

12: Season 1 Finale: Grief & Gratitude During Covid-19, Adult Female Friendships, and Your Career as a Calling with Reshma Kirpalani



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kaneisha Grayson

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You are listening to *Scale Your Joy* with Kaneisha Grayson, Episode 12. Season One finale.

Welcome to *Scale Your Joy*, the only podcast that teaches high achievers with heart how to craft a life and build a business focused on freedom, joy, self-expression, and social impact. I'm your host Kaneisha Grayson, a Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School grad, author, essayist, and self-made entrepreneur. I did it and you can do it too. Let's get started.

Hello there you wonderful person unlike any other ever made. It is Tuesday evening. And guess what day it is that I'm recording this. It's 4/20. And no, I am not ecstatic because of the usual reason people get excited about 4/20. But today, the day that I'm recording this April 20, 2021 is the one-year meet-iversary for me and Zadie, my beloved rescue dog. And then a few hours later, me and Tyler.

It is mind blowing and heart bursting for me to think about how different my life was just one year ago. I was single and deeply desiring a committed romantic partnership. I was sheltering in place alone in my apartment, and I was pretty lonely. I was trying to find a dog to foster to keep me company for the long days and nights but I just kept getting passed over.

And one year later, I have a dog. Not a foster, a dog that I all the way adopted, Lady Zadie. And I also have that committed romantic partnership that I so deeply desired and still desire and have and cherish. And not only do I have those two wonderful beings in my life, but we all live together peacefully and joyfully. And we will soon be moving into a house together.

And you heard right my friends. So that second house that I went under contract on is still a go. Inspection has been completed, appraisal has been completed, my loan has been approved. And now all that's left to do, or at least that I know of, is to show up to closing on May 7th, sign a bunch of

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papers that I will most definitely actually read, and then get the keys to the house.

I am thrilled with the look and feel of the house, the size of the house, and the neighborhood. And I just look forward to filling my home, our home with lots of great memories and hosting lots of friends and family there. So excited about what is ahead.

Before I introduce today's wonderful Season One finale episode, I have some reminders for you. This episode is the last episode of this season. But wait, we'll be back. Season Two will debut on Tuesday August 3rd, so mark your calendars ladies, gentlemen, and non-binary folks.

We had our five-book giveaway last episode but you can still get yourself a free eBook copy of my book, *Be Your Own Boyfriend*. The way to get it is to leave a written review of the podcast on Apple Podcasts and then come let us know you did that by filling out the form at scaleyourjoy.com/welcome. If you have already reviewed the podcast on Apple Podcasts and you've already come to scaleyourjoy.com/welcome to fill out that form and let us know, then great, you are all set. We are going to get that free eBook of *Be Your Own Boyfriend* to you ASAP.

And thank you for your review those of you who have already left written reviews on Apple Podcasts. And thank you in advance for those of you who will. So you have all the way until the beginning of Season Two, which will debut on Tuesday August 3rd. You have all this time if you haven't yet to listen to a few episodes of the podcast, write a written review, you can keep it simple could be one sentence. Just one sentence you actually mean from your heart and then come let us know you did so at scaleyourjoy.com/welcome. And that gives us your email address and lets us know you actually left a review.

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I also want to let you know about an amazing opportunity to interact and get coached by me and interact with others *Scale Your Joy* listeners live for free. The Review Crew is my community of listeners who leave a written review on Apple Podcasts. Every quarter I hold a two hour Ask Me Anything Q&A session for review crew members only. Everyone who has already left a written review and let us know they did, you are already a member of review crew.

For those of you who still need to join, you can always find the details on how to join Review Crew at scaleyourjoy.com. I don't want you to miss out on this Q&A session because it is going to be really fun, really helpful. You can ask me anything and I'll be answering your questions and also giving you some coaching. That call is happening this summer so make sure that you don't miss out.

While we're on our summer break please stay in touch. We want to hear from you. We want to stay in your life. So you can visit scaleyourjoy.com and subscribe to our monthly newsletter called The Joy Note. And you can also follow us on LinkedIn for the latest. We have some really cute posts and carousels on LinkedIn that I think you'd really enjoy.

Today's episode features an intimate conversation between me and my good friend, Reshma Kirpalani. Reshma is an amazing award-winning journalist that I have been good friends with for seven years.

During our chat we discussed the experience of filming a five-part docuseries about the COVID-19 pandemic that we've all been living. And a challenging professional setback that Reshma experienced along the way. We also talk about the difficulties of making friends in your 30s. And we also talk about why we think our friendship is a deep one and a great one.

