



Jake 02:18

thank you, Ella, for coming on. And joining me on the podcast today really appreciate you taking the time. And I've been looking forward to this conversation for a while now. You've got a really interesting story. And you know, a lot of people may already be familiar with it, but are with you. But for those who aren't, I would appreciate if you could just start sort of as early as possible and talk about you know your story and some of the decisions you made along the way and where you are now and what you're doing.

Aella 02:46

Thank you for having me on. It is such a gigantic question. It's like telling me about every facet of everything.

Jake 02:53

Ideally, you take the full hour and I don't have to ask any more questions, and it's just super interesting.

Aella 02:58

Okay, I will try not to disappoint you, but I might need some help. Let's see. Yeah, I was born 1992 to a very excited person about Christianity. My dad is a professional evangelical person. He does defense of the Christian faith. And so when I was born, I think he was employed as an assistant pastor, but not doing very well with that, because he isn't like he doesn't have a great personality. And so my mom was also a stay at home housewife. So we were super conservative. And over my childhood, my dad, basically, like started up his company founded his own research ministry. And so my childhood was full of like, intellectual defenses of the Christian faith. I performed my first witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses at the age of seven when I asked them if they believe in the Trinity at a Taco Bell, and my parents are very proud of me. And yeah, our culture was super conservative, is like we're complementarianism we were into so like, wives are supposed to sort of stay at home be housewives. And the idea is you're kind of, like separate but equal. So our access to media was highly filtered. We had like a thing installed on the television that would delete scenes from movies that were too inappropriate. So like, for example, I watched the Titanic and I had no idea that the two main characters had sex or that there was that nude scene like people would reference scenes from the Titanic. I was so confused later on in life because I didn't even know anything had been deleted in the first place. They're homeschooled. Obviously, all of the people we talked to were homeschoolers. I memorized 800 verses over my childhood years of the Bible. It was just like an extremely religious, extremely traditional kind of environment. It's just the general overview of it. Which this is kind of

relevant because I I'm now a sex worker. So the contrast is the fun part. I got out of that I went to college, or I attempted to for a couple months, but I wasn't able to afford it. And that was when I lost my faith. And also had sex for the first time was very big. And sort of like the transfer to the outside world was really disorienting. Like I felt like, I'd come from a totally different culture from the people around me. But the people around me had no way of making sense of the culture I had been from, like, it wasn't like I was visually different. It wasn't like people could, like, look at me and be like, Oh, that's somebody from this culture, sort of, we know how to communicate like, what the cultural differences are. It was more like I just, I just like, didn't understand a lot of what people talked about. Because so much is informed by pop references or references to music or TV or celebrities or like memes that I just had no idea. It was like really baked into culture. Also school life, a lot of what people talk about when they're young adults is sort of Health School for them. And I just had no sense of like lockers, you know, like, like, break, what's the period, the period belt, like, this was stuff that totally went over my head. And I felt really isolated for quite some time. But anyway, I lost my face, which I can, okay, it's strange to have such an unformed like prompt where I'm like, kind of randomly thinking about memories and kind of talking about ones that pop into my head. But you did say that you prefer longer over shorter so I can try and give random details

Jake 06:36

that I did that I did. And I have a question maybe you can address as a little break I'll do talking for just a second was college always like an obvious thing that you thought or your parents thought you were going to do? Because to your point, like growing up homeschooled, you know, very sort of censored, what you could take in and learn and just a very different experience, going to college just sort of like, drops all the walls at once, it seems and you just are sort of thrown into this totally new and different environment where, you know, not everyone's similar, but on average, most of these kids probably weren't homeschooled, most of these kids probably didn't grow up with the religious sort of teachings that that you had received. So very different. I'm curious if that was like an obvious thing, or sort of a, you know, something that was controversial?

Aella 07:24

Yeah. I, we were very strongly prepped for college, we were there a lot of immunisation going on such as like, statistics, like 75% of all Christian kids who go to college lose their faith within two years or something like that. And so like, throughout our entire childhood was hammered into us, like

when you go to college, people are going to try and make you lose your faith. And you can't do that. So I think my parents felt relatively safe, and that it was prepped in me like pretty significantly. And I also was like, way more immersed in Christianity than a lot of other Christian kids were, especially once I went to public school. So I think my parents thought that afforded me some protection, it was expected that I would go to college, not like very strongly, but a little bit, it was sort of like, Oh, if you can, you can, you know, my younger two sisters, both have not gone to college either. And I couldn't go due to financial reasons, like my parents made too much money for me to qualify for financial aid. But they wouldn't help me financially for college whatsoever, because they had the philosophy of like, once your kid leaves home with you don't help them. And they also wouldn't cosign on any loans, so I couldn't get any loans. So that's why I couldn't actually serve, I will only go for a few months, and then they wanted the payment to be worked out. So that's why I got kicked out. But yeah, and the general mentality behind me going to college was, can I remember asking my mom at one point very directly, and like, why am I going to college if I'm just gonna stay at home and be a housewife? Like, what the fuck is the point? And she was like, well, you need to get educated that you can teach your kids so you can homeschool. Like, it's good to have a background to be a better teacher. And also, like, you're very likely to meet a husband. They're like a good Christian husband. And so like, Okay, I didn't really like see the point. But it's kind of what everybody did.

Jake 09:13

Yeah, it's interesting, because, you know, the rest of the background wasn't really following or having much regard for what everyone else did. But then college is sort of this traditional milestone and, you know, thing that people do, and I guess that makes sense, the reasoning, I was just curious, um, you know, it sort of seems like stepping outside of this world that you grew up in, and I'm going somewhere very different. And, you know, it seems like they prepped you for people trying to come in to drop your faith, and that obviously ended up coming to fruition sooner than later. It sounds like it sounds like you're getting into sort of how that happened or play down. I'd read a blog about it, but I'm curious to hear sort of the voiceover on what went down.

