

WHAT ROLE DOES FEAR PLAY IN OUR RELIGION AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS?

Hi. This is Natalie Hoffman of FlyingFreeNow.com, and you're listening to the Flying Free Podcast, a support resource for women of faith looking for hope and healing from hidden emotional and spiritual abuse.

NATALIE: Welcome to Episode 194 of the Flying Free Podcast. Today I have with me a special guest. Her name is Naomi Norton. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist. She's been in practice for eight years. She has a passion for working with marginalized communities and people with religious trauma. And she's currently in the final stages of completing her PhD in family therapy at North Central University. Her dissertation research focuses on how the evangelical Christian community views mental health, which I think is so fascinating. So welcome, Naomi. Thank you for being here on this podcast episode.

NAOMI: Hi, thank you for having me. I'm really excited to be able to have this conversation with you.

NATALIE: Yeah. Okay, so first of all, before we tell everyone what we're gonna talk about, tell us just a little bit about yourself. What is your background? I mean, I wanna know what your background is. Why did you wanna be a therapist? We need good therapists, right? And what are you hoping to accomplish with your dissertation?

NAOMI: Those are big questions.

NATALIE: I know.

NAOMI: Like, okay, a short amount of time. So I grew up in a very independent, fundamental Baptist home and growing up... I don't wanna say anything negative. I had a really good childhood, and also as I got older, I started to realize a lot of these different ideologies and how they were affecting me. More so when I graduated and I went to college, then I started experiencing a lot of the patriarchy and purity culture, and it got to the point where I ended up really losing who I was. And not just within my family, but also within the Christian culture that I was surrounded by at college. Because they were just telling me, "It's just your job to submit and to pray. That's God's will for you." And then I didn't have peace in my spirit, and I got a lot of spiritual abuse and psychological abuse at that time. And so I did lose who I was, and it took a long time for me to sort of claw my way out of that.

And so it was probably about in my twenties when I really started to wrestle with my faith and really make it my own. At that point, I also realized how much families impact people and impact us. And so that started me on that journey of family therapy. Then I got my degree, and then as I kept going, I remember all throughout my childhood and even currently how mental health within the Christian circles tends to be dismissed or been seen as, "You're not doing enough; you're not praying enough," or "There's some sort of demonic influence." And so that really got me curious, and, "How can we help bridge this gap?" And so that's what sort of led me into my dissertation of really trying to figure out these cultural ideologies and, "How are we making meaning of mental illness?" So long story short.

NATALIE: No, that was very concise. That's great. I think your dissertation is so needed. I'm excited to read it when it's done.

NAOMI: Ugh, me too. I'm just to the point, like, just get it done and then I can look back and see what I wrote.

NATALIE: Yeah. Who was it? Someone said, "I don't like writing. I like having written." Can't remember who said that. Some great writer. Well, anyway. Okay. So here's how I found Naomi. I actually don't remember, but I found her on Facebook going through a Facebook rabbit trail — you know how those are — and I found her post on fear. And I just wanna read just a couple of little highlights from this post, just to get everyone in the framework of where I'm coming from is why I invited you on to this episode. So the title of her post was, "The Power of Fear and White Fundamental Evangelicalism."

And she said this: "Fear is a powerful and influential emotion, especially when harnessed by other people. Within my experiences and coding, there is a notable theme of fear." And as you just heard, she has kind of a fundamentalist Christian background. "Fear is a normal human emotion and isn't seclusive to the white..." Did you mean "exclusive" or did I just... "...isn't seclusive to the white fundamental Evangelical..." (I'm probably showing my ignorance there.) "...white fundamental evangelical culture, yet it is a powerful dynamic within the white fundamental evangelical community."

Okay. Then she wrote about some themes, and she kind of listed all of these themes of fear within the community, the Christian community, that she has observed. And I'm not gonna read all the things she wrote about each little item, but I wanna just highlight what the items are. And then I will include a link to this particular post of hers so you can read the whole thing. And also, if you're interested, you can look at her page, and if some of the things she's writing about resonate with you or interest you, you can

certainly feel free to follow her, okay?

So here's some themes of fear she found: 1. Using fear for salvation. I mean, I remember being a kid and I was told, "Pray this prayer, and you will go to heaven. Don't pray the prayer, and you will go to hell." And so of course, I raised my hand to pray the prayer. That was fun.

NAOMI: Who wants to go to hell? I mean, fire, worms, gnashing of teeth.

