

The Art of Asking Everything

Highlights of the First Season

Voicemail 00:05

Hey, Amanda.

Voicemail 00:06

Hey, Amanda.

Voicemail 00:07

Hi, Amanda.

Voicemail 00:07

Morning, Amanda Palmer.

Voicemail 00:09

Hi!

Voicemail 00:10

Hey, people... creatures... whoever's out there in the abyss.

Voicemail 00:15

When I found out that I had the opportunity to have you hear my voice, I got so excited!

Voicemail 00:21

The first podcast... wow. A lot of important things were said, and said well.

Voicemail 00:26

I'm just calling to tell you that I love your armpit hair, and it made me embrace my own armpit hair.

Voicemail 00:30

You know, you've got a little weirdo across the world who is appreciative of you, and grateful. It makes me feel less alone, so thanks.

Voicemail 00:42

I've barely left my house since March 13th of 2020. There are days where I'm starting to go feral and forget how to people. I've literally felt every single feeling amplified, because I got to share it with someone who made me not feel alone.

Voicemail 01:00

Please stay strong. There is hope out there. You just have to reach for it, and it'll reach back.

Amanda Palmer 01:08

This is The Art of Asking Everything. I am Amanda Fucking Palmer, greetings from Aotearoa New Zealand. Everything's weird. Everything's been weird. Everything's gonna get weirder. I love you. I really do. And I'm doing something new.

This is a special episode that my whole amazing podcast team has helped me pull together, and it is called... Highlights of the First Season, or How I Learned To Stop Worrying, And Love My Podcast.

This is what we're doing. To wrap the first season of the podcast of the Art of Asking Everything, I thought it would be fun, and enlightening, and experimental, and maybe even helpful, cos there's a lot of podcast stuff out there right now, mine and others, to assemble and collage the story of the podcast, and the best moments from the over 20 conversations that I have had with my incredible guests. It's sort of like a greatest hits package, crowd-sourced weird audio thing that I hope you enjoy. We'll see.

So here's what I did. I asked my team, I asked the patrons, I asked Twitter and Facebook and Instagram, and people wrote in with comments, and left me voice messages, about their favourite quotes and moments and takeaways from the podcast. You all did this with me.

Len Tower (Voicemail) 02:46

What stands out to me is the intensity and passion that each podcast interviewee brought to their lives, and their willingness to share what they know with all of us.

Amanda 03:01

That is Len Tower, from Cambridge, Massachusetts. One of my favourite patrons and community members of all time.

And listen, I am just gonna give you an honest life update here, because you know me, and I wouldn't do it any other way. I'm really tired. I'm a little fucked up. We are all so, so tired and fucked up after this year. And as I am reporting this with my speaking voice, in my fifth Airbnb in New Zealand, I am in Auckland, and where I live right now is going back into lockdown. My kid can't go to school next week. And I also feel kind of like, no claim to complain, given how lucky I have been to be in this country, with almost no COVID. But also, I've got the bends. I really do. It's bad. I'm forgetting everything. My organisational skills have flatlined, my soul and brain have kind of a freeze-y jetlag, and feeling of disorientation and confusion I cannot even put into words. And I'm trying. I'm writing. I'm writing this, I'm reading this, I still don't know what's happening! And I have not seen my house, or my stuff, or my home country, or my old friends or family, for 18 months. And my business, and my career, and my songwriting, and my art-making, like, by the way, a lot of musicians who are parents of young kids right now, is a hot fucking mess.

And let me just tell you, while I am sitting here writing and being honest, putting out this podcast this year has not been quite what I expected it to be. And I don't even know what I expected it to be, right? When I came up with this idea for this podcast several years ago, this was not the plan. I planned to record some good, deep interviews with friends and colleagues from all over the world. I was gonna do it while I toured, and I was going to put it out while I toured, live and in real time.

And then it turned out, and became very obvious very quickly, that I and my team did not have the bandwidth to run a touring machine and put out a podcast. We just could not multitask. And many of you may have seen my tour in 2019. I went to a million countries, and a million theatres, and I did this show called There Will Be No Intermission. And it was during that tour that I recorded almost all of these conversations.

And so, when we realised we couldn't multitask, we made a new plan: to release the podcast as I was wrapping up the tour, and we would keep putting it out as I finished the tour, end of 2019, beginning of 2020. And it was gonna be a long time to wait, but I was like ah, the conversations are timeless, they're deep, they're important and juicy and good, it's not like I'm making a podcast about up-to-the-minute politics. I'm mostly talking to people and friends about life, and struggle, and art, and childhood, and creativity. Enduring themes that are not gonna get old in six months. Cos, as we know, the world doesn't change that much in a few months.

Ha ha ha ha ha.

Voice of America clip 06:33

The global health crisis is taking a nasty political turn, with tensions worsening between governments locked down to keep the Coronavirus at bay, and people yearning to restart stalled economies and forestall fears of a depression.

Amanda 06:47

And like so many people, my entire life was totally up-ended. I found myself living in a foreign country that I was intending to tour in for a week. A week. And I had shown up in New Zealand with one suitcase, and then there I was. And my husband and my kid rushed over from Melbourne, in Australia, where they had been waiting for me to finish tour, so we could all fly back home to New York the week after. And this was where we locked down.

And then a month into lockdown, my personal life fell apart. My family fell apart. And I crashed to the ground, with no real immediate viable support system around me, almost no community. I was in lockdown with a 4-year-old. And it was the loneliest I have ever been in my life. I had a few people around me trying to help, but it was very shitty.

And I couldn't fall apart completely, right? And those of you with young children get this. I had a kid to take care of. I couldn't totally fall apart. But there were days where I could barely keep it together, and barely talk, and barely make a phone call, and barely work. And my two full-time staff back in New York, Michael and Hayley, were on the other side of the globe, going through their own versions of COVID hell. Michael got COVID very badly, my manager Jordan was locked down in Sydney, and also dealing with his own family tragedy, and his dad wasn't doing well, and it just felt like the darkness was closing in.

