever lost somebody to death before in my life. I had certainly not been a caregiver or primary caregiver for someone who was dying. Hers was the first dead body I had ever seen up close and spent time with. And although I had had a significant loss, history of non death related loss before her. Her death became this catalyst or this opening where I was finally allowed to experience all of the grief I hadn't experienced previously in all the ways that our culture likes to tell the narrative of death. She was a really good one in that she was a really beautiful, young, vibrant, extroverted, physically beautiful white person who died of this tragic illness we call cancer. And so I had a lot of permission to grieve her death when she died, and I didn't have any permission to grieve all of the other parts of my life before her death. And so something in me, really, unconsciously, I think it's my body, in some ways, just knew that, and so knew that I needed. I mean, I was devastated. I was shattered over her death, shattered. And it also became the grief I had from her death, became much larger than her as well. So in the extreme flail, that was my grief. After she died, for years and years, I found myself all over the world. I ended up living in a very small community along the togolese border in eastern Ghana. For many years, I lived in the Middle East. I worked at a camp for children with life limiting and life threatening illnesses in California, just trying to find my way. And really, one of the things about singing is that you need to breathe in order to sing. And the other thing about grief is that every time you breathe, you cry. And so singing very quickly no longer became an option for me as a way to earn a living. I couldn't do it any longer. And so in the kind of years that followed her death, all I knew. I knew that there wasn't a single thing about me that was the same. So who I was on November 28, 2005, ceased to exist as of November 29, 2005. And that remains true, that the person that I was before her death doesn't exist any longer. So she died, and did I. And then it's been just 16 years of figuring this version of life and this version of myself out and in that flail discovery, depending on what spin you want to put on it. I eventually went back to graduate school. I got a master's degree in sanetology, which is the scientific study of death, dying, grief, and loss. And eventually that led into a 15 year career, particularly in the hospice palliative care end of life sector in Ontario in

Canada, and eventually led to me leaving that sector and forming being here human with Michelle. But it feels really important, I guess, in terms of. I mean, it's part of the reason why we formed being here human. But it also still feels true for me that being here, human is just an extension of me trying to live and survive beyond her death. I think that it has had a lot of impact on people. And both Michelle and I in the business get a lot of praise for how it's impacted folks and how meaningful it is. And I don't in any way mean to reduce or minimize that, because I think it matters, and I'm very proud of it. And it is also true that for me, it's just one of the ways that I continue to exist beyond the point where she did not. Because part of one of the pieces that has changed and that has remained true is that I can't tolerate being in the world or being in any space where I am asked to not be a bereaved person or where I am asked in any way to place her. And that experience of us, of our love, of her death in the past, I know our culture really loves to always talk about, well, that's in the past. And then we move forward, and it can be 16 years, 20 years, 30 years from now. She's not in the past for me. She lives within me. She is so very much alive in every breath I take. She's alive in my marriage. She is alive in how I parent. She's alive in the work I do. And so for me, I still, 16 years later, can't tolerate being in any space where that's not welcome. Because to say that that isn't welcome is to say that I am not welcome.

00:07:15 - Heather Taylor
Thank you for sharing that.

00:07:16 - Sarah Taylor
Yes, thank you, Rachelle.

00:07:20 - Michelle Williams

So, similarly to Rochelle, I never actually intended to do this work. My mother died in 2010 at the age of 61 of a rare form of cancer. And we had maybe ten months with her from the time of her diagnosis until her death. And so that experience, actually, she wasn't the first death loss that I'd experienced in my life, but she was the most significant. She was the one person that I had lost in my life who I had had the strongest attachment to. And the experience of her end of life journey for our family was very eye opening for a lot of reasons. We are a BIPOC family. We're a family of mixed ethnicity. And so navigating our health care system as a brown person at the end of life, my mother being visibly a brown person was really interesting. It was totally incongruent with the narratives that I'd heard other folks tell me about their experiences with their loved ones at the end of life. And the thread that kind of was similar to all of those stories was the fact that those folks were coming from white dominant culture, that amount of support, the kind of care their loved one received, the kind of interactions that they had as the caregivers to their loved ones with their healthcare community, all sounded so beautiful. And then our family had this experience that was so devastating and so difficult and so challenging that I realized that there's a disconnect here. I don't think that we're alone. I don't think we're the only family that's having this experience. And after my mother died, which I think, and I think this is true, and Rochelle sort of alluded to this in her own story, is that you flail and you have this complete shift in what is important, what's a priority, where is your life going? My mother died. For me, it was like, what am I doing with my life? And I had this total shift and reorientation to my career and where I was going. And it sort of led me to say, okay, this isn't where I want to be, but this experience is shaping something for me that I think I want to explore further. And so I chose to go back to school to get a master's degree in social work, which I thought would prepare me, but also would give me some kind of an education to help me better understand the experience that I'd had, the experience that I was still having. Because the idea that my mother was now permanently gone for my life was just incomprehensible to me. Right. And so being the person I am, I needed to understand this better. Social work wasn't going to do it. I realized very quickly that this was not going to be the space that was going to teach me anything about end of life, anything about grief and loss, anything even about bereavement, even though the field itself is one where everything you're going to do as a social worker, every interaction you're going to have, every community that you're going to work with, every individual that you're going to support, is in some way experiencing loss and as a result, grief. So I realized very quickly that was not going to be the education that I was getting, and I had to seek out, essentially my own education around end of life palliative care, grief and loss and bereavement. And it was when I was going through seeking out those experiences that I met Rochelle. And the thing that I think Rochelle

and I connected on immediately, well, at least I know I connected with Rochelle on immediately, was Rochelle was doing a volunteer training, of which I was one of the volunteers in that training. And I immediately recognized that what she was saying felt true to me, felt really, really true to me. And I'd never heard anyone articulate that experience of end of life, of grief and loss in the way that she was articulating it. And it all felt so true to me. And so I sought her out, essentially. I went up to her and I said, hey, I want to talk to you. Let's go for coffee. Let's have dinner. I need to talk to you. And it was through conversations and the development of a friendship that we realized, you know what? We're actually seeing a lot of the same things. We are actually having a lot of the same experiences. And very quickly realized that not only could this be done better, but that we could actually do it better, that we could actually bring something to that space of grief and loss that other folks weren't bringing, that we could actually do it better and create education and workshops and an orientation to grief and loss that was actually missing from the. So that's kind of, like, what brought me here. That's what brought us together. And I'm really grateful for it, because, like Rochelle, I'm super proud of what we've been able to do in this space.

00:12:41 - Heather Taylor

It's beautiful.