NATALIE: Exactly. It was like a total no brainer, right? 2. Fear of the unknown, 3. Fear of change or the evolution of the faith. So fear of your faith kind of changing or evolving or whatever. 4. Fear of finding out parts of your beliefs might have been wrong, 5. Fear of being vulnerable or authentic with the religious community due to being misunderstood, judged... Which the women that are listening, a lot of them have experienced this. They've been afraid to step forward and say, "Hey, I think there's something wrong in my marriage," because they know instinctively that if they do that, they're gonna be told, "Why are you airing dirty laundry? Is this being respectful to your husband by telling us what your husband's doing? Surely you're misunderstanding. You must not be submitting. You must not be being a good wife, otherwise he wouldn't do that" — that kind of thing. And then 6. Fear to reach out for help and connection because you're just gonna get back this simple Christian response like, "Count it all joy when you face trials," and "Suffer for Jesus," and "Die to yourself."

And 7. Fear of being contaminated by others. Like being afraid to read books that maybe your church says, "That's a heretical book. Don't ever read that author," or "Don't ever read that book." Although I have to say, any of you listeners who have read my book, you've already dipped into the heretical waters, so, you know. You had to overcome some fear to do that, right? 8. Fear of the end times, 9. Fear of other people who are different from you, 10. Fear of losing power or influence, 11. Fear of persecution or hardships, fear about... Well, anyways, those kinds of things. So we're gonna actually have a conversation about fear in general right now. But that's the post that inspired me to invite Naomi on here. So why don't you tell us, Naomi, what is the function of fear as you would describe it?

NAOMI: So as the therapist side of me, it took me a while to realize that emotions actually have a purpose. Because I was raised a lot like, "Emotion is just weakness. It's just something that leads you astray." So you sort of dissociate from them. And so then it wasn't until I was in school that they taught me every emotion has a function and a reason. And so with fear, a lot of it is to let us know that there's something that feels unsafe. And it also took a lot for me to recognize that there's even a physiological

response. We have an amygdala in all of our brains that is always assessing for safety. And so that is a core part of us as being humans and how we were created, to really look at, "What is safety" — if we're feeling unsafe to really tune in, to see what is going on. Because yeah, some things, it can be a little wonky and we may still be safe, but feel unsafe. Then other times we could really be in unsafe situations, but we won't know if we're not paying attention to this fear that we have or that's coming out.

NATALIE: Yeah. So what are some ways that we can recognize fear, then?

NAOMI: Well, I think generally it tends to show up in our body first. And so we really have to tune into our bodies. So a lot of common things is when we're noticing our heart rate increase, our breathing going faster. Sometimes we get like this butterfly feeling in our stomach — that tends to let us know. And a lot of times, sometimes our muscles will tremble. I try to tell people, like, it feels weird to describe — it's almost like you're shaking from the inside out. Like you're not cold, but your muscles are sort of responding. And so those are sort of those signs of, "Okay, something isn't right." And the more you start tuning into your body, the more you can start to be aware of, "Oh, I'm sensing that this is a presence of fear." And so your body doesn't have to do a lot of really showing you that it's really scared — that you can start tuning into those smaller signs that something's wrong or feels wrong.

NATALIE: Yeah. So let's say that starts to happen. What do you recommend for people to do when they start noticing, and then they actually make the connection and go, "I think I'm feeling fear in my body." Then what?

NAOMI: Well, I think there is definitely a spectrum, because first, being able to assess your situation. Because many times when we're having a response, it's not sort of that time to sit down and process. So it's almost that time to sort of regulate, do some of those grounding... Because if our brains get too overwhelmed, if we feel too scared or if we're not really tuned into emotion a lot, we can almost get zapped if we start paying attention. So we really have to focus on calming our bodies and brains down so we can still stay connected. And so really paying attention to textures, colors, sounds around us so it can help calm us down.

But then also, when we are in a safe place to be able to recognize and process, "Okay, so what happened?" Because our brains are so crazy. They're so amazing that we can take in so much unconscious data that our body and brain is processing, and we're only aware of just one or two percent of it. So we could be responding to a sight, a sound, or someone's tone or something that's going on. So it takes time to process through to figure out, "Okay, what was it? Did I feel this way in a different situation? What came up

for me," to really sort of start to tune in to sort of connect those dots.