And on our list of things to do was put out the podcast. And I did not know what I was gonna do at all. About my life, about my family, about work, I didn't know if I was gonna go home, I didn't know if I was gonna stay in New Zealand for another week, or month, or year, or lifetime. And I certainly did not know what I was gonna do with this fucking podcast that I had spent all year recording. I just had all these episodes in the can, and I would sort of stare at them and go, I don't know what to fucking do with this. I don't know if all these conversations are now totally irrelevant because it's a global pandemic, and everyone is careening into the dark. I just didn't know anything.

And my team really helped me. We tried as best we could to help each other, and to pull each other up, and it was hard, and it was weird, and it was painful. And we Zoomed,

and we tried to break through the terrible time changes and talk to each other. And we tried to take turns taking care of each other from our various spots in hell. And we checked in on each other, and we, after many discussions, decided to just release this podcast in September 2020, starting with [this episode with Elizabeth Lesser](#).

Elizabeth Lesser 10:02

Bullshit is ubiquitous. There are bullshit, sexist asshole musicians.

Amanda 10:08

Oh, I know.

Elizabeth 10:08

There are bullshit, sexist asshole academics, intellectuals, sports people, you name it.

Amanda 10:17

Plumbers! Shoe salesmen!

Elizabeth 10:19

Bullshit is everywhere. When you are in an 'industry', let's call it, the self-help, spirituality industry, the problem with bullshit there is it's a supposedly anti-bullshit industry. It's like, this is about being true to yourself, and being loving and compassionate. It's the same thing that happens when a priest screws a little boy. There's a sharper sword seeking out the integrity of anyone who dares to say, 'My work is about being a better person, and helping you be a better person.'

'Yeah, but you're a jerk!'

Amanda 10:59

We had no idea what would happen. But actually - and I wanna say this now that I have a little perspective - what happened was really kind of amazing. Because it turns out that the main theme of the podcast, without me actually realizing it as I was travelling around and recording these conversations back in ye olde Before Times, the main theme was resilience, and survival. These are my favourite topics anyway, and sort of by default I had not strayed very far from these topics while talking to all of these incredible artists, and doctors, and sex workers, and writers, and musicians, and all of the conversations that we were having touched on that anyway. But when I went back, and I look at all of this, all of these conversations are like a reminder that there is always an exit door from the hell of suffering. It can just be very hard to find that door.

And they were all so kind, and patient, and enthusiastic about sharing what they've learned, and sharing their roadmaps, and their tricks, and their trapdoors out of hell.

And this is why, when I look back at the decisions that seemed impossible to make around the podcast, it's why I'm so glad that we put it out the way we did. And listening to your feedback makes me realise that we didn't fuck up. Because these podcasts really helped not only me, but you, and I hope a lot of you, through the darkness of this year.

Damian (voicemail) 13:01

Hi Amanda and team, and everyone listening. This is Damian from New York. I listen to a lot of podcasts, and what I noticed a while ago is that you get, that people talking in your ears gives a sense of intimacy, but there's still a bit of a wall between you and what's going on. And taking the podcast, and then following it up with a conversation where it's that much closer to what's actually happening, where the community gets to interact and be a part of it, just makes this conversation feel more robust and more inclusive.

Amanda 13:34

Oh my God. Damian! Thank you. We love you too. Everyone, if you don't know Damian, he is a long-term patron who, like clockwork, showed up to the live follow-up streams, and asked the best questions, almost hands down, every time, and I wanna talk to you about that.

The follow ups were another thing that we decided to do, given that a lot of these podcasts were done in the 'before times'. And I wanted to check in with the guests, and catch up, and I never imagined that these little Crowdcast rooms - it was usually like, 100 people - would become a check-in place, and a beautiful, safe, gorgeous space to just talk, in the moment, about how we were, and how things were going. With me, with the guests, with the community. Just asking that very important question, how are you?

How are you? How are you? I mean, the question 'how are you?' has gained such dramatic proportions lately, and to listen to how my guests responded, because they all come from different places, and they have these complex, diverse lives, and they've all been universally screwed and bent and twisted. All of these follow-up conversations reminded me how we are in this together, and I'm so glad we decided to do that too. And from Dubai to Scotland, and Portland, and Moscow, and a billion spots around the globe where the patrons would tune in, it was this moment where we could all just remind each other that there was a way out of hell, and a way to make this better.

And we'll talk about that more in a second, but right now, I wanna start listening, a long preamble from me, I'm sorry, but it was important. Let's start listening to the best things that happened, according to me, and to you, and to everyone else who has tuned in. Let's go.

This is [Clare Bowditch](#). Books can change your fucking life!

Clare Bowditch 15:45

I was desperately yearning to find this sense of an 'other', of a higher power, of a God, of a way of thinking, of a way of living, of a way of staying alive, of a way of finding meaning. So I guess I was on that journey young. I was brought up in a deeply religious, very profoundly faith-driven family, we were brought up Catholic. My mum was Dutch, her faith was profound, my father's faith was profound, and I knew I didn't fit neatly into Catholicism, but I saw the gift that they had, and this focus on love. So I got that bit. But I was deeply rebellious, and I guess I started reading [A Course In Miracles](#) when I was about 16, and I had no idea what it was about. I probably came to it via most people, I watched Oprah as a 10 year old.

Amanda 16:37

No, but that's important! How books wind up in our lives... I don't think it's un-important how these books find their way to us. Because it could just be there was a good book store with a curated section and it was lying on the table, or an older friend goes, 'I think you might be interested in this and need to read it.' And when I think about some of the books that changed my life right around that age, I look back and I don't take for granted that the books that opened up my head canon didn't wind up randomly in my lap.

Amanda 17:09

So we got really inspired by this, and then we went to the patrons, and the team, and social media, and we started amassing a huge list of books that changed our lives. And if you need some reading, you should go [check out that post](#), and [the book club threads on the Shadowbox](#), which is our community anti-Facebook forum, where we discuss, and people are sharing what they've read, and the whole team helped me make this beautiful list of books that had changed their brains and souls and lives. I'm gonna put [that list](#), and the link for that list, in the notes for this podcast. You can also just Google it, or you can ask me on social media, and I'll send you the link.

