

Dia:

Transcript: "Seen, Heard, Held: An Empathetic Reversal & Impending Individuals"

[February 17, 2021, 5:04 PM]

Legacy Russell: Hi Lauren!

Are we ready to start?

Lauren Simon: Hi Legacy!! Yes! Let's do it

Would you like to ask the first question, or shall I?

Legacy: Recording!

Let's begin with this question of care

How can care be radical? What does it mean to you 'to care'?

Lauren: I think care can be radical depending on the situation, as well as how close we are with the person involved

For example, driving hours away to see a friend who needs a shoulder to cry on. More personal to me, friends have shown up to protests with me. Standing up against oppressive forces together, even if that force does not oppress you specifically. That's how my friends have been showing care as of recent

Legacy: I think care is a messy and complex thing. It is essentially an opportunity but also can be a vice, I've learned.

It's gorgeous but also tender and sometimes painful

Caring too much – I didn't realise – ouch, that can hurt! [*Lauren emphasized this text*]

Lauren: Yes! Absolutely

Legacy: I have had to think about the ways care can work generatively. How I can stay whole in directing my care, with care, really.

Esppp as a Black womxn [*Lauren loved this text*]

Lauren: Yesss, I agree. I want to care a lot, but I think it's also important to not give too much of yourself away to other people [*Legacy loved this text*]

Much easier said than done

You kind of touched on one of my questions. Are there consequences to care? Positive or negative

Legacy: You know what? I have found myself so deeply thinking about this gorgeous and necessary question Lauren

I think that it is an act of self preservation to step back sometimes from taking care of people, culture, institutions, spaces – that cause harm to us

We deserve better

This is the future we are building for you !

Because you deserve that, dear one! [*Lauren loved this text*]

But it's a vulnerable question [*Sent with echo effect*]

Dia:

- Lauren: Thank you, I think that's an important part of moving into the future for sure
- Legacy: How do you think we can do the vulnerable work of caring for ourselves? For one another?
(To speak to a question you had posted and shared w me!)
- Lauren: I think to care for others, we must establish what we, ourselves, need first *[Legacy liked this text]*
- Legacy: Go off !
That is freedom work
- Lauren: Knowing yourself is less of a hot or cold, yes or no kind of thing. I think it's a journey that we will all continue to go on as our lives continue. Once you can get a feel for what your needs are, you can start to evaluate what your wants are, the things you can live without *[Legacy emphasized this text]*
From there, even just having a conversation about each other's needs can be soo helpful. Sometimes people respond better to one kind of care over another, like quality time over gift giving
- Legacy: *[Screenshot of Lauren's text: "Knowing yourself is less of a hot or cold, yes or no kind of thing. I think it's a journey that we will all continue to go on as our lives continue. Once you can get a feel for what your needs are, you can start to evaluate what your wants are, the things you can live without" circled in red]*
This forever *[Lauren loved this text]*
I love this idea of "gift giving"
Vs quality time
The way we love and place value on the things we love as a core part of care-work
But also as well, articulating the things that keep us seen, heard, held *[Lauren liked this text]*
What makes you feel vulnerable?
- Lauren: Yes!!!!
For me, I feel vulnerable when I'm out of my element
For example: I'm 18, graduated high school during a pandemic, now I'm in college states away from my parents studying business *[Legacy loved this text]*
- Legacy: What makes you feel out of your element
Ah, following now
- Lauren: I don't think I've ever been so vulnerable, haha *[Legacy emphasized this text]*
- Legacy: And me: I'm 22
An incredibly vulnerable age
- Lauren: I don't have the experience or knowledge because I'm experiencing so many "firsts"
- Legacy: (Kidding)
But you are correct

Dia:

vulnerability in this moment – you are entering into a moment that is so powerful
Because there are so many unknowns *[Lauren emphasized this text]*

Lauren: Yes! The unknown is, and always will be, so scary

Legacy: Me, in comparison – I am old. 34 and in a pandemic. It has been all the mixes of terrible curious wonderful deep soul crushing excellent joyful filled with grief filled with surprises
But you doing this is BRAVE
[Legacy replied to “For example: I’m 18, graduated high school during a pandemic, now I’m in college states away from my parents studying business] It’s an incredible thing to be taking all this on
How does it feel to be entering the space of study in this moment
And studying business to boot! In a moment where capitalism requires an overhaul if not collapse all together as we search for new systems
A black womxn doing this work is timely, necessary

Lauren: As I described it to my friends, it feels as if my life is beginning and ending all at the same time *[Legacy emphasized this text]*

Legacy: 🙌🏻👉🏻 100
👁️👁️
📌

Lauren: So much is happening, and although I’ve known this for a long time, my childhood is gone. It’s like I’ve entered a new life completely rather than just completing 1 stage of this whole living thing

Legacy: I feel – truly FEEL – that. But !!! You know what?
It’s interesting – I am speaking