

**Episode Title:** A MATTER OF LIFE AND NEAR DEATH

**Guest:** Nikki Boyer

**Episode Link:** <https://grownasswoman.guide/episode182/>

[00:00:00] **Jackie:** The last time Nikki Boyer and I spoke on the Grown-Ass Woman's Guide. It was March 11th, 2020.

We sat across from each other as we recorded a podcast at a restaurant in the LA area, with pretty much no idea that would not only be the last time we'd record in a public space, but none of us would be spending any time in any restaurant for a long, long time. That's episode number 62, by the way, which I will link to in the show notes. In that episode, Nikki talked about her podcast Dying for Sex. A show she hosted with her best friend, Molly, after Molly was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer.

When she was struck with that life-altering news, Molly decided to leave her unhappy marriage and embark on a series of sexual adventures to feel alive. After 12 million listens and a podcast of the year award, that show is something people are still talking about to this day.

It was during the recording of dying for sex that Nikki met a hospital chaplain named Peggy. I'm going to challenge you right here to think about this. What do you envision when I say Christian hospital chaplain? Because Peggy likely ain't it. Nikki and Peggy went on to form a friendship and now they host Near Death, a podcast that makes it easier, and dare I say entertaining to talk about death in a way that not only decreases fear, but inspires conversations that we all should be having. Don't believe me? Keep listening. You will fall in love with Nikki and her giant sunshiny, hilarious heart and her ability to navigate uncomfortable conversations in such a fresh, approachable way.

I'm a firm believer in like, listen to the universe, right? Watch what the universe is trying to tell you to do next. look at the opportunities. They're not always what you think. So a few years ago, you do a podcast, one of my favorite podcasts, Dying for Sex, about your best friend Molly. And now you're just like Creative Death.

[00:01:58] **Nikki:** Oh my God.

[00:01:59] **Jackie:** You've started your company Dying for Media.

[00:02:01] **Nikki:** Yes.

[00:02:02] **Jackie:** And now you're doing another podcast called Near Death.

[00:02:06] **Nikki:** Do you see the theme here?

[00:02:07] **Jackie:** Was there a part of you that was like, you know what I really wanna do the next chapter of my life is like all death all the time.

[00:02:13] **Nikki:** Noo. No. The irony here. You're gonna die. Well, when you hear this, is about four or five years ago, and mind you, I can't keep track of time. It was either yesterday or four or five years ago. I said I'm leaving the business. I'm done. I'm gonna become a life coach. I got my certification. I also worked at the Suicide Prevention Center as a volunteer.

I did all the training and I answered the phones when people were suicidal. So to answer your question, I think the road was sort of being paved for me, whether I was a participant or not, right. But I do have to say, when Molly passed away and we decided to create this story, that's when I got back into creative mode. I was like, let's do this story together. And then I just realized after doing Dying for Sex, like I love having uncomfortable conversations. I like being very real and sex and death and money are always the uncomfortable things. And I really don't like to talk about money, so I just leaned into death and sex.

[00:03:17] **Jackie:** Perfect. I love that you're having these uncomfortable conversations cuz it's kind of my love language.

[00:03:24] **Nikki:** It is. When we first met him, we started having our lunches. And although they were, we didn't get to see each other as much as we wanted to, we would sit down, we'd like to get our coffee and our croissant or our pasta or whatever, and we'd sit and we'd go right in. There was no like, so it was like, so... I don't even wanna say out loud what we would, but we went right in. And so I knew you were my people and I'm learning that our people, they're out there and they wanna have some real conversations and death is, I don't know, it's really scary. Like super scary. I've gone through it a lot. I am way more afraid to lose someone suddenly than I am to lose someone in a pro- I'm really good with the process. Like, let's unfold this. Let's do it gracefully. Let's connect, let's have conversations. But I'm not gonna lie, now that I'm doing near-death, in the middle of the night, like I put my hand up to my husband's nose, I'm like, "Is he breathing?" So it's affecting me and it's definitely bringing it to the limelight. Um, I need maybe work in the sex part more than just death. Maybe another podcast about sex. I don't know. I gotta start sexing it up because the death is...

[00:04:28] **Jackie:** Well, your next one is near sex, right.

[00:04:30] **Nikki:** Near!sex!

[00:04:33] **Jackie:** Maybe you just sit beside a couple and talk to them while they, you know...

[00:04:37] **Nikki:** Oh my God. Shut up. That's a great idea.

[00:04:40] **Jackie:** Go over their intimacy issues.

[00:04:42] **Nikki:** Oh my God, that is a brilliant idea. I wonder if anybody would let me record. Yeah, exactly. No, you're there with me. We're both in bed together with this couple.

[00:04:51] **Jackie:** All right.

[00:04:52] **Nikki:** All right.

[00:04:52] **Jackie:** It's done. But to go back to the death, so, I was three years old when my mom died. Um, I don't remember it, but death has been a part of my life. Like I lost a niece and a nephew both suddenly over the past, several years. One of my brothers and one of my sisters have each passed in the last three years. But, but theirs were not, suddenly they were both sick and, and I feel you and I hear you about this process. Like it can actually, it's kind of beautiful in a way .

