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[00:00:00] **Suriya:** For me because I'm, you know, stubborn even to myself. Nah, come on. I don't want to do the flare right now. Just leave it just two days. Give me two days and then come back. You know what I mean? You realize that you can't boss it with your body in that way.

[00:00:24] Welcome to Sickbabe. The podcast from my bed to yours. Here we'll be chatting about all the things that it means to be invisibly sick or disabled, chronically ill, whatever words you choose. We'll be talking about everything from Thai and sex to Mary on Facebook. You think she knows more about your condition than you do.

[00:00:43] Um, and we hope that you can be a GC bedside chat for those days that you don't have loads of energy and maybe just some. The company on the days that you feel all right, and if you're not sick or disabled, don't worry. You can still listen. Turns out capitalism and ableism is screwed us all over. All right, let's get into it.

[00:01:04] Hey, sit Braves. So today I spoke to the brilliant Toby at a bio, their pronouns. Are they them? They are a parent, a artist, a community organizer, a doula, and they've just done some absolutely brilliant work. And have amazing insights about being disabled and black and queer. We spoke about rest as resistance, what it means to be in community with each other, and also some of the challenges that come along with that.

[00:01:32] So I'm just going to go straight into the conversation for you today. Hope you enjoy two days. Give me two days and then come back. And then you realize that you can't bother it with your body in that way. You know what I mean? And that is really, it's a painful process to go for it. Especially if you're doing work that is involved in other people who you care about, or you feel like you're making a difference in your community to work at this pace.

[00:01:57] That's different. I mean, I try and remember that it's the way I just fight to myself. It's like, oh, it's a revolutionary act in and of itself,

[00:02:08] but it's actually in a strange way. It's easier for me to say it like that than it is for me to say it to rest for myself, which is interesting. So for number therapist, they would,

[00:02:21] **Tobi:** you know, they'd be internalized, you know,

[00:02:24] **Suriya:** April as this is it.

[00:02:30] It's the place you, when you, when you, when you, you go in there, you know, whether you've lived with a condition for a long time, or you've been diagnosed in adulthood or Lee life, you realize how much ableism is, is so synonymous with capitalism is it's it's. So every system that we know that to be a person who is honoring your body in the midst of it, Is actually you are rebel.

[00:02:53] Like, how am I in trouble for taking care of myself? Like that is a mistake. Imagine I'm a rebel because I went to arrest is it's actually quite bizarre when you put it, like, so I'm a rebel because I'm in pain and I'm sitting down where have we got to that? That is radical. You know? I mean, it's actually quite, it's actually quite scary.

[00:03:15] **Tobi:** It's terrifying because it's just, it just. I don't know, solidifies the reality that we are living under capitalism and that we are living in an alien society and that even inside of our own selves, as people who are experiencing pain and illness, like it's, it's going to be so much of a process. Like we're just rewriting the books as we are going through it, right.

[00:03:36] Where we're creating the scripts because none of the exists beforehand, like there has never been in my existence and understanding of what it, what it looks like to live inside of sites that. Centers the needs of the people who are existing inside of it, as opposed to centering productivity. And so even in my own stubborn, like wanting to do everything when support feeling guilty mind, like that battle is also a labor and it's also so tiring.

[00:04:01] So it's nice to be just voicing it with other people who experienced similar and just be like, yeah, it's true. Like it's, it's work. Like that's a separate type of work. Like the unlearning of that. It's hard to even consider what it looks like to unlearn it because you're unlearning it. And then also having to teach it to other people who don't have access to the internet,

[00:04:21] **Suriya:** all of the things

[00:04:26] it is that thing of like hearing someone else say it's like, you're breaking it down in the sense of, you know, I do when I'm teaching other people. I do say being sick as a full-time. Yeah, but even saying, you know, you saying it to me is reminding myself that yeah. Like every day you wake up and

you have to check in with your body and go, you check your calendar and you have to ask yourself, can I still do what I plan to do?

[00:04:49] And then halfway through the day you start to say, can I still do what I planned to do? And then in the end of the day, you say, did I do too much? Can I do tomorrow? Like, did I have I got a communicated with someone else that I've got to change? Like, you know, because there's so much work and admin inside of that, And it's, you know, I, I wanted to, I feel like this is kind of the thing that you can only talk to other sick people about, because I feel like other people weren't really deeply, there's a complexity that.