Aella 09:56

Yeah, I think I think they didn't expect and neither did I know The mechanism by which faith changes happen, at least in me. And I suspect this was common for a lot of other people too. Like, I think the idea was, Oh, if you know all of the arguments against Christianity, and you know all the answers, of

course, you're not going to be convinced of any of the arguments and you're going to hold on to your faith. I think they didn't anticipate the impact of just different culture. Like, when I was prepped for the world, I was told a lot of things like people who are not Christian are sinners, you can't really trust them as much. They're not like driven by grace. So you have to kind of be on guard around these people. It was very, like othering of them, despite a lot of lip service to the contrary. And so I went into it like, already other than myself, like, I was put in a dorm room with this other girl, and she was like, bisexual, and that was the first time I'd met anybody who was not straight, at least openly. And I was like, really horrified by it as like, Okay, I have to witness to this girl, maybe like, it'd be a good Christian example. But it was definitely like, Oh, she is of the other, she has been like CO opted by Satan. In some way. She's like, sinful and doesn't know it, you know, I have to save her. So very much the attitude. But I think overall, like long term exposure to people in college is sort of the attitude faded, like I became friends with people. And I kept like, regularly seeing people actually pretty similarly to the way that my Christian peers did it a lot of ways. And I think that sort of broke down some sort of deep, deep thing, like instead of becoming us versus them and become like, oh, like, they are one of me in some way. And I think that made it less terrifying to adopt a different perspective. I don't think this was conscious. I think this is extremely subconscious and happening in the background. I don't think I really formed this narrative about it until much later. But there was some way where, like, Christianity was tied to a lot of social survival things like if I wanted social acceptance, or, you know, a place to stay, or people to like me or to be loved, like I had to be Christian. And then once I had other people who weren't Christian, who I knew they would still, like, support me and love me, even if I lost my faith, I think that like allowed me to actually consider that maybe my faith was not true. Like I wasn't, I did not have that in my mental landscape whatsoever. Before that point. And so so once I hit that, and and then like, I ran into some problem about the Christian faith, which is like, you know, some inconsistency in the Bible that I hadn't heard before. The Christians, by the way, have like a decent response to but I hadn't heard that. And so once I ran into this inconsistency in the Bible, that plus the realization like if I lost my faith, that would be okay. That finally like switched me over. And within the span of like, 30 seconds by faith was gone. It was very terrifying.

Jake 12:44

Wow, yeah, it sounds like it was more of a, like a straw that broke the camel's back than anything else, where it wasn't probably this one counter argument that really was so mind blowing, versus just sort of the buildup and

the loss of this sort of us versus them. And realizing that there's sort of other options out there. And people seem to be fine, and kind of similar to you in many ways that sort of prepped you and then just the straw that broke the camel's back. Yeah, you lose, you lose your faith in college, and like get kicked out right after or how's that work?

Aella 13:21

Let me kicking out was due to the financial problems. I was only there for like three months. So I don't actually remember the timeline. But sometime in those three months, a very classic, you go to college, probably three months. It's probably near the end, because I think it took me quite some time. Actually, it might have been longer than that. Because I stayed with my boyfriend at the time who was in dorm I think after I got kicked out so. So it may have even been three months. But But yeah, so at that point, I was in northern Idaho. And I was like, Okay, I can't get educated, so I have to get a job. And I worked as a factory worker, which to me was great, because at the time I've been applying to like sewage sludge worker like that. That was what I was ready to do. I was like, anything it takes to feed me because at that point, I'm like, the best I could hope for was kind of being a housewife. And like, my mom's scope of life was really small. I just talked to her about talking to her about my finances today. And she was like, damn, when I was your age, like, I didn't think I would ever own a house. That was just not in the scope of what was possible. And that at that point, it was very similar. I was like, the best I can hope for my life is like maybe becoming like promoted a couple levels off of a gas store. Cashier worker like that was I didn't think I would ever do anything greater than that. So I applied the sludge stuff, because I was That's right. I've mentioned them. I was going hungry at that point. I remember like I moved into this house where I rented a room for a couple \$100 And I remember them showing me the fridge, like when they were showing me around the house and I was moving in. And I asked like, oh, Sara, how do you roommates treat each other's food? And they reassured me they're like, Oh, don't worry, nobody's gonna eat your food. But when I had actually been trying to ask is like, can I eat anybody else's food because I was so hungry. Anyway, so I got a job at the factory, which was many, many hours a week, I worked, had to wake up at like 4am, or something to go to work and went home after the sun went down because it was northern Idaho. It was really shitty, I drank a lot. But I've tried really, really hard to be happy. I was like, I'm glad I have a job that pays a little bit more than minimum wage. And they fed us lunch on Fridays, very nice. And then but on the weekend, somehow, I managed to like kind of do hobbyist photography. And I got hired eventually, by this like boudoir company. They fired me two weeks after that, but, but like that caused me to quit my

factory job when I went to the photography thing, and when they fired me, I just couldn't bring myself to go back to a factory job. I was like, I have to try something else, I have to try anything else. That I had some in savings at that point. So I went back to Boise and stayed at a friend's couch. And that's when I discovered camming being a, you could just like broadcast yourself online, show your boobs and make some money. And I was like, ah, that's incredible. I don't even have to wake up at 4am That's how it all started.