[00:05:26] **Nikki:** How so do you think? What did you, I mean, you've been through it.

[00:05:31] **Jackie:** I don't know. It's like I feel like we're all in this hustle and bustle and we have these goals and we live these lives. And when you're watching someone, like whether it's in those final days or they know that there's no turning back, like that's where they're headed, simplifies everything. The conversations, The affection, the...

[00:05:55] **Nikki:** Oh, yes.

[00:05:57] **Jackie:** Everything. It just strips everything, all the bullshit away.

[00:06:01] **Nikki:** God, you're so right. Like takes you, you don't get any more present than you do when you're with someone who doesn't have the luxury of time, and everything becomes super, super tuned in and present. Oh God. Yeah, you're right. And you have so many losses, Jackie. That's a lot.

[00:06:19] **Jackie:** It is. And, and thank you. And it sounds like you've experienced your fair share. So there's a lot of people, like my husband has never had other than my family, you know, has never had like that close person, let me knock on wood here.

[00:06:32] **Nikki:** No, no. I hear you. I hear you. But I love a Death Virgin. I'm always like, oh, you're so you haven't, oh, go. Oh, buckle up

[00:06:39] **Jackie:** A death virgin. So you always bring it in the sex. So you went through this experience and if you haven't heard Dying for Sex, after you're done with this, go over there, listen to that whole series. And then Reverend Peggy is somebody who, you know through this experience that you had with your best friend Molly, to find out that she was, had incurable cancer and divorce her husband, or leave her husband and just go like balls to the wall, like literally.

[00:07:08] **Nikki:** Well, she didn't have balls, but yes, literally her ball. Other balls were to the wall. To her wall. Yeah. She went for it.

[00:07:19] **Jackie:** And so with some space, I know we talked about it in an episode that we did a long time ago, but now with space, and you back to that podcast, or you think back to that experience, what have you learned? Like what did you learn about?

[00:07:34] **Nikki:** That's such a cool question. Oh, well, I learned from Molly watching her die so gracefully and so beautifully and really take control. Like, no shame. Like she had no shame right? It was just like, here, this is who I am, this is what I'm going through. I'm gonna put it out there. People might judge it. People might think like, oh, she left her husband and started... I just, I got to sit on the sidelines and really watch her work through, Her confidence and I think she was her most confident as she was dying, which I just thought was this

really interesting juxtaposition. Yes. Um, I watched her lose her vanity, you know, and start not giving a shit which she looked like or how people received her as like a body, but more about a spirit. Like I watched all, it was four months of those, you know how earlier you mentioned like, it brings you really to a pinpoint those moments when someone's dying, or sick. We had four months of that together. So what I learned, I think, is that there's a lot of noise and there's a lot going on around you. But if you can just stop and appreciate those tiny little pinpoint moments, get rid of your shame, get rid of your attachment to your body. Like I'm going through it right now, like getting older. I'm getting really critical of myself, getting hard on myself, and I'm like, this is what we're supposed to do. We're growing older, we're getting wiser. We're all going through this. Like, that fighting it. Like she kind of allowed me, this is a really long-winded answer, but she kind of allowed me to give up on that stupid fight that we're doing and get really right with myself and get clear about what matters. I don't always follow it. Sometimes I get stressed. Sometimes I need a Xanax. Sometimes I want to check out and just be stressed and overwhelmed, but every time I think of her, it pulls me right back to center and I just touch, like I touch myself, I touch my husband, I get center. I'm like, hold on a second. The world is moving. And then like, I need to ground myself. She grounds me like I carry her with me. I almost feel... It's weird to say like, we have a closeness now that we never could have had when she was alive. It is such a spiritual closeness. So, yeah. So I met Reverend Peggy when Molly was dying. She was her chaplain, which is ironic, Molly was Jewish and not religious at all, but she found Reverend Peggy and so then, As time went on, I thought, gosh, should I really wanna talk to Peggy about her life because why talk about my life when I can deflect and talk about other people in their life? You see the theme here.

[00:10:10] **Jackie:** Isn't that what we do?

[00:10:12] **Nikki:** So now Peggy's in the hot seat. So yeah, so that's how it kind of happened, and I think Molly guided me to this new show, very much so. Yeah, I felt it.

[00:10:20] **Jackie:** You're not a religious person, right?

[00:10:22] **Nikki:** No, I was raised Catholic. I mean, I went to church four times a week. Wait. That's right. We did talk about Catholic girl syndrome. We did. I don't feel religious at all. I feel spiritual and very connected to universes. I think you and I probably have similar- but like I religion to me, I'm just, I just look at it as like, oh, that's a really cute story. That's so cute. What? No judgment. That's just where I got...

