

- Melody Moore: [00:03](#) Hi, I'm Melody Moore, the founder of Embody Love Movement and I am so excited to introduce this conversation to you. I got to speak to a dear friend of mine, Rosie Molinary, who is an activist an organizer an author and a public speaker. She's also a professor. She's written a couple books – you may know of them. One is called "Beautiful You", which is incredible. It's a daily practice of determining your own beauty and she's also written a book called, "Hijas Americanas". Rosie and I talk about so many things in the upcoming conversation. One that I absolutely love is her description of leaving room for margin in your life. We go into advocacy, self care practices, self love practices, what it's like to be an advocate for yourself, to not feel like a fraud, to stand up for your beliefs and to be part of an interdependent collective working toward the liberation of all bodies. I know you will enjoy this as you sit back and welcome fully your, your heart and your mind to this conversation with Rosie. Thanks for being here.
- Pura Fe Sings: : [01:29](#) True freedom involves the understanding of our true human spirit within. It dispels the lie of inadequacy and helplessness who are we? Powerful beyond measure. Who are we? Power of the creator....
- Melody Moore: [01:52](#) So excited to be here with my dear friend Rosie Molinary today who has so much to offer and so much to share. So I'm excited to dig in with you and I just, I thank you for your time. One of the things I've, I've learned from you Rosie and continue to learn every time I send an email and get the auto response back is what a beautiful job you do at setting boundaries for yourself, which I can only imagine has been a practice, a life practice of yours, to become what I consider an expert at setting boundaries for yourself. So I'm curious if you can say some more about how you, how you learn to demonstrate to really to embody what it means to be self loving enough to have a clear, a clear yes and a healthy no.
- Rosie Molinary: [02:43](#) That's a good question. First of all, thank you for having me. I think it was Maya Angelou who said, you teach what you most need to learn, and that is absolutely the case for me. And for a long time, the way that I came at showing up in the world was offering as much of myself as possible to everyone around me as a way to prove my worthiness and that I was enough and that if I was helpful and good by other people's standards, then I was worthy. And, and, and ultimately over time, one of the things that I had to realize was that if I was going to show up in the world, especially as an educator, and believe that every single one of my students was worthy simply because they were

born then they weren't going to be able to buy what I was selling until I believe that about myself.

- Rosie Molinary: [03:49](#) So it wasn't okay that I absolutely, passionately believed in everybody else's worth if I didn't believe in my own. And so that I think for me was this moment where one of the things I realized was look I'm worthy simply because I exist. If I'm enough simply because I exist, then how do I quit spreading myself out so thin? So that I can have energy for the places that I feel like I am most on purpose. You know, I do profoundly believe that we are here on purpose and that we each have gifts that we're meant to give the world, and one of the things I began to realize was that by diluting myself and saying yes to all the things, I was diminishing my purpose in the places where I really could make impact. And so that's when I began to think about, well, what boundaries do I need to set some of those boundaries were relationship type boundaries of like, no, you can't say that to me.
- Rosie Molinary: [04:52](#) And some of those boundaries were around how I use my time. And some of those were around how I take care of myself. And so beginning to really try to embody that. But that's been a lifelong work. Like I'm a slow learner and I need processes like I need it to be so deliberate and intentional. Other people are more seamless than I am. I'm just not one of them. And so I really have to do this stuff with like very big dramatic, like 'you're doing this' moments to, to make myself embody what I know that I most need and and deserve.
- Melody Moore: [05:32](#) I, I love that. And it sets an example again. So we'll, we'll tell the people, if you'd like, about the email that you have, your auto reply email because again, for me as a friend and a collaborator of yours, every time I email you, I get back this wonderful response and tell us what it says.
- Rosie Molinary: [05:52](#) So just to set a little bit of context you know, one of things that I've come to realize in doing self-acceptance work is that so often I believe that every single one of us is here on purpose. And so often the thing that gets in the way of our ability to live our purpose is our relationship with ourselves. And sometimes that relationship with ourselves, the hole in it is how we take care of ourselves. And sometimes it's our level of self awareness and sometimes it's our level of being able to believe in ourselves. So, sometimes these places around, self care, self acceptance, self awareness. And so my auto response – and it really is just when I'm out of the office, it's just sometimes I'm really out of the office a lot – invites people to take a moment

to think about what it is they need right now more than anything else and to offer it to themselves.