00:12:42 - Sarah Taylor

It is beautiful. Can you explain to us your definition of what grief and mourning is and how we need to shift our thinking about grief?

00:12:50 - Michelle Williams

Oftentimes, people will speak about grief when they really mean mourning. People will talk about mourning when they're really speaking about grief. And ultimately, that's because there isn't, in our culture, in our society, there's not a clear definition for each of these things, nor is there a clear differentiation of what each of them are. And so grief from being here, humans perspective. And our definition of grief is that grief is an involuntary response that happens in our bodies without our consent and without our participation. It is something that impacts us on all levels of our being and our personhood. And we don't have control over the fact that we will be grieving. We don't have any control over the ways in which grief will show up in our bodies. That is grief in a bubble. That's the definition, right? It happens without our consent or participation. It's totally, entirely involuntary. We will have a loss. We will attach to something. That attachment will be severed. We will experience loss. And involuntarily, we will experience grief. Mourning, on the other hand, is what we do with that grief. Right? So mourning is what we would call our grief gone public. So it is lighting a candle in memory of it's having memorial service, the entire process of everything that you would do with your grief, those sort of public acts that don't need to be witnessed.

00:14:17 - Heather Taylor

Right?

00:14:18 - Michelle Williams

For some folks, it's writing about their loved one. For others, it's going and running a marathon in their loved one's memory. Those are acts of mourning in a larger, systemic sense. We've seen this in a grander scale when in 2020, we had the murder of George Floyd, and then the uprisings in the black communities where we had the Black Lives Matter movement really come into play and do some public activism and protest. And Rochelle and I would also define that as a public act of mourning, an outpouring of grief from black and brown communities. If we really pay attention to these definitions and we actually acknowledge grief for what it is, which is this entirely involuntary response that human beings have to a severed detachment, then we actually have to shift the way that we orient to grief as a culture. We have to shift the way that we think about grief, that it isn't something that any one of us who's experiencing loss is choosing to do. It's also not something that any one of us has control over when it happens, how it happens, how long it will last. And for Rochelle and I, we definitely don't put any kind of time limit on grief. If you've had a loss, and especially if that loss is permanent, then your grief experience in relationship to that permanent loss will also be permanent, will be for the rest of your life. Right. And so the way that our culture orients itself to grief as being something that is time limited, as being something that we as human beings have control over, that whole way of thinking of grief, that is what we actually need to reevaluate, as well as the fact that we kind of place, we have a culture here in North America and generally in any western country, really, where we kind of have an orientation to grief, where we look at it as a mental health issue, and when we put it in that category, we also then inevitably pathologize it. And so this sort of pathology based orientation that we have to grief, where in the DSM now, we have a definition of prolonged grief as any sort of grief response that is lasting longer than six months. And once you get past that six month mark, you are actually pathologized. There is something pathological about your grief which then has a medication associated to it to help to relieve your experience of grief. So it's a really problematic approach to grief. And if we can think about the fact that for the last three years, we've all been in the midst of pandemic. We've all had all kinds of losses associated to this experience, death related and non death related. That at this point, technically speaking, because Michelle and I would say that as a culture, we're all in a collective state of grief, right? Whether or not anyone would agree with that individually and say, oh, I don't think I'm grieving. We are all, to some extent, grieving some kind of loss that we've experienced in relationship to this pandemic. And according to the DSM, all of us are all still grieving over a year, two years later, we would all be pathologized in some way. And there is something insidious about that that we need to examine as a culture, as a society, when it comes to grief.

00:17:46 - Heather Taylor

There's so many questions, so many that branch off from there. But I think one of the things at the beginning, both of you, when you're talking about yourselves and your process of experiencing grief, you talked about kind of feeling like you have permission to grieve. Something like, oh, it's your mother, or it's someone who has this tragic death, like, you're allowed to grieve now. But I know that there are many things you said you would grieve about, but you weren't able to. I'd love to know more about what are those things and why do we believe we need permission to grieve?

00:18:19 - Rachelle Bensoussan

So, for me, I lost both my parents very young, but not due to death. I lost them to a combination of mental illness, intergenerational trauma. So there's a lot of violence, a lot of lack of safety, lack of chaos. And so I was parented primarily by my maternal aunt. And I know why I didn't have permission to grieve, because my parents were living. So there was no acknowledgment that I was orphaned. There was no acknowledgment of any kind. I don't know that this was explicitly ever said to me. I can look back and think implicitly. I was somebody who, with no real effort of my own, did very well in school, academically. So it wasn't because I worked hard at all. It was just something I was born with. And in that, in when I would do well in school, somehow the messaging got in. That was the evidence that you weren't hurting.

00:19:15 - Sarah Taylor

Taylor can relate to that.

00:19:16 - Heather Taylor

I can.

00:19:17 - Rachele Bensoussan

So as long as you're doing well in school and you're not acting out, I wasn't behaviorally difficult in those ways. And because I wasn't doing that, then nothing was wrong. And it was very clear that everybody around me was very glad nothing was wrong. That just became a cycle of reinforcement. And then it was also very explicitly said to me if I did ever express anything that I either needed to be understanding or I needed to understand, even hurt people hurt people, or they're doing the best they can, like lots of those narratives, but nobody ever sat and said, wow, it must be a really sad thing for you that your parents are such harmful people that you're not allowed to be around. So those were really obvious to me. Grief was completely only for death. Only if somebody died, it had nothing to do with loss, it had to do with a death. And then, even then, one of my closest friends, like from my best friend from kindergarten, throughout all of school, her mom actually did die when we were in first grade. And even then it was very clear that she didn't have permission to actually grieve. There was kind of an overwhelming sense of pity for her, I know from other parents and kind of people making excuses for behavior and stuff like that, because, oh, but it was always this thing. Like, we don't talk about it, we just overindulge. Or you could sense the pity or you could sense the sympathy even, but it was never something that was addressed or spoken about. Or maybe we do something in this way. And so I felt like my own experience of loss always sat next to my best friend whose mother actually had died, and then there was no space for any of it. We equate it to death. Even if we do want to investigate that further and see how we treat people who are grieving a death related loss, we don't do particularly well. As Michelle said, anything lasting beyond six to twelve months, anything, is immediately pathologized. We create narratives around it. Even if you look or explore the language that we use in our culture around people who are grieving, like denial, stuck, struggling. It's such a dismissive language because first of all, it's not accurate at all. And second of all, it's just so latent with value judgments for an experience you know nothing about. Like the people who are always creating these narratives are never the people who have lived experience. And so it's so thick with judgment. And certainly I think the primary myth is that it is something we get over. And so even if you are struggling maybe a little longer than twelve months, at some point, the blanket expectation is that it is complete, that it has an absolute and concrete end date, and what we know as human beings with lived experience, what we know from all of the research and grief theory, is that that just isn't true. It never has been. It's just a story. It's a great one. It's beautiful. It's fiction. It's just not how we live. And so then it disenfranchises the grief further, because then you're not allowed to have it culturally anyways, to acknowledge it. And then certainly if you have it, and then it's not complete in some time, we're really asking folks to carry it entirely alone and entirely silently. I've had a lot of privilege in traveling and being with