[00:10:50] **Jackie:** We could have a whole episode on that. But I think my point is that while you're talking with a reverend and a chaplain, it's not a religious podcast. I mean, there is some, her experience, which she brings in Christianity and Catholicism, but I think it's very universal,

[00:11:09] **Nikki:** Oh, thanks for saying that I hope that's how it comes across. I mean, she is a Christian chaplain. She is a Christian faith. But what I love about her is that she never turns down like she loves the juicy clients. She loves the patients that are layered, and she usually finds her way to people that aren't of Christian faith because she's so open. She does reiki. She is just really, um, open-minded, but she definitely is of Christian faith. And I think, you know, we do go into some stories around Christianity, around heaven and hell and angels and all of that. But it's not, it's definitely not a show based around religion at all. In fact, we kind of go into, I think, conversations that may make some Christians go, hmm, like Peggy is a Christian chaplain, but like, she'll go into a room where a lot of chaplains maybe wouldn't. And that's what I love about her.

[00:11:58] **Jackie:** Yeah, I like that. She's got a little woo-woo in her.

[00:12:00] **Nikki:** Yeah. She, yeah. Little woo-woo. Yeah, that last episode was called Woowoo stuff. That's funny. She does. She says she's from a family of witches. If that tells you anything, which I love.

[00:12:10] **Jackie:** Hey, well I went to college in Salem, so we're good.

[00:12:14] **Nikki:** That's so funny.

[00:12:17] **Jackie:** Molly is guiding you to this podcast. You wanna have these conversations with Reverend Peggy. What do you think the audience needs and wants from this particular podcast?

[00:12:29] **Nikki:** The response of Dying for Sex from people when they would reach out and comment and share was, oh my gosh, thank you. Thank you for talking about this. And the way that it affected them was ways that I couldn't even expect.

Like one guy came back and said, what I got from this was my relationship with my mom. I haven't talked to her in 10 years, and I pulled over and immediately called her. So that was his connection to it. Other women were like, oh my gosh, I need to go have sex, like I need to heal some old wounds. Other people were like, oh my gosh, I my best friend has cancer and I've never talked to her about any of this.

So it affected people in such different ways. So even though death is really specific, I also feel like the ripple effect of death is, there's just so many layers to it. So Molly, I felt like was guiding me. And then I would see Peggy at lunch. Like we'd go have lunch. Like I never intended to become friends with Reverend Peggy, but she's awesome.

So we'd be at lunch and talking like you and I do, and I'd be like, how is work? And she'd say, well, um, I did an exorcism and then, um, I did two baby blessings, and then I dealt with a trans patient who was transitioning from female to male. And then there was, there were some pretty intense cases as well, and I was like, that's your day. And I said, how many people have you seen die? And she said, almost two thousand. I was like, so I knew immediately. I was like, I think with her stories about death, she can help people figure out some shit about their life. I mean, it was a year and a half to two years of talking about it. Right? And then finally I was like, why don't we just do it? like turn on the mics and the first thing re-recorded completely didn't use throughout the window and then sat down and got really clear about what's the purpose of the show, what's the point of view, what are the stories? And we can't just sit, and I think people think podcasting is you just turn on the mic and you're like, let's just talk.

[00:14:21] **Jackie:** It's not?

[00:14:25] **Nikki:** Maybe, maybe I'm doing it wrong.

[00:14:28] **Jackie:** I'm just playing. Um, you're right. If you turn on the mic and you just talk, like people might come, but they're not gonna stay necessarily.

[00:14:35] **Nikki:** Such a good point. Yes.

[00:14:37] **Jackie:** So what do you think the audience is getting from this?

[00:14:40] **Nikki:** I'm on my phone looking right now and I just got a message on Instagram that said this is exactly what I needed. I'm so grateful. I'm actually at work crying right now. What great stories to help inspire people, right? And I'm like, inspire what? Like what are we inspiring? And I hope. Yeah. Inspiring people to have the uncomfortable conversations, inspiring people to not be in the waiting room if someone you love is dying and you can handle it. Right. Inspiring people to have conversations about advanced directives and those weird things. And also inspiring people to like kind of value life. Like you never know when it's, we don't know when it's gonna end, so you may as well whoop it up and enjoy it. And I think if you're hearing more about death, it can enhance your life. Not make you fearful. Like, that's the main thing. As Peggy said, she wants to make people a little less afraid of death. And if we can just make one person feel like, oh, okay, then, then we've done our job, we've done a good thing. And so that's kind of the goal. And also, entertaining people. Like there's some crazy shit that happens at a hospital that you don't even think of. And I'm like, let's talk about that. And Peggy's just really cool cuz she's a single woman in Los Angeles and you don't think of chaplains as people looking for love and trying to figure out their personal life, and she's willing to go there too.

[00:15:59] **Jackie:** There's this, like, really uncomfortable stuff really, really difficult. And at the same time, I laugh out loud because the two of you are like old girlfriends.