Rosie Molinary: [06:48](#)

And the next 48 hours. And it's this reminder of if you get quiet, you know what you need deep down inside, we just don't often get quiet enough to think 'this doesn't feel good, but what would feel better? And can I give it to myself?' And, and my rule about the 48 hours one is important because I think that often we'll be going through our day and we'll say, gosh, I'm really tired. I need to get some good rest. And then we don't provide for that. We don't go to bed early enough. We don't do whatever that, we don't put our phone to bed somewhere else. We don't do whatever it is that we need to give ourselves good rest. And so one of the reasons why I really encourage people to do it within 48 hours is to meet your need. And then if in a couple of days you have not met your need, then the issue is why aren't you meeting your need?

Rosie Molinary: [07:40](#)

You would meet the express need of any loved one in your life. And so you should be a loved one in your life and why aren't you meeting that need? And, and so that is my emergency question for myself. Whenever things don't feel right, if I'm like, gosh, I don't feel like myself, I'll say to myself, what do I need right now more than anything else? And if I get quiet, the truth is going to bubble up. And then what my subconscious is asking me for us, please meet my need. And I think the best thing we can do in that moment is to, is to do that and show ourselves that we can show up for ourselves just as much as anyone else. And so my out of office sort of encourages people to take some moment for self care. And, and to do that.

Melody Moore: [08:28](#)

I love it. And the reason I say it's inspiring is because I started doing that too when I would be away for any amount of time. And people now will write back and say, I love your response. And I say, "I got it from Rosie! Read her books!" Let me get into that. You've written two books and I know have contributed to several others, like at least five others. We both have chapters in "Yoga and Body Image Coalition". You are a professor and your intro was at the beginning, but just, just to recap, it's clear that you're a professor when you talk because your words are so potent and so clear. But, but you're also a writer, which I feel like is an incredible skill, at least it is for me, to make attempts at this thing. And so tell people, if they're not aware yet, you've two books: "Hijas Americanas" came first, about growing up Latina in America and "Beautiful You" came next, but maybe we'll start in order if that's okay with you.

Rosie Molinary: [09:27](#) Sure, that's perfect! So I truly thought that I'd be a classroom teacher for life, that they would drag me out like at 70 saying, "okay, you don't, you're like not with it anymore, you gotta go". And then I had this like wonderful little sidetrack into writing and writing really saved me as a young person. Reading and writing really saved me as a young person. And so I had decided that I really wanted to learn how to be, how to use writing in my classroom in a really powerful way. And so I went and got a master's in fine arts and creative writing. Which meant that you have to write a book while you're there. So the book that I wrote was a collection of nonfiction essays and linked poetry about my own coming of age experience. And at the end of that, I just thought, well, I'm headed back to the classroom.

Rosie Molinary: [10:16](#) And then my final advisor really pushed me on that and said, "know you have a pretty literal understanding of what a classroom is. Would you have felt better when you were 16 or 17 or 18, if you had read any of this stuff you just spent the last two years writing?". And I was like, Ugh, yes, but still. And so he really encouraged me to look at publishing. And so I started thinking about, well, how can publishing align with what I feel like my mission is? And so ultimately I thought, well I don't necessarily need to get this book published, which was called "Giving Up Beauty", but what if I used the access and experience that I have to tell the story of Latino women? Which wasn't an opportunity.... I didn't have the opportunity to see Latino women's stories growing up in South Carolina.

Rosie Molinary: [11:09](#) And so I thought, well, that'd be really fun to, to, to get the opportunity to hear these stories and tell them. And so that was ultimately the book that I pitched and "Hijas Americanas: beauty body image and growing up Latina" is that book. And I was able to interview a hundred women into a web based survey with 500 women about their coming of age experiences in the US which was the privilege and honor of my life, to be trusted with these stories, and to be able to tell them. And the wonderful ripple effect of that has been to give so many women who actually felt very similarly to I that I did, which was that I'm really alone in this, even if they communally weren't alone, it wasn't always something that was talked about when we were coming of age or our cultural and ethnic identity and how that impacted our view of what was accessible to us and what was possible for us.

Rosie Molinary: [12:05](#) And so writing that was, and putting that out in the world and having people find it and find company was really just profound for me. And so then ultimately that book inspired sort of two things. One is that it inspired "Beautiful You", my second book

and the subtitle to that is a "daily guide to radical self acceptance", because what would happen is when I was touring for "Hijas", people would say, well, how'd you get to a place where you were okay with yourself? And I said, well, try this and then try this and then try this. And it was all the things because I'm a process person. You know, it was all the things that I etched out for myself to have a healthier relationship with myself. And and so that became "Beautiful You", which is 365 days...there's a short passage no more than 350 words at the beginning of each day, and then a little exercise that you do.