Amanda (voicemail) 17:53

Hi, this is Amanda from Brooklyn. I wanna say thank you, first and foremost, to Amanda, for putting all of these podcasts together. I learned so much, and there were so many times that I felt camaraderie, and felt seen, during a really terrible time, both for me personally, and for the world. Some of the guests I had never even heard of before, and now I have a lot of new books to read, and even started [Tim Ferriss's four hour body diet](#), which has helped me lose some of the pandemic weight.

Amanda 18:28

Thank you, Amanda. Other Amanda. That makes me so happy. All of these messages made me so happy, you guys.

I want you to listen to this now. [Fred Leone](#), this was another huge highlight from the podcast, and a lot of people wrote in about it. Fred is an Aboriginal Butchulla song man, and he reminded us about what music is. And he talked about feeling music, and not just hearing it. Listen.

Fred 18:54

As human beings, the core of our being, since the beginning of time, has always been some kind of music. Like, our oldest songs in Australia, the old songs, are all... (taps rhythm) your mother's heartbeat. All the rhythms are like this. As human beings, we feel that music has that power to move you, you don't even have to understand what the fuck somebody's saying, but you can feel it. You know what it is.

Today, music, particularly, has the power to transcend language, or politics. Anything like that. It breaks down all barriers.

Caitlin (voicemail) 19:31

Hi Amanda, my name is Caitlin, and I'm from Minnesota. I listen with my son sometimes, and he's only 2, but during the Fred Leone episode, once Fred started singing, all I heard was 'Mama sing,' and I had a 2-year-old curled up in my lap, just looking up at me and listening. It just was an amazing moment, and we had to sit there, push rewind I swear for like, half an hour.

(Clip of Fred Leone singing)

Amanda 20:19

God, I miss making music. Why haven't you been making music, Amanda? You may ask. I may ask. I don't know. I have been talking a lot this year. Making music has been hard to access. Maybe doing this podcast was a mistake, maybe I should have spent all

of the time that I spent on this podcast trying to play the piano. I will never know. Don't judge. I'm not judging. I'm just improvising!

I also just spent two years before this pandemic happened putting out the most emotional album of my life, and touring it for four hours a night on stage.

MUSIC CLIP – “The Ride”

Amanda 21:06

I think I just wanted to talk. I'm kind of music-ed out.

But also, I'm getting back into wanting to make music, and every time I talk to one of these musicians, and listen to these podcasts with [KT Tunstall](#), and [Laura Jane Grace](#), and [Storm Large](#), and [Tim Minchin](#), and [Fred](#), and [Rachel Jayson](#), every time I go in there, it gives me the itch to absorb myself back into the world of music. So maybe that's the reason backwards. Maybe I did this podcast because I wanted to talk to my musician colleagues and friends, to remember why.

[MUSIC CLIP - Crazy Weather by Storm Large](#)

Amanda 22:25

That was Storm Large, singing Crazy Weather. [Storm is now on Patreon](#), by the way. You should support her there.

I also got to sit down with the great Sir Lenny Henry, an incredible comedian, Brit weirdo actor-thinker-now memoir writer. For all my fellow artists who have ever felt the calling to just fuck everything and go off and join the circus, this chat is the one for you.

Lenny Henry 22:55

Comedians would go on before me, and they'd be quite bitter that I was top of the bill, so they'd tell the filthiest joke they could tell before I went on stage, just to screw up the audience for me. I was doing very 'I walked into a bar, I said ouch, it was an iron bar.' I was doing jokes like that. I was really terrible. A skeleton walked into a pub and said, 'Can I have a pint of bitter and a mop?' I was doing jokes like that. So I was a kid. But these guys were adults. And what I noticed with adult performers is that they didn't like anybody being successful, and what they would try and do was to pull you down. And I had that to deal with for a good five or six years, it was awful.

And I remember coming home and I was in tears once. My mum said, 'What's the matter with you?' I said, 'It was horrible, and they didn't laugh, it was awful!'

My mum said, 'You wanted this life! This is your fault! You chose to do this! If you want to be funny, go to Wolverhampton! Find jokes!' Which is like go to Poughkeepsie, find jokes. Go to somewhere in the midwest, and there's jokes just lying in the street, and pick them up.

And in a way, what she was saying was, this is the life you've chosen. When you were a kid you just went out with your friends and came back, and you surprised me with all these jokes. You've gotta start doing it again. Keep doing your research. Because whatever you did to get into this career is what you've got to do to keep it.

She was right. Keep going out, keep getting up. Don't just let them knock you down. Cos I've been bullied at school, and all that kind of stuff, and it's very easy when you've been bullied to just give up, to curl in a ball and wait for them to stop hitting you. But one day you're gonna have to get up and face up to it. I just learnt, both in life and in my career, that just because you have one bad night, you've gotta get up the next night. Do it again.

Amanda 24:45

And I wanna get back to the Crowdcast for a second. So if you don't know what Crowdcast is, it's basically like a livestream, like YouTube or Instagram Live, but it's a little private room on the internet, just for the patrons, and that's where I brought the guests in, a few days after the podcast dropped, so people could ask them questions, and I could catch up with them and say, 'Hey! I talked to you 14 months ago, but how are you now? How is COVID?'

And Damian's voice message which you heard talks about how valuable these turned out to be, to me, and to the team, and to the patrons, and the guests. They were mostly patron-only, but if you're listening to this and you're not a patron, all the archives are [now available to anyone](#). So if you wanna tune in and see what I talked about after the fact with [Laura Jane Grace](#), or with Storm, or with anyone, you can see them all on my Crowdcast profile, which I'll stick in the notes, but it's also [Crowdcast.io/AFP](https://crowdcast.io/AFP). You can just go there and see the huge list.

And there were some incredible moments, like this one, I want you to hear this moment with Laura Jane Grace. We recorded our interview, our original podcast, back at SXSW, and then we caught up in quarantine. She was broadcasting from her bathroom,

because the acoustics were good in there. And this Crowdcast felt like a perfect respite for both of us.

She had just released a new lockdown album, called [Stay Alive](#). Wise guidance that we could all use right now. And I want you to listen to this, Laura talking about how she deals with being labelled.