But first, we have our listener spotlight. Today's listener spotlight is from my friend Ina. Ina is a friend I made online during the pandemic and I'm

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actually surprised to realize that Ina and I have never actually met in person. So Ina is a kick ass realtor and entrepreneur in Colorado. We met on a Zoom call in a business coaching program and we were instant friends.

I have a big thank you to give you, Ina, because Ina is the person who gave me a pep talk about not being intimidated by the ultra-competitive housing market in Austin. And she and I kept in close touch throughout my house buying journey and she has cheered me on the entire way.

Thank you for nudging me to move forward, Ina, to get into the market and to claim my stake here in my hometown of Austin, Texas. I am so excited to become a homeowner. I appreciate you Ina and I cannot wait to have you come to Austin and host you at my house.

“Kaneisha Grayson's new podcast, *Scale Your Joy*, is my new favorite podcast. She is so brilliant and brings to this podcast all of her expertise both as a successful business owner and as a Harvard Business School graduate. And it just really helps people like me who are in business and sometimes don't know what they're doing. Thank you so much.”

Before the official conversation with me and Reshma, I am going to share some juicy pre-roll backstage pass content so that you can get an inside look at me and Reshma's friendship rather than just the official interview content. And I have Reshma's has permission to do that. Then we'll go straight into the official conversation. So let's listen to what me and Reshma have to say.

Kaneisha: Let's start the recording so that we get some of that great pre-roll rapport.

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Reshma: Sure, sure, sure. Do it, do it, yeah.

Kaneisha: The audience loves the pre-roll rapport.

Reshma: They do. They sure do. They sure do.

Kaneisha: So I'm wrecked, man.

Reshma: Oh my god, I'm so I'm so wrecked. I'm so fucking wrecked. Wait, do you, oh, I'm not allowed to swear, am I? I'm sorry.

Kaneisha: You can swear, we'll just have to put an explicit. She done made me make my podcast explicit.

Reshma: So one thing that I don't know that I'm, I don't know how much I want to or should or will. I don't know I want to talk about, you know what? Yes, let's talk about it. Let's talk about how I got laid off during the series.

Kaneisha: Absolutely. I mean, I wasn't going to ask you, but now that you bring it up, absolutely.

Reshma: What I do want to talk about from that experience is pushing through it. I mean, it's been fucking hell on earth because, you know, you have the whatever graphic language thing already, so I'm just going to say it. It's been hell on earth. It's been hell on earth. Like, it's been so hard. I mean, you know, like it's been insane hard. Like, I probably have slept two hours a night for the last three weeks, like consistently.

Kaneisha: You're going to have a nervous breakdown.

Reshma: Yeah, I have brain fog, like it's not good.

Kaneisha: Okay, so Reshma, first tell us about your educational background, college and grad school, and what your career is. Also, go

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ahead and tell us about your cultural background. Are you Latina? Are you Indian? What is happening?

Reshma: It's a mix of all three. I'm a little bit of everything.

Kaneisha: I hope you enjoyed your salad Reshma. What was in your salad?

Reshma: I'm going to keep eating now, is that okay? Because I need to like – No? Can I not eat?

Kaneisha: You're supposed to respect my podcast. No, you can keep eating.

Reshma: I respect your podcast.

Kaneisha: No, you can keep eating. Tell me, what's in your salad. I always talk about what I'm eating on the podcast. So, you know, I love food.

Reshma: Well, it's not going to sound exciting, but the back story to the place is exciting. It's from a place called Sweet Green, which was my favorite salad place in DC. Like, there's so many salad places in DC and it was like a challenge to figure out which one was good. Anyways, so it was Sweet Green was the winner. And then they opened one down here in Miami and I was so excited.

Kaneisha: Yay.

Reshma: This is literally my treat for like working for weeks nonstop, is a Sweet Green salad.

Kaneisha: Man, that is a disciplined person when her treat for working nonstop for three weeks is a salad.

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Reshma: But their salads are so good. So good. They are so good.

Kaneisha: So, Reshma, welcome to the Scale Your Joy podcast.

Reshma: Thank you. Happy to be here.

Kaneisha: Tomorrow is your birthday. Happy early birthday my friend.

Reshma: Yes, thank you. My big birthday day.

Kaneisha: Your big birthday date. So Reshma, we were doing the math before and we think that we met in November 2013, which means we have been friends for over seven years.

Reshma: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so we met at a book club meeting in Austin and we became fast friends. I remember looking at you and thinking - Well, first of all, I noticed how petite you were, I was like, "She's so little."

Reshma: I think people are shocked when they meet me. Because I've had a lot of people, like when they meet me say like, "You're so small."

Kaneisha: Yes, people always think that I'm taller than I am, I guess because we both have big personal presences. But yeah, I was like, "Oh, she's so small." And I was like, "What is her race? Is she Latina? Indian? What's happening? I don't know what's happening, but I want to be her friend."