Rosie Molinary: [13:04](#)

And the idea is that not all 365 days are met for each individual person who picks up the book, but that you can walk yourself through creating a daily habit of self-acceptance by journeying through this book. And so "Hijas" inspired that. And then the other thing that inspired was a nonprofit called "Circle de Luz", and we are based in Charlotte and we work to radically empower young Latinos by supporting them through holistic programming, scholarship funds for their further education and extensive mentoring. And so we work with Latino girls from seventh grade until high school graduation. And so "Hijas" interestingly launched the whole this like this whole phase of my life now that's really rooted in helping people have healthy relationships with themselves so that they can go out and live their purpose and using what little access I have, but that I know is still more privileged than many to help young women access education and futures of their choosing.

Melody Moore: [14:14](#)

That's so beautiful. I see the, I think it's Circle de Luz...something behind you.

Rosie Molinary: [14:19](#)

Yes. We have a manifesto. It's back there.

Melody Moore: [14:25](#)

It's gorgeoud.

Melody Moore: [14:26](#)

I don't know how you would answer it. I don't know how I would answer this if I were you, but I feel compelled to ask you when you, when you wonder about this or get curious about it, why you? Why do you feel as though... What in your life's experience or in your Dharma, however you consider it, called you to this work?

Rosie Molinary: [14:52](#)

Such a great question! I think for, (Melody interjects with "I'm like, I don't know how I'd answer it even", then laughs). It's so interesting. Because I could see myself still being in a high school classroom just as easily as I could see myself in this moment. And so I think that at least what's happened in my life, I don't know if this is what happens in life in general, is that, you

know, you're, you're constantly on this path and at any given moment, you have the option of like, what do you want to go this way or do you want to go this way? And you make the call and then you try to make the best of it and try to rise to the occasion of it. And I think that for me, what I've been trying really hard to embrace is that it is all journey.

Rosie Molinary: [15:52](#)

I am always practicing. I'm not ever going to get to like park in it and just like be like, "Oh, this is it. And let me just hang out here and it's easy". And I think that's true for all of us. But what I do know is that if I spend too much time thinking back to what I thought my life would look like at 18 or 25 or 30, then I'm just inviting discontent because there was no way like when we do that, when we extrapolate out we do that in a vacuum of like, you know, someone not getting cancer or you know, like, like nothing bad happens when you vision forward, right? There are no curve balls. And so my life looks different than what I thought it would look like when I was young. And I try really hard not to hold that idea up against the reality.

Rosie Molinary: [17:00](#)

And so when I think about "why me?", I think that I just sort of, I tried to go through life saying sort of yes/and, and like that improvisational model, and how can I rise to this occasion? Yes. And how can I rise to this occasion and yes. And how can I rise to this occasion? How can I help it to call out my best self in this moment even though it's an evolving self and how can I help to call out others best selves in this moment. So that's not particularly inspired or wise. It's just...and I'm going to think about that so much more now [laughter]...I think the reality of how I've taught tried to come to it as different curve balls have happened and I'm like, "Oh, I didn't expect it to go this way".

Melody Moore: [18:05](#)

Well, one of the reasons I asked that is because I heard you say at the beginning of your last answer, writing and reading are one of the things that really saved me in my childhood and I often think about the reasons I needed saving in my childhood, being the same catalyst for how I show up in the world and the ways that I can hopefully contribute to the world, knowing those wouldn't even be available if I hadn't had the struggles or the opportunities to become resilient.

Rosie Molinary: [18:37](#)

Yes. Isn't that so true? I think about that so often now you know, as I raise a young man who I don't want to go through similar pains but also I recognize that all those pains gave me this grit and this resilience. And so how do you balance those out? Like how, how much do I protect him? And how much it, because of how some life struggles really help you overcome and develop your worldview. And so I do think that's an, an

interesting part of our own evolution. And you know, often I think that we get some distance and say, well, I wouldn't change that because that's how I ended up here. And I, you know, I do, I do feel that way and there's this part of me also that feels like [inaudible] but can I use what I've experienced as a way to make way for others and maybe make it a little bit less painful because of how fundamentally lonely parts of my life have felt.

Rosie Molinary: [20:01](#)

And you know, I don't know, I don't know that I want that for anyone else. And so if I can say...well, you know, if someone asks, you know, my son is adopted...and so if someone asks me an awkward question or a question that's worded awkwardly about adoption, can I assume right intention in that moment? Can I share our experience? Can I help them know better ways, better words to use, better ways to phrase those questions so that someone else doesn't get asked that question? Or the same thing with my own ethnicity, and how people might say like, what are you? And, I think what you're asking is "what's my ethnic background?". Better way to ask that question. And so, you know, I've tried a lot in my life to say is there a way that I can approach what just happened to make way for someone else in the future?