Laura Jane Grace 26:28

Yeah, okay, I'm a transgender musician, but I'm just a musician. And putting the beginning of it, being like, 'transgender musician,' is just the same as being like, 'female musician,' as opposed to just 'musician,' or anything like that. And all those things are nothing that have to do with my creative process. I don't sit down in the morning with my guitar and cup of coffee, and be like, 'I am transgender, it's time to write some transgender songs.' I don't fucking care. I just am who I am.

And also, this real emphasis put on 'Now that you're your true self!' Where it's like, I've always been my true self, motherfucker, it's just been varying degrees of your understanding of what that means, or what I've been upfront about, or... I don't know, everyone grows into themselves in different periods of time, and you understand yourself in different ways. But my reality has always, essentially, been the same, on a personal level, you know?

Amanda 27:30

And then she sang for us! Quite resonant against those bathroom tiles.

MUSIC CLIP – Laura Jane Grace playing Why Kant I Be You?

Laura Jane Grace

*Is this what you expected?
The total of your wants
In the freedom of the motion
Always leaving behind or gone
Sleeping in a stranger's bed
What strange dreams have we shared?
Are you cut adrift?
Lost yourself to nowhere
If I could be anything but me
If I could be anything but me
If I could be anything but me*

*I would be you
I would be you*

Amanda 28:28

God, that was amazing.

And then there was this moment with [Leslie Salmon Jones](#), who is one of the most grounded human beings I know. She's a healer, and a yoga teacher, and in the follow-up Crowdcast, she led us in a spontaneous, unplanned meditation.

Leslie Salmon Jones 28:46

Let's take a moment, maybe keep your eyes closed, or gaze soft, and come back to a natural breath, and relax your hands, and your thighs. Take a moment to notice how you feel in this moment. It's all connected to the rise and fall of your breath.

At your own pace, there's no rush, if your eyes are closed, gently coming back into the room, and noticing what's around you.

Whenever you're ready, bring your awareness back to the screen.

Amanda 29:26

My first Zoom meditation.

Leslie 29:30

Yeah.

Amanda 29:35

That was amazing.

MUSIC CLIP - Pussy Riot's Punk Prayer

This happened, this was November 2020, and I got to interview Nadya from Pussy Riot. And Nadya understands lockdown, having been in jail for two years as a teenager, for her incredibly brave political acts of art and descent. Real lockdown.

And this was the only episode we recorded after lockdown, and released really quickly, because I felt like we needed Nadya's immediate perspective, in a year of so much upheaval and unrest. Listen to this.

Nadya 30:20

A lot of people feel not heard by mainstream politicians, they feel that their needs are not being met by neoliberal economy. And people like Donald Trump appearing all of a sudden, and they offer easy solutions, because that's what authoritarian, or pro-authoritarian, politicians are doing. They're pointing at easy targets to hate, and to blame for all the problems that people are experiencing. And that's easy, that's just part of our human, it's a part of being human, we are looking for easy solutions, because if we'd look for difficult solutions, all the time our life would turn into hell. So we cannot blame people for wanting to vote for Donald Trump.

But I think what we wanna do is to offer a viable solution to those people who feel left out by current economic system. And I feel like people like Bernie Sanders, and Jeremy Corbyn, they're on the way of serving justice to those people who feel left out by current system.

And it's just a matter of time, when politicians - left-wing, progressive politicians - will be able to connect with those people who vote today for politicians like Donald Trump.

Amanda 32:00

And I need to add this. Right, right now, and I mean right, right now, Pussy Riot's Masha Alekhina is currently under a house arrest for posting on social media, and she is facing two years in jail. The suffering endlessly continues. So I'm gonna throw in a little ask here, because you can actually get the word out about that right now, and just go search the hashtag #FreePussyRiot on Twitter and other social media, and go look, and go help. And I also linked the campaign in the show notes here in the episode.

Here is a clip from Pussy Riot's latest song, Rage.

MUSIC CLIP – Rage by Pussy Riot

Amanda 32:51

Here are some more of the messages we got from listeners.

Lauren (voicemail) 32:55

Hey! My name is Lauren, I live in the Boulder area, and I actually just moved here just before the pandemic started, and I would say that my favourite part of the podcast, for the first season, was listening to Amanda talk to her therapist. It was really interesting when they were talking, especially about how everyone is thinking about making a move in their life, whether that's about a relationship, or a physical move to another place, and

that just really hit really hard. I'm considering moving from here already, even though I've lived here for a year, cos it's been so difficult meeting people during these times, and I actually ended up forwarding that specific episode to probably five more of my friends that were going through a lot of the same things.

Amanda 33:34

I can relate to moving so much. I am in my fifth Airbnb in less than a year.

Here is an excerpt from the podcast with my therapist Wayne Muller, where we talk a lot about being always in flux, and how to contain it.

Amanda 33:54

Neil and I have been in a 'what is home?' struggle, and the proportions are just bizarre, because we travel constantly. So whatever we're calling home isn't even just the place that we sleep, it's the place that we'll come back to every six months and spend some time unpacking and doing our laundry again before we go out and live in London for four months, and live in Australia for three months, and go on tour and live in tour buses, and taking turns taking care of our child.

I really struggled with our current... let's call it 'sleeping house.' I've struggled with our current sleeping house, but I also was dealing with my own internal struggle in my relationship with Neil, reorienting myself as a parent. Just feeling homeless on every kind of level.

I see it with Neil too and his career, but I certainly feel it as I tour. There is kind of a home base for me emotionally, doing a show and just being with my community. And when I have felt upended and disoriented and homeless in my little domestic sphere, I can feel very relaxed and at home when I tour and I'm with a group of semi-strangers, the same way I am sure you have felt that with different groups of people, because you're sort of a group leader, and a workshop leader.

One of the reasons I wanted to do this retreat last week, and get these 60 people together, and I think I even mentioned it a few times in the course of the retreat, is this is where we live right now. With each other. I'm used to this, I've changed homes maybe 600 times in the course of my adult life. I'm good at it. And I also really know what I need. And what I really need is to just feel connected to the people who are in the room right now, and I can do it at the drop of a hat, cos I've had to learn how to do that.