[00:16:09] **Nikki:** Thank you for saying that. Yeah. If you're looking for a depressing take on death, this show is not bad. But if you wanna have all the feels and you wanna laugh and you wanna cry, and then we have, you know, a gin martini at the end of every episode, then you like to drink and laugh and cry, which is pretty much what we do every time we're together, except the drinking no more. Um, then I think, I think near death is probably, um, I say go for it. Don't be afraid to listen. Give it a try. And I just love that you like, I just appreciate you bringing, you know, bringing me on the show and having these conversations. Because if we can just find one person that can go, oh, I'm gonna listen to this, and it helps them maybe navigate something in their life or when a loved one dies, or when they're themselves going through something. I just love helping people. I do. It's so nice.

[00:16:56] **Jackie:** And, and you're totally right that this is like the only thing that we're all guaranteed, right? No one's getting that alive. Um, and so, just in the past, probably since 2016, like I've learned some of those last days, right? what are things that happened to the body as you are passing? And like it never even occurred to me. Oh, the breathing starts doing this, and this starts happening, and this starts happening. There are so many signs that none of us really wanna know. But the fact that I do now through multiple family members, it's kind of, for lack of a better word, empowering.

[00:17:37] **Nikki:** I totally, I just got the chills when you said that. I totally get it, because if there's less things that you're learning in the moment and freaking out about, then you can be so much more present for the other stuff, right? If you know this is gonna happen, this is gonna happen and this is gonna happen, it's gonna be totally uncomfortable, but I know it's happening, then you can be really present and holding the person and touching them and being present with them, and not freaking out, "They're breathing is off, they're, they're what's happening?" It's like this is all part of the process. And if you know that it is empowering and it allows you to just be just really there for the person, like really there. And for yourself, what, can I ask you what you've learned going through all the deaths that you've experienced? Like what has, what have...

[00:18:18] **Jackie:** Oh goodness. Um, well, I agree with you that the sudden ones are, um, they're jarring and they're, um, we've had two suddens in my family, and my first was, my niece was 30 years old and she was in a car crash. And, um, I will say that particular one just like racked my family because, you know, 2011, it just, it

just was not something we, I've been around more cancer than you can imagine, but like, not the sudden get a call at 3:30 in the morning. 2017, my nephew, who was 37, passed in a car crash, like separate siblings, kids, and, and so you know, that stuff is like, you know, two kids and that stuff is, um, I don't think you ever recover. And I'm the aunt, like I'm not, the spouse, the mom, the sibling, and I forever will be changed by them, with my sister and my brother. So my brother was like out of 13 of us. He was the life of the party. He had cancer for many, many years and, um, really battled it. But he was so funny. And after my niece, Kristen, the 30 year old who died, suddenly he came up with this theory that you couldn't not smile if you heard a slide whistle. So literally, like heard a slide whistle, you have to...

[00:19:45] **Nikki:** Wheee! Like that?

[00:19:45] **Jackie:** Exactly. Yep. You have to smile.

[00:19:48] **Nikki:** That's funny.

[00:19:49] **Jackie:** Right? So that's what, like he and my little brother Matt, after Kristen died, were like sitting in Jim's apartment, like using the side whistle.

[00:19:58] **Nikki:** I love this.

[00:19:59] **Jackie:** As my brother was in his final days, Someone brought his slide whistle and he didn't even look like himself. But he was, I was on FaceTime cuz they're all in Massachusetts and all of my siblings were there and he was doing the slide whistle and we were just like in that moment with him not going, no, no, no, you're not allowed to laugh. No, you have to be sad. No, you have to be crying. Like just experiencing life with him. This very simple act. And so after he passed, I went on Amazon and bought like, a couple dozen slide whistles, just plastic ones, and gave them to my siblings, for the cemetery after the funeral. So like, everybody had a little slide whistle. But, I've just learned, it's sad, don't get me wrong. Like, I still, he doesn't call on my birthday. He never missed a birthday. He was also the guy that was like, if he said, oh, I'm gonna go down the store to get a coffee, you weren't sure if he ever came back that day. Like he was just, he lived his life. He's on his own time.

[00:21:02] **Nikki:** Oh, I love it.

[00:21:04] **Jackie:** We always said he'd be late for his own funeral. And the funny thing is, the priest actually had car troubles and was late for my brother's funeral. Yeah. He's like, well, I'm here, but he's late. You know, so I, I just, I just learned that like, It's part of life.

[00:21:22] **Nikki:** Mm-hmm. Totally.

[00:21:24] **Jackie:** It puts things in perspective, and it's hard, but it's also something to talk about, there's so many people who are blocked off when it comes to death, like they won't talk about it. And so I have this idea, I'm putting it out there like the Grown-Ass Woman's Guide to end of life decisions.

[00:21:44] **Nikki:** Wow. I'm so down for that.

[00:21:46] **Jackie:** Using the experts for, what do you need to have an order? What's the insurance situation? What's the, all of the things like to get your grown-assery in place. And somebody said to me, well, this is something that people are resisting. Like, why would you write a book or do a podcast on this thing if people are so resistant? Not even resistance to just doing all the things that they're supposed to do, resistance to even talking about it.