So Reshma, actually just because on *Scale Your Joy* I love to love the diversity of my listeners, the diversity of our guests. Go ahead and actually tell us a little bit about your cultural background. Are you Latina? Are you Indian? What is happening?

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Reshma: Actually I don't know. That's a good question because technically I am from Latin America. I'm from Suriname, which is a country in South America.

Kaneisha: Who knew?

Reshma: I was born there, my family lives there. I'm of Indian descent. So my grandparents immigrated to Suriname, and that's where my dad was born and that's where I was born. So I'm West Indian.

Kaneisha: Oh my goodness. I got me the off-brand Kamala Harrison. Isn't it Kamila? Kamala Harrison. Wait, what was Harrison? Kamala Harris.

Reshma: Don't put that in the podcast. I just, wow. Okay, I haven't talked in a very long time. But her name is confusing to me because in the Indian culture, her name is Kamala. Like, it's very weird for me to like see her name, and then I always forget how to pronounce it.

Kaneisha: No, but I think you're saying it right, Kamala.

Reshma: Does she say Kamila or Kamala?

Kaneisha: I'm not sure, I don't watch TV. I literally don't watch TV.

Reshma: I call her Kamala Harris.

Kaneisha: I don't know. I watch things like Netflix, Ginny and Georgia.

Reshma: I would really discredited myself before I even started like knowing -

Kaneisha: Yeah, we're leaving all of this in just so you know. So you're not the same as Kamala Harris because she's black and Indian.

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Reshma: That's correct. I mean, I'm fully of Indian descent, I guess. But my dad is born and raised in Suriname, but he is also of Indian descent. So my dad is Indian Surinamese.

Kaneisha: Yeah. So you're like Kamala's cousin.

Reshma: Yeah.

Kaneisha: And what I also think is interesting is you are of Indian descent, but now that part of India is Pakistan.

Reshma: That's correct, right.

Kaneisha: So what?

Reshma: Yes, yeah, yeah. So I'm like every immigration story that has ever existed.

Kaneisha: Oh, wow. All of them? Wow.

Reshma: Yeah, so my ancestors are from the part of India that is now part of son and then they immigrated to Suriname, and then I immigrated to America.

Kaneisha: Okay, there we go. That's amazing.

Reshma: That's not weird at all.

Kaneisha: Yeah, not at all. That was great. Okay, so also Reshma please tell us about your educational background, where you went to college, where you went to grad school, what you studied. Tell us about that.

Reshma: I went to University of Miami for undergrad. I graduated with a degree in communications. And then I went to University of Texas for my

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graduate degree. I graduated with a degree in photojournalism, a Master's of photojournalism.

Kaneisha: So Reshma, you are definitely a person I think of who considers their career as a calling. I would love for you to just tell all the listeners what your career is and how you think of it as your calling. And don't talk about the awards yet, because that comes later in the interview, because that's a whole thing.

Reshma: Well, yes, the awards are not part of my calling. So I'm a video journalist. I'm a journalist. I am a journalist. Yes, that is my calling. So I tell stories using a camera. Yeah, I came to it honestly, I didn't know anything about journalism when I was in undergrad, you know, I got a degree in communications but I had no idea what that meant.

I got a job at a small community newspaper, that was my first job out of college and I was actually a graphic designer for them. I would design the paper daily, and it was super boring. Like I was like, "This is, no, I don't - There's something else here." So I started taking pictures for them and then I started writing a weekly column for them. And I realized that I actually enjoyed producing the content for the paper more than I liked producing the paper. So it kind of went from there.

I moved back to Suriname after that job. I worked for a nonprofit, and then I applied to grad school when I was in Suriname. I took the JRE in Suriname and got into UT, went to UT. I think the best part about graduate school is that it allowed me to, well, A, I realized that I'm I guess not terrible at this. Like I didn't have any formal training with storytelling or journalism before graduate school, but somehow, I was like pulling it off. So that was like, "Oh, that's a skill I guess I have."

And then the other thing about graduate school is that like you can do every internship on the planet, and like you have access to it because

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you're a student. And that's basically what I did, is I just like interned everywhere. And my formal education in graduate school was almost secondary to my experience working in different newsrooms. That was like invaluable, actually. And I really learned a lot of what I do now on the job. Like, I didn't learn it in the classrooms, I learned it on the job.

Kaneisha: Okay, I love that. I love hearing about the early part of your career because when I met you, you were already out of grad school, back from Suriname, in a career, and pretty confident in your career. I've watched you really blossom and grow in your career.