One of the things you've really helped me with, just to have someone to work through all of this internal stuff. Cos also, I used to have Anthony on the phone all the time. He wasn't my 'therapist,' but he was a therapist, and he raised me. You, in a way, almost took his place as a kind of homing mechanism. Even just to have someone to talk to, to remind me what I'm struggling with, what's going on, what is home? Why does this feel so disorienting? What am I doing?

And I can say right now, when I shifted my internal feeling within myself, within my relationship with Neil, around where I was, my feeling in my own house transformed. Because I went, oh, right. None of this fucking matters. I could be anywhere. I could be on tour, I could be in the Congo, I could be in Iceland. I was really trying to rely on the correct Tetris combination of domestic certitude rightness right decision to make me happy, and that was incorrect. Wouldn't have worked.

Wayne Muller 37:20

When you call me from a place of whirling or flailing or unknowing that feels in that moment bigger than you, or frightening, or painful, or really 99 times out of 100 what I will be doing is mirroring back to you some way of helping you remember who you are, where you live, where your gifts and where your wholeness is. Because me, in Santa Fe, as much as I would love to, can't grant you the peace, the ease, the relief from those things that I would love to. But you do, when you remember the spaciousness of your container.

There's a Tibetan story about if you take a tablespoon of salt and stir it into a glass of water and drink it, it tastes terrible. If you take that same tablespoon of salt and stir it into an enormous clear blue mountain lake and then you drink the water it tastes just as sweet. The salt isn't the problem. How spacious the container is is really what creates the suffering.

And when we speak, I can feel you remembering how much you can create a space large enough to hold even this, and still be alright. And that's not in service of holding more and more, that's not the point. The point is to be able to remember who you are. And when we choose a home for ourselves, the world right now is a very difficult place for almost everybody. The economic pressures are statistically so jagged and heart-shredding for people, it's not really being talked about. People have to work harder just to keep up. Finding a place of peace, a time of quiet is almost impossible. But if there are ways, and if we have one another's back, and if we know one another well enough, what we need really more than anything are communities of people who know one another, love one another, have one another's back, so that we can remind

one another who we really are, how strong, how beautiful. We need to resurrect our magnificence with one another.

Amanda 39:59

Goddamn, Wayne! That was beautiful!

Amanda 40:06

This is a voicemail from Mary.

Mary (voicemail) 40:08

Hey, it's Mary from Lancashire, Pennsylvania, and I wanted to tell you that in [the KT Tunstall podcast](#), "The Land of No Fucks Given," basically everything from 54:02 on was unbelievable.

KT Tunstall 40:24

What I'm realising, and it's so easy to say it, and it's so hard to actually follow it, is the most important subject is just to love yourself, completely, and thoroughly, every dark corner.

Mary (voicemail) 40:40

... was really, really good. And I also really loved "We think the mind..."

KT Tunstall 40:46

We think the mind is God. And the mind is not God. God is God. Soul is God. Source energy is God.

Mary (voicemail) 40:56

And then at 57:30, she said...

KT Tunstall 40:58

Mind, have a look at everything. Let's see what's actually real. And every time I do that, I'm forming this new habit, that the body knows it is not the mind, and the mind knows it's not in control. That response, taking that breath before you respond, is the path to peace.

Amanda 41:29

God, that was beautiful. Thank you, Mary.

And Skye wrote in to remind me of [the conversation with end-of-life specialist Dr. BJ Miller](#), who told us in his episode that most hospitals are only really good for preserving life as defined by a heartbeat.

BJ Miller 41:54

On some level, dying is just about as natural as it gets, and on some level it should be an intuitive thing, and we've been doing it for gazillions of years as a species. But the truth is, we have invented all sorts of spectacular ways to distract ourselves from it, so we don't get to know it earlier in life, and we've just invented incredible ways to sustain, to prop up a body, but actually not necessarily promote life. So you're left with, actually, you've got a healthcare system that could make you live practically, bodily, give you a heartbeat almost forever, and death becomes a moment of opting out of some system. And it's not intuitive.

Amanda 42:32

No. It's not intuitive.

Leslie (voicemail) 42:38

Hey Amanda, my name is Leslie, I live just outside of Boston, I ate an amazing lunch with you, way, way, way back when my daughter was about 4 years old, her name's Trin, and she's 16 now. And I've been listening to your podcast. And the whole thing about death, right? That's me. I died while giving birth to my daughter, 15 years ago.

And I have a story about death. It came with birth. My daughter. She came into this world dramatically. It was trauma for both of us, and I'm shocked that we are both still alive. And the journey from that year of 2005 has been the most amazing 16 years of my life. During this pandemic of 2020, I went back into yoga teacher training, and became a 500 hour yogi. We only have this moment. We only have the moment that we are alive, just in this moment. One breath at a time.

MUSIC BREAK – Congratulations

Amanda 43:58

While we're talking about death, let's talk about love. It's complicated. Relationships, they're fucking hard. So many of you wrote in responding to [my episode with Dan Savage](#), sex expert, about being in an open marriage.

Andrew (voicemail) 44:12

This is Andrew from Los Angeles, California, sunny Los Angeles, California. Amanda, I had no idea that you and Neil were in an open marriage! I've been following you since about 2008, which is about the same time I've been following Dan Savage, and I still learn something new from him and yourself every day, and I love that you two got together, and it just sounded like you were two were like, best friends.

Amanda 44:39

We are your best friends. We just are!

I want you to listen to this clip. This is me and Dan Savage talking about open relationships.

Dan Savage 44:47

There are people who cheat...

Amanda 44:48

Oh, cos they want the danger.

Dan 44:49

They want the danger, they wanna lie, they wanna sneak around, that's what makes it exciting for them.

Amanda 44:52

I don't get that! I have never, ever felt that, but I think that's just the way that I'm built. To me, the idea of lying and cheating is so un-sexy.

Dan 45:01

Well, risk and danger excites people, and power excites people. And to have a secret, and to get away with something, is to have power over someone else. If you can understand that that's what's going on for you, I think you can build that into an ethical non-monogamous relationship, in fact I have friends who have built that into an ethical non-monogamous relationship, where the one used to cheat, and they had a lot of crisis around it, and when it was permitted, if he could go and ask for permission...