[00:05:20] I can't Boyce, but I know is there about the reality of being a sick person in a pandemic, watching other people get sick and letting them say things that you've already said for ages. And now they're seeing that it's to you. Like it's the first time you've ever said it.

[00:05:39] Like, I don't want to be. Bitter person being like, well, me right now, finding the, you get it. But at the same time, that's good. That's how it feel like, nah, it's

[00:05:48] **Tobi:** irritating, deeply irritating to not even be able to process those feelings without feeling guilt, because how can we, it's also like gaslighting in a way that you can't eat.

[00:06:01] Necessarily call it that because you don't want to diminish somebody else's experience, but we need to hold space with the fact that we've been seeing y'all we're living evil in society. Yo, can you please just consider people who don't have the same access as you, when you're holding it? It shouldn't have to take like you experiencing something for you to actually listen to the people who are experiencing it.

[00:06:21] So I feel that frustration and I think we need some rage about it so it can leave our

[00:06:26] **Suriya:** systems. Yeah. I think the isolation is, is so it's, we're trying to base cause there's, there's, there's so many levels of isolation isn't there, but I think being a black disabled person is a particular type of. Thing, because I don't know whether why it is that we feel less able to reach out to, I don't know whether it's that or whether it's, whether, you know, it's just even the disabled community is dominated by white voices and, and, and the experience of experience of how you're allowed to be vulnerable.

[00:07:04] Say for example, a white woman versus a black face. Woman is very different and we've internalized that even ourselves. So it's kind of like, you know, even for me to express to myself that I am in pain is a process that I have to learn because it's like, I've never really seen the black women or black fems in my life do that in a way that isn't like watering and all these different processes, you know, it's really interesting.

[00:07:33] I think my thing came when it's like people are coming to me being like, you know, what's the right. It's the fatigue, the fatigue is different from type this, you know, fatigue really,

[00:07:49] really. Wow. What's it like to be fatigue? Like I would love, like I've been living with fatigue for the last 13, 14, 15 years. You know what I mean? And it's so it's like, it's a really painful piece of. You don't see me see me, or you don't believe it, like, oh, you don't take the time to digests. Yeah,

[00:08:18] **Tobi:** exactly.

[00:08:18] It's the thing of people really like consume us. Like they love to consume us, but they don't actually digest what's happening. It's just like another thing to like, I don't know, to look at or to. To be, to be inspired by as opposed to something to really sit with and think about, okay, this is somebody else's reality.

[00:08:39] Like, what does that mean? Like, what does that, what does that actually mean? It's not like, oh yeah, I know that person's disabled. And then we're like, so, you know, Doing anything with the information. You're just keeping it like as a, as an FYI, but it's not, it doesn't change anything. It's just like you saying, yeah, the sky is blue.

[00:08:57] We know the sky is blue, but why is the sky blue? Did you know about the water? Did you know what, like, do you know any of the like deeper, the deeper it's it's hard. Like, I really, I struggle with it to be. For me, I try to not even talk about my disabilities online. I talk about them. I say that I'm disabled person, but I feel like most people don't know what my disabilities are or like what I'm experiencing, because every time that I've even attempted to have any conversations about it, it's 10 into more labor for me.

[00:09:28] And I'm like, no, I'm going to keep that for people who actually see me so that I can use the energy in a way that's productive and like not productive in like a capitalist way, but productive in that. It's useful for myself

and it's useful the people around me as opposed to something it's something else to just be consumed.

[00:09:44] Um, the speed as well. Right? The speed with which people are quickly, just see how everybody, like, you know, how we all just like went online so quickly. It's like, oh, you can do it online, but you can't do online pandemic or you couldn't just do a live stream for the people who can't access it before. I I'm really curious.

[00:10:02] It made me so salty. Like I was so salty.

[00:10:07] **Suriya:** Just literally just so bad, just sprinkled every

[00:10:14] You know what I mean? Sitting in my bed scouting, that's all I did, but you know, what is is fine. And I feel like there's a book that I read by code CareWork, dreaming, disability justice. And in the beginning of the book, Leah says, you know, yes, disabled people are angry. Why wouldn't we read? Should, I mean, you haven't been in.