Melody Moore: [21:02](#)

That's a really kind rewording, because I imagine that questions like that about things like your ethnic background, about things like your son being adopted that are said so unskillfully could get old.[laughing] In my experience, questions like that coming at me, it can get really old and it can be really, really cumbersome and burdensome to feel like I have to be in the position of educating you too. How do you stay kind in those kinds of reframes for others, whereas you're really, you're really offering skill?

Rosie Molinary: [21:37](#)

So I think that I am wired to be non-confrontational, so sometimes I appear kinder than I am in my head.

Melody Moore: [21:44](#)

[laughter]

Rosie Molinary: [21:44](#)

So I'm going to be honest about that. Like I'm not just universally kind. It's just that, "Oh, she's really scared of confrontation", which sometimes looks like 'kind' and so that's, that's helpful in those moments. But I think that when you grow up kind of as an outlier, which I did as a Latina in South Carolina, you start to get those questions super young and before you can realize like there's something super messed up about this. And so I think that that really helped me later on. And I try, I'm not always able to figure it out. And so when I leave a situation and I'm like, "huh, I wish I'd said something", I'll think about,

"well what do I wish that I had said?" and there are kind of two things that'll come up. There will be the thing that I like wish that I had said that's like a total zinger that I mean, let's be honest, couldn't even come out of my mouth. Like I couldn't, I couldn't say it without like being nauseous. And then there's like the thing that I'm like, "Oh, I could stomach saying that". And that's part of me learning how to set boundaries over the years. And so I will have, if I'm not able to act in that moment, I'll think about it afterwards and say, well, I wish that I had said this. I wish that would, someone said, "how much did your baby cost?", that I would say, I think what you're asking about is how does adoption work and is it a financial stressor? You know, but I think the first time that I was ever asked that, I was like, "Oh, I think he needs a diaper change", and sort of disappeared and was like, okay, what do I wish that I'd said?

Rosie Molinary:

[23:26](#)

And so, you know, figuring out like, Oh, I could say, "I think what you're asking is this". And and that's helped me. Sometimes I just escape the moment, then think about what do I wish I'd said? I love playing in that moment of like, "what do I wish I'd said? What can I actually say?" And then, you know, practice that out loud. And I love that generally for boundary setting, whether it's like someone who says, you know, have you thought about getting married or whatever the case may be, that ridiculous people in our lives say to us sometimes. And so I think getting myself to a place of safety, processing, considering and then being armed the next time because the reality is very rarely are the zingers one timers, you know? And if you use that at one time to help you figure out what the rest of it looks like, I feel like that's plenty of, you know, it's okay that you may have looked at the person like you are absolutely insane and me and my kid are getting out of here. And then, you know, moving forward you can have it, but also, you're right. And, and I'll add a layer to this. It's not our responsibility to teach other people. That's just not our job. And especially if you are a person who has been marginalized in every way, if you're a person of color, if you have a different sexual orientation, like whatever the case may be, not our job! Not our job! Like it is not my job to be the universal teacher on adoptive families and Latino women, like just not my job.

Rosie Molinary:

[25:01](#)

If I choose to do it well, then great. But like really you know, I hope that more of us take the onus on us of "ho, I am, you know, about to supervise a person who has a different background than mine. I'm gonna learn a little bit about them rather than say, well, if you want me to know about it and you want me to be sensitive about it, then you're going to need to teach me". And so I think that as often as I can, I try to show up

in that space of helping to be a bridge so that I can make way easier for other people. And then sometimes I just have to accept that, that this is a place where I can't be the bridge and and it's not my responsibility to be the bridge. And either this person will find it on their own or they'll run into somebody else who will help them get there.