other cultures in times of grief and times of great loss. And the very definition that Michelle is speaking about in this prolonged grief disorder of six or twelve months of any kind of elongated symptoms. There are other cultures in the world that bring meals. Every single meal. They bring a meal to the altar of their dead ones, of their families. We think of Day of the dead, where we have a friend that we come and visit every year. There's so many cultures that would meet the definition for prolonged grief disorder just based on their rightful cultural rituals that they have. So it's really crazy to think of that. You're just like, that's absurd. That all people around the world are mentally ill because they maintain continuing bonds with the things and the people that they've loved and lost. The reason our culture wants us to cut it off is because of capitalism, right? And so it's what we define as productive, what we define as productivity. It has nothing to do with truth or with research. It has to do with economics.

00:23:29 - Sarah Taylor
Make more money.

00:23:30 - Rachelle Bensoussan
And we know this. I mean, I'm not saying anything revolutionary or radical. We just going into the third year of a pandemic where every single which way that we can possibly relate to. Covid has said that we prioritize the economy over people, over human beings. We just do. And there's like a resistance to being in that reality. But then when we look at it, it's true. There it is. And then, of course, then that's why we have the narratives about grief that we have in this culture. It just only is entirely rooted in our economic system. It's not based in actual truth. It's not based on lived experience. I know for myself. I will speak for myself. It has been incredibly cathartic and liberating and also very lonely at the same time to be a person who refuses that narrative, who just says, I will not forget her, I will not leave her in the past. I will not leave her behind. And consequently, I will not do that to myself. I will not leave myself behind for a narrative that never included me to begin with.

00:24:32 - Heather Taylor
I had a loss, was really upset, crying, not being able to function, and going to the doctor and then going to grief therapy. And it was all based around. Here are the five stages of grief. And we had to go through those stages of grief, and then it's just done. And then now we're on acceptance. There's a narrative about what grief is and what these stages are that I feel like not only we have that in our heads, but I feel like also that's what medical practitioners have in their heads, what everyone has in their heads, what television shows us. How do we think about this differently? I know that you've talked about education and how we're not being educated in grief, even when people should be educated in grief. So what should we do about this? Can you just fix everything?

00:25:17 - Sarah Taylor

That is why you're here, I guess, right?

00:25:20 - Rachelle Bensoussan

I can't fix it. I don't know the answer. I can tell you the facts, which is that Elizabeth Kubler Ross's five stages of grief aren't the five stages of grief. It's not how they were ever intended to be. What we've taken from that came from a book that was published in 1969. It was called on death and dying, not on grief and grieving. It was called on death and dying. And it wasn't research, it wasn't theory. It was a medical observational journal, a diary of sorts, that she wrote very bravely about her personal experiences with dying patients. From the point that the dying patient was given the fact that their diagnosis would no longer be curative, that it was, in fact, terminal to the point where they died, which what we now call acceptance, this word that has been hijacked, actually just meant that the person died.

00:26:07 - Sarah Taylor

It was all wrapped around the person that actually is about to die. It had nothing to do with the family or the people that were left.

00:26:14 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Behind, nothing at all. It had to do with from at the point. And again, she wrote about this. If you read the book in terms of themes, right? So not stages, not everybody has them, just themes. She noticed that when a dying patient was told, your diagnosis is terminal, there was a theme of denial. And what she meant by denial was they would seek out secondary opinions to see if there were other trials they could get on to see if there were treatments that they could do. When they moved through that and realized that they were getting the same feedback about the disease progression from multiple practitioners. They moved into a stage of anger. And what she said in anger was that there was a lot of blame. Like, why me? Why did this happen? Who didn't catch this earlier? Then after that, there was a theme of bargaining. So, fine, if I am going to die from this, can I still make it to one more spring? Can I make it to my daughter's wedding? A bargaining of sorts. Following this, there was a theme of deep sadness, which we would call grief. Right. Incredible mourning period. Incredible sadness over the loss of their own well being, the loss of their life, their mortality. And finally, what we call acceptance meant the actual acknowledgment that they were dying, that the disease itself was progressing. Oftentimes, this acceptance could simply look like a loss of responsiveness or consciousness in the patient. Right. So none of it had to do with grief. None of it had to do with a stage like model. None of it was researched. This was just a physician who at the time, was doing radical work by even engaging with the dying, because this was at a time when medicine was almost entirely curative focused, and it was an old boys club. So to have a female physician demanding that the field of medicine change its relationship to those who are dying and to humanize them was radical. And she is a pioneer. She's amazing. She also was recorded. She did a recording at the end of her life where she said if she had any idea that what her book publishing her book and her ideas would have become, what it had become, she had deep regret and wished she had never published it. Because what now has happened, which is what you're speaking to, Heather, is the very population that she spent her life advocating on behalf of her work became a weapon that was used against them. And so she was devastated by this. Just devastated. So they don't exist, is what I can say. I don't know how to fix it, but I can tell you that they don't exist. I can tell you that it's worth questioning that. Why are we taking non clinical, non evidence based work from 1969 and still using it by the method that we're doing? We'll always joke on our workshops. I'll say, would anybody sign up for a 1969 root canal?

00:28:50 - Sarah Taylor

No, thank you.

00:28:51 - Heather Taylor
No?

00:28:52 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Anybody sign up for a 1969 colonoscopy? If there was a school, a nursing school, a medical school that was caught teaching 1969 clinical skills that were refuted, they would be unlicensed. There's such beautiful research, grief theory, evidence based practice that has come out in the last 2030 years that nobody knows about. Everybody knows about Kubla Ross and the five stage on a cultural narrative. Nobody's heard of Bill Warden and the four tasks of grief. Nobody's heard about Ken Doca and Terry Martin and intuitive versus instrumental grief styles. No one's heard about Therese Rando and her brilliant work with Stuggs. There's so much work out there, and we're la. Just don't want to hear it. Because what that work says, what all of that body of work says, which is what Michelle and I reiterate, is that grief does not complete. It does not complete. That's what the research shows. It is an adaptive process that we integrate and adapt to for the rest of our lives. And capitalism doesn't have room. It doesn't have space. It has no way of orienting. How do we support community members, workers, family members, if they will be forever altered? We don't have that.