But it's lovely to just hear about these early days of how you came to it. And you really were called to it, right? It was just, you studied communication, then you got this job that was kind of boring. But then just slowly, step by step moved closer and closer. And it's so interesting, because there's no part of your story where you're like, "Oh, and then I spent, you know, three years fundraising for a nonprofit." Or something like that. It's all just kind of like you getting guided to where you are today.

Reshma: I mean 100%. I remember specifically, I was in my first job, I was at the newspaper, I was designing the daily paper. I was so bored. I was just like, "This cannot be my life. This is not the right fit." Because I really liked graphic design, I thought that was going to be my future. But like it was so boring.

And I remember being in an Einstein's coffee, just like sitting there with my coffee and I just felt like, I just knew, I was like, "There is something bigger for me out there, like this is not all there is." And actually that's part of the reason I quit that job and I moved back to Suriname. Because I was like, "I cannot stay here, this is too small." And I don't say that like in a, I don't know, like vain way. Like I just kind of knew this is not the path for me and I need to find what is.

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Kaneisha: I love that. I love that, being in integrity with your inner wisdom of you weren't exactly sure what was for you, but you were willing to let go of what you had to find it.

Reshma: I want to say I've always had an inner knowing about my work. I don't know if that's true. Maybe that's not true, but it feels like it. I mean when I compare it to other parts of my life where I have zero inner knowing, like it's so markedly different, you know, like how I feel about my calling versus like other parts of my life where I don't feel that sense of like ownership, and connection, and intuition.

So that's how I know the difference, it's that like I don't have it in every aspect of my life quite frankly. Like I don't know anyone who does, but I do have it in this part of my life. And I'm, I won't curse, I'm very grateful.

Kaneisha: You can curse, that's who you are. That is totally fine. Okay, so speaking of your career, I just finished watching Episode Two in the docuseries that you produced that is out right now, just came out right now. The last episode comes out just a few days after this episode is released, it's called Inside the COVID Unit. And I'm wrecked, Reshma. I'm wrecked.

Reshma: I'm so happy to hear that.

Kaneisha: I'm so happy to hear that you're happy to hear that I'm wrecked. It's so good. It is so well done, so engaging, educational, entertaining, inspiring. And if I'm going to watch a documentary about something as momentous as the Covid 19 pandemic, I do want my heartstrings pulled. And I just feel very invested in each of the people that you're interviewing. And also, the music is very, it's well scored.

I was texting you while I was watching it because, you know, I'm an interactive audience member. And when they're showing the mom and all the frenzy of trying to both be present for her husband, who's a charge

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nurse in the COVID-19 ICU, but then she's also trying to entertain what looks like maybe three, four kids and also trying to sort of maybe let you see her life. And then that music is playing and it's just getting more and more intense.

And then the more lighthearted, plucky music that you play when the doctor, I can't remember his name, but when the doctor is, you know, jokingly talking next to his wife about how he doesn't have a heart where a heart goes, he has no emotions. And, you know, they're just being really jokey with each other. It was just, it's really excellently done. And I want everyone listening to this episode to go watch all five episodes.

You can get the links to all five episodes at this episode's show notes, scaleyourjoy.com/12. I want you to watch all five. And you will feel just as inspired, entertained, touched, and wrecked as I am. And so just tell us about this docuseries, Inside the COVID Unit, Reshma. What is it about? Tell us about it.

Reshma: So I ended up in Miami. I came down here to help the Miami Herald with their COVID-19 coverage and I was working on daily stories for a while. But of course the whole time, you know, what we were all thinking about is like what is actually going on inside the hospital? We were hearing horror stories, we were seeing posts on social media from like nurses and doctors, you know, whatever. But like I wasn't seeing very much of like what was going on and how that was really affecting the healthcare workers.

So I decided to find out. Contacted a comms person for the largest public health system in South Florida, completely cold, I just found her email on Instagram. And emailed her and I pitched her an idea for a documentary. It was supposed to be like one documentary short.

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You know, we had no idea what was happening with the pandemic, or how long it was going to last, or what was going to happen in Miami. The immediate challenge was like how to show what was happening inside the COVID unit, because of course, at this point there were no visitors inside the hospital. So they were certainly not going to let me in with my camera. And also, it's like such a sensitive subject, right?

So I immediately pitched having the doctors and the nurses film inside the COVID unit themselves. Which meant the second challenge would be to find the right people to tell the right story. Because, as you can imagine, in an ICU the last thing that a healthcare worker is thinking about is like, "Let me pull out my phone to film this right now." But I actually did find a healthcare worker who was willing to do that and who did do that all through the pandemic. Which I can tell you, like I found the right people to tell the right story and that has made all the difference for this series in my opinion.