- Melody Moore: [25:54](#) They're on their own, without me. Well, I find that to be really a nuanced place to sit as an activist. And I don't know about you. For me, I didn't self-proclaim activism. It sort of got said about me enough times that I agreed, to own that term. And there are times when I'm like, because I'm an activist does not mean in every interaction that I have in my personal life it's my responsibility to educate you about whatever...
- Rosie Molinary: [26:23](#) ...Because then how do you ever refill your well to keep doing this deep, you know, this deep work? Absolutely!
- Melody Moore: [26:31](#) ...And I read some of your wonderful blogs and I've seen specifically you be able to educate, reframe, inform folks when you choose about setting boundaries around body image conversation and food conversation, especially I think I read something that you wrote around, you know, like how to deal with what comes at you during holidays. So can you help people? I get asked this a lot. What do I say back when someone says to me, you know, if he lost 20 pounds and be healthier or you really gonna have seconds?
- Rosie Molinary: [27:11](#) Well I think the first thing to understand about those moments is that if someone has something to say to you about your station in life or your body, it's about their stuff. Like all you're getting is a mirror into their stuff. And so that realization has been really powerful for me where I'm like, "Oh, so this is your pain point. Okay". so you know, and that's not where I was 20 years ago, but now I'm able to be like, "Oh, that's your stuff. I'm sorry that's your stuff, but I'm not taking this baggage from you. Like I am not holding it". And the person who is saying this stuff, like that's what they're doing. They're trying to release the pressure valve on their own tension around this issue. It's like, Oh, the transitive property, I'll hand my baggage to Melody and maybe she gets to hold it forever. The reality is they'll feel better for, you know, a minute or two while they've like put the spotlight on you, but it's coming back to them and then like, unfortunately it can stick on you. And so I think that's the first thing there to just put in your brainwork is wow, that's their stuff. And to really begin to shift your thinking about about it and no longer be willing to take it on advisement of your stuff. But then I think the next step is to think about that you deserve

to be cared for by you and to be protected by you. And, and you owe that far more to yourself than you owe this person kindness and respect and deference. And so, you know, sometimes if, if you don't have, if you're not able to access your voice, then I'd say just create distance.

Rosie Molinary: [29:01](#)

But I think that as soon as you can begin to access your voice you should, and I, I'm not confrontational, and so my boundary setting is pretty gentle. I say something typically along the lines of "that's not an appropriate conversation for us to have". And I move along and that's like this like gentle warning sign. Now I will do this exercise with my students where I have them think about what are things that are commonly said to me that cross the boundary and to come up with what they'd like to say and what they can stomach saying. And we were doing this in pairs a couple of years ago and I had a student say that her mom would often say to her, "don't you think you'd be so much happier if you just lost 20 pounds"? And her partner said, you should say to your mom, "mom, don't you mean that you'd be so much happier if I just lost 20 pounds?". And I was like, "Oh my God, do not say that to your mom. Don't say that". Like I was sweating... [laughter]...Oh, I'm nauseous. And so about two weeks later, she raised her hand in class and she was like, it happened. My mom said it and I said it back to her, and ya could've heard a pin drop in the silence that followed. So we fast forward to the end of the semester and she's like, she still hasn't said anything. And she emailed me about two years after that class and was like, I just want you to know that my mom has still never said a word about my body since that moment. And so here I bring that up because here's what I found. My gentle boundary setting tends to have to be reset. I think more assertive boundary setting tends to take care of it time one.

Rosie Molinary: [30:47](#)

So what I find is that when I'm like, "that's not appropriate conversation for us to have" that person's like, "Ooh, I can't believe Rosie just put up a wall. She doesn't do that". And so then a couple of times later they're like, I'm going to try again. Like she's the person where I've handed this, tried to hand this baggage off to in the past, and surely she didn't mean it. And so I find when you set a gentle boundary that it probably will take three to five times for the boundary to hold where they're like, "Oh, she means it. I've gotta find another place". The reality is you weren't targeted the first time by accident. Somebody sort of sensed about you "Oh, this is someone who is empathetic. This is someone who was gentle and this is someone that I can like pop off on". Because it's not gonna come back at me because this person is looking out for their own interest in this, right?

- Rosie Molinary: [31:37](#) So they're not like going to the most assertive person in the room. So because of your kindness and the grace in which you show up, you've gotten targeted. And so if you set a general boundary, they are probably hopeful that, "Oh, she didn't really mean that". And they'll come back a few times. If you set a hard boundary, what I found is that boundary holds like it, you know, the person's like, "Oh, something flipped in Rosie, and I am not coming back from war". Because I don't even know who she is anymore. And so that I think is an important thing to realize and is something that one can take into account in terms of 'well I see Aunt Edna once a year at the Thanksgiving table, so I'm going to go ahead and make it a hard boundary'. Or I see my mother-in-law every week at the family dinner, and so it's going to be a gentle boundary where no one can say I was disrespectful, but she's gonna notice after three or four times. And so I think that's a choice that you can, you can make sort of gaging the distance. But I think that we all know mostly the stuff that's going to come at us. Because we've been around these people before, right? And so, you know, you can, ahead of like particular moments where it's, you know, a family wedding or family holiday celebration be like, well, these are the four things that'll be said to me and here's what my reaction is going to be. And go ahead and practice it out loud, which sounds ridiculous, but makes a profound difference for being able to say it in that moment.
- Melody Moore: [33:07](#) I even think the practice of saying "no" out loud, maybe even repeatedly and embodying some sort of gesticulation that goes with the "no" can be a really powerful beginning for people who seem to not have access to that word.
- Rosie Molinary: [33:22](#) Yeah, absolutely! You are so right. And no, you know, I was able to set boundaries around what people say to me sooner than I was able to set boundaries around like what your expectations are from me in terms of like my energy and resources. And so yes, I think that all of us learning how to say "no" and practicing it and giving ourselves permission to say it and saying it like over and over as you say is really powerful.
- Melody Moore: [33:53](#) And I like the way you worded that cause it seems like the more, the more value you've cultivated in yourself, the easier over time perhaps it's become to navigate some of those sticky situations of "is a soft boundary okay for me here?" And "will I survive this intact in a way that I feel my self preservation has been upheld and is sacred". It sounds like that's been a learning over time cause you said 20 years ago. And so I'm curious about, I'm curious about that and I'm curious about how your own, because body image is a big part of your work and you