[00:10:35] You ever have a code? Think about how pissed you are off you are. If you have a cold and you caught different, it's very, very irritating. And then if somebody's constantly telling you to not have the code and imagine having to code all the time, you know what I mean? So I feel empowered in this moment that we're sharing that in the sense of, I think it's okay to be angry.

[00:10:55] I think it's okay to be pissed off. And I think what I was when I was thinking about us having this conversation today was it was also about. The idea of what happens when that's in your community that you fought was the safe space. Do you know what I mean? That's, that's the challenge because it's like, I have people who I consider good friends calling me saying, you know, my own mom called me and said, it's the fatigue.

[00:11:23] Uh, okay. And even the conversation is like, it was like we were having the conversation for the first time. Cause I was, I think that my. I say, I talk about the fatigue because I feel like potentially it's become a buzzword that people hear and nursing. And also, because it's one of my biggest challenges, right.

[00:11:43] I have internalized ableism about, but also one of my biggest symptoms of my, my conditioner and because, and because in the sense of the reason why it's sparks my embolism the most is because it's like, come on, man.

You're just tired. Like get off, like drink some green tea or do like do this and that.

[00:12:02] And then you'll just be fine again. And actually, you know, we know that fatigue is not tiredness, fatigue, because you know, it's, it's your, it's your kind of body, your organs, your cells, everything has been like, you need to rush. You can't think straight, you can't focus on so many things that are affected by.

[00:12:20] So also I find that really difficult to communicate because I think people do confuse fatigue and tiredness with, so I think they think we'll just get some more sleep or you have a real tired or, I mean, and then also, so, and because that's a constant challenge for me, it's like, It's, you know, it's the one, it's the thing that's chronically there.

[00:12:43] So it's, so it was the, it was the biggest slap, you know what I mean? When people start talking about long COVID and dah, dah, dah, and I said, well, some of us have been living with those symptoms for a long time and I'm not trying to say, oh, me first. Like, it's just the challenge of it all is complex. And I feel.

[00:13:02] **Tobi:** I just can relate so much sometimes I'm just like, I'm just going to listen to everything that you're saying and just nod because yes, I have nerve bottles. No, just yes, because I, I don't know. I don't know that I don't know that I will ever be in a place where I won't have to like, try to explain something about my illness to somebody just to, just to make them see me fully and to not try and explain a way something else about me.

[00:13:30] Um, and for that I'm frustrated. And for that, I encourage us as sick babes to be enraged and to hold space for it and to like let it out. And once it, because there's nowhere else to do it because nobody else is going to understand, they're going to think on. And like, you know, you're not being empathetic.

[00:13:48] It's like, okay, well, what about me? What about my other people, myself? What about all the time that I'm spending, like trying to unlearn all this, like internalize. Yeah, but I don't even know what the word is for the ways in which I can get ourselves into feeling like we have to do certain things, even when our body is saying no, because we feel responsible to the people around us.

[00:14:08] But we ultimately know that the only people who can, can have us are actual allies and other disabled people. Um, and there's such a, like it's tiring. And you were saying the thing about safe spaces before, and my like, My soothing or my help has been accepting that there is no safe space. Like it doesn't, it's not real, it doesn't exist.

[00:14:35] Like the only thing, like they're safest spaces, like the spaces where like, you know, that people are putting in the work, but at the end of the day, because as humans, everything is so complex and you're so multi, multi, like, multiplicitous, I don't even know if that's a word, but like there's so many. You know, parts to us that you don't know, you're walking through the door might trigger someone and you haven't even done anything yet.

[00:14:57] So the idea of safe space already gone. So in, in thinking about that and accepting that there are no safe spaces, it made me have to then consider what do I need for my own safe space? Like what do, what do I need for the space to feel safe for me? Like how do I ensure that I'm held, even when people don't know how to hold me and like asking myself that question is my own way of like creating safety for myself in a world that is.