So Dr. Andrew Pastewski, who is the doctor in the series, he had become the medical director of the ICU at Jackson South Medical Center not but like a month before the pandemic hit. And he was still trying to like build up his unit, he was still getting to know his unit and all of a sudden, you know, this worldwide pandemic happens and he's leading his team through it.

The first time I met Andrew I knew that he was going to be one of the characters in the show because he's so hilarious. Like, he's so fucking funny. Like, you know, I do pre-interviews with them and I just could not stop laughing. And I was like, "Yes, yes, yes. Like you, let's go, let's find the next person." You know, because I wanted to feature a doctor and a nurse. I wanted to make sure I included multiple voices in terms of like people of color, people who represent Miami culture.

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Anyway, so he told me about Julio who was a charge nurse who was living away from his family at that point, Cuban American family with deep Miami roots. And then along the way he was telling me about Mr. Washington and the sad story about having already lost his son. Derek Washington was the first COVID ICU death. And then his father -

Kaneisha: In Florida or in that hospital?

Reshma: No, at Jackson South, at the hospital, yeah.

Kaneisha: Okay.

Reshma: And then several days later his father was also admitted to that ICU with COVID-19. So, I mean, when he told me about the story I was like, "That's devastating. Like that poor woman." And, you know, one of the hardest parts of my job is like asking people to talk to me when they're going through something really hard.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm.

Reshma: And it was a big ask, but I asked Andrew like, "Do you think she'd be willing to talk to me?" And at this point her husband was still in the ICU. I'm not going to tell you what happens. It was a very sensitive moment for her and when she agreed to talk to me I was like, "Okay, yes. Thank you." And so when I met Mrs. Washington, like I was like, "We got it, like it's the trio."

Kaneisha: You have your cast, yeah.

Reshma: Like they represent different stories in a way that will fully complete this picture of like the pandemic experience. So, yeah, that's how that worked out.

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Kaneisha: Yes, it's so interesting to hear about the intentionality of how you craft the story. I think a lot of people think that documentaries are about like, show up somewhere with a camera and see what happens, and that's the documentary. But there really is quite a bit of shaping, selection, curation, and story craft. So it's super interesting to hear about how purposeful you were in making sure that it was a diverse cast, that it was diverse in terms of profession.

And I can see it, to me it really reflects the diversity of Miami, right? We've got Dr. Pastewski, who seems like maybe he's like some sort of Polish American, Brooklyn dude, or some Long Island or something.

Reshma: Brooklyn.

Kaneisha: Yeah, Brooklyn, I had it right? Okay. And then we have his wife who appears to be Asian American. And then we've got Mrs. Washington who's African American, then we've got, you know, Julio, and his wife who are Cuban American. And I'm like, "Yes, that's Miami."

Reshma: Yes, exactly. I mean, I interviewed, I pre-interviewed multiple healthcare workers for the show and I was very clear that like I need to be talking to people from different backgrounds. And when I wasn't maybe initially getting that for a minute, like I made that clear that that's important to me, and, you know, to work with me.

So that was really important to me. I mean, if we're going to tell a story about a community, we have to show the community. Like we have to represent the community, like that needs to be correct.

Kaneisha: That's right. And so you are filming what you originally think is going to be sort of one documentary. You've got this unprecedented access to the staff; the staff is giving you this also very non-traditional footage. I can imagine there were so many different HIPAA type things and

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hurdles you had to deal with. And so much uncertainty just to get this story out there.

And then in the middle of all this, you learn you are getting laid off from your job. The job for which you are producing this documentary. So tell us about that and how you have handled losing your job. Especially a person who, you consider your career a calling, I totally consider this your calling, to have lost it during the pandemic. And in the middle of what I could imagine is the biggest story you have worked on to date.

Reshma: All of us have a story, right? Like, my story is ongoing while I'm telling theirs. And the reality of the pandemic is a lot of people lost their jobs. I could not let that stop me from telling this story. So while I was being laid off, I didn't actually care about getting laid off. What I cared about was like, I mean, the, you know, agreement we made with this large healthcare system and its important storytelling. And like please let me finish it.

They made a huge exception for me, which was very generous of them, gave me three months to finish out the documentary series. And that is not very much time to produce a five-part documentary series, but it was better than the alternative.

So, it's been really rough. It's been very hard. I mean, shooting a documentary during a worldwide pandemic is very different from shooting something during like, normal times. You know, I was wearing full PPE while I was filming.

Kaneisha: Wow. And the equipment is already heavy.

Reshma: Oh yeah. Yeah, I'll share a photo with you actually.

Kaneisha: Yeah, if you're okay we can put that photo on the show notes page so people can see what you looked like, your little, tiny self carrying

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all that equipment in full PPE. I think that would be an amazing photo. Maybe we can even use that in your episode artwork.