00:30:07 - Sarah Taylor

There's lots of work to do. But being here human and having conversations like this, I hope educate more people to throw away the five stages and that the fact that we need stages and look at it differently and leads to my next question of how can we prepare for grief if we know that we're going to be losing someone?

00:30:24 - Michelle Williams

The reality is that you can't.

00:30:27 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Right?

00:30:28 - Michelle Williams

Like, you can't. Because if you actually hold the definition that we've given you of grief, which is that it's an entirely involuntary response that happens in our bodies, that we don't actually know how it will show up, then there is actually no way for us to prepare for that. Right? So we can hold the knowledge that someone close to us, if we're talking about a death loss, then we may be able to hold that. For example, when my mother was dying, we knew that her condition was terminal. But the fact of knowing that she was going to die and she was going to die imminently, in no way could have prepared any of us for the grief experience or response we were going to have. It's not possible. And it's not until you are confronted with your grief that you will even begin to know what it looks like for you.

00:31:23 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, that makes total sense. Yeah.

00:31:25 - Michelle Williams

The problem in our culture is that we don't actually hold any space or give any space for the reality that grief is a very individual experience. As Rochelle said, it doesn't follow any kind of a set number of stages. It doesn't look the same in everyone, but people encounter two things. They encounter other folks lack of literacy around grief and other folks discomfort with their outward expression of grief. And then, as a result, the one who is grieving will experience these losses of people in their social circle. They will actually experience folks moving away from them, because those people cannot be in contact in the same space with their expression of grief. And then additionally, as I said, we don't get to decide how grief is going to show up. There are what Rochelle and I refer to as socially sanctioned expressions of grief. And so what that means is that we have an idea in our culture about what grief can look like and how much of an outward expression of grief we are willing to tolerate as a society before we say that this is too much, before we actually put a label on it and we name it as being problematic or we pathologize it. The other piece is then there's a socialization that we all have towards grief. I'm someone who's cisgender. I identify as female. I'm socialized female. That if my expression of grief doesn't look like what it should look like for someone like me, then again, you get judged. You get maybe pathologized. You get labeled. If I don't have tears, if my expression of grief doesn't look like what it should look like for someone like me, then I'm cold. I am turned off. I am emotionally disconnected. Maybe I'm in denial. There is a whole narrative that gets applied to you because your expression of grief doesn't look like what is socially sanctioned, and that is extremely problematic for the bereaved person. It's very harmful, as you can imagine. And the result is that that bereaved individual can become terribly, terribly isolated as a result of no fault of their own, simply because our culture is so illiterate when it comes to what grief can actually look like for every individual.

00:33:56 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah. Again, like you saying we have no control over how we grieve. So you have no control that you're not crying and blame be put on you for something that you have zero control over.

00:34:06 - Michelle Williams

Right.

00:34:07 - Rachelle Bensoussan

And also to not question the narrative of who the hell ever said and show me the research that says crying equals exactly.

00:34:13 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah.

00:34:14 - Rachelle Bensoussan

That doesn't also exist. So it's not just that something's wrong with you. It's like something's wrong with the entire assumption or the entire.

00:34:21 - Sarah Taylor

Exactly.

00:34:22 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Narrative. And I will say, well, I completely agree. There's nothing you can prepare you for it. It is similar to me to parenting, which is like, there's not really anything that can prepare you for labor and delivery. There's not really anything that can prepare you for what it means to become a parent. True. And so it's both. And that is true. And I do think it radically impacts how we experience something, given how accurate the information we were going into the experience. What I know for sure is that because the description or the story that we have, culture, what we've been told, grief is. Is so deeply incongruent to what the experience is actually like, it sets us up for additional suffering. So while you can't prepare yourself for it because you have no idea, there's a difference between saying you're about to jump into a pile of fluffy clouds versus you're about to jump into a pit of hot coals. Yeah, those are different things.

00:35:23 - Heather Taylor

They are.

00:35:24 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Right. And so I do think that the stories were told, and the stories that are allowed to be told in a community sense, in the circles, your work community, the circles that you travel in, their level of literacy and understanding for what it is you're going through and what it is you may be going through will help soften the landing drastically. It's why Michelle and I don't offer any kind of counseling or therapy. We only offer literacy is because it does matter. It does matter that we all are being told. No one is told when you go into labor, no one goes to prenatal class saying, this is going to be a great time. No one does that. You go into class and they're like, this is going to be really painful. And here are all the options that may be available to you to help you manage the pain.

00:36:06 - Heather Taylor

And then here's a video, and you're.

00:36:08 - Sarah Taylor

Like, oh, okay, yeah, that's going to hurt.

00:36:09 - Rachelle Bensoussan

That looks painful. And so nobody's surprised when it hurts. You still can't really prepare yourself. But it's useful that when you're in it to remind yourself, right, I was told this is going to be painful. Lo and behold, it is. And here are all these options that I remember being told to me that I could do to help cope with the pain. And that, to me, is really different than what's happening with grief, because we're told it will be six to twelve months, it'll be five stages, and then we'll be great, and we resume life as it always was. And then you go into that experience. It is so wildly untrue. Your own experience is so wildly different than what you've been told it is. And then there's no possible way you're set up to then have the belief or the thought process that I'm doing it wrong, or something is wrong with me, or this isn't natural or normal because you were never given the correct information. And so while I certainly don't have the answer to fix it, I have a fundamental belief that literacy is where we start.

00:37:09 - Heather Taylor

How do we help people who are facing grief then, and how do we help ourselves when we're being told, well, go to the doctor, take some pills, you'll be fine, or don't talk about it? How do we start to change that for ourselves and for the people that we love or other people who are facing grief?

00:37:26 - Rachelle Bensoussan

We sell gift certificates.

00:37:28 - Michelle Williams

Because what Rochelle and I say resoundingly and every time we're asked this question, and we've already said it throughout this conversation, is literacy.

00:37:37 - Sarah Taylor

Totally.

00:37:38 - Michelle Williams

That's how you help yourself and that's how you help others, is to become more literate in this space of grief and loss to better understand what the experience is, the diversity of what the experience can look like, the fact that it's entirely involuntary, the reasons why we have and experience losses, that it doesn't have to be only death related, is actually just becoming more informed and literate. And the better informed you are, and the more literate you are. As Rochelle said earlier, once we understand the narrative, when we have a different narrative of what grief is, it actually will influence our experience of the grief when we're in it.