[00:15:25] I don't think in my lifetime, it's going to be safe. Right. For me as a black person's need for, as a person who has an agenda for me as a single parent, like all the other things from you as a queer person, etc. Etc. I, yeah. And so I, I'm just, I'm very like, enthusiastic about having that conversation and like posing that question in spaces with other people who want to like, actually really think about it.

[00:15:49] And be held through that thought process and be supported whilst they figure it out. And to know that, you know, we have some kind of online in a world that doesn't give us that, like, you think you don't get that in school. We can't get that from our parents or our family if we have them, because most times they don't even have that language, you know, because like you were saying earlier, like we're just learning it now.

[00:16:10] And it's a lot of work. Yeah. I'm all about just accepting that, you know, if you don't seem five months and you, and I say, I'm in my house, you should say, I'm very proud of you. I'm very happy that you're

[00:16:21] **Suriya:** arresting. Yeah. This is what it is. It's like, I really love what you said about. We, you know, giving ourselves space to be enraged and the acceptance that there's probably only going to be a few people in your life who truly understand it.

[00:16:38] And it is true. Cause I ha you know, I have my sick friends who, who I'd text and say, I'm just so angry at this. And they don't try and pacify me. They don't try and say, you know, because it's also the acceptance of a constant grief, isn't it? It's like, there's not, there's no way to, I think a lot of the people are so.

[00:16:57] Obviously the whole world is built in binarys, but in the sense of sickness, I think if you haven't been sick or chronically ill, you really are still in that mentality of like, you're sick until you're. Well again, or if you're sick, you need to make yourself well, or what can you do to make yourself better?

[00:17:15] And the truth is that those of us who have got chronic physical disabilities, It's never, it's not going to get better. We'll get more manageable, potentially manageable. You'll find different ways to manage it. Or it's not about me trying to shift and shape myself into, well, hold me. It's about me finding ways to hold myself.

[00:17:39] Like you were saying by thinking all the time, what makes the isolation feel even further? Is is someone saying, oh, that's, that's really shit. What can you do to change that? And it's like, nothing. That's the whole point. So now the conversation is like, is it something that, um, uh, SquadCast I was listening to by Bernay brown, where she talks about the difference between empathy and sympathy.

[00:18:06] And she spoke about the idea of what does it feel like if someone says to you. Oh, you say I'm having this really hard time and someone says, oh, that's, that's really, that sounds really bad. And I've got so much sympathy for you or how does it sound when someone says like, Wow. Like, I don't get that, but I want to hear what you've got to stay and let me know, let me listen to it.

[00:18:36] And I'm feeling that that must be really, really shit for you. I think the fact that sympathy is like distancing. Isn't it? It's like, I feel really sorry for you. I feel sorry with you. I mean, I'm feeling with you and a lot of people will relate to us with sympathy of like, oh, I'm glad I don't have. Yeah.

[00:18:57] Wow.

[00:19:00] **Tobi:** Oh my God. That's so much to deal with. Wow. I'm so sorry, but wow. I can't even imagine. I can't imagine that. Why don't you say, we're not asking you to imagine him asking you to hear what we you're experiencing and just hold space for it and let us grieve. Let us grieve the grief that we're going to be constantly grieving for the duration of illness, which is probably the duration of our lifetime.

[00:19:27] Like when not so much.

[00:19:31] **Suriya:** It's, it's, uh, it's the reality of something I've had to kind of come to terms with.

[00:19:38] You know, even with you doing the doula work, it made me think about like deaf doulas, which is something that I'm really interested in as well. And I think if you haven't faced the truth about your mortality or like, you know, a lot of us have maybe had to have questions of death or significant reduced mobility and those kinds of things.

[00:19:59] Or death of a certain part of yourself. I think it's really, it's difficult for people to hold space for us. Isn't it? Because it's like, I then have to. If I, if I sit with you in your pain of illness, death, I also then have to think about what that might feel like for me, if I was in your position. And I don't want to look at that because that's not something that will happen to me.

[00:20:21] That's something that happens to other people over there and not me. So I don't want to get into that space with you because that means I have to accept it. And I think potentially that what's happening with COVID is you're seeing a lot of people realizing that they're like multiple beings. You know what I mean?