Reshma: Well, feel free because ultimately I personally filmed inside the COVID unit because one of my asks was, “Yes, I understand right now numbers are high, we can have them film inside the COVID unit. But as numbers go down, I would like to film in there, at least just once.” So when I went to go film inside the COVID unit I was like full body PPE, double masked, hair net. Like I looked terrible, and I had all my gear on me. I'll send you the photo, I look ridiculous.

But it was like one of the most important shoots I've ever done. And even while I was filming the doctor and the nurse and Mrs. Washington outside of the COVID unit, the pandemic was still very real and I was wearing full PPE and trying not to get too close to people while I was interviewing them.

And I was scared, I had multiple COVID scares. I mean, at a certain point I was getting tested like weekly. It was just like part of my weekly routine because I live with a sister who's technically high risk, she's got asthma. And my worst fear was giving it to her. So, you know, I would film, I would film for hours, hours, hours, hours, and then I'd come home and immediately throw all of my clothes into the washing machine, take a shower, scrub down, wipe down my equipment before I would even like start attending to the footage or whatever. It was a whole process.

Kaneisha: I know you're going to get a D or an F on this question but I still want to ask it, is how have you been taking, yeah, how have you been taking care of yourself? You have worked so tirelessly on this documentary while also knowing that at the end of producing it you will not have this job.

Reshma: The truth is, I think, when you make something like this, which is so time intensive and so emotionally intensive, your life is not going to look normal. Like it's just not. Like you're devoting yourself to something bigger

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than yourself. So, you know, it's eat, sleep, breathe the series. And I haven't slept very much in a long time.

Making sure I'm still reaching out to friends, like my support system. And while I don't talk to you very much, you know, probably in the last couple months, like it still makes a huge difference to know that you're there. And there's just something about not being alone, you know, when you're working on something so hard that helps you keep going.

I mean, and that's what I needed, it's like this was a marathon. I'm still running it, and I just need help to keep going. Like no one can run it for me, I have to run it myself, but I need people cheering me on. And I would text people and just be like, "Can you please be my cheerleader today?"

Kaneisha: Oh, that's so good.

Reshma: Yep. And they were, and they still are. And it's made all the difference. It's made all the difference. I mean, yeah, I think having a support system period is essential to life, but especially when you're going through something hard. I would say I think that's something that I've continued to rely on. Because I have not been able to rely on sleep, and eating, and like anything else, you know.

Kaneisha: Mm-hmm. Oh my goodness. So walk me through the timing a little bit. So Episode Five comes out April 22nd. Then what happens for you?

Reshma: I catch up on all the sleep I haven't had for a long, long time. And then I figure out my next move.

Kaneisha: Okay. Okay, so literally is that your - I'm confused, are you are gone from your job already?

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Reshma: Tomorrow is my last day of work.

Kaneisha: Tomorrow? Your birthday is? Oh my goodness, it's your birthday and your last day at work. Well, that is a lot of feelings.

Reshma: Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

Kaneisha: I will be here to receive any voice memos you want to send.

Reshma: Thank you, maybe I'll send you a very long one.

Kaneisha: If you send me a very long one then also, of course, we're going to have your Zoom party. And we always have a blast when we get together with our friends.

Reshma: Excited about that, yes.

Kaneisha: Yeah. So let's talk about our friendship. A lot of people have an idea that it's really hard, or maybe even impossible, to make new friends as an adult in their 30s.

Reshma: I agree with that.

Kaneisha: Okay, you agree with that. So talk to us about why you think it's hard. And then let's talk about how we were able to actually become friends. So why is it so hard? I'm 37, you're about to turn, are you about to turn 37?

Reshma: Mm-hmm.

Kaneisha: We is old.

Reshma: Mm-hmm.

Kaneisha: Okay, so why do you experience it as hard to make new friends?

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Reshma: Well, I mean, I don't know that it's hard to make friends. I think that as you get older, you're not in a position in life to like dedicate the time and be in the space to like make friends. Like you have to seek that out. And my life, the past year or two years, has looked like displacement, ending up in a city that I never thought I'd live in again, a worldwide pandemic, a documentary series. And even before then I was traveling a lot for work.

So yeah, I think that makes it difficult, right, to like have the time and the intention to make a new friend. However, I'm not saying that like it's impossible. I just think that it gets harder as you get older. And I think that's okay. I mean, yeah, I don't know. It doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. It's just like it's not as easy.

Kaneisha: It's not as easy, yeah. And so even though we probably only have a phone call, let's say once a month, and we'll talk for like an hour and 40 minutes, once a month. But we do, I would say we have a very close, intimate, vulnerable, open hearted, and fun friendship.