And so I wanna turn that question that somebody asked me onto you. Like, if people are so resistant, like I, I've seen your podcast, I've seen the stuff that you do and how easy it would be to get so many listeners, but now you're setting yourself up for a little bit of a challenge, right? So it's like, hey, you know that thing you don't wanna talk about, come listen to this. So obviously it must be, it must be very, very important to go through that when like, you know, there's, there's, there are podcasts out there that are low hanging fruit. You could host a True Crime podcast and pay the mortgage.

[00:22:48] **Nikki:** Right. No, you're so right. Thank you for saying all this. I don't think I've ever like put it so eloquently in that way. Could you write the bio for the show? Cause I think you're gonna need you. I think there's so much resistance around it. One thing I have learned through life coaching, Talking to the Suicide Prevention Center, people that call in, dealing with friends and family that are struggling is that they're resistant and they're resistant, and then they're not. And the only thing that gets them to that place of not being resistant is one little tweak in the communication or one little question that they didn't wanna answer, but then they did and the floodgates opened. So I think resistance is, it's there. Some people just are not into it, but some people are just waiting for the right opportunity or the right time, or the right temperature in the room emotionally to be able to do it. And so I'm hoping this podcast can maybe give somebody in their car by themselves. Cuz podcasts are so intimate, right? People put their headphones in, they do their laundry. They do their grocery shopping. I think if you could have these conversations with me and Peggy, cuz you're involved too, like we're, I feel like we're talking to the people, and maybe that could just open crack, open that little bit of resistance so that your life, when that time comes, you can go, oh, I remember Peggy and Nikki talking about advanced directives and maybe I should ask my mom, like, even though it's a weird thing to say, like maybe I should ask my mom what she wants. And then that moment of asking someone the uncomfortable question either can make them say, I don't wanna talk about that. Or it opens, like I said, the floodgates and then it creates connection. So I think I like to pretend I know people better than they know themselves, and I'm like, oh, just trust me. Go along for the ride. Just trust me. Because it's happened. I've watched it happen in real time where you get somebody on the phone, they're like, I don't wanna talk about this. I don't wanna talk about this. And they're like, well, there was this one time. And then it happens. And so I think that's my hope. And maybe I'm just being a control freak, trying to control everybody. Talk about it!

[00:24:54] **Jackie:** But I think, well, I think you make a good point too, that they're not listening to their own lives, right? They're not, they don't have somebody who's like, okay, now you do this, and now you've gotta ask your mom about an advanced directive. You're just telling stories. And through those stories, I can let my guard down and then ask myself, oh, would that be beneficial if I had that conversation with my mother? You know? It's kind of brilliant.

[00:25:17] **Nikki:** Thanks. Thanks. Gosh, I hope. I hope people enjoy it. I hope they listen. I think everybody could use a little bit of Reverend Peggy. That's the one main comment that I get is, God, I wish I would've had a Reverend Peggy in the room when my mom was dying, or when my son was struggling. I wish I would've had someone like that. And so I hope to give everybody a little, a little dose of her.



[00:25:39] **Jackie:** Yeah. Can, can you make a connection so she can be the rest of our best friend as well?

[00:25:43] **Nikki:** sure. Yeah. She's probably...

[00:25:46] **Jackie:** Rent a reverend.

[00:25:48] **Nikki:** Right. Everybody needs a reverend.

[00:25:51] **Jackie:** See, I wouldn't have, like, when I saw that it was coming out and, I knew that you were talking to a reverend, it was, it, the podcast is very unexpected, the fact that she is, so open and funny and the fact that she wanted to be an actress, you know, and then she has her own story of like how she got into this work. But it's not like what you would expect, she's extremely open. What are some of the things, so you talk about spirituality, you talk about angels, you talk about woo-woo, what are some of the other things that people wouldn't expect? How many episodes have you recorded?

[00:26:24] **Nikki:** We have done, I wanna say we have done ten. So we're ten in, right. So I like, there's some stuff that happens at the hospital, um, like I said earlier, like at the exorcism stuff like the evil, the dark side where people think they're being punished and that they're sick because there's some spiritual, evil, spiritual stuff going on, which I never thought about that happening at the hospital. I was just like, what? Um, there's also some supernatural stuff that goes on at the hospital. I mean, imagine how many spirits are lingering, if you believe in that stuff, how many spirits are lingering around a hospital? So there's some haunting stories that are kind of unexpected, and then also like moments that sound tragic, but are so stunningly beautiful like when people are dying and they wanna get married, well she marries. They're like, oh, there's so many good stories. So a lot of unexpected twists and turns. And I think one of my favorite that we haven't recorded yet, but I cannot wait to get into is donors talking about people who get hearts and lungs from a tragedy that happened. And there's this thing that happens at the hospital that Peggy can only describe, but where a donor is honored and the family- it's, I mean, it's magical what goes on in these hospitals. So, um, I can't wait for people to really kind of understand what, what kind of spiritual work happens at the hospital. It's pretty in depth.

[00:27:49] **Jackie:** That's wild. It never occurred to me like the energy that could be passed through donation, and I just did two episodes on kidney donation, recently. And so now I'm gonna have to do a third to talk about the energy, because you know, we're in our little vessels, right? And so when you remove things and put it into a different vessel, like does the spirit go with it? Like, what happens?

