

Ep 32 | Is Alzheimers Funny: The Healing Power of Art and Laughter

with Melinda Buckley

Happy April Fools Day!

The fool archetype in literature, often seen as a wise fool or jester, is a character who, through seemingly simple or foolish behavior, challenges authority, speaks truths others can't, and acts as a counterbalance to societal norms, often with humor and resilience.

Today we are #LIVEintheHIVE with our special guest, actor, comedian, choreographer, playwright, multi-hyphenate extraordinaire and master storyteller, Melinda Buckley.

She has written and performed several solo shows, her latest being, ***MOTHER (and me)***, which will be the focus of much our conversation.

MOTHER (and me) is a fast-paced 75-minute piece that uses the power of theater to bring people together around an important issue: Alzheimer's, and the struggles families face while caring for a loved one, utilizing the power of humor and resilience.

Melinda and I have so much to talk about, so many similar experiences on our journeys, but, in particular, the themes of the artist as healer and the complicated, somewhat consuming mother-daughter relationship. In this April Fools episode, we explore the edges between story telling and grief, caregiving and advocacy, and humor and healing. Where they meet is where the power of the artist emerges.

Find Melinda : www.motherandmetheplay.com | www.oneupsolo.com

In this episode we touch on...

- The service leader/artist identity and how Melinda stepped into this identity by doing this very personal and vulnerable show. Admitting some of the ego-centric emptiness that can, at times, be felt in the business of show.
- Melinda's relationship with her larger-than-life mother, her phenomenal backstory of intrigue and drama, and her courageous embrace of becoming a single mother.
- The complicated and potentially co-dependent Mother-Daughter relationship within show business.
- The difficulties within the family of coming to terms with her Mother descending into Alzheimers.
- To deal with her grief and overwhelm, Melinda began to journal all she was experiencing and learning and these writings became the spark to create her poignant and hilarious solo piece, ***Mother (and me)***.

- Booking the show in the New York Fringe and welcoming the help of other artists and producers to develop the show and bring it to many other venues in NYC and regionally, as well as in solo festivals.
- Her edges explored: Summoning her courage to vulnerably share such a deeply personal story.
- The unexpected wisdom she discovered about death and dying.
- The complicated emotions she experienced by not being with her Mother when she passed.
- Care-givers as teacher and models for staying present to death and grief.
- The profound healing power of comedy and laughter.
- The jaw-dropping statistics of the growth of Alzheimers in the US – and Melindas growing understanding of advocacy during her care-giving as well as through doing her shows and offering talk backs in conjunction with Alzheimers Association.
- Her new play, ***Color My World***, non-biographical, about early on-set.
For festival schedule: www.helltownplayers.org

Watch Video: <https://maximizeu.life/the-edge-of-everyday/>

Resources:

<https://dementiaspring.org/>

<https://www.alz.org/>

<https://www.alzfamilysupport.org/>

Find Sandra:

www.SandraBargman.com

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijDexceS4h8>