Reshma: Yes.

Kaneisha: And so what would you say helped cultivate those qualities in our friendship and keeps our friendship on that deeper level versus like that surface level check in friendship or like activity partners, or just call each other when we're bored friends?

Reshma: I don't know, maybe this is the wrong answer. But like I feel safe with you. I feel like you're a safe, honest person. And like I think we just click on a lot of levels without really even needing to try. Like I think our personalities complement each other in a way. And we have enough in common too, like I think we're both kind of introspective, deep, I don't know, we're just like thinkers maybe.

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Kaneisha: And feelers, for sure.

Reshma: And feelers, oh my God, yes.

Kaneisha: Yeah

Reshma: And you're safe to feel my feelings around. Honestly, that's the answer. That is why I think our friendship is like, I don't know, so special.

Kaneisha: Some things that come to mind is I think that we both extend quite a bit of grace to one another, and in friendship in general.

So for example, like I absolutely knew you would be late to this interview. And I absolutely knew I would be late. It was like fine, you know? I don't even know that I thought about like, "Oh, she will be eating." It's not even a thing. I'm like, you know, "Reshma is busy, I'm busy."

My team knows I show up to almost every meeting frantically eating an apple or whatever. But I think that that's really important. We have lost some shared friends. And I think one of the things we didn't have in common with some of the friends, the friend we lost, she didn't die, she just is not our friend anymore. And then other friends that are not my friend anymore is a very, to me, a low tolerance for imperfection.

Reshma: I think that's the line we're constantly walking, right? Like with all of our relationships, like we're all imperfect. And I don't know.

Kaneisha: Yeah. And so one thing that I've learned from you is the importance of persisting when working on a big, exciting, ambitious project. And to understand that like the work that one does, especially if it's creative work, like for me this podcast, it's often a labor of love. It's not actually about it being fun all the time, or even most of the time. It's about the story

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you want to tell, the content you want to produce, the legacy you want to create, the people you want to educate or inspire.

And so I just really appreciate that about you. And that is something I've really gotten to see you demonstrate over and over and over again in our friendship, is just like a commitment to the work, or to the craft, or to the story. Even if it does mean that temporarily self-care goes by the wayside. But it can only be temporary. So I'm just curious, what is something you've learned from me in our friendship?

Reshma: This is not the answer you want. I feel like, I don't know, sometimes you need like a friend you can be completely inappropriate with. I feel like just like the honesty, you know?

Kaneisha: I thought that was going to be your answer, like something like sex.

Reshma: I was going to say like all the sex stories you've ever told me. Like I'm like, I kind of don't want to know that. But also, it's so nice that we can talk about that. Like there aren't very many people I can talk to about that stuff. You know? I don't know, just like a level of comfortability between us.

So anyways, the question was like what have I learned from you? I think it's okay to be yourself. Like it's just okay to be yourself, whatever that looks like. It doesn't have to fit a mold, and it's great if it's outrageous. I mean, it's just the way, it's just like celebrate who you are.

Kaneisha: Yes, no, I love it. Okay, so as you know, one of my favorite things to do in my friendships is to speak blessings into my friend's lives based on the wonderful qualities that I see in them. And when we were early in our friendships seven years ago I constantly and repeatedly told you that you would win an Emmy one day.

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So now it's seven years later and please let us know how many Lone Star Emmys, which is our Emmys here in Texas, how many of those have you won since we've been friends?

Reshma: 12.

Kaneisha: What? A dozen?

Reshma: I think so, yeah.

Kaneisha: Is it 12? Is it 11? Is it 13? We can't even keep track.

Reshma: I think it's 12.

Kaneisha: That's amazing. What are some of the stories that are still available that people could watch that have won Emmys?

Reshma: You can still watch The Talk.

Kaneisha: Okay, we can still watch The Talk.

Reshma: Displaced but not Erased, it's a short doc that I produced for the Austin American Statesman. I can't remember the names of all of these stories honestly.

Kaneisha: Can y'all imagine winning so many Emmys you can't even remember the names of the stories that won the Emmys? 12 y'all. So we will list, we'll give Reshma time offline to get them together, the ones that we can still watch. And we can have a little Scale Your Joy virtual independent film festival where we just list all of them. People can watch them; people can write in and say which one is their favorite.

It's a great thing to do, especially because this is our season one finale. People are going to be missing Scale Your Joy, looking for the next thing

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that they want to spend their time with. And I think there's nothing better than lots and lots of Reshma's pieces. So we'll list those on scaleyourjoy.com/12.

Also, just wanted to take a minute to just have some joyful reminiscing of a few years ago when I got to be your date to the Emmys and how much fun we had.