[00:28:11] **Nikki:** I know. And also, that's great that you brought that up cause we're gonna get into traditions, like where do these death traditions come from? And like, there are certain religions, if you lose a limb, you bury that limb and then the body joins it later. Like, there's some wild shit we're gonna talk about. And I just love to get a chaplain's perspective of all these interesting religious things that we do. You know, laying the body out, embalming people. Like when I was a kid, that's just, you went and just saw your grandpa, grandma and they were embalmed and they were like this weird version of themselves. What happens in the crematorium? What happens when you do that to people? Cuz being with Molly, like I stayed with her until the very end when they put her in the body bag. And I remember going like, what? Molly? Like they zipped the body bag up. And I remember thinking she's laughing on the other side cuz she's like, see ya! But I remember thinking to myself, nobody prepared, nobody prepares you for this. So if our quirky little show can prepare you a little bit for these things that are unexpected, might be helpful.

[00:29:14] **Jackie:** Yeah, I mean it's, it's crazy because I've been to a few funerals or services on the west coast, but growing up on the East coast and like, that's where most of the deaths that I've experienced have happened. there's still that tradition of, you know, the wake, the, the viewing hours, and then the next day is like the big church funeral and all of that. And it's, it's kind of wild. Like, I think other people in certain parts of the country are like, wait, what, what, what?

[00:29:45] **Nikki:** Right. What are you guys doing out there?

[00:29:47] **Jackie:** Y'all just like kneel in front of him and like, you know. It's kind of wild, I'm curious, like if someone's listening, like what happens in your world?

[00:29:58] **Nikki:** I know, like how you do and what's the I think, I think the history behind it is also interesting. Like, we do that, but why do we do this and where did it come from and who said this? And is it helpful? Like there's some shit that I do that I'm like, what am I doing? And I look at it and I'm like, On the outside looking in, that looks ridiculous, but it's helping me. Snd that really is all that matters. And also we wanna hear from people. We want, eventually we'll start taking people's stories, like the story of, of your brother with the slide whistle. I kind of want you to come on the show and tell that story because I feel like that, like, that's a story worth telling because everybody has their own version of what the slide whistle could be, and don't be afraid to bring that slide whistle in. Don't be afraid to have those moments when someone's passing because it's incredibly, empowering, like you said earlier.

[00:30:44] **Jackie:** Absolutely. And what was funny, I actually have it on video because I was on FaceTime and so I recorded and somebody was recording there and um, he did the slide whistle. And my dogs in California, he's in Massachusetts, my dogs in California heard it and they started barking.

[00:30:58] **Nikki:** Oh my God. Wait, check in. I think you need to come on the show. I think we need to do your story. If I, what's your brother's name again?

[00:31:05] **Jackie:** Jim, Jimbo is what we called him growing up. You would've enjoyed his inappropriate Humor. Humor. So yeah, I just automatically went back into my Boston accent.

[00:31:14] **Nikki:** Wait, what did you say in your Boston accent? Humma.

[00:31:17] **Jackie:** Yeah, a wicked sense of humor.

[00:31:20] **Nikki:** Jimbo. God love him.

[00:31:23] **Jackie:** Now that you're this many episodes in, and you're planning to do many...

[00:31:27] **Nikki:** Yeah. Like a whole season, weekly for, 45 episodes.

[00:31:31] **Jackie:** Does it weigh on you? Do you feel like you have to shake it off after you record? Like how do you, cuz I know you ask Reverend Peggy about that when it comes to her work, but like you talking about this all the time, does it weigh on you?

[00:31:46] **Nikki:** Is it weird that it doesn't?

[00:31:48] **Jackie:** I don't think so.

[00:31:49] **Nikki:** Maybe I'm not aware, or maybe I've been living in this world of talking about death for so many years that it's become my new normal. I don't know if that's healthy. Maybe it's, maybe it's healthy. It doesn't weigh on me. It makes me incredibly, I'm very emotional. I cry all the time. I picture it. I'm recording with Peggy, and then we're in the edit, so I'm crying during the edit, like I cry a lot. I think that's good. I think it's good to get it out. I do notice that my grief, like, you know how you have grief and then there's some that's like stuck? Like it just like you can't even tap into it. I feel like some of my old grief around my dad and around Molly and around my dog that passed away recently, like it'll find its way out while I'm working with Peggy. So I actually think it's good.

[00:32:34] **Jackie:** You know, it's so interesting because, I produced Media Circus the first season for Kim and, you know, talking with these high profile victims of crime, the first couple of episodes I was struggling. Like, I was like, I don't know how I'm gonna do this. just listening to these stories of like, you know, Parkland and, and you know, just, just, ugh. And I just remember, like, I was just dreaming about it. I was like, it was all encompassing and then I got to a place where I was like, yes, we have to talk about what happened because I think it gives it all the perspective of the pain and the healing and all that. But I started to just shift my focus on the healing. I started to shift my focus on the purpose that the person has found. It's not like, oh, wrapped up in a pretty little bow, but at the same time, we all go through hard shit. Whether you lose somebody in your life or not, we all go through hard shit. And so how do you find the humanity in that hard shit? And not focus on the...