And it's so important that we also don't just dismiss them. That's like when we're safe and calm to go back and sort of process through, "What was coming up, and why was this coming up for me?" And some of it could be past trauma, because many times, our body's not just responding to the current moment, but also to past experiences like, "Ooh, this feels unsafe because of all these other past times." And so also being aware of processing, "Did I feel this way in the past, and is something connecting to this?"

NATALIE: Yeah, okay. So in the Christian world... And I grew up swimming in that soup. I remember it was ingrained in me that it was silly. Like if I was afraid of something that somehow I was weak or that I was making something up in my head or whatever. How have you noticed the Christian community actually talking about fear or relating to the emotion of fear?

NAOMI: It's so complex, but I see some of it is really dismissed, especially for us women. Because I feel like it's seen as, "Oh, well, you're just emotional, You're just PMSing. You're just making a big deal out of nothing." And so it almost teaches us that our concerns don't matter and that we almost need to be silent because other people in leadership — all the men, all the elders, all the pastors — they're looking out for us, so we need to trust what they say, and so it's almost like we have to second guess ourselves. But I also think there's that ingrained, "I have to be scared of God. Because if I'm not following the straight and narrow, if I'm not listening to leadership, if I'm not listening to my husband or to my father or whoever, that then we're not gonna be in God's will, and then we're gonna face punishment from God."

And so it sort of creates this very complex dynamic of, "How do we tune in to fear?" It's to help us be safe, but then also we're tying in almost our eternal safety to it as well, especially within this community, which makes it so hard, because it's like we're making a decision or trying to figure out safety right now, but also for eternity. So it's so hard.

NATALIE: Right. It is. The whole fear of God thing, too, is... There's so much cognitive dissonance around that, because God is like, "God loves you and He's for you, and He rejoices over you with singing. And also, be careful because" (like Jonathan Edwards) "because you're a spider, and He's dangling you over an open barbecue pit, and if you make one wrong move, He's just gonna drop you and be happy to watch you burn."

Which God is it? And then I think too, that really is one of the biggest things I think that the women that I'm talking to — so many of them will ask questions, and what's underneath that question is, "I'm afraid of what God will do. I'm afraid if I try to get

help, I'm afraid of what will happen. What will God do? I'm afraid if I separate from my husband, what will God do? Will my kids go to hell? Will I go to hell? Will I never have enough money to eat again?" They think that God's going to not bless them, which goes back to the whole, "God blesses you if you do A, B, and C, and He's not gonna bless you, He's gonna punish you if you don't." Can you talk about that a little bit too?

NAOMI: That's a huge topic.

NATALIE: I know, but with these women, it is a big thing,

NAOMI: I think for me, there's that space of first me giving myself permission to almost trust myself to even explore these topics, because I think I was taught so much to silence myself and "I can't trust my reading or my interpretation" or "I can't trust the Holy Spirit's prompting." That, "I have to tune into leadership." And so even thinking of those topics of, "What do I really believe about what's going to happen to me if I deviate from leadership?" It's going to take so much of my own work and repair and really believing. I grew up thinking even though I have the Holy Spirit, I can't trust him and I can't trust my voice. And so getting to that space of, "My voice matters and I do have the Holy Spirit and God speaks to me. I can speak to God and read His Bible and really connect. I don't have to go through all these other people to be able to do that." And so it takes a long time to be able to sort of separate out from that, to be able then to wade into some of these waters of, "Well, what do I believe?"

Because some of what you're also talking about is a lot of these different doctrines and theologies when it comes to, like, the atonement theories and really figuring out, like, was Jesus sent in order to die for punishment, or is it more out of love and care and being the victor? There's all these different types.

So it can get really into some deep stuff when you really start exploring. And I think one of those first steps is really starting to hold space for our own voices. I think there's a lot of fear — "But what if I am wrong?" — and stepping into that fear of that uncertainty, because we've been raised in — I mean most of us, I think that's fair to say — that we're raised in certainty that this is absolute truth. And then we're having this dissonance of, "I'm experiencing so much fear and so much shame and so much guilt and a lot of trauma, and is this really what God wants for me as a woman?"

And that was one of my struggles I had to wrestle through of, "If I fully believe that I'm created in God's image and that He created me for a reason and a purpose and I have the image of God and I have the Holy Spirit in me, what does that mean about me? And how can I have a voice and autonomy but also live in a community, and even have

relationships as well?" I don't know if that answered your question, but.