Amanda 45:26

It's just no fun any more.

Dan 45:27

It wasn't fun, it wasn't exciting. He liked being this dirty bird guy who sometimes snuck around and did these disgusting things, and it was a part of him that was, pre-coming out, he was sneaking around and having sex with men on the fly, and feeling very conflicted, but very aroused by who he was perceived to be, and who he actually knew himself to be. That dichotomy really turned him on. And so everything being on the up and up was kind of ruining it for him, and I actually kind of helped them craft a solution, which was he can cheat, and he doesn't have to ask permission, tell you in advance, but every six months or so, you guys sit down, and...

Amanda 46:03

Make a list?

Dan 46:04

Yeah, so what happened in the last six months?

Amanda 46:05

Wow!

Dan 46:06

So there are times when he says, I'm meeting a friend, or going out to dinner with my parents...

Amanda 46:10

Lies!

Dan 46:11

And it's a lie. And there are times when he says I'm going out to dinner with my parents, and it's the truth.

Amanda 46:14

It's so theatrical, though.

Dan 46:16

It is!

Amanda 46:17

Once you know that, it can't be, it's like, well, really dinner with the parents? Or I'm going to the dungeon?

Dan 46:23

So he gets to go home after sneaking out to a dungeon, and his partner is none the wiser, feeling like he put something over on his partner, and then they go to Palm Springs and take MDMA, and tell each other everything.

MUSIC BREAK - Do It With a Rockstar

Amanda 46:41

God, I love Dan Savage!

Lisa Marshall from Tasmania, Australia, wrote in that [my chat with musician and powerhouse singer, lover, bon vivante Storm Large](#) made her laugh out loud, specifically how parallel parking became a feminist statement for both of us.

Amanda 47:02

Do you have a problem asking for driving directions, is the big question?

Storm 47:06

No, but you want my fucking button? My quickest button to get to, to make me tell someone, 'Look, motherfucker, you dial 9 and 1, and with whatever I don't break you can maybe dial the other 1 if you stand here too much longer,' and it's when someone fucking tries to tell me how to parallel park. I'm like, bitch. I will dust you off like an old rug in front of your girlfriend. Your girlfriend will be screaming at me to please stop kicking your unconscious body around the street if you don't get away from my car. Because I can parallel park with a goddamn boat being towed.

Amanda 47:46

I can parallel park the shit out of things, and I am so proud of it!

Storm 47:49

Right! It's awesome!

Amanda 47:51

And I also love nothing more than kicking a man out of the driver's seat, like, listen, I got this.

Storm 47:55

I got you, I got this.

Amanda 47:57

Enough with your seven-point-turn.

Storm 48:01

Yeah, man. Let me clamsplain something to you, bro!

Amanda 48:04

Clamsplaining! So just so you know, clamsplaining is the opposite, according to Storm, of mansplaining. It is like mansplaining but with your vagina. God, I fucking love Storm Large. So if you want to laugh for a good hour, and also go on a marathon of loving self-acceptance, that's your podcast. That's your episode. Go listen to that whole episode. It is so good.

One of my patrons, Suzanne, wrote this in the comments: "I adore listening to these podcasts, I have learned so much, the stuff I learn makes me feel like 'why did I not know this before now?'" If I tell you what these things are, I'd be embarrassed, because I am 56, and ought to know some of this shit by now. Also Amanda, you ask really good fucking questions, I mean really good, so that's my feedback, keep asking everything please."

Here is my response: HARD RELATE. I relate very hard here. I am constantly astounded and confronted with what I do not know and understand. But if I am learning anything as I get old, and dude, I'm 44 now, let me call myself old, it is that I have less and less shame every year, around what I don't know and understand, and I have less and less shame around asking questions when I don't know or understand what the fuck someone is talking about! And especially when someone is talking as if I am supposed to know exactly what they're talking about, I just refuse to be ashamed about the massive holes in my brain, and my world education. Fuck that. There's just tons of shit I don't know, and I am going to ask when I don't know. Got that? Good. Thank you, Suzanne.

My patron Kate Whitehead let us know a few of her Australian favourites, like Clare Bowditch, and Fred Leone, but she also brought up a really important message from [climate scientist Tim Flannery](#), that I want you to listen to here, and it has so much resonance now, a year into the pandemic.

Tim Flannery 50:11

What I tell climate sceptics now when I meet them is, 'Look, you and your attitudes are threatening my children's future. This is getting very personal. It's not just some

ideological thing, you are actually threatening my family.' And that gets discussions started. So get out there, and start being a leader in my community. And that's why I use harsh words sometimes when I'm talking to people like that, saying this isn't a game, it isn't about tribalism, it isn't about identity, it isn't about politics. You are threatening my children. So justify that, or get out of the way.

Amanda 50:44

(singing) If you can't lend a hand, oh the times they are a-changin'!

Okay! So here, I'm on a roll you guys, now. I feel like if this podcast is good for anything, it is to use my measly little platform to get information and important messages like this into your ears, right now. And even more important, I want you to not feel alone. This is the most important thing to me. For you not to feel alone. And I thank my lucky stars every day for this community, this podcast community, this patron community, which helps me not feel alone every goddamn day.

Listen to this message from Susie from Chicago, who, by the way, I stayed with, back in the day.

Susie (voicemail) 51:36

I was listening to your podcast on our climate crisis, and what was going on, and I was really excited to hear your podcast, and hear this discussion, but then I realized something very sad, when you asked, what can we do today to change things? And there wasn't an immediate, like, this is an easy thing that you can do. And I wanted to call and talk to you about the fact that the simple act of opting to use a bike to go around your neighbourhood, to do the small trips that you need to do, so that we can lower the impact that we have on this planet. Small trips under ten miles are the majority of car trips, and those usually are single occupants in the vehicle, and those have the greatest climate impact, because of the lack of efficiency in using a car for that short of a distance.

Here's to changing the world, and making it better for our kids, so it still exists, so they have a place to raise their kids, too. Thanks.

Amanda 52:47

So sometimes these conversations aren't fun, or funny, but goddammit, they're so important. So important.

