

Hey everybody.

Welcome to the first episode of the This Woman Knows Podcast.

I am your host, author and filmmaker, Lisa N. Alexander.

This podcast is dedicated to sharing lessons learned and personal stories on the evolution of becoming.

Sometimes you and I will have one-on-one conversations and other times we'll have amazing guests. But hopefully, each episode will leave you inspired, motivated, and yes, even challenged.

Pride month is coming to an end so for this episode I wanted to honor my uncle who died during the height of the AIDS epidemic.

Enjoy the show everyone.

It seems the major divides in this country are often centered around one's personhood.

Are black people truly human?

Can enslaved folks be Christians?

Should women have autonomy over their own bodies?

Should gay people have the right to marry?

If you're melanated (regardless of the hue), non-Christian, female, gay, bi, trans or fall anywhere on the LGBTQ+ color palette, or heavens forbid be any combination of these, well, there is likely a hotly-debated issue about your person.

June is Pride month— a celebration of LGBTQ+ rights and culture.

It was started after the Stonewall riots in 1969 and its celebration has spread across the world. And not without a whole lot of resistance and bloodshed.

Growing up Christian meant holding the belief that being gay was an abomination. "haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers are also clearly identified as abominations.

But the folks who commit such don't garner the same level of ire and hatred as LGBTQ+ folks.

LGBTQ+ bodies have always carried the brunt of what is considered abominable.

And so, for a long time, I kept quiet.

There were people in my family that I knew and loved who were part of this community.

My uncle was one of them.

Michael Daniels—the baby of nine children.

He was smart, handsome, and funny. And one of the few aunts and uncles who didn't find pleasure in making me cry. I do think he's responsible for this scar on my forehead. I think it was him chasing me through my grandmother's house and I fell on a nail and ended up needing stitches.

Still, I loved him.

I don't know much about him.

And I don't remember much either.

Experts say blocking out whole parts of your life is a normal reaction to certain life experiences. You can only remember the tragic parts. The good parts you need family and friends to fill in.

I do know that at that time, he was one of the few people in my family that had gone to college.

And this inspired me to do the same. At one point, I even wanted to be a college professor.

That didn't happen but I owe the very thought of higher education to him.

My uncle Michael died in the 90s. During the height of the AIDS epidemic.

When he passed there were only whispers on why he died so young.

Rumors that his lifestyle had incurred God's wrath and he received the ultimate punishment.

I have a question though.

Why aren't those with haughty eyes or lying tongues which are equally abominable met with a similar fate? Why do some who lie on young Black men, resulting in their torture and death, graced with freedom and long life?

Just asking.

This Pride month, I officially came out as an LGBTQ+ ally.

It's risky but not wanting bodies harmed because of the color of their skin or their LGBTQ+ status makes all the sense in the world to me.

To my incredibly handsome, kind, and smart Uncle Michael, rest in peace.

You are loved and fondly remembered.

Happy Pride Month.