Jake 16:28

Yeah, it's interesting as an alternative to waking up at 4am. And working in a factory and like, just scraping by. I'm sure anything sounds pretty good. But um, I heard like a description you gave? Because, you know, you're like, I don't know, it just seems like apparent to me. And you know, even people listening, I think probably already get the gist. But especially reading some of your writing, like you're obviously just like, smart. And you know, just generically speaking, just, you know, smart. And so people wonder like, Okay, well, how does, like this smart person ended up, you know, working for a man in a factory, and then, you know, going and being a cam girl. But you talked about how like, you know, some people end up in the industry as sex workers, a number of people turn to the industry because they're already sort of on the outskirts of society. And I couldn't figure out, I couldn't figure out but it was just like sort of a last ditch effort of something to do that worked out. But then there's a whole nother category that's like, largely underrated or ignored of people who just realized that, like, they just sort of think about things differently. And they realized that this is actually like a pretty low time commitment, high, you know, highly compensated way to make some money. And it's like pretty reasonable from a certain angle. How did you think about it, like a bad time when it sounds like you were maybe more like in the former category, but more recently, like over the years? It sounds like you're definitely sort of in that latter category, if that makes sense.

Aella 18:08

Yeah, definitely. I mean, you're right. There's this sort of dichotomy, like people who get into it, because I have two people who get in it because they want to, in a sense, usually people who get into it because they want to, it's like they're in college that maybe their parents are paying for and they like, or they want some extra spending money, they start sex work, and then find out that it's paying them like a lot. And so they sort of keep going, and maybe they quit college, and maybe they created the sex work. And for me, this was not the case, I definitely entered sex work because I had to not

because I wanted to. But at that point, I was already pretty promiscuous. So it wasn't that hard. I think my like, upbringing around sex was pretty confusing, because it was like, as I mentioned, extremely repressive. I was told that I haven't had a vagina until like, age 11. And so when I lost my face, I was sort of like, okay, everything that I've been taught is a lie. Maybe? I don't know. So how do I go about doing things like sex, for example. And so I sort of reconstructed from first principles, and my first principles will is if it feels good, then I should do it. Right. So I just had sex with a bunch of people. I was just like, randomly approached men and be like, Would you like to engage in coitus? And then we would just bang, because that's just what I figured, like, Oh, it feels good. It feels nice. I'll just do this a lot. So I didn't really have the social conditioning in a sense, or like, I reset the social conditioning. And that's what made me like, pretty inclined to sex work, I think are like made me kind of adapt to it pretty well, because it's like, well, if I'll hold if all bets are off, like why not try this thing? And it's definitely pretty scary, though. I remember the first time I was, you know, pumped full of adrenaline and I had to drink a lot to be okay with it. That yeah, you're right. Over the years, it's gotten to the point where I could probably quit sex work and get sort of a normal job, but it's hard, right? Because like, I don't have an education. I haven't been like, I don't have experience working in companies like all of my experiences building my own business. by myself, and so there's not a lot of skills I have that seemed like directly transferable to a job where you sort of report to somebody else and work on a project that's not yours. So I don't actually know I, it's probably untrue. But if I quit sex work fully, that I would be sort of out on the street and unable to make money, but it really feels like that, it's always felt like that. I always feel like there's like nothing, no other option I have, although I did just get funded for a research institute. So I actually announced that I'm going to quit only fans for now. Or at least I'm taking a three month break from all the friends. And if the Research Institute is doing really well, then I'm just gonna stop. So I actually have managed to transfer out as of like, a couple weeks ago, which is pretty great.

Jake 20:43

Yeah, it's awesome. And congrats on on the research project. I guess I'm trying to like reconcile in my head, like, from sort of listening to you on other podcasts and reading some of your writing. It seemed to me that this, like, broader category of, you know, sex work, whether it's, you know, only fans or anything of the like, these were things that you sort of, it didn't seem like you were just doing them for the money. Like, I guess if money was not an issue, it seemed to me that you would maybe continue doing them for

not that the money wasn't part of it, like certainly is, you know, maybe the biggest part. But it sounded to me more now. Like, if money wasn't an issue for you, you wouldn't really be doing any of this stuff at all. Is that the case? Or it's hard to sort of say

Aella 21:36

that's currently the case? I don't, it's mostly just that I'm burned up is I've been doing it for so long. It's a decade like when I first started, it was genuinely fun. It was super creative, open atmosphere, I could, you know, broadcast anything I wanted. And I made up super crazy creative shows that have been lost a time, unfortunately. But I really poured my heart and soul into it. It was really fun. And the same was also when I started only fans, I was like, Oh, cool. There's like a new problem to solve. Like, I want to pour my soul into figuring out this system to make the maximum amount of money isn't the thing is like, once you figure it out, and it becomes rote, then it's no longer fun. So at this point, like I wouldn't be doing it if I weren't getting paid. But that's not to say that, like the initial stages, were not like pretty novel and awesome.

Jake 22:22

Yeah, no, that makes sense. And I understand like, you have quit before, at least for some period of time, right? I'd read that like that was you'd quit for a little bit to start a crypto project, which is more familiar probably. To my audience, who's listening. Can you tell us about you know what that was? How you got even, you know, exposed or involved in crypto in the first place. Just you know, it's sort of, there's already been a couple of, in your story, a couple of like, sort of untraditional transitions, I would say and then this one like slapped on top of it all. It's like well, okay, now she's doing a crypto ICO.

Aella 23:03

Yeah, yeah, it's, it's true. I've been in crypto for a while. At that point. I bought my first Bitcoin in 2014. Many of them because at that point, they were didn't cost anything. So I would always been a fit for business. I heard about it even when everybody else told me that I was insane for buying in. I was like, I don't care if I'm saying this is support to kind of feature that I want to see that because I'm like, pretty libertarian. I'm like, decentralized money. Absolutely. Fuck, yes. Anyway, so I ended up selling it when it hit 300. So I'm not like a multi millionaire. But yeah, so I've been in and out of crypto and around crypto for a long time. And I had a friend who was going to start an Ico thing. And he was basically like, I'll just I'll pay you if you quit sex work to go come do data here. And I was like,

Absolutely, yes, please. It didn't really matter to me so much what the ICO was, I just like, at that point, I was scamming at super super burned out I was desperate for anything else. So so that's when I went and joined this Ico which I kind of don't want to name because like it was not a great experience. Or not a great company either. I still like kind of it was for dating. It was like monetizing, dating on the blockchain. And some of the principles behind it are really cool. And I still stand by it. But the company was like, run by people who are very inexperienced at running companies. And so I dropped out of it, I think, under a year after that, and that's when I started escorting.