And with that, you may be asking... what is next? Where's the podcast going? What are we gonna do? We've taken all of our episodes in the can, we've put them out. So I wanna tell you what we're working on.

I thought about stopping the podcast, so that I could get back to focusing on writing, writing a book, making more music. And it's not that I can't do both, but I stopped and thought, and especially because it's COVID, I thought, there's so many people around the world I want to talk to anyway, and this is such a good excuse to get on the phone with the people who I want to connect with, and I wanna bump brains with. And you get to listen.

So I'm gonna do it.

And also, I have learned about how to make a podcast. So has my team. And I want this podcast to keep getting better. And my team has learned so much as we have stumbled through the mistakes, and the takeaways from season one. I don't wanna stop this now, just as we're finally starting to figure out how to do this.

So the plan is to keep doing the podcast, but instead of putting it out weekly, which has been killing us, we're gonna put out about one episode per month. And that way, we can really slow down, focus on it, work on it, give the episode, and the edits, the time and the care that it needs.

That's the plan.

The plan may change, you know me. But I've already started down this path. If you haven't heard it yet, go back and listen to [my interview with Dr. Rola Hallam](#), who's a Syrian-born British doctor who saw how broken the system was on the ground in Syria. Funds and resources were just not going where they were needed, so she decided to crowdfund a hospital for kids in Syria, and it worked.

Rola Hallam 55:14

Hospitals were being bombed. They were being targeted, they were being strategically destroyed as a weapon of war. Not accidentally, not like, oops, sorry! The bomb fell, it wasn't meant to be there, it was meant to go to a bakery, or a school! It was actually as a weapon of war.

Amanda 55:32

And she reached out to me, and said, 'I need to talk to you, I've read your book, we have so much in common,' and I cannot wait for you to hear this episode. I just recorded it, it's amazing. And she, the doctor, suggested that we name the episode 'The Fuckery of Philanthropy.' Come on!

And I got to interview [Sherry Turkle](#), one of my heroes. She has been studying, researching, and writing about the collision of people and the human soul and computers and technology and smartphones for decades. She is a heavyweight over at MIT and has been working there for many, many, many years. She has a new memoir out, [The Empathy Diaries](#), that we got to talk about. And she told us a story about how Marvin Minsky hates Bambi.

Sherry Turkle 56:30

And he says, you know, no kid should ever see Bambi. So I'm such a jerk, I jumped to the bait. I'm wanting to have a child some day, I grew up with Bambi, I'm thinking about Bambi.

"Marvin, why can't children see Bambi?" I ask, thinking of the mother, thinking of Bambi's love for his mother.

And he says, "Well, Bambi teaches that it's important to love your mother and be attached to a parent, whereas we're gonna be raised by robot minders and artificial intelligences, and no child should learn that that's important, because in the future we're gonna be raised by robots. So it's completely out of the question and bad for children to get that kind of idea about human attachment."

And all these kids, and all these students, these impressionable MIT students around him are going, Yes! Yes! Bad Bambi!

So I just say at the end of the book that when I had my daughter - the book is dedicated to my daughter - I stored up on Bambi, I made sure we had one at my summer house, my summer cottage, one in the winter palace, one in the summer palace.

MUSIC CLIP – Untouchable Face by Ani DiFranco

Fuck you, and your untouchable face

Fuck you for existing in the first place

And who am I, that I should be vying for your touch?

Amanda 58:00

And I have an interview lined up with [Ani DiFranco](#), titan of the DIY 90s, and a hero, musical hero, music business hero of mine. And we're gonna talk about how the way we put out music has changed the way we think up songs and music, and the way we make and record. Basically, we're gonna talk about how the way we share music with our communities has shaped us as poets, and lyric-writers, and that is gonna be a fucking good conversation.

And there's more, I have a list as long as your arm, with guest ideas, and you know me, I'm also gonna take your ideas, so hold the phone, I'm gonna ask you who you want to talk to, and have access to. I have a good rolodex, I have a billion ideas, but only one slot about every month, so we're gonna have to choose wisely, and go slow. But if you want some ideas on the burner of friends, I wanna talk to [Ben Folds](#), a musician I've worked with many times who has wound up in Australia during COVID. I wanna catch up with [Brené Brown](#) who is a professor and writer and vulnerability expert, who wrote the introduction to my book *The Art of Asking*. And sky is the limit! Let's get Michelle Obama on the fucking phone! I wanna talk to everybody! Who do we want? Everybody! When do we want them? Soon! It's gonna be good!

I also wanna make a quick note, if you have missed this, about transcripts, and accessibility. We want as many of you as possible to be able to enjoy *The Art of Asking Everything* podcast. And it's a podcast, you listen to it, but our glorious London-based Merch Queen Alex Knight has been transcribing, lovingly, the episode audio since day one. And these are not just transcripts of the conversation. They are works of art! Alex has been working to make these enhanced, annotated transcripts. And he sits and listens to every word of the podcast, and writes it down, with fact-checking, and spell-checking, and he checks with me, and the guest, to make sure everything is right, it is a lot of work.

And also in each episode, we tend to talk about, and reference, a lot of different things, like people, and music, and books, and TED talks, and articles, and links, and there's just too many to be able to link everything in the podcast show notes. So, to help you out, the transcripts are annotated with links to everything that we reference, including the titles of every track we play during the musical breaks. And that's a lot of work. So I want you to know, especially the patrons who are funding this podcast, that Alex is always sitting there, and slaving over that project.

So if you heard [Madison Young talking about her feminist art gallery](#), or [Storm talking about how she broke down crying on a live television reality show](#), or you fell in love with the gorgeous music of Clare Bowditch during her episode, or you heard something

and you just couldn't stop and write it down, Alex has got your back! The transcripts are there, care of Alex. Always know that we're there, working for you.

And also, up until now, the transcripts have just been attached as a pdf file to the episode post on Patreon, but going forward, these will be even more accessible, by just going to amandapalmer.net/podcast and you'll be able to click on each episode and see the beautifully laid out transcript.

If you have feedback about that, tell me, tell Alex, we wanna hear it.

We are also putting out a survey, so [please click on it in the show notes](#), or on the Patreon, and fill it out. We need to hear from you! As we're going forward in the podcast, we want to make it what you want.