[00:20:34] Which is a brain thing. It's like, what, what did you think you were before? But to sit in the acceptance that you, your family, someone else could die is like a really hard feeling to feel. And so that's why I feel that people run away from us like, oh, scary. No, no, no, no. That is too scary for me to deal with.

[00:20:52] I don't want to have to think about me dying. I don't have to think about you dying. I don't want to have to think about you not being the person that you are right now in this moment. So I just think it's. It's just something that I've realized is that people want to, as soon as you talk about anything, they just, they feel afraid and want to run away from you.

[00:21:28] **Tobi:** I, uh, I want us to like, yeah, to, to move away from sympathy. Sympathy is boring, like empathy. So much more interesting, like is a much more like, you know, the connections or the roots, like just spreading out in the world. And if you don't want to do it, you just say, actually, I'm not interested in engaging with other human beings.

[00:21:54] **Suriya:** And connection with anyone. Like not real. Anyway, that would be so

[00:22:00] **Tobi:** helpful because then we wouldn't have to waste all this labor of like showing ourselves to you so that you can just like,

[00:22:08] **Suriya:** yeah, everyone, should you know that when you get to this traffic, like parties, like everyone should just wear a different, like, sticker to be like watching, showing real empathy and connection.

[00:22:18] Yeah. That's be good to like get different levels of ally badge for that as well. I'm a performative activity. I'm performing, I'm like she did with work. Like, you know what I mean, change it exactly. But it will be also helpful to me. I'm thinking of how I'm wondering if in the QC community that we might also still experience.

[00:22:39] Um, and just for anyone who's listening, QT pop suns for Macquarie. Trans intersex people of color. And sometimes I think people say QTP park. And what, what, how do you find that? Yeah, I say

[00:22:53] **Tobi:** this, I say QCV book. Um, so as queer trans intersex, black, um, people of color, but also there's also cutesy be pock as an Inquirer, queer trans intersex.

[00:23:05] Black indigenous and people of color. Um, so yeah, I guess it just depends on where in the world you are, but it's just the, everything. Often the queer trans intersex is more about like your racial, um, your racialization, as opposed to your, um, sexuality or your gender expression or anything like this.

[00:23:25] **Suriya:** Um, yeah.

[00:23:26] Yeah. So that's, um, W so purple rain collective. And I kind of had up a network called , which is a space for LGBT black and people of color. And I think we've spoken about also, still feeling isolation in those spaces as a disabled person, as a sick person. And I think, I wonder whether that has anything to do.

[00:23:50] You know how we go through this? We went, we went through the process of like, we got queer representation in film and media, but the queer person always died or the queer person is always unhappy. So I feel right now we've gone to that place of like, no, we, we can only talk about. We can, we only want to talk about this, the, the kind of positive sides of it, which is

obviously like, I love the idea of Joy's resistance and I love kind of all the kind of celebrity celebrate Taree areas of being a PC pop person.

[00:24:20] I think what's difficult is that if you're seen as somebody who was associated with. Darkness like, you know what I mean? And that is kind of like, but actually this is just the reality. So I wonder if people are unwilling to look in that space because of that. I don't know. That's just my, some of my thoughts.

[00:24:38] I wanted to know what you thought about that.

[00:24:41] **Tobi:** I don't know. I felt like, unfortunately, just because of the way that the world is set up, where people are nice people. So queer people who are also black or indigenous, or, you know, a person of color are experiencing even further. Marginalizations right. And so then when we come into these spaces where we're supposed to be like, you know, together, there is a lot of expectation that this space is going to be the thing that's going to, you know, hold you and all you want to cities.

[00:25:13] But then I think what is missing is that this place is, is trying to hold you and you know, or you and most prestigious, but then it's also holding. So many other people and their experiences and, and in, in that happening, there's people coming in with expectations and then like leaving with. I don't know, maybe sadness that they didn't have their visit conditions met, but then also like the reality that there are other people who exist inside of these communities that don't look like you actually, they have very different experiences of marginalization than you do.

[00:25:48] There's older people, there's younger people. As people, without parents, there's like disabled people and there's able boarding people. I feel like want to keep going because people, community should be doing a lot more work than they do, to be honest. Like most times I just see them showing up to things and I'm bored.