Jake 24:33

Okay, so escorting What can you tell me about that? What is I don't even know what exactly that means.

Aella 24:40

Yeah, having sex with people IRL, for cash. I was living in New York at the time because the ICO project had moved to New York. And that we were living in a big loft with only one room but six people very cramped. And I was not making enough money and I was like, hey, I want to go back into sex work. But I'm just I can't be camping anymore. I'm so burned out. So I talked to a friend who is an escort. And she gave me the lowdown of how to do it. And then I put in my ads, started a website, took some photographs, and then started seeing clients in New York. And I charged, I think I started out charging \$800 an hour, and then raised it to 1000, a couple of months later, and then a couple of months after that, raise it to 1200. So yeah, I would, they would email me and I would screen them. So like ask them information about themselves that makes it more safe, check them against blacklist, and I would meet up at a hotel with them. And then for us, typically, the equipment's around 1.2 to two hours. And then we would have sex, and I would leave with a bunch of money in my pocket. So it was really great.

Jake 25:41

So sounds like that was a welcome change from camping. And I'm not like I sort of have an idea of what camping is. But how did the experiences I guess, like compare and contrast for you? It sounds like, yeah, the same industry, but very different day to day.

Aella 25:58

Yeah, absolutely. I personally preferred escorting of all of the forms of sex work I've done escorting is the best for me. In addition, the way like the work feels, because camming them which for those unfamiliar, it's like you

broadcast a webcam. And there's like a chat box next to you. It's like, when you're watching porn sites, and there's a pop up being like, come chat with me live, like that's typically a campsite. And this is very asymmetrical. So it's like one too many. And you have to sort of appeal constantly to the lowest common denominator, the most like generic form of appeal. And you have to do things like set them against each other for competitions. It's very like it sort of depersonalized in a way. And it's totally the opposite with escorting, that's where you meet a person, you're one on one with them. And your job is seduced like this human being and then you have sex with like this one person. And it feels so much better and healthier. And I like it so much more like I was able to get like way stronger, like emotional hits out of that. Like, I really liked a lot of my clients, and it was actually pleasurable to see them in a way that just wasn't possible with camping. I still liked a lot of my Canon clients, but like, there was no way to bond with them that like that. Because it was you always have to be handling the rest of the room too.

Jake 27:17

Right. So last question on on this subject, I think at least so where did you sort of land like where are you? I guess how many years ago was this that you were doing the escorting in New York and then you know, you don't have to walk through like the whole timeline. But just I'm curious where you landed now in terms of like I know open with only fans is sort of a new platform. What like format did you sort of Landreth and I guess why?

Aella 27:45

Yeah, I did I started escorting in late 2018 And then I started only fans around and COVID hit I think April of 2020 So as for for like a year and a half or so two year two years ish. And then then I COVID hit and then like people just weren't seeing people anymore and like the business was really slowing down. And then some of my old camera friends were like hey, only fans is popping off people are making a lot of money here. So switched back over to only fans and then made 13 grand my first month and then like 50 grand my second month and then by third month was 100 grand that I made 100 grand for the next three months in a row. So after that that was the fun part that was the the we money obsession.

Jake 28:30

Yeah, I mean, that's like a lot of money for anyone doing anything. So I guess if you don't feel comfortable sort of stepping away and doing other things now is it do you maintain like a relatively high cost of living or you've just sort of gotten used to the money and like like to make a lot of

money? How do you think about that because some people and we'll get I want to also get into like the psychedelics BIIt seems unrelated, but I think down that path, you you talked about, like you know, having basically no desires like some people can sort of limit their desires especially like material desires or just comforts of living to sort of be happy and satisfied on like a relatively low spend you know, like digital nomads for example traveling the world like living in hostels, things like that. What's your like? How is your relationship with money changed over time from obviously you know, really struggling around the time of college to make 100 grand a month

Aella 29:32

it's a great question. I It's really weird. It's so weird health like fast your relationship to money changes once you get more of it. Like how quickly normalize I I'm not making that much anymore. I made 100 grand for three months so then rapidly dropped off after that just because I couldn't force myself to do to do all the routine stuff anymore. So I'm not like a I'm not super rich as a lot of people seem to think that I am taxes. are super high, especially when you're self employed. And I was living in California at the time. So it was just, excuse me, I saved most of what I got anyway, or at least like 30%, or something. My standard of living right now it's not super high, it's like, definitely higher compared to where I was from Idaho. But like, if I didn't earn any money, and I just lived, I could probably make it like another five years pretty easily. So I'm not like burning through cash like crazy right now. But it's really strange, like, especially when I go back and visit my parents, like really differing attitudes towards money, because I make so much more than my parents do. And so it's like, weird to be like the rich person in the family. Rich, you know. But Kryptos also helped a lot. I've been investing in crypto over the last few years. So it's just been, like a really good idea.

Jake 30:54

Yeah, that's worked out pretty well. And it's interesting, your response is like, not really what I expected. In regards to like, you know, a five year runway, that's actually like a really long runway, and I imagine your cost of living, you know, \$100,000, like you said, with taxes, there's only for a few months, you're making less subsequently, like, it's not that much money after taxes and everything to have a five year runway. You know, you're it sounds like you are saving a lot, obviously, you're investing crypto certainly helps. But with that runway, like, have you ever, I swear I'm not trying to like convince you to quit or anything, I think you should do what you want to do. But I'm just curious if you've considered like, taking time and just, you know, I know like you have a company now I think the company is just the not

just but you know, you're working on the car game, right? I imagine it's not like a crazy amount of input in terms of your time. Have you considered sort of just like dropping everything, letting yourself have a ton of free time and, you know, figuring out what you want to do next, or you feel like you're already sort of past that, and wouldn't gain a lot from that sort of, like gap year or gap period type of experience?