00:38:21 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, right.

00:38:22 - Rachelle Bensoussan

And if it could be so bold, I'm just going to say this. It's like the question itself. I understand why you're asking it, but the question itself is faulty because it's how can we help? And it's like it doesn't need help.

00:38:31 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, right.

00:38:33 - Rachelle Bensoussan

If you're saying it requires help, it means that something is wrong or needs interference. And the point that Michelle and I make is that grief is entirely perfect as it is, albeit painful. And so what it actually needs is not your help at all. It needs you to get the bleep out of the way, totally, actually. Stop interfering.

00:38:53 - Sarah Taylor

Yes.

00:38:53 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Right. So I'm going to use a very crass example. But if you're constipated, right, if you're backed up and then you're looking at, you're like, what am I doing? And you're like, throwing all these things in your body and you're eating all these foods, and your body's just like, no, I just need water. I just need some fluids and some fiber. And if you stop doing all these things, I'm going to set myself right. And so that, to me, literacy is the fiber, the fluids, the exercise, the movement of grief, which is like, if you just understand it and get out of your own way, will it be pleasant? Absolutely not. Absolutely not. You will adapt. Your body will adapt. Your mind will adapt, your heart will adapt, and you will live, you will survive. Forever changed, forever altered, and you don't even have to like the alteration. There are parts of myself that I really do like, and I'm very grateful for the experience of grief as a young person. And there are other parts of myself I really can't stand, and I really wish we're different. And I don't get a say. Again, the faultiness is an assuming that we get to better or we get to I like it or we get to this toxic positivity piece. No, you just will exist. You will live with it if you can just stop interfering. But we can't, because we're so programmed, as you guys just illustrated, to be like, what do I do?

00:40:15 - Sarah Taylor

I need to help. I need to do something.

00:40:17 - Rachelle Bensoussan

How do I help? How do I help? You don't need to. Like all warm blooded social animals, I get really evolutionary and darwinistic about it, but it's just like, what is the number one thing that has allowed us to survive as a species? Adaptation.

00:40:29 - Sarah Taylor
Yes.

00:40:30 - Rachelle Bensoussan
Just let yourself. But if we have this narrative that says, you go back to who you once were, there's no room to adapt because adaptation requires change.

00:40:41 - Heather Taylor
Yeah.

00:40:42 - Sarah Taylor
Well, speaking of narratives, are there any film, tv, books that deal with grief in an accurate way, in your opinion? And if not, what would you like to see represented?

00:40:53 - Michelle Williams
Well, there's a book that we always recommend to folks, which is Megan Devine's. It's okay that you're not okay. And it's probably one of the first really beautifully written, accurate representations of grief from someone who actually was a therapist in a space where they supported folks who were grieving. And it wasn't until they had their own experience that they realized, holy, I've been doing this all wrong all the time. So that's one that we always, always tell people about.

00:41:23 - Rachelle Bensoussan
I really love afterlife. The Ricky Gervais series on Netflix. There's a pinch at the end of the first season of a little bit of, like, this silver lining, toxic positivity that I really wish they had avoided. I'm like, oh, you had to do it. You just had to do it to get renewed for a second season.

00:41:38 - Sarah Taylor
Yeah, probably.

00:41:39 - Rachelle Bensoussan

But minus the last 15 minutes of that episode, the rest of it, I think, is really well done and accurate. And there was a movie, a long time ago, same thing. I mean, the ending, they need funding, but the duration of the movie I could get behind was a hilary swank movie called PS, I love you. Oh, yeah. And there were just moments in them where it really actually showed the despair. They really did just go there where you could not only see what they were losing or understanding the grief about what was lost or who died, but you actually saw the transition in them, the change, that it was something that it didn't mean that they wouldn't live or they wouldn't have other meaningful relationships or meaningful work, but that they were actually fundamentally and forever altered. And I think what I loved about both of those is that what I took away from it or what I saw that was illustrated really beautifully, was this idea of, like, I actually do wish they had lived. I really wish it had been different. And I feel like so much of what we're told now is, I hate it so much. I get so mad about to say it. But this narrative that says that we have to be grateful for what we went through, because it made us who we are today. And it is the most dominant narrative we have about grief and of trauma right now in our culture. Hate it. Because I don't believe for a second that I wouldn't have learned what I needed to learn had she lived. I don't believe I wouldn't have still become a person that I liked, and that could do be of service in the world had she not lived. And I don't believe for a second that she died for my own personal growth. I think she was in a body and cells mutated, and it killed her, and that was it. I don't think that. People say it happens for a reason. I don't believe that. I don't believe anything. I think we are humans and we are mortal. Our lives are finite, and so we die, and then people are left behind. And that, to me, is actually enough. She died, and I lived. Full stop. And none of it needs to have meaning, purpose, a reason. I don't believe it. And so in that movies, in that Netflix series, I feel like what they did really well was explore that. It's like, no, I'll live. I'll continue to live, but I really just wish that hadn't happened. I really wish, actually, that I would have gotten this version of my life where I just get to live till old age with this person. And I think that that's not, like, on top of. Of course, there's no space to grieve. There's not really any space to be nuanced and to be able. I, for myself, Michelle and I get this often. I get it all the time, which is that. But you're married. You have three beautiful children. You have being here human. You do such meaningful work. She would be so proud of you. Everything happened for a reason. I just want to throw punch people, because it's like my survival or like, do I love my wife? Absolutely. Do I love my kids? Absolutely. I would have had an entirely different life that would have been just as great had she not died. And I really wish I had had the shot at that one.

00:44:42 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

00:44:43 - Rachelle Bensoussan

And so there's no space for saying, like, of course I'm still grateful for what I have. I'm glad I'm not dead. That goes without saying. It doesn't mean that actually it makes up for this other life that I was so deeply invested in that got taken from me.

00:45:00 - Michelle Williams

There's a couple other shows that I've watched recently that I think do a pretty beautiful job of sort of relaying that complicated reality of the grief experience for many folks. And one is Tignaro's Mississippi, because it looks at grief from so many different ways, not just from death, but also from Tig's own experience of their own health and chronic illness journey. And then the other one that I just watched really recently, and if you can just get past Amy Schumer and her problematic, whatever, this, I think was a piece of good work and it's life. And Beth and I thought that was also really beautiful because it is a daughter who had a very complicated relationship with their mother and then losing their mother and then how that impacted, but so much more than that as well. It just also explored things like relationship. When you're in a relationship that you realize isn't going to be the relationship you thought you were going to have and the grief associated with that. There's a couple of other shows that I would recommend to folks. If you want to see something that actually is bucking the trend of showing something that's a little bit more realistic about grief and loss, I was going.