NATALIE: Yeah. I would say that modern Christianity is very fear based. A lot of religion is fear based, and I think Jesus meant to come and introduce something completely different. I mean, the Bible says, "Love casts out fear." So if we're really leaning into love... For example, if you're gonna jump into the arms of your dad, he's in the water and he promises to catch you, do you believe he's gonna catch you or not? Is he trustworthy or not? Does he love you or not? And if you grow up in a home where you're not really sure, or you grow up in a church where you're not really sure where you stand, then you're going to think that God's the same way. You're gonna project all of your experiences with humans who do use fear a lot to control and manipulate people with God. You're gonna think that God's the same way. "Oh yeah. God's gonna use fear to control and manipulate me too."

And that's not what Jesus came to show us about who God was. So I think part of healing in the spiritual aspect is saying, "Okay, does this make me feel afraid?" Probably it's not from Christ, then. It's probably not aligned with the Holy Spirit if there's a bunch of fear surrounding it. Even the thought, "The heart is deceitful above all else and who can know it?" Why don't you talk... Because that's what people will throw in your face all the time. "Well, you don't know because your heart's deceitful and who can know it."

NAOMI: Well, and it's interesting — even as you're talking, I hear — I call it my IFB voice, my "independent fundamental Baptist voice" — that comes in, because I was so in that, and I had that, "I have to be perfect in order to be okay." And so I have all these voices memorized and all this. So even as you're talking that IFP voice is going on in my brain. And I think that is one of those scary things, because as a Christian, especially what I believe, the Bible is very core and central. It's how we get to know who God is in His heart. And then when you have other people using scripture in a separate way where you end up distrusting yourself and your interpretation, it's almost very coercive, cause it's like we can pick any Bible verse to make it fit our agenda.

And so it's almost like even as you're hearing, "Well, the heart is deceitful," I'm like, "Well, yes and no." How you're talking about it, it makes sense how you're using it. But also being able to step back and... I mean, even for me, as you were talking, I noticed when that verse came up, my stomach got twisted, my brain started thinking, my heart rate started going. So I automatically had this response when I was hearing that Bible verse because it has been used, especially against me in certain ways. And so being able to sit down and recognize, "Okay, yes, there is a component..." I mean, it's almost like having a both/and approach instead of an either/or. It's like, "Yes, there is sin, and there is part of me that, yeah, it's part of the sin nature and I'm learning to be

conformed into God's image. And then there is also a part of me that really longs to know God and to have a healthy relationship. And just because what I believe or hold may not align with what other people in leadership are saying doesn't necessarily mean that my heart is deceitful. It doesn't mean that I am wrong." There is this both/and component.

And I think for me, it's also really important as we do this work of being in a community and really finding other people that are also wrestling with this work so we can tune into them to be like, "Okay, so this is what was shared. And someone said that my heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. This is what I'm struggling with," so they can also sort of help process through it. And especially people that we know really care for us and have our best interest at heart, not just trying to get a certain response, which can be really hard within this community to find, especially as you're starting to wrestle with faith, because the whole faith... I mean, it's so interesting. Because the whole faith community has their own cultural fears and then we have our own individual fears, and so we're sort of like combating multiple levels of fear but sort of being able to connect with certain people to say, "Okay, like..." Which is what I love, what you're doing with your own community and helping women within this work, because they're able to connect with other people and bounce ideas off of and really hold their fear and their pain and also their hopes and desires and say, "I really do want to follow God, and I don't know what to do with this." And so then you can have a community come alongside and hold that as they process and find their voice.

NATALIE: The Bible also says we have the mind of Christ, so how I've reconciled that verse for me is that first of all, if someone says that to you, quotes that verse to you, the verse applies to them too. "So how do you know that your heart isn't deceiving you right now by saying that to me?" I mean, it cuts both ways. It's kind of ridiculous. But I think the ways that our heart is deceitful is in the things we've been programmed with our whole life. Some of them are lies. Some of them aren't true. They're deceiving us. Like the idea that if you grew up in an abusive environment, you're gonna associate abuse with love. You're gonna think that's normal. That's a way that you've been deceived. Now we can unravel that lie and speak the truth.

So honestly it's so twisted, because I think the people who are quoting that verse and trying to get you to do what they want you to do, they're actually... What you wanna do is you wanna flip that around and go, "Actually, I have the mind of Christ and I'm gonna lean into His wisdom about what you are doing to me right now, because if I buy into what you are doing to me right now, that is an example of how I would be being deceived." I can't wait to use this stuff on people when they say stuff like that to me.