Aella 32:08

No, you're I think that's good advice. I think like, I'm sort of afraid of it. Like, I'm afraid, cuz, like, I think a lot of my friends, like, for example, are programmers. And so if they take a year off, and then they need money, again, they can pretty easily go get a programming job. And for me, the thing is, if I want to come back, I have to do sex work again. And it's like, like, I'm getting older, you know, I taking a year off. Is it scary? I feel like I'm supposed to do it. All right now, I'm turning 30 soon. And like, income really starts dropping around 35. So it's like, do I really want to take the one out of five years off? So that sort of thing has been really scary. For me. I feel like very much time pressure. But I think you're right, like, I think at this point, maybe I should just trust it, which is why I I am actually taking the break now from only fans like possibly quitting permanently, because I got funding for that research institute. So it depends if I can continue to get funding. I would love I would love to just be a researcher. That's my dream my whole life. I just wanted to sit at research all day, every day. But if we might be that direction, I should probably just like trust in the process more. Hmm.

Jake 33:18

Yeah. I mean, like, I appreciate your sort of openness. The question I myself, like have experienced a couple of times first in college, and then my first job out of college is quitting without nest, well, the first time I left to try to start a company the second time I quit just knowing that what I was doing wasn't for me and not knowing what was next and both times. And the super beneficially, for me, at least from my own perspective, looking back, of course, you can never know how things might have gone had I stayed on those tracks. But um, I mean, I think you're, you might be underrating yourself a good deal, like I could, you know, I think you're you might be overweight, not to be critical, or whatever. But like, maybe overrating certain, like experience and expertise within industry and positions. Like, I'm sure you could do like a ton of things. One of which I imagine could be like helping companies. You know, maybe even crypto companies like build their brands, You've obviously done like a tremendous job of this. And it's been sort of, you know, only fans oriented or whatever, but you've got like a



ton of following on Twitter. You know, from my perspective, you could do basically anything you want. But it sounds like the thing that you want to do most is research. Can you talk more a bit about the project that you got funded and what you have to do there?

Aella 34:33

Hmm. First of all, like thanks for that, it's it's useful to hear that I think like I have some sort of cultural disconnect from people who work in mainstream jobs, then that sort of lack of knowledge sort of makes me think like, I just don't know how to do anything because it's just so I don't know what the norms are for that sort of world in ways that like maybe are hard to predict, because like most people in that world, like sort of take a lot of knowledge for granted. But you So with my current research, I'm looking at sexual fetishes I got funded to study sexual fetishes and published about them. There's so much just to learn about them. I have so many questions. I've done like some preliminary surveys, just like cause more questions. Because the current state of sex research in academia, from what I understand talking to people in academia is absolute shit. Like nobody can research anything, because you have to get Board approval. And I don't have those kinds of stipulations, I have a lot more freedom, and I have fucking gigantic sample sizes. So I'm really excited about it.

Jake 35:37

So how does this like come from, you know, connect this back to what I see you like doing on Twitter? I think you're serving them via other formats as well. You're doing like a lot of polls. I think it's interesting. Like I've, I've done a few polls on Twitter or you know, several dozens, whatever it might be over the last couple of years, I've been on Twitter. And like the functionality to me, like I haven't really, it's just sort of interesting to me to do once in a while. But it's relatively like, there's not a whole lot you can do with the Twitter poll, at least from my perspective, but I've seen you doing like quite a bit like, you know, step one, I think of what what I've seen you do that I haven't really thought to do is like these two part polls where you're then sort of, like, you know, correlating things, or whatnot. But how do you sort of approach polling on Twitter, I guess, where do you start doing that in the first place? Like, where did that motivation come from? and translate that to sort of this, you know, next step professionalized like research project?

Aella 36:38

Your Twitter posts are great. I think they get a bad rap. Because people are like, Oh, Twitter Polls are not scientific. I feel like there's this whole,

like aesthetic around science. And if you don't match the scientists that it couldn't people are like, Oh, that's not valid, or that's not scientific without like, deeply understanding why, like, I think like, Twitter Polls are a lot more scientific, quote, unquote, than a lot of things that are published in academic journals, which is absolutely ridiculous. But with Twitter, you can do a lot of things to check. Like, for example, I do, I repeat polls over years to see how things are changing and to see sort of how stable things are. Like sometimes I retweet polls that I would expect to remain stable like, like do you like do would you rather lose the ability to sing or to swear, for example. And so you can see, like, how, how reliable Twitter Polls are across time, or how much is due to noise? I wish you can do like statistical analysis on that. But besides that, you can do things like sometimes I ask people, for example, like, what what are you on the right or left politically and people answer? And so I can see that total percentage, and then I'll wait a while. And then I'll ask another poll that split, it'll be like, What is your political orientation? Right or left? And then like, do you support you know, XYZ? And then have people answer that? And so I can see the the change in what people are reporting right or left, once combined with another question that they know is leading. So I can see how much people are, like faking their answers, basically. So there's like ways to do tests in Twitter itself to like, determine how reliable certain factors are. So I like doing a lot of that stuff to sort of know. But regardless, I do have a pretty skewed audience. Like they're mostly male, mostly in STEM, for example, the kind of people who follow via Twitter, not representative, the general population I off so I use the typically to sort of get a sense of things I want to dig into deeper. Like, for example, I found when my most significant correlation that I found in a Twitter poll is a relationship between anxiety and if you have IBS, which is I out of all the polls that I've done, I've done polls, where it's like, Are you male or female? Like would you fuck a stranger and like, it's a greater result from that is the IBS and anxiety one. So anyway, it even if it's like, not, like a full, it has its limitations, you can still use it as like really interesting pointers if you want to do a more full fledged survey. And then I do occasionally read run, like much more full fledged surveys, typically really heavily informed by the Twitter polls that I've been doing.