Lastly, guess who pays for all of this shit to happen? Yes, you got it, my patrons!

A lot of you are probably listening. Some of you listening might not be a patron. I need to explain this once again, cos it's so important. The podcast will remain advertisement-free. You will never be fucking listening to my podcast, to me talking with a guest about death, pain, suffering, childhood, and survival, and how we get out of the hell of suffering, and then like, two seconds later, wonder why I am telling you to go to mattresses.com. Never. Why? Because patronage.

And I fucking love my team, and my team works hard, and my team is expensive. And they should be, because they kill. And I have no shame about asking you to pay them for the dozens of hours of work that go into producing these episodes. It is not just two people talking and a little recording that I pop up onto the internet, and voila, magical podcast.

Also, we pay our podcast guests. What?! Yes, we pay them. They take time out of their lives to talk to me, and us, and it is nice to pay them for their time. And if my guests don't wanna get paid, we ask them to choose a charity, and we pay the patron money forward to the charity of their choice.

So much shit has to be done to get this podcast out. Recording studios have to be booked, and re-booked because COVID, and sickness, and cancellations. Engineers have to be hired, edits take billions of hours, audio needs cleaning, and clearing, and rights, and the podcast release needs design, and images, and there's fact-checking, and there's the transcript, and ahh, it's a fuck ton of stuff! And it's expensive!

So, usually podcasts have ads and sponsors, and exclusive relationships with giant corporations like Spotify and Luminary and whatever, and we don't do that. We just use patronage, and we ask everyone to kick in a few bucks a month to support me, and my staff, so that we do not have to do a dance of death with the for-profit world of podcasting. And it is awesome.

And, by the way, a lot of my guests are also on Patreon. [Pussy Riot](#), [KT Tunstall](#), [Madison Young](#), [Storm Large](#), please go and support them too. Giving these artists and thinkers and writers even a dollar or five dollars makes a huge difference when it all adds up. And Patreon is an incredibly powerful anti-patriarchy community-based democratically flattening way of supporting and connecting art and audience. I'm a huge fan of it. And if you didn't get the gist, please support me but also my guests.

And my patrons are becoming a stronger and stronger, and more beautifully connected community, within themselves, and with me.

And I just cannot stress enough how important it is, even if you can only give a dollar a month. It changes everything. Because how we make this media is fucking important. The medium is the message, people!

So, [join the Patreon](#). Without you, it doesn't happen.

I am so happy I put this podcast out. I have no regrets. (*singing*) Non, rien de rien! Non, je ne regrette rien!

I fucking love all of you. Thank you for listening. Thank you for even getting this far in this episode. Thank you for listening to the podcast. Thank you for your support. Thank you for loving it. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for supporting my staff. Thank you for sharing this with your friends and your families. Thank you for rating and reviewing it everywhere you go. Just, thank you! I love you!

Your support of this podcast has kept me sane, I am not shitting you, over the last six months. I do not know what I would have done without it. I cannot wait to see what we do next. Whatever we do, let's fucking do it.

Signing off, this is Amanda Fucking Palmer, and her whole team. We love you. Keep on asking everything.

This has been a weird, special episode of The Art of Asking Everything podcast. I am Amanda Palmer, you know that by now. For all the music you heard in the episode, and throughout this season, you can go to amandapalmer.net/podcast

[I also made a Spotify playlist](#) with all of the great music by the artists that I've talked to this season, like Tim Minchin, and KT Tunstall, it is hand-selected, it is a beautiful playlist, go listen to that.

As usual, fucking a billion thanks to my incredible team. Hayley Rosenblum and Michael McComiskey, keeping the fires burning in New York City, who between them wear about 97 hats on Team AFP. Thanks to Alex, Merch Queen and Transcript Queen in the UK.

I have already told you about the new Team AFP member, Kelly Welles in the UK, who I found through her work on [The Guilty Feminist podcast](#), she joined in November to help with social media, and editorial, and fact-checking, and connecting with the guests, so thank you, all of you, for welcoming her very effusively in the [Shadowbox](#), on the forum. Kelly is now working side-by-side with our podcast editor and genius Fannie, to lovingly craft this episode that you're listening to, and all the new ones that you're gonna hear coming up.

And I don't often talk about Fannie, or give her the shoutout that she deserves for all of the hours that she spends at a hot editing desk. But without her work behind the scenes, this podcast wouldn't be happening, wouldn't have happened. She and I actually talked for months, maybe even years, in the lead up to the podcast, about how we wanted to do it, and she has been booking interviews, and dealing with guests, and handling recording studios around the world, and transforming raw sound files into the pieces of art that they have become. So I just wanted to explain Fannie to you, so that you know who is actually back there behind the desk, doing this work. And Kelly is becoming a bigger and bigger, bigger, brighter part of the team every day, so just wanted to thank them, thank you Fannie and Kelly.

Thank you to my manager Jordan Verzar in Sydney, who is bringing it all together, and making sure everybody gets paid!

This podcast was edited and produced by FannieCo.

Once again, do not forget to support the podcast by [becoming a patron](#). It's a dollar a month, it makes it happen.

Also, just a little quick note. I don't advertise on this podcast, if you have noticed. There are no ads, there are no sponsors, but since it's my fucking podcast I can advertise myself if I want to, and I want to advertise that if you happen to be listening to this podcast in the middle of April towards the beginning of May 2021, which probably you are, I'm having a gigantic, everything Dresden Dolls and Amanda Palmer merchandise clearance. [I will also put the link in the notes for this podcast, but if you go over to either my merchandise page or the Dresden Dolls page. we're having a giant fire sale](#), we're clearing out our warehouses of posters and vinyl and stickers and pins and everything under the sun that's just been sitting gathering dust in our merchandise warehouses for the last ten years. There is shit that's up to 80% off, Patreon people get an additional discount, so go over and check that out if you just want some things to make your life more stuff-laden.

I hope you loved this. It was an experiment. Sorry if it was weird, and long, and rambling, that's what it was supposed to be. Fuck you if you didn't like it. See you soon, everybody. I love you! Bye for now.