All right, here's another question. What are some ways that we can protect or integrate fear, because it's a healthy emotion. We need to be able to have that emotion at times. It's like the feeling of pain. If you don't have pain, then you're gonna burn yourself or get permanently injured. So how can we integrate that into a healthier and more informed approach?

NAOMI: Yeah. With this, I think it's part of that processing after. So when you're safe, being able to process through and recognize, "Okay, so what caused this fear? What was going on for me?" So then we can set boundaries and note, because... I'm trying to give a decent example. I recognized for myself that I have a hard time interacting with Christian men in leadership. I'm automatically scared, I'm automatically... Even thinking of going into a meeting like that, I just know that's one of my fears because I've been trained to be that way and have had some negative experiences. And so when I know that's going to happen, then I can start setting boundaries. I can start preparing like, "Okay, I'm going to regulate. I'm breathing. This is what I would like to say." If I need to bring someone in to help me so I know someone's in my corner, then I can do that as well. Or I can make sure it's in a safe space where I'm like, "Okay, if we go to a church and meet with a pastor, that's gonna be really hard, because it feels like a sense of authority. So we're gonna meet outside or do something else."

So we're able to create space where the fear isn't controlling, but it's also not really being manipulated and used by others, but I can still set a lot of those structures. And sometimes there is space where if the fear is really big and there's a big concern, then we need to set rigid boundaries and say, "No, I can't keep going towards that." I think there's almost that dynamic within the church that we always have to keep going towards things that are hurting us.

NATALIE: There is. What is that?

NAOMI: Right? And then it's almost like that prosperity gospel thing of just like, "You're in God's will if things are working out." So it's like, if you're having bad relationships or out of God's will, then we have to do the Matthew thing and keep going and making it work so we're in alignment. And it's like, no — there's still a systemic dysfunction of sin in the church as well that it's not protected from that. There's still humans. And if we're getting hurt, sometimes we need to set boundaries and say, "You know what? This is not a healthy relationship. I'm getting hurt. There's a lot of fear in this. So I just need to set a boundary and say 'no.'" And I think many times it's even us wrestling with that and being okay, because we're taught not to have cut off relationships. Be able to say, "Okay, this is healthy for me." And even having that paradigm of, "I don't believe God wants people to be abused." If we're in an abusive relationship and a harmful

relationship, that there's other things going on there. And so being able to take a step back and value ourselves and who we are being created in God's image and just being human. We have value and should be treated with dignity and respect. And so creating that space.

So the more we're aware of these different fears, the more we can process different ways of setting boundaries and setting up protective factors and even potentially needing to have to cut off certain dynamics just so we can achieve health. Because for some people, they're so hurt that they're not able to go to church for a while. And that's okay. They're able to process through that. And then as they process and heal, then they can move towards it and do different interactions. But if we keep going towards things and we're getting a fear response, it's just gonna end up hurting us more.

NATALIE: Right. And I think that the fear is, in many cases, is something we could just listen to and just say, "This maybe isn't a safe place." I remember the last time that I... And I hear this a lot — women will say, "Well, my church is asking me to..." If the women's woman stands up and says, "I think there's something wrong and I'm not gonna stay in this situation," then it seems like the church elders always want her to come in. "We need to come in and have a meeting." What they're really saying is, "We need to get you in here and get you in a corner so that we can bash you over the head with a few Bible verses and get you back in line." That's really what they wanna do. I've been in those. I'm sure you've been in those too. So they'll be like, "I feel like I should go. And what should I expect and what should I do?"

I would always go too, but the last meeting that I went to, I brought my sister with me, like you mentioned — you know, "Bring someone who's in your court." I brought my sister with me and it was five minutes into it and the elder leans forward and says to me, "You don't know God." He says that to me. I had this visceral reaction because I was making all these decisions based on what I truly believed God, the Holy Spirit, was telling me to do. And then to have this person who was in a position of power... I was shaking. My voice was shaking. My hands were shaking, but I had enough left of my brain... Because you know how your brain just goes offline and you can't even think about anything? I remember thinking this: "I think I just heard the voice of Satan and not God." I remember thinking that. Not that he was Satan, but that the enemy was speaking through him.

And then I had enough of my brain left to say, "I would like to record the rest of this meeting. I can stay and hear you out, but I want to record it on my phone." And the elder and the woman who was with him (because yes, sometimes women get in cahoots with these guys), they were like, "No, you can't record this meeting." And I said,

“Why? Is there something that you guys are gonna say to me that you don't want to get out there, that you don't want anyone to know? Why can't I record it?” And they wouldn't give me an answer.