even, what's the course called that you teach around body image?

Rosie Molinary: [34:31](#)

Body image.

Melody Moore: [34:33](#)

[Laughs] You know, like just nailed it. Just call it what it is. Tell em what you're gonna tell em. [laughs] Um, why is that and how has your own body image changed throughout, throughout your lifespan, thus, but you got a lot of life ahead of you, I hope... How's it changed so far?

Rosie Molinary: [34:52](#)

So, how has my body image changed, and what was the first question?

Melody Moore: [35:00](#)

That's a good question. What has that journey, the journey been like toward finding more value in yourself over time that's allowed those, the boundary setting to become easier or more facile?

Rosie Molinary: [35:13](#)

So I'll start with that first... So I started my career as a high school teacher and said yes to all of the things we need: A student activities director. Yes! We need a women's soccer coach. Yes! We need somebody to teach the AP history courses. Yes! and there was really this like part of me that felt like at some point these 'yeses' will lead to the secret sauce of change. And what the 'yeses' all led to was me getting incredibly physically ill. Um and I just had the... I was hospitalized and had this moment where I thought, "Oh, I, this isn't sustainable and I don't know any other way of being in the world. And if I keep being this way, I could really, I could really hurt myself, which means that I won't be able to live on purpose." And that for me was this moment of like, "well, what do I do?" And I realized I had no tools in my toolkit of how to sustain myself so that I could impact others. And that really is what instigated my self care and my self acceptance journey. Because what I realized was I say all of these 'yeses' a) because I care deeply and am empathetic, but b), because I want to matter to people. And if I matter to people, then I'm worthy. And so that's a whole self-acceptance issue. And then I realized, well, if I started to say no and just sat at home, I wouldn't even know what to do for myself to, to give myself the energy to keep doing this work. Like, you know, what would fill my well. And so that was really, I, you know, I remember the first "nos" that I said, and they weren't 25, like I don't, I can't recall saying those before then. I used to have this really... It breaks my heart now...I used to have this this day dream of getting in a little bit of an accident and I wanted it to be just enough of an accident that I had to be hospitalized, but nothing serious. And I would like lay in bed at

night and think, okay, it's a little bit of a car accident and it's a broken bone that needs to be set. So I'm in my hospital bed and somebody comes in and takes care of me, like somebody else makes sure I had make sure that I have food, they make sure I'm not in pain. They brushed my hair out of my face. Like it was like this whole fantasy and I thought, I look back at that young woman and I'm like, "Oh my God, that's heartbreaking that that was how you thought you could escape this, like that you had no other agency to escape this".

Rosie Molinary: [38:02](#)

And so ultimately the first big "no" that I said was realizing that I could not go back to teaching the next year. That I just did not have the skillset to not get myself back in this situation and that I also was not going to be able to stomach going back to the school and say, well, somebody else can coach soccer and somebody else can do this and somebody else can do this and I'm just going to do these two things. What I realize now is that had I been more schooled in sort of boundaries and agency and what my abilities were than what I could've done was say, this is the place where I can make a profound difference. Like let me go deep here and I can exact change as opposed to going so wide that the medicine I had to offer barely touched the wounds in each place.

Rosie Molinary: [39:02](#)

And it just, I just didn't have that frame of reference then. And so that really began to shape for me moving forward, "Well, how, how do you recreate a life that was built on a faulty foundation?" and so it meant that I had to really start thinking about it and come up with structures of, "okay, well, you know, healthy people have relationships outside of work. And so how do I develop really great relationships outside of work that are not about obsessively talking about my students" and "healthy people have hobbies" and "healthy people just find a movement that they love" and "healthy people you know, relax without having every moment feel productive". And so just beginning to realize those things. And it meant that I did lots of things and I also had a therapy in the mix and you know, figure that all out.