00:46:15 - Heather Taylor

To just add, I don't know if you've seen somebody somewhere yet.

00:46:18 - Michelle Williams

Yes.

00:46:19 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Oh, amazing.

00:46:20 - Sarah Taylor

So good.

00:46:22 - Heather Taylor

But I think it deals with not only loss through death, but it also deals with loss because of identity and where you believe to be and coming home and changing your profession and feeling lesser than sometimes and grieving what could.

00:46:37 - Michelle Williams

Have been that never was. Yeah, it was beautiful.

00:46:39 - Sarah Taylor
That was beautiful. So good chills.

00:46:41 - Michelle Williams
Yeah.

00:46:41 - Heather Taylor
I cried and laughed at the same time.

00:46:44 - Rachelle Bensoussan
I was like, I don't know what to feel.

00:46:47 - Michelle Williams
Absolutely. And, you know, what was interesting about that one as well is that death was part of it, but it wasn't central. It actually did explore loss from so many. It was so interesting because they didn't even ever really show you even who died. Right. We just knew that somebody died, that it was a sister barely even spoken of, but then explored all of the other losses that were surrounding this individual and their family. It was beautiful. Yeah. Thank you. That's another great one. I agree 100%.

00:47:19 - Heather Taylor
I feel like I really want anyone who's listening, who's a filmmaker, to stop doing the five stages of grief. You don't know how many times you hear that, too, and then like, oh, how do we represent this in this narrative, and how do we pull this through the stories? So I think I'm hopeful that anyone who listens to this may start to think differently about grief and the representation of grief and also just hopefully to help themselves in terms of understanding more and getting literacy. So we'd love to know if there's any other resources that you would recommend for people as they're starting to learn more about grief and the literacy behind it.

00:47:54 - Rachelle Bensoussan

I think podcasts are great. Like, Megan Devine has a great podcast that you can source out. If you look her up or her book, it's okay that you're not okay. You'll very quickly find her. Podcast. Our friend Lisa has a podcast also called Grief is a sneaky bitch, which is great. Lisa Kievovar, one of my favorite podcasts is a podcast called dying for Sex, and it's a story of two best friends, one of whom is terminally ill with breast cancer. To me personally, I just love hearing firsthand experiences and hearing other people who are willing to tell the truth about their own experiences, because I think we find ourselves in them in that way a lot. And then this is a more relationship one. But if you look at Esther Perel's podcast series, where should we begin? There's a lot of episodes you can pick out from there about couples who have come together following a loss. So either one of them are coming into relationship as a widow, or they've had a collective loss in the family. Those, for me, are the kind of go to podcasts that I go to just to hear how other people are figuring it all out.

00:48:50 - Heather Taylor

Any last words you'd like to leave us on before we say goodbye?

00:48:55 - Michelle Williams

Take our workshops.

00:48:56 - Sarah Taylor

Do it.

00:48:57 - Heather Taylor

It was amazing. Sarah and I took the training, and it's such a great course. And it gave us, or still in a process of learning, but giving us language around that.

00:49:06 - Michelle Williams

I think that the truth is what Rochelle and I know, and this is not to be braggadocious in any way, but there is nothing really else out there, like, what we're offering is what is true. We wish that it was different. That is also true. We wish that we didn't have to be the place where most people find themselves because they can't find anything else. But it is what it is. And so we are always grateful when people find us. But the reality is that what we offer is very unique. There isn't a lot out there like it. And so I think if folks are searching for more literacy around this experience, then, yeah, they should feel welcome to join us for a workshop anytime.

00:49:50 - Sarah Taylor

And can you just let the listeners know that you offer scholarship?

00:49:54 - Michelle Williams

Yes, we do. And this is particularly for folks who come from more marginalized communities, those who face some financial barriers, those who are from BIPOC, LGBTQ, or chronically ill communities or disabled communities. We do offer subsidized spaces where we offer fees on a sliding scale. And then for folks who actually just have no access to financial resources at all, we will always make sure that we create free spaces in our workshops. And that is actually through the generous contributions from our past participants and our social media following who actually provide some financial resources to us that we keep for those sort of spaces for folks.

00:50:35 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Amazing.

00:50:36 - Sarah Taylor

So, yeah, if anybody feels compelled to donate, please do funds. Please do. Yeah. Such important work, they can go to.

00:50:42 - Michelle Williams

Our website and find and click on the offerings tab, and that's where they can do that.

00:50:47 - Sarah Taylor

I was going to say, rochelle, do.

00:50:47 - Heather Taylor

You have anything that you'd like to add to finish off?

00:50:50 - Rachelle Bensoussan

I always wish that someone had said this to me in the early know or the early years, I should say years after Diane died, which is that nothing is wrong with you. Like, really and truly, nothing is wrong with you. It really does hurt this badly. And what was lost really did matter. It really does matter as much as it does. And so when you lose something that matters, this is the inevitable, not just normal and okay response, but this is the inevitable outcome, and nothing is wrong with you. And I really feel that so about myself, first and foremost, and I feel that about all the people we work with. I don't believe that we're all going to be okay. I don't think that's true in the world we live in. I don't think that we all make it, but I definitely, definitely know that the amount of hurt and pain that can come when we are grieving, that it is not in any way evidence to support the fact that something is wrong.

00:51:49 - Heather Taylor

Thank you so much. Thank you both for sharing your stories, for giving some insight into the way that you're thinking about grief and how I think we should start to think about grief and to educate ourselves on it. I know that I will. Okay. I will be forever changed. So thank you.

00:52:07 - Rachelle Bensoussan

You're welcome.

00:52:08 - Michelle Williams

Sorry. That means a lot.

00:52:12 - Heather Taylor

I found that I had a friend die unexpectedly on, like, a Saturday. And then on Monday, this woman who was my friend's mom and who would help me in high school in a way that just helped my life. And then I had to go on a Zoom call and start work, and I had a really bad day, and I didn't know how to tell my boss that I was grieved. Like, I was so sad. And so when later in the week, when he kind of gave me feedback and I still, even at that point, couldn't feel like, oh, I'm really sorry, I had two people die and then had to join a phone call, I didn't feel like I had the right to say anything.