And so I said, “If I can't record the meeting, then I can't. I need to leave.” And that was the first time that I'd ever realized, even as I was saying it, I realized, “I can literally walk away. I am free. These people have no power over me. They think they do. They are sitting there thinking that, that they can control me and have power over me. And they can't. I'm an adult. I can get up and leave.” And I did. They said, “Nope, you can't record it.” And I said, “Well, then I've gotta go.” And I picked up my stuff and we walked... My sister and I were both shaking in the car. We went to a restaurant and we started writing everything down, because we knew that we wouldn't be able to remember everything if we didn't write it all down, the whole conversation. And to this day I don't remember it. I have those notes. In fact, I think I might have even stuck it in a blog post somewhere.

It was so traumatic, but I just wanna bring that up because if you're listening, just know you are an adult. You don't have to... this is how I've framed it. It's like these guys are all six-year-old boys in a sandbox, and they think their sandbox is the world. It's just a sandbox. The playground is big. You can go bike riding in the playground. You can go swing in the playground. You can do so many things in the playground. That church is just one sandbox in a gargantuan playground. Go find some other kids to play with. They're not very nice. They're throwing sand at you. You don't have to stay.

NAOMI: Absolutely. As you were talking, it really made me think of just along my journey of almost getting to this place where I realized that my salvation isn't dependent upon other people. I kept feeling like, “Oh, all these people are saying I'm going to hell. All these people are saying I'm an apostate. I have to follow what they say.” But finally getting to that point of no — my faith is built, is from, Jesus. I believe in Jesus — that's all that it is — and how freeing that was to be able to separate from those power dynamics and from some of those voices that were being used to control and manipulate me to say, “Okay, I can trust Jesus. I can trust the Holy Spirit. I have the skills to be able to navigate these dynamics,” and how powerful it is to be able to say “No. You could say whatever you wanna say, but no. You don't get to say that. I mean, you can say I'm going to hell, but it's not up to you.”

NATALIE: Yeah, right. How I ended up ultimately healing from that and reframing it is that I realized that that elder was actually correct. I did not know his God. His God was scary and small “g.” His God is like Zeus or something. And I realized that is not the God that I know in the core of my being that I have grown up with that I have an intimate

relationship with. It's not that God. The God I know loves me so much. He's the God that led me out of that Egypt of sorts and sent me walking through a wilderness, but my life is so much better now. I'm happy I don't know his God. I feel bad for him and all of the people in his life who do still know that God.

NAOMI: Yeah. Well, and also how excruciating it is to get to that place, because I think even along my own journey, there's parts of me that are like, "Oh, well just believe this and you'll be fine," but it's also like that journey is separating from what you've been raised in or been taught for so long of being able to deviate from that and find who Jesus is. It is very scary and it's very hard and it's very painful. And there's also beauty and there's also freedom and there's also complete love and acceptance and community on that other side.

NATALIE: There is, there is. And when you are free and you know that you're safe, when you know that you're loved and you know that you're safe and you know that you're free, the sky's the limit as to what what you can create and accomplish in your life internally and even externally, because that ends up bleeding out into the people and the lives around you. You end up having influence in amazing ways because you're able to be more aligned, I think, with Jesus Christ who came to bring those things. And the world is thirsting for that, they're thirsting for that. But it has to start with us internally. We have to stop being afraid.

Well, thank you so much for being willing to have this conversation with me, and I will put the links to your social media accounts so people can find out where to follow you. And she writes a lot, because as she's working on this dissertation, I think you're processing some of the things that you're... When you say chapters, are those the chapters that you're writing?

NAOMI: Yes, yes. So my dissertation has five chapters, so I'm at the very end of it. And so it's part of my... I'm a very auditory and verbal processor, and just getting it out there. So as I'm doing my writing for my dissertation, I'm also putting little tidbits out there of just like, "Hey, this sort of popped up in my brain. I'm gonna leave it here and then keep on writing."

NATALIE: Yeah. I love it. It's very, very rich on her Facebook page. Lots of golden nuggets that your brain just wants to eat up. So I highly recommend that you go over there and check her out. All right. That's it. Thank you so much for being with us, and for all of you guys who are listening, thank you so much for listening. And until next time, fly free.