Rosie Molinary: [39:59](#)

And that ultimately helped me realize that we say so often in our culture, "I know there's no such thing as perfect". There's this subtext beyond that that's like, I'm trying to get as close to it as possible. And I'm no different. And so I had this moment where I just realized, well, wait, if there is no perfect, than there can actually be no imperfect. Like there is no continuum that can exist if perfect isn't even an option. And so, "Oh, I am not imperfect. I am just meant for my own unique expression". And that was really powerful, especially because I felt so solitary looking the way that I looked, and having the cultural frame of

reference that I had in the South. And so it just for me began to give me permission to not worry about other people's reactions to me and to recognize that I'm the only person that can have a consistent reaction to me, to myself, and really working to make that real.

Melody Moore: [41:11](#) Let's say that again. That was so powerful. If there's no perfect than I am just...

Rosie Molinary: [41:16](#) Yeah, if there's no perfect than there can actually be no imperfect. So I think so many of us chase perfect cause we're trying to get as far away from imperfect as possible. There's nothing to get away from. We are each meant for our own unique expression and that was such this relief of like, "Oh I've been trying to get away from this illusion, but the illusion is not even real". I mean, you know, because there's no continuum, there can't be another side of perfect.

Melody Moore: [41:48](#) And what I love about that, 'I'm meant for my own unique expression' is it also gets you out of the comparison game. Comparison is the thief of joy as we know because there can only be one unique expression of that which is you.

Rosie Molinary: [42:02](#) Right. H-hmm.

Melody Moore: [42:03](#) That's "Beautiful You". [laughs] Telling someone who wrote the book about it, but I love those.... I love the way you worded that. That's gorgeous. Okay. So the second part of my very long question was how has your body image changed over the course of your life?

Rosie Molinary: [42:17](#) So, you know, I think that what is interesting is there are days that I look in the mirror and I'm like, "You have it going on". And they're days that you look in the mirror and I'm like, "Oh, you don't?" [laughter] And on all those days that makes no difference to what I can offer the world. And so I think that the fundamental understanding I've come to is, my appearance does not matter for the difference that I want to make in the world. How I feel matters. And I want to drink enough water and get enough sleep and do whatever makes me feel good so that I can live my purpose in the world. But I never expect those things to change my physicality or that changing my physicality gives me more meaning. So if I slept in and couldn't shower and like hopped on the zoom with you and felt like, well, I'm going to suck because I didn't even get to shower, then I have bordered away my power.

- Rosie Molinary: [43:41](#) And so coming to understand that I can enjoy, "Oh, that's a pretty shirt and I want to wear it", or I can enjoy doing my hair, I can enjoy putting on makeup, whatever. You can enjoy those things. Sure. If they feel like a great expression for you, absolutely enjoy them, but understand that they don't change what you have to offer. And so, you know, I wouldn't say that I feel like I have perfect hair days every day or whatever the case may be, but I also would, but I can say that if there's a moment where I'm like, eh, I'm not feeling myself physically, I also know like, that makes profoundly no difference in what I can offer the world. And what I know to be true is I could show up on here and maybe somebody will say, "Oh, that was a cool shirt, Rosie had on". Maybe somebody will say, "Oh, I like her curls", but what I have control over is how I make everyone feel with how I show up. And so you know, what I ultimately know is all of us want to feel seen, heard and understood, and those connections are made with how our heart shows up. And that's the greatest offering I have to give.
- Melody Moore: [45:05](#) I love that answer. I feel like, I feel a very similar shift took place in me around body image acceptance that really had to do with a shift in values – that if how people feel in my presence becomes more important to me, than how I feel like they care about or approve of the way that I look or my weight or shape or whatever, that changed everything for me because it stopped being so, what I hear you saying, if something's so important to you, like "how are they gonna think of my hair, my shirt, or my size or my whatever?". More like, my contribution to the world is not impacted by any of that.
- Rosie Molinary: [45:40](#) Right!
- Melody Moore: [45:41](#) So you're holding this, the way in which you can contribute, as a higher value to you.
- Rosie Molinary: [45:46](#) Absolutely. Yeah.
- Melody Moore: [45:49](#) And then body image just becomes like, "okay". You can artfully play with things like makeup and style. If it gives you pleasure. Great.
- Rosie Molinary: [45:57](#) And if it doesn't, that's fine too.
- Melody Moore: [46:00](#) That's fine too. Yeah. It's sort of here nor there when what really lights up your heart it sounds like is knowing that other people are benefiting and knowing you're making those connections and ensuring people feel valued in your presence.

Rosie Molinary: [46:12](#) Yeah. And I love that you brought up values. One of my favorite things to do now each year is to set some guiding values for the year. And they're not just like characteristics I already embody. They're often things that I really need more of in my life or have realized like, "Oh, this needs to be a priority right now". And so for this year, my guiding values are being open, [inaudible], wholehearted. So making sure I'm doing things that I want to do. Presence, vitality and margin. And those have been great for me to sort of weigh opportunities and ask against and say, "well, you know, do I have like, does this, would this support my values? Is this the right expression for me?" and so I think that it can be really powerful to get super clear on our values and what we need at particular moments of our life. And to play those up because I think they lead us to the right choices for us at the moment.

Melody Moore: [47:21](#) What, what's the last one that you said? Did you say margin?

Rosie Molinary: [47:24](#) Margin. So one of the things I've found for me is that I need more breathing room at this moment in my life and my schedule. And I have been a person who's like back-to-back-to-back-to-back-to-back for years and years and years. And I find that just with what my responsibilities are at this moment in my life, that that does not bring out the best me. And I just need a little bit more room to like visualize and create and show up for people and linger. And and so I'm working hard on creating some margin in my life.

Melody Moore: [48:02](#) I love that. I love wordsmiths and I love that word for, for what you just described. I was like, take note of that.

Rosie Molinary: [48:10](#) Yes. Like before, like I thought about it as like, I mean even in my journals you can see it. Like I write all the way to the corners and I'm like, "Huh!". To the corner of the page. I need more white space. I need so much more white space right now.

Melody Moore: [48:24](#) Yeah. In your life.

Rosie Molinary: [48:26](#) Yeah.

Melody Moore: [48:27](#) Okay. I'm going to give you the white space for the rest of your morning. You have and we can offer it to the people that, that saw this too. Could you, could you leave us with a tool perhaps from your 365 days of radical self acceptance if you choose that would just leave folks watching and listening who I know have already been inspired, and probably activated, my hope is, by

hearing you and parts of your journey... Can you leave us with a tool that's probably universally helpful?

Rosie Molinary: [48:58](#)

So, my very favourite tool we talked about earlier, which is asking myself whenever I feel out of sorts, "What do I need right now more than anything else?" And then challenging myself – the answer has to be within my control – so I can't say win the lottery because I don't control that. And it has to be, the need has to be met within 48 hours. Now I might say, "Oh, I really need a massage". And maybe I call my massage therapist and she's... You know, because I have a massage therapist on speed dial. Sure... but I call a massage therapist and they can't see me for 48 hours, but if I've made the appointment within 48 hours then that counts and so that would be like my number one tool. If you do nothing else for yourself, maybe ask yourself that three to four times a week and check-in and meet that need.

Rosie Molinary: [49:45](#)

But if you're like, "Okay, I got that, I want one more", then another tool that I really like that's easy to do is I like starting my day by setting an intention and just saying like, "What is it that I most...What do I most need from this day? How do I most want to show up from this day?" Different days call for different things depending on what's going on. And so it may be that, "Oh, like today I really want to savour the interactions that I'm having because I'm seeing people that I don't normally see". Or it might be that, "Oh, today my intention is really to have some gratitude because there's some crap stuff on my list of things to do and I can have a bad attitude about it real fast". And so I really love starting my morning with just a quick, like I get to my desk and I think about what is my intention for the day. And I happen to have a journal and I don't journal in the traditional way of like stream of consciousness I used to, but now it's just like I jot things down and it's all over the place. But I like to say like, I'll write the date in there and be like 6, you know, 10, 2019, my intention is presence. Today I want to be really present for myself and for others. And then move forward. And I just find for me that that's a grounding practice that returns me to myself.

Melody Moore: [51:01](#)

Mmmm. I love that. Yes. Thank you for, for both of those ideas and commitments. And if you're watching, consider it, like consider what it might be like for you to indulge in either of those practices and hold yourself as valuable enough to offer them to you. I think that would be something that Rosie might tell you. Thank you for your time. I know that your time and all of our time is the most precious and valuable asset that we have to give away, that we have to give to ourselves, more than

anything. So I really value your being here and having this conversation with me.

Rosie Molinary: [51:36](#)

Oh, I value talking to you and thank you for these good questions and good conversation and this opportunity.

Melody Moore: [51:42](#)

Absolutely. So if you don't have Rosie's books, get them! They're everywhere. We'll put the links to both of them and to any of the other workshops, facilitations that you offer and to donating to, or being a part of Circle de Luz as well.

Rosie Molinary: [51:57](#)

Thank you.

Melody Moore: [51:58](#)

Thank you, Rosie.