Jake 39:10

And do you that that's really interesting. And by the way, when I said like Twitter polls, you know, how much can I do with them? I think the number one sort of drawback that was in my mind was basically, like what you said, you know, your audience isn't representative of like a general, a larger audience, like you can't really extrapolate extrapolate the results that

they're not necessarily representative of like any particular audience that you can define. And for me, it's even more extreme, because it's a much smaller audience. And like, I think he said, You know, one thing we might have in common between our audiences besides maybe a crypto edge is, you know, it's just like such a large percentage. That's male. And that like, sort of, I mean, that's fine. Like you can just assume that the surveys are for like all males or something. But I just feel that the audience is so specific, like given just how big the internet is like these couple of 1000 people sort of landed on my page that it's so specific as to be almost not just not really, the results aren't really useful, I suppose. But maybe when you get up to like, the numbers where you're at, you're it sounds like you're finding some some interesting results. And you've sort of come up with these principles. You know, I call them to try to sort of hack the system a little bit like, you know, asking, you mentioned, like, on the left or on the right, and then a couple of weeks later asking a question with that as a part of it and seeing people change their answers. I think that's pretty interesting. Do you have any other like, sort of tools up your sleeve that you've discovered, over your time doing this that are things that are just like regularly top of mind as you're creating these polls, in terms of like how to make things more effective, or uncover interesting results, things like that?

Aella 40:58

Yeah. One thing is like, like reducing trolling is really fun. Because Twitter Polls are super easily trouble. People pick things that they don't believe, but you can reduce it, or you can test the magnetron. Like, I have a series of polls that I do sometimes, where it's like asking people, What is two plus two? And then I have the answers. And then I ask people like what is like two plus two times eight, and then I suddenly have like an increasing complexity of the math problem. And then the the troll answers like, it gets more correct, the more complex the math problem, which is really funny, which means that like people sort of are answering as signalling, like they're clicking the answer based on how much like they get to represent their identity in the response. So like, if it's two plus two, they're not like if they know that everybody knows that they know that it's for, so that there's nothing lost in selecting big five. But as soon as there might be something lost in selecting five, then the accuracy of the answers or like, at least people's attempted, like accuracy for self reporting really goes up. So I tend to trust polls a lot more, but it has something at stake for somebody's personal identity, when they're answering. But if there's nothing at stake, like if they lose nothing by people thinking of them as somebody who answers a wrong answer, then we have like a significantly greater control response. And then Then what if I bring those particular troll response? Vulnerable



questions into a larger survey, then I do like, like, greater details to try and prevent it like, like, having deliberately confusing or sorry, contradicting questions that if they answer, you know, opposite ways on them, that I delete their answers, that sort of thing.

Jake 42:38

Yeah, that's, that's a really interesting point. And I think like, a lot of these insights you're having around polling are pretty, I don't know, if you like, sort of formally study, like surveying or like, I think you'd spend some time in statistics, but some of these observations are, like, not obvious to me at all. And then when you say them, though, they make like a ton of sense. What areas within research, not like formal areas, necessarily, but just like, interests? Are you most, I guess, do you find yourself now most exploring, and sort of, if you could just do whatever you want and have like the perfect audience and all the funding and everything you need? What are like the most interesting areas for you to, you know, do these surveys and do research on

Aella 43:27

the perfect eyes everything? Because that's such a huge question. And I'm not doing a ton of like, right now, I'm mostly getting tutored in statistics. Like, just knowing how to interpret data better, and like, how to control for things and whatnot. But I don't really study things beyond that, which like might be a flaw. But for what I want to study, like I mentioned, sexual fetishes, I really want to know where things come from, is a big one. I also want to know a lot about like relationships and polyamory and monogamy and relationship length, and like the kinds of things that happened that caused greater relationship length. That's like a little bit of a side project right now. But there's so many other things like I'm also really interested in, like the kinds of things that cause trying to think of like a more charitable, Turman woke, but like, the, like, the really aggressive ideology that some extreme left people tend to have. I'm really curious about, like, what corresponds with that, like, and how people's behaviors and mentalities around that change, if you like, change the variables. I'm also curious about how it differs from the kind of extreme ideology on the right. Like what kinds of things are they thinking that are very different in which ways or they're very similar? So those are probably the three main topics I'm most interested in.

Jake 44:43

That's it's definitely an interesting set of areas and very diverse but I like I've already just been like looking through your Twitter Polls here and

there like I see results that are really surprising to me. And I think that alone makes for sort of like an interesting like, if You can get a really interesting result that's super unexpected. It seems that you're asking an interesting question to me, at least I don't know, like, even I feel like I don't have to be that interested in the subject. Where, you know, if you can just like surprise me, with some feedback from a reasonably large audience, then like, that, in and of itself is interesting, sort of, regardless of the subject. So we'd certainly be curious to, you know, follow what you're doing in all of these areas. I want to I know, we've, we've been on for a while now. And, you know, I won't spend too much longer, but I do want to touch a bit on your experience with psychedelics, because I thought your writing on it was like, really exceptional. And like, it just was really interesting to read. Basically, you correct me if I'm wrong on this, but you had spent like 10 months. And maybe you could place this in time, because I'm not sure exactly where it was, over your sort of story that you've told so far. But you spent like 10 months, doing pretty high doses of LSD for like, on a weekly basis, I think, and wrote about that experience, and like coming out of it. And I guess, you know, that's place to start, like, I read the thing, so I sort of have the background, but for those who don't, maybe you could just sort of give the quick voiceover. And then I have like a couple of questions based on what you wrote, and maybe what you say here that I think would just be interesting to hear your response to. Sure.