[00:26:04] I'm bored by it. I'm like, you shouldn't be the one asking like, Hey, how can I support you in this way? Like what can I do? Who is the one taking on the most labor here? And how can we make sure that that person is doing less labor? Because I have more physical nasty, and here is how I can do that. So like, I really think like the thing that's challenging and that people aren't doing is actually sitting with.

[00:26:26] Their privileges look like within their varying identities, to be able to know how they can then use the, I don't know, the sites that, that, you know,

those privileges to essentially, to, to bring about spaces that are safer for them and for other people, without it being that the labor was falling on the Mo most marginalized people who are the ones who are seeking new spaces so desperately that they're having to create it in the first place.

[00:26:53] So I'm really interested in those conversations. And I hope whoever's listening to this as like mini Winnie, like thinking about their privileges. Cause I, I do, I have to like every day, like I considered that like, as I'm moving through this flow, like as I'm in this space, like what, what is my positioning and what does that mean for how I should engage with this space?

[00:27:10] Like that, that question is very, very, very, very, very important. And I encourage all of us. Continue to like, make it a part of our everyday conversation and interaction with

[00:27:21] **Suriya:** ourselves. Right. And I think you just spoke about, I think you've mentioned before about being a single parent and also just people with, without parents.

[00:27:30] And I wonder, did you know if there was like another parent listening to this who has a chronic illness or a disability? Like what would be, what is your, what is your greatest learnings or. You know, what do you, I mean, I see the little video, your, your little one who is just seems like such a joy, and I'm sure there's challenges along with that, but like for you, like, what is the, because I just had.

[00:28:02] I know we've just said about like inspiration. We don't want to be an inspiration. I don't want to use that word, but I do have an awareness and an admiration for you as like, you know, being me being a chronically ill person. I just can imagine that I can feel the sense of well, how it might be challenging to look after also yourself and another little person.

[00:28:22] So I wondered if you had to meet. Words for anyone else. Like, I really appreciate

[00:28:28] **Tobi:** it. Like, I really appreciate it a lot. So like you saying that, because I think something that I didn't realize I was missing until people started telling me was like, just the affirmation of you're doing a good job as a parent, because especially as a single parent and queer, like I think at the beginning of this journey into like really like being a single parent.

[00:28:50] I felt a lot of guilt. Like there was a lot of guilt that, that was associated with it. And so for anybody who's listening to a single parent and who's like, honey, P L like, don't worry about the guilt is not going anywhere, but you don't have to carry it by yourself. Like, and also there's a lot of it that you actually just don't to carry a tool.

[00:29:08] Like you can only do so much as your body has capacity for. Your child is of you, whether you adopted them, whether you birth them, like they are, they are an extension of who you are and a lot of ways, and that's not to put pressure on your child, by the way. They have their own autonomy, then you should, you know, be encouraging that and letting them do what they want for their lives and just supporting that.

[00:29:28] But you are their main role model, right? So flips. If they're seeing you asking others for help us and people to support, you know, then they're going to be able to do that for them themselves. And they're not going to replicate the same cycles of like, no, I can do everything by myself and I don't need any help because we.

[00:29:44] Nobody can exist in this world without, without support. And for me, the biggest, biggest, biggest learning curve was to just learn, to accept, help, to be okay with that and to like sit with the guilt, let it be in my body. But then also accept that if somebody is reaching out and being like, Hey, I can offer you this.

[00:30:01] It's okay to say yes, it's okay to take that time off. It's okay to be by yourself for a moment. If, if you know, there's, there's somebody who's able to facilitate, facilitate that for you. And if there is. Then reach out. Like if you're listening to this podcast, that means that you have access to internet in some ways, right?

[00:30:18] In the so many forums and groups and social media pages that are so affirming and proper and collective inboxes, always open to any queer, disabled parents out there who are interested in like networking. So, um, I really think it's important to just remember that even though you are a single parent or anything, that you're a parent who's.

[00:30:40] You're not alone. Like there are other parents out there too who might be experiencing similar things or might be also looking for just an ear or. Yeah, somebody else to just affirm a family, what they're doing and who they are and a hairpin, or you're doing a great job, as long as you're respecting the autonomy of your child.