**Nikki:** The mess or the, yeah. No, you're right. Oh, that's good, and it's practice, like you have to practice it like it's a muscle of just going. And so I think after your episodes, it's interesting, it makes me think of Peggy. I'm like, how do you go into every room? She's like, cuz it's my job. She says something really beautiful. Like, I go in and I do what I can in human form, right? So, With spirit. And then I know I give them tools or I give them a moment of comfort. And then when I leave the room, I know that somewhere, something, someone else that she obviously believes in Jesus and God, she says, I know they're taking over when I leave. Like they're always in good hands. And there's something really beautiful about that, of knowing that you can come in and do your part. But, ultimately, everyone is universally and spiritually taken care of in some way, shape, or form. So yeah, we, yeah.

[00:34:31] **Jackie:** I like that she doesn't put it on her. You know that she has to be there for all of it. Like I think especially as women,

[00:34:37] **Nikki:** I would be the worst chaplain.

[00:34:41] **Jackie:** Yes.

[00:34:42] **Nikki:** Like a female chaplain. I'd be in there thinking I needed to fix, I'd stay too long. I'd overstay my welcome, I'd say too much. Then I'd leave and I'd come back and be like, sure, you okay? And I'd offer them food and that would just, I would be a disaster. I'd be such a people-pleasing disaster.

[00:34:57] **Jackie:** Right. I think her, the fact that she has boundaries and she's able to give what she can give and then leave and kind of go have her martini and go live her life and, and have these conversations, it's pretty

amazing. You know, it's funny because when I listened, I was saying to my husband while I was listening, you know what I should become? I should become like a death coordinator.

[00:35:17] **Nikki:** You'd be great at that.

[00:35:20] **Jackie:** I don't even think that's a job, but knowing what that person really wants. I have these conversations even before listening to your podcast. My kids know. We talk, we talk about this stuff. Like what? Cuz my middle one was like, well, you don't. Do you wanna be in a church mom? And I was like, no, I want you to find a beautiful spot. Like, I don't need a headstone. Like da da da. You know, we just talked about cremation and all of these things, and they're teenagers.

[00:35:42] **Nikki:** This is beautiful. This is so cool.

[00:35:43] **Jackie:** I don't know if you've ever heard of the Painted Turtle Camp, um, but it's a camp for kids with chronic disabilities and illness. So my husband and I want to, we're gonna leave some money for a bench to be built or to be put at this camp with our names on it. There's a little spot by a little pond, like, so my kids know. I'm less concerned about who gets what you know and stuff, and more concerned with they get to live a life someday, hopefully, many, many years from now, where they know what we want and they're like, hey, we gave them this like beautiful party and this bench, and, you know, and so, I don't know. I think in some ways it really benefits them that they, know what to do, because they're actively still having a relationship with you. They're doing things for you. They're expressing their love. Like after someone dies the relationship doesn't end there, but if that person that's passing away says, Hey, every year. Will you do this? Or wouldn't it be great if you could create a memorial that's like for other people, like if you give people tasks and ask them to do things there's a back and forth that's happening. I mean, even on this call right now, in a way, I feel like I'm expressing my relationship to Molly. That's where this all started. And she jokingly said one time before she died, she was like, I know that like. I'm not your person cuz you have your husband, but like, you're my person, like you're my soulmate. And there will be a time where maybe during this show, if the show becomes successful, like let's just say it does. Then I am gonna be the most important person in your life. And I was like, you're such a, you're so twisted. And here she is. I'm talking about that girl like 24/7. And I'm like, oh, she's, she was right. Like she's in every single conversation that I have. So in a way, this is Molly's bench, right? Like the kids will do for you. Look what we're doing. So I love that you did that with your kids and that makes me like, that's the, you coming back to you saying empowered, like it will empower them to go, this is what I'm gonna do and this is what feels good and this is what mom asked me to do. And your kids are so cool. You have the best kids.

[00:37:46] **Jackie:** Yeah. Aw, thanks. I'm a big believer in talking about things before you need to talk about them. So, can we talk about the creative side for a second. One of the things that we talked a little bit about before we started recording the women that I'm working with and providing workshops for and like Grown-Ass creative and being around in that community, many of us are like, what's next? In our careers, right? We're like, this TV job's not working, or I got laid off from this marketing thing, or whatever it is, right? And so as a creative, somebody who's won Emmy's, somebody who's worked in tv, you've been hosting, you've had podcast of the year, like so much success, do you feel like you need to know you're on the right path to try something new like this?