Aella 46:30

Um, as a general overview, when I was 22, I did acid, I had a really, really great time. And then I was like, Maybe I should do more acid. And then I just kept doing acid. There's on average, once a week, like sometimes it was multiple times, like a couple days apart, sometimes it was like two weeks apart, but roughly, it was around 40 times. And I definitely experienced a pretty severe change over the course of those 10 months. I like the first part was pretty vibrant. Like I produced a huge amount of art. It was very sort of active and invigorating. It made me like engage with the world more they become become like pretty Evangelical, I consider a slight evangelical stage, where I wanted to tell everybody about psychedelics, like we should dose the water supply with psychedelics. And then over time, like it just kept. It was like a process of deconstruction, right. And so like, the first part to go was sort of, like a lot of norms I had about the world and society and reality in my mind. And once those norms were gone, I had sort of the next layer down, which I was very excited and evangelical about which is like, oh, you know, art, and we are all one and all this stuff. But then like that sort of also got distracted, kind of deconstructed, and then things started getting a lot weirder. A lot more unrealistic, or unreal. And then by

the end of it, it was like, I was felt like I was tripping. Even when I wasn't like when I wasn't on acid, it was still, I was like, I was still in that water. Anyway, and it became like pretty non functional. I was camping at the time, but I like I gradually just stopped camping because like, looks like I don't want to do camping. Why should I do it, it just doesn't feel good to do in that moment. And I was totally at peace with it. I sort of felt like I was dead. I felt like I was in a waking dream at all times. It was awesome. It might sound a little weird when I talk about it. But I think about that state with like a great deal of, of love. I think I'm

Jake 48:34
so good

Aella 48:37
at. And then eventually, when I realized that if I kept doing LSD, I would probably physically die. Like if the path that I was going down was one of sort of very intense and action. And I was like, Okay, I might become a homeless person on the street just cold and freezing to death. Because I just am not moving anymore. And I was totally okay with that. I was like, Yeah, could be a homeless person. Freezing to death on the streets. But some part of me was like, I don't think I feel like dying. So maybe we should stop. I don't know. So I just kind of stopped doing LSD and it took me about another month to return to roughly normal.

Jake 49:21
Yeah, it's interesting. I sort of would have expected it, it might have taken longer than a month to, to sort of come back from that. Obviously not.

Aella 49:30
I got 10 months to come back from it. Sorry if I misspoke.

Jake 49:33
Oh, 10 months. Okay, that sounds more reasonable. So the couple of interesting things. Well, one of the things you just said actually was like, you know, I might not be quoting you exactly. But it was like, you know, he basically said I felt like I was dead. I felt like every day was like sort of a waking dream. It was awesome. Like that's not really what you expect the third line to be after the first two. And I understand like probably hard to describe but relates to something that I had seen that you'd written, which was that, like, you know, you're free of desire and like everyone connects that with not everyone, but you know, people connect that with like the Buddha thing where it's like, all might be misquoting this, but like all

suffering is desire. sort of known that, like, you know, if you don't really want anything, then it's like pretty hard to be unhappy, in a way. But then you also said, like, you didn't have any fear of death. And it started to sound like, you know, and now you're saying, like, after several months of this, you start to, like, feel dead. It sounds like you're almost connecting this because like, it's not like, you're just going into these chips and like, feeling dead, like you're going into these chips. And they're like, super mind blowing, and, you know, just indescribable, I imagine, and like, you know, just using language or whatever. So, like, they're very, like, lively, I guess, experiences, but then you somehow start to feel like dead. And it connected for me, like, it sounds like sort of this understanding somehow leaves you feeling like universal in a way, like you get separated from your ego or whatever. But also dead, I guess I just, it's hard to understand that, can you speak to that at all, or it's not really make sense.

Aella 51:20

There's, there's a way in which, like, you are your body, obviously. But you don't feel like your body, like, I don't feel like I'm doing my digestion, it's not a conscious process. And I don't associate with my ego. And so there's a way where like, a lot of my conscious processes sort of got converted from being like a thought that I'm thinking to something like digestion, where it sort of like I am not performing that thought, I'm sort of noticing that that thought gets performed kind of in the way that I noticed food gets digested. And that was just cool. Like, it still happens. It's still part of me, but I'm no longer associated with it. And so like the turn that knob up, like really far, and then you sort of becomes like, all of your experience, like no longer is you? And if it's no longer you, like, what are you? And so like being dead, in a way, sort of means that like, the thing that that you used to identify as you is now suddenly your body like it's dead in the way that your digestion is dead, or like other people are dead to you, like you are not experiencing their experience in that sort of way. And so in that, I was like, who am I, I cannot find myself, I would like look for the thing that was, that was like the meat, the ego, that identity, and it was just like sand that would fall through my fingers. And I'd be like, Oh, I there's nothing here. I must be dead. I'm using the word a little bit poetically. I don't mean literally, like I am beyond the grave. But rather that it was like, How do I convey this sensation that the thing that used to be here no longer is, I know that I'm acting and moving and speaking, might be similar to what people talk about, like, like the peace, zombie conception, like if somebody could be there and talking, but like, there's no conscious experience, except I was deeply conscious, like, I was very aware

of what was going on, just that I was not there to be aware of it. If that makes sense. There's a little bit of nonsense, but

Jake 53:12

oh, yeah, I think I follow it's like a useful description. Certainly changes like how I was thinking about you using the word death a little bit. It's almost like, you know, I think there's a lot of value to, especially for people who are like, very emotional, to sort of remove yourself from that and be like, you know, instead of I am angry, it's like, I'm feeling anger or whatever, I forget what the exact like turn of phrase is, but you just sort of disassociate from what's like consuming you and look at things from like a third party perspective. And I think that's really useful in a lot of cases. And it sounds like this was somewhat that like, to the very extreme, where you just, like, sort of stop viewing things as yourself in a way.