[00:31:03] **Suriya:** And I mean, from the little thing, the little videos that you've shared, if your little one, it just seems like they're like. Just, they seem amazing. Do you know what I mean? Obviously you're probably like I'm bias anyway, but just, I mean, what I've admired from the videos that you shared is like the way that you are able to have conversations with them or that they are able to express themselves to you and others.

[00:31:26] And that part of you accepting health has meant that they've got this really lovely community around them of lots of different like, like, you know, aunties and uncles and aunties and, you know, nonbinary. And our audience is like, do you know what I mean? And I think if it seems, it looks like the future of parenting to me.

[00:31:47] Do you know what I mean? In the sense of, it's not even if you're in a parent, you know, you're in a parenthood that has two parents is they'll need support, probably external soccer parents,

[00:31:58] **Tobi:** um, per parenting is the way. And like, I was always so desperately seeking other crap parents who were interested or other queer people who were interested.

[00:32:06] Learning what parenting looks like alongside me. Not necessarily to be like, I'm going to give you all my parents and jobs, but to be like, Hey, this is what I think about this. And this is the way that I'm doing this. What do you think? How would you have done it? And in doing that, and I guess learning all these new perspectives and new ways of, of loving, of caring of naturing, you know, and, and nurturing a child, you're also nurturing yourself.

[00:32:28] Um, like with the homeschooling thing, for instance, like at the beginning of locked down, I was like, I'm going to have to homeschool Gabby, a myself. This is so stressful. So many different topics. Like I have a background in biomedical science, but I was just like, I don't want Gabby to get sick of me. Like I'm already parenting them to then be teaching them as well as like looking after them.

[00:32:48] It might be much. So I reached out to everybody. Who CA who counts themselves as Gabby's parent, because Gabby has so many parents now because of the grandiosity, because people are like, yeah, like I'm never going to have a child, but Gabby is definitely my child. Like I'm going to look off to them and like, whatever they need and like I'm here for it.

[00:33:06] Um, so I, I feel really, really grateful. They have like 10, 10 different. 10 different parents who teach them 10 different topics. And then sometimes I get an hour off lost and learning. Um, and yeah, as much as I say, I'm a single parent, like Gabby has so many parents and it's really beautiful to watch. And I think people should, should encourage each other to co-parent.

[00:33:32] And if you have people with children in, in the, in, in your life, then maybe think about like how. You can engage with that. If you're interested in a way that is like within your own capacity as well, especially as queer people, because we also unique and so beautiful and like all of our experiences are our own experiences and the younger generation aren't going to get to experience that if you don't share it with them.

[00:33:57] Right. So. Yeah, I feel, I feel really grateful. I feel really glad to be a queer black person to be a queer black disabled person. Maybe I want to be this empathetic, this empathetic. If I was able bodied, who knows? I don't

[00:34:11] **Suriya:** believe that, but you know,

[00:34:18] it was so amazing to talk to you. Today, Toby. I felt like we've covered so much. And I feel really, even in myself, really inspired by the things that you've said. And actually, yeah, like the biggest thing I'm going to take away is about the whole idea of honoring your rage as a sick person, existing in an enabling capitalist society.

[00:34:40] Of course, we're going to feel angry. Of course, we're going to feel frustrated and bitter and salty and all the feelings that we can feel, and we shouldn't be allowed to. And actually that's part of the self-care as well.

[00:34:52] Wow. What a joy to be able to spend that time connected with Toby. I feel as a black queer disabled person, there's so many nuances that we share with each other and having an opportunity to affirm that and share those things and, um, speak in that way. Just feels like such an honor. Always every time it happens.

[00:35:13] So you can find out more about Toby on. That Instagram. So that is act Toby, add a buyer. So that is T O B I a D E B a J O. And they also are a part of the purple rain collective firms. Of course. Waste women, which is women with an X instead of an a. So please go and check out more about their work and some of the brilliant community, um, connectivity that they are creating.

[00:35:51] Sick bay was produced by. She wants a dog supported by contact data and arts council. England sound designed by the amazing Anyon Evans. Follow us on Instagram at sick bay pod. For more information.