00:52:53 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Yeah, I will say that. I don't think you're wrong. I don't want to give the impression that all spaces are safe to do that. I don't want to set you up. It's like, yeah, just claim the legitimacy of your grief all the time. I don't want you to lose your job. Three people have to constantly discern and assess, like, can I show up here? Can I show up here? It's why I don't work for anybody else. I don't think you're imagining it. I think the barrier that you've experienced, which is the lack of literacy, the lack of space, what you're feeling there, what you're coming up against is not your own lack of courage. It's a very real barrier, which is like, I don't know how this will be received and I don't know what narratives this person has in their head. And will they then think I'm not capable? Will they then pass me over for a promotion? Those are real, real things. When I do see someone struggling, I will never allow in my present someone to apologize for it. I will never, in my not reach out and just say, hey, in the ways that I can because I think it matters. Even this seems like a weird story, but you'll know. When our recent supreme court justice was just nominated and confirmed to the supreme Court, she told a story about walking around on the Harvard campus, and she was so distraught. And this black woman, who she didn't know, who was just crossing her path, looked at her, and all she said as she walked by was she leaned in and she just said, persevere. Right? And that moment of somebody, for them, it wasn't necessarily about grief, but it's like the moment where someone just sees you, and you don't have to have a preexisting relationship with them. You don't have to know them. But to just be like I see you, I think, is incredibly powerful. And so, in my life, in your life, in the people we support, it's like, if you can just have those moments to just be like, I'm so sorry you're hurting. I see how devastating this is, and then don't interfere. I'm not having this interaction to make the person feel differently. I'm not having the interaction to make them feel better. I'm just having the interaction so that they're witnessed. Or it could be, like, her, where she never even knows who that woman is. She doesn't know if that woman's still living. But that encounter, to her, was enough to make her persevere. So now she is the first black supreme court justice. Right? So I think it's like, I don't have a very large social circle, but it's like the people I have collected over the years are, like, beyond tie tested. True. Because they're the people that I can. Maybe I can't do it to my boss, but I can call afterwards and just be like, holy fucking shit. I'm actually so shaken up by this, and I'm so sad and think, I will be forever. And whatever it is, I think you just have to collect those gems where you can find them. And even in the situation, if you really don't have them, then for myself, it's just a commitment that I make for myself to provide them for myself. So whether that's like going through the forest, whether that's making sure I always have a dog, whether that's watching show or something that makes me cry so I can have the feelings, I can't fix this. I can't change the whole world, but I can absolutely not participate in it myself. But it is really fucked up that we work in a system that a

boss can't even pick up on that and stop and just be like, we're just going to pause the phone call for a minute and check in. Hey, Heather. Anything I need to know? How are you? Doing in a kind of very darwinian way. I feel like if we were the pets in the zoo who, if we got let out, would have lost all of our survival. Like, we'd be the first go because we can't even read the people across from us enough to say like 1 second, something's off here. Do we need to check in? Yeah, that we can't do that is actually an instinct that we've lost. Like, we have it as animals. So something's wrong that we've lost it and are like, next on the meeting.

00:56:37 - Sarah Taylor
Keep it the agenda.

00:56:38 - Rachelle Bensoussan
Yeah, it's weird. So I think it's just important to remember, like, you were having the correct response. Doesn't mean that you did something wrong or something's wrong with you. It just means that you work in a system that's really shitty.

00:56:49 - Heather Taylor
Well, that makes you feel better about the thing that I was carrying with me for a long time.

00:56:53 - Sarah Taylor
Thank you.

00:56:54 - Heather Taylor
I really hope this is useful to people who are listening to just think differently and to give themselves permission to think differently and to be differently in the world as they need to be. So thank you.

00:57:05 - Rachelle Bensoussan
Thank you, guys. Keep in touch. Please do.

00:57:07 - Michelle Williams
Thank you so much. Okay, bye bye.

00:57:10 - Rachelle Bensoussan
Bye, guys.

00:57:14 - Heather Taylor

I feel like my entire perspective on grief and mourning has changed. And I just think that, like I said, I am forever changed because now I feel a greater capacity to think about grief in a new way and to support other people in what they need. And sometimes by supporting them, maybe not doing anything and just being there, not shying away from other people's grief.

00:57:40 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, I think that's a big thing. It's almost like a veil was lifted from my perspective on what grief was and what grief is and what mourning is. And I did reflect on times when I wanted to do something or say something or be somewhere, and I didn't feel like I was allowed. And now going forward, I'm like, just going to do the thing.

00:58:04 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

00:58:04 - Sarah Taylor

So sometimes I'll have a memory of somebody who's passed, but I won't say it because I don't want to upset anyone. But I think to talk and to keep doing is important. Yeah.

00:58:15 - Heather Taylor

And I think it's an honoring of someone.

00:58:17 - Sarah Taylor

Exactly.

00:58:18 - Heather Taylor

And I think also honoring someone when it's a hard time for them, like, knowing my husband's mother passed when he was young, and so Mother's day is hard for him and certain times of year are hard for him, and to just be able to give him space that he needs and to allow him to just have grief in the way that he needs to have grief in.

00:58:38 - Sarah Taylor

Those moments and, like, not trying to fix it or make it better. Right. I think that's the biggest thing I've taken away from this. And even hearing Rochelle say her partner, Diane lives on with her, is still living in her and with her forever and ever, and that's never going to go away. And that was, like, a huge thing to think about it in a different way.

00:58:55 - Heather Taylor

Yes. And also that grief is not just tied to people and death that you can grieve about. There's grief about anything and everything that's in your life. There's moments of change and moments of loss around things like your work or ideology or. There's so many things that you can feel grief because it's just how you feel.

00:59:15 - Sarah Taylor

Exactly. Because it's just part of being.

00:59:17 - Heather Taylor

Yeah, I shouldn't feel this. I'm like, but you are feeling it.

00:59:20 - Sarah Taylor

And I think that's the biggest thing we need to reframe in our world is, like. And I've hear it all the time, like, don't shit on yourself. Don't shit on yourself. But if you're feeling the feeling, then feel the feeling.

00:59:31 - Heather Taylor

Yes.

00:59:31 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Right.

00:59:31 - Sarah Taylor

And we don't need to explain it away or justify it or we just feel the feeling. And I've definitely experienced, like, I was laid off, and it was tragic for me at the time because I was identified with my job, and so it was huge. And if I had different perspective, then maybe it would have been different. It just would have been different. But, yeah, there's so many moments in life where we just need to let it be. Yeah.

00:59:56 - Heather Taylor

And it's like, letting it move and pass versus, like, I'll do this, too. Like, oh, you'll stop the motion, but it's there still. So you're just like, let yours building up.

01:00:05 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Yeah.