[00:38:30] **Nikki:** No. Oh my God, no. My favorite- I love that you're asking this question. I think the best way to find out what you wanna do is by checking off all the things that are complete train wrecks that you don't

wanna do. Like you have to go into the fire and go, I'm gonna try this, and then go, that wasn't right. Like I learned so much more from doing things that turned into a shit storm than I do from being like, I'm gonna do a vision board. I'm gonna plan this whole thing out and it's gonna go perfectly. Like, no, I came to LA. I wanted to be an actress. I wanted to do TV and film. I couldn't get an audition. I got on a TV show. I think most of the time I played like a corpse. That was like my biggest role, or a reporter.

[00:39:10] **Jackie:** See, you were prepared for this!

[00:39:13] **Nikki:** I was like on the line, like the line was drawn around me. I think I was on like unsolved mysteries. I still get like two, three cent residual checks from Unsolved Mysteries, by the way.

[00:39:24] **Jackie:** Oh my gosh. Which costs them more to send the check than the actual...

[00:39:28] **Nikki:** I digress. I don't think you have to have it figured out. Let's be honest. We have to like address the financial part, right? In your twenties, you know, other people were paying your bills maybe, or you didn't need a lot to survive and now it, you have to think about that stuff. So take risks, but take risks that feel good within your life and your lifestyle. But don't be afraid to just go and try something and then check it off and say, hey, that either led me to a better decision or I don't wanna go down that road, just, I just go for it. But you have to put in the work. We talked about this earlier on the phone call, before we jumped into record of, the world is changing and skills are changing and you need to learn new things. I didn't want to learn how to use logic and learn how to edit. I would rather take a dull butter knife and poke it into my eye than edit. But like now, I'm like, I can freaking edit like I can. And so at 47 I learned all these new skills. Do I want to do them? Absolutely not. Can I do them? Do I feel empowered? And now I value the people hopefully that come in and will eventually do it for me. I value that and I can get what they do. And, and so I'm in a real growth spurt right now, right? Because I've always been the girl who like jumps into the studio records has a good time. Then I'm like, bye everyone. Make something pretty. Send me the link, and I'll post it on social. Now I am those people, so don't be afraid to try new things. Don't think you're too good for anything. And go for it. Just try it. It'll be a hot mess and it'll be great.

[00:41:04] **Jackie:** Yeah, I think that's such a great point. it's so easy to go just try it and dive into it, but like, if you have a nine to five, then do a little bit on the side or take a Saturday morning or whatever it is.

[00:41:17] **Nikki:** You have to schedule it too. Cause I know how life is. Like, you have to say, I'm gonna take three hours on a Saturday morning and say that's my time to delve into, you know, whether it's podcasting or, trying something crocheting. I don't know. Whatever you decide, you wanna... If you wanna try something, do it. There's nothing worse than hearing your friends for seven years go. I really, really have always wanted to fill in the blank. It's like, we're all dying, so you better hurry up. Oh my God. That's awful.

[00:41:45] **Jackie:** There's the quote.

[00:41:48] **Nikki:** Oh my God.

[00:41:49] **Jackie:** If you had 60 seconds

[00:41:52] **Nikki:** Oh Lord. Okay.

[00:41:54] **Jackie:** to share with the Grown-Ass Woman's Guide audience, what you want them to do next?

[00:42:01] **Nikki:** For themselves or for me?

[00:42:03] **Jackie:** Yes.

[00:42:05] **Nikki:** Okay. Okay.

[00:42:07] **Jackie:** What do you got?

[00:42:08] **Nikki:** Okay. 60 seconds. I'm gonna be really selfish and then I'll be selfless. I want you to follow and like my Near Death podcast. Why? Because I think it will help people and you deserve to be less afraid, right? So follow it, like it, and if you could share it with your friends and family and tell them to do the same, that would be, like, fill my heart so, so much near death.

All right. For you. For you. I want you to take one day a week. Where you get, you just get to focus on one thing that you want to do for yourself. Go get your nails done, go do something nice for yourself. Go get a massage, but don't tell anybody you're going to get a massage. Because then you have to feel guilty about the massage. Go do something so good for yourself and on the drive home, you have to listen to Near Death. Okay, I don't think that was 60 seconds.

[00:42:53] **Jackie:** We'll cut it so it is. No, that's perfect. Now I have my reel don't have to do bullshit. Nikki, I love you so much.

[00:43:03] **Nikki:** I adore you and just honestly thank you. Every time I have something that I wanna share with the world, you always step up. You always help me, and I just, I'm so, so incredibly grateful. That does not go unnoticed from you. Thank you. You're a ride or die, and I appreciate that.

Thanks to Nikki Boyer for sharing her story and her gifts with all of us.

And just to add to that note that she left us on, what if this week we all make the commitment to show up just even once. For another Grown-Ass woman. Share her work, connect her with a resource or a support system. We are not in competition with each other. We are in collaboration. Because when one grown-ass woman succeeds, it creates a ripple effect that is never ending. Please check out Near Death where you listen to podcasts. And if you enjoy the show, Or this one, consider leaving a rating or review. And definitely share it with a friend. As podcasters, word of mouth is absolutely everything, and very much appreciated.

That's it for today. Until next time, remember. You are a Grown-Ass woman. Act accordingly.