Reshma: Yeah. Yeah, that was super fun. I think that was one of the years where I won four in one night.

Kaneisha: Yeah, you kept having to go on stage. It was so great. And you ran out of even things to say in your speech, because you go up there and you do a thing every time but what do you say?

Reshma: those ceremonies are so long. Man, by the time you went for the fourth one it's like, "I'm over it."

Kaneisha: They are, but they fed us well. I think it was an open bar too, so we had a great time. If it wasn't an open bar, we treated it like an open bar.

Reshma: It was a lot of fun, yeah.

Kaneisha: Wonderful, wonderful. So Reshma, you know, I love to speak blessings into my friends live. So I would love for us to wrap up your interview with me speaking some blessings into your life.

Reshma: Yes, go.

Kaneisha: Okay, so in your career, Reshma, I want for you, and I see this with absolute certainty. And you know I've been saying this for years, for you to be producing video content, you know, very well produced, great budget, great support from management at a globally reaching outlet such

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as the New York Times, or the Washington Post. Or maybe even something that takes you International, like BBC or Al Jazeera.

So I just really see you having the funding, the reach, the authority, everything you need to tell these beautiful stories that are touching people's lives and changing the world. And so that's what I see for you and your career and that's what I bless you with.

Also, in your personal life, I've said this to you before, but I have absolutely no doubt that as long as you keep your heart open and you persist you will meet your beloved. And this person will be wonderfully special and you will both bring out the best in one another.

And so those are just two blessings that I don't just hope for you, I know will happen for you as long as you just keep taking chances and risks and putting yourself out there in the world.

Reshma: Oh, thank you so much. Thank you so, so, so much.

Kaneisha: You are so welcome my beloved Reshma. I will actually see you in 10 days.

Reshma: Oh yeah, that's right.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so I'm coming to Miami.

Reshma: I want to say one last thing.

Kaneisha: Yeah, say one last thing. Close us out Reshma.

Reshma: Well, no, it's not going to close us out. But you also spoke another blessing into my life and I can't stop thinking about it.

Kaneisha: Tell us, what was the other blessing I spoke into your life?

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Reshma: Well, it hasn't happened yet. But anyways, yeah, maybe we should just say it and if it happens in 10 years that's great.

Kaneisha: Go ahead, I don't know what it is. The Pulitzer, right?

Reshma: Yes, yes.

Kaneisha: Absolutely, yes.

Reshma: You told me I was going to win a Pulitzer by the time I was 50. And you said your message, "If you think 50 is too old, you're being selfish."

Kaneisha: That's right. And you will win a Pulitzer by the time you are 50.

Reshma: I was like, "That's a really long time away." Then you said, "Don't be selfish." I was like, "Okay, I won't."

Kaneisha: That's right, I cannot wait. You will. You will. And then I'll get to say I was right.

Reshma: Oh my god, how eerie will that be if that's true?

Kaneisha: It's going to happen, I called in the Emmy and oops, we got 12. So get ready.

Reshma: I'm ready. I'm ready.

Kaneisha: I love you Reshma.

Reshma: I love you too. Thanks for having me on, this was fun.

Kaneisha: Absolutely.

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Okay, I hope you enjoy that conversation. I hope you had fun listening to me and my good friend Reshma interact and sharing our thoughts and our feelings and just being there for each other as friends. It is time for your joy work.

For your joy work this week I want you to journal doodle and noodle on the following. One, I want you to evaluate your current friendships. Is there a friend with whom you'd like to deepen or reinvigorate the friendship? What is one imperfect action you could take to reconnect with that friend, or to connect with that friend in a deeper way?

Number two, when you look at your current friendships, I want you to see if you have a friendship where you feel like one of you is putting in way more effort into maintaining the friendship than the other person. Maybe it's you putting in more effort or maybe it's them. What is one tiny action you could take to help move that friendship and that level of effort to a place of better balance? Is there something you feel you need or want to say that you haven't shared with that friend?

Your third assignment for your joy work is focused on the pandemic. The last 12 months have been devastating, chaotic, and scary for so many people, for all of us. But there have also been moments of joy within it all. And so I want you to journal doodle and noodle about a few of the joyful memories you've experienced in the last 12 months.

And if you find yourself feeling heart sick because you're like, "Well, it's really hard for me to think of some joyful memories I've had the last 12 months, it's been terrible." Then I validate those feelings and I encourage you to take some imperfect action, make a beautiful mess, and go out over the next week and endeavor to create a joyful memory that you can claim for this time of your life.

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Okay my joy friend, that wraps up Episode 12, the season finale of Season One. I look forward to chatting, laughing, and journal doodling and noodling with you in August.

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