01:00:05 - Sarah Taylor

You're just sticking things on top of it. Eventually you're going to explode, and that's not good for your body or the people around you. Exactly what I really enjoyed when I first started dating my husband. His family's vietnamese, and they have a day, I think it's usually. I need to confirm with my mother in law, but it's usually the anniversary of someone passing. They will prepare their favorite meal. So there's, like, this one day where we'll go to my in laws and we'll have this feast, and it's all of the favorite meals of my mother in law's father. And so that is such an awesome tradition that they hold, and they're honoring the people that have passed. So that's something that we've talked about as a family, like, well, what would you want your meal to be? How do you want us to remember you? Should we have Nachos? Are we going to have tacos?

01:00:55 - Heather Taylor

I'm pierogies and ramen, please.

01:00:57 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Okay.

01:00:58 - Sarah Taylor

And the west, it is so different. And of course, we talked about this and capitalism and all the things, but being able to have some insight on how other cultures celebrate death and the people that they've lost in the physical form but are still there in their spiritual form is just really beautiful.

01:01:14 - Heather Taylor

Yeah, well, okay, I guess we'll talk about our awesome things. That mine is not related to this conversation in any way, but I guess that's okay, too. I love space. The first interstellar meteor has been confirmed. So interstellar meaning coming from outside of our solar system.

01:01:31 - Michelle Williams

Oh.

01:01:31 - Heather Taylor

And so they have discovered what they believe is to the first known interstellar meteor to ever hit Earth. I mean, that they know of. I still think it's like, with the technology they have now, this is. They can confirm. So it's a space rocket that originates from outside our solar system, which is very rare. And so this one is known as the sexy name of cneos 2014 108. That's when it landed, and it crash landed along the northeast coast of Papua New Guinea on January 8, 2014. So, basically, there was an undergraduate student who basically was doing research around what's called umao mua mua, which is the first known interstellar object in our solar system that was found in 2017. And he realized that there actually was another object that had hit Earth in 2014. And they found it was from what's called an unbound orbit. So most other meteors in a closed orbit that will then come down and hit Earth, but this one came from outside of kind of these orbits that normally meteors are found in. And so basically, they said it was produced by another star, got kicked out of that star's planetary system, and just so happened to make its way to our solar system and collide with Earth. And so it was just confirmed by us space command, because basically, exact information isn't always given by NASA to even these scientists, because just for confidentiality's sake, I think they keep things. But it was confirmed. They reviewed analysis of additional data available to the Department of Defense, because, basically department of Defense is responsible for military operations in outer space. So this is under their purview, which seems so fascinating. But anyways, they have confirmed that the velocity estimates reported to NASA is accurate. And it indicates an interstellar trajectory.

01:03:22 - Sarah Taylor

I love that. The poor little meteor. Is it a meteor? That's what it is, right? Got kicked out of another star solar system and then landed on. Sorry, buddy. Sorry, buddy.

01:03:33 - Heather Taylor

I know. And then everyone's like, these poor people. So basically, the person who identified it was Amir Siraj. Him and another person he was working on this paper with. They would be saying for years, like, since 2019, they've been like, hey, there's this thing. There's this thing. And no one would confirm it for them. And then they saw a release, and.

01:03:53 - Sarah Taylor

They're like, wait, it's been confirmed.

01:03:55 - Rachelle Bensoussan

This is us.

01:03:56 - Heather Taylor

We found this. It's pretty cool. It's, like, interesting. And of course, you'd have seen. I've been seeing online people joking about, oh, this is when all our problems started. I mean, I don't agree. Our problems started way before 2014. Conspiracies and conspiracies. Some scientists are like, this isn't true. It's going to be a lot of conversation, but I just think it's just interesting how sometimes you find things in unexpected places and so. Scneos 2014 108. Welcome to.

01:04:26 - Sarah Taylor

Welcome to Planet Earth. We're here for you.

01:04:30 - Heather Taylor

We're here for you.

01:04:31 - Sarah Taylor

My awesome thing for this recording. Anyway, a dear friend of mine got a new kidney.

01:04:38 - Rachelle Bensoussan

Yes.

01:04:38 - Sarah Taylor

She's doing well, and it's just the best. And when I got the message that there was a kidney for her. When you're on the kidney, I guess, on any transplant list, basically, you get a call and you go right to the hospital, and then. So she got a call, and then the next day, she had a kidney. How wild. And just, like, the medical technology or system and how this works, and you get an organ and then you're like, life changes.

01:05:07 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

01:05:08 - Sarah Taylor

So I'm just really excited for her, and I hope everything continues to go smoothly and that she is able to get back to full capacity and feeling good. And I know it's been hard during.

01:05:19 - Heather Taylor

COVID being ill. Yeah.

01:05:22 - Sarah Taylor

So I'm just so happy that she got a kidney. It's so great. That's amazing. And she was released from the hospital on green shirt day, which I didn't realize is transplant day. So you wear a green shirt in March. I can't remember the exact date. In honor of transplant recipients and people.

01:05:40 - Heather Taylor

I'm so happy for her because I know that was a hard journey to this point. So I'm really excited that she has what she needs now in the form of a kidney.

01:05:49 - Sarah Taylor

Kidney that works. That's great.

01:05:51 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

01:05:52 - Sarah Taylor

I guess this is a good time to maybe say, if you're interested in being an organ donor, you should make sure that you have that checkbox checked on whatever form you need to check it for wherever you live so that you can also help other people.

01:06:04 - Heather Taylor

Yeah, I'm an organ donor.

01:06:06 - Sarah Taylor

I am also an organ donor where I am. It's on your driver's license. Check it out. Do what you can, if you can.

01:06:12 - Heather Taylor

Yeah. It will help someone.

01:06:14 - Sarah Taylor

It helped my friend, and it's very good.

01:06:17 - Heather Taylor

I just want to say thank you to everyone for listening to today's episode of Braaaains. Braaaains is hosted and produced by Heather and Sarah Taylor. Mixed and mastered by Tony Boa
That's my husband.

01:06:28 - Sarah Taylor

Our theme song is by our little brother, Deppicsh, and our graphics was created by perpetual notion.

01:06:33 - Heather Taylor

If you like what you hear, please rate and review us and tell your friends to tune in.

01:06:37 - Sarah Taylor

You can reach us on Instagram or Twitter at Braaains podcast, spelled B-R-triple A-I-N-S podcast. You can also go to our website, brainspodcast.com, where you can contact us, subscribe, and find out a little bit more about who we are and what we do.

01:06:51 - Heather Taylor

Until next time, I'm your host, Heather Taylor.

01:06:54 - Sarah Taylor

And I'm your host, Sarah Taylor. Bye.