Aella 53:55

Yeah, there's some way where, like, there's often a little bit of a misconception that goes on not that you're doing it but that it's like, often done where, like, the disassociation is associated with like, not feeling the thing, which was absolutely not what was going on. I was feeling extremely intensely everything like including pain, like this was not a way of not feeling pain, right. Like I was in pretty intense agony for quite a lot of it. So it definitely was it was disassociation in a sense, but also it was very intense.

Jake 54:26

During during the trip or in between you're feeling like these overwhelming senses,

Aella 54:32

both

Jake 54:33

so the during sort of what's the word emphasizes like the in between, in a way like it sort of spills out a little bit, or is that not right?

Aella 54:45

Yeah, I'm not really sure. I just knew that like I would take the drug and have a trip. And I was sort of come down and then just sort of there was still some of it in me like they the first time I tripped it was like, sort of my brain opened up like, you know, a pupil dilating. And I was like, Ah, so much information. And then you know, you come down in the people squint



back, and then you kind of forget about it, it's like waking up from a dream, like the information is sort of lost in, you know that there was something important there. But it's kind of gone. But he may be remember a little bit. And so for me, it was like, I want to go back and remember more. So I would do it again, everything would dilate, and it would come back. And I would maybe have taken back like one more person. And so I was like, I just want to take back more. And so like, after many, many trips, like, at that point, I had just taken back a lot, like managed to somehow pull a lot of that experience into my waking life. And so that's, that's how I think it bled over.

Jake 55:38

And then so like, 10 months into this, or so you decide, like, you know, you're feeling dead, it's awesome. But you want to, you know, the cool, I think from your your writing was, I wanted to stop knowing you wanted to sort of, you know, come back, I guess for layman's term. And I guess, I don't know if it was obvious to you at the time, but like, just for outsiders sort of hearing the story, it wouldn't be obvious to me that at that point, you would be sort of capable of like, coming back and sort of change, not changing your mind. But like, well, maybe literally changing your mind. But like coming back to a place where you are like, you know, sort of identify, like, whatever it was that we just described, you're not in that place anymore. You're closer to where you were before you started tripping. I guess you described the decision, like it sort of maybe didn't even seem like a big deal at that time. But the journey coming back over the next 10 months, like how is that? How is that sort of gradually coming back from this sort of altered state that you were living in for a while?

Aella 56:47

Yeah, the decision itself was really interesting. And I feel like that's like maybe the one thing I don't fully understand. It feels like it happened to me, it feels like I didn't make a decision. It felt like it was inevitable. Like, it was like an inevitable part of that journey, that once you hit a certain point, you just go back is kind of the way that I process it now. So I hit the point. And I just went back. And the journey back was really hard. Like, I decided like, okay, if I'm going to live, then I need to stop knowing what it is that I am. And I feel like, like body sensations talking about this right now. So I tried like really actively to like create my ego again, and really attached to feelings of like anxiety, or insecurity, or jealousy, and all this stuff that is pretty classically associated with ego. And it felt great. It felt great. I was like, Ah, this means I'm alive. This feels I'm a person with like, opinions. Like I'm so concrete like I'm a I've a

character and the character is so fun to be in. And to some extent this, I still feel like this, I'm now like a pretty well formed character. Like it's been many years since that experience. And I do LSD maybe once or twice a year since then not very much to like, sort of keep the edge on right. This point, I feel very much like a pretty well formed character, I feel legitimate anxiety and anger and judgment of other people. But there's like a part of me here that I didn't have before, which is like a really deep delight in that. Before I did LSD, I felt all the same things, but there wasn't a delight in it. And now it's like, almost like a part of me is constantly choosing it like yes, this is the thing that I am and this is the thing that I want. And it's wonderful. Yeah,

Jake 58:34

I think that's awesome. And I think we'll end it there are actually, I sort of, I do want to comment on that, actually, because I think it's interesting, like, choosing can make a huge difference, even if the thing is sort of the same I feel and so, you know, if you sort of previously were just living because that's like the obvious thing to do, but then you went down this, you know, other path and chose to come back to where, you know, to, to not like tripping LSD all the time, and whatever sort of comes with that. And just by making the choice, it's like, if you're forget where I heard this analogy, or whatever, so credit where credit's due or whatever, but like, if you're forced to run, you know, a marathon or even further, whatever it might be, or else like you know, you like something bad happens, like you're threatened to do that, then like bad is like horrific. But people choose to run marathons all the time and describe it as like, the best thing they've ever done and you know, an awesome experience. And that just goes to show it's like the same exact experience in terms of what you're physically doing. But choosing to do it makes all the difference. And so I wonder if that's sort of a component for you where ever since that period of your life, you've sort of in the back of your head, you know that everything that happens you've sort of chosen to be around for it in a way if that makes Yeah,

Aella 1:00:00

yeah, it's a really lovely way of putting in, like even things that aren't strictly my choice like things other people do. And then I feel sad about it. Or like terrible things in the world like every experience that passes through my brain is my choice. Like it is by being here I am choosing to give life to it. And this great

Jake 1:00:22



awesome well, let's end there really, really interesting conversation. I really enjoyed it. I know a lot of other people listening are going to enjoy it. So I appreciate you coming on and then taking the time. Yep. Where can we find people who want to learn more from you and read your stuff and follow along your journey which I'm sure will continue to be very interesting from here. If if the past is any indication, where can they go and follow you? Online or otherwise?

Aella 1:00:51

Yeah, my Twitter is a liberal H E L L A underscore girl and my website is knowing less.com Like kn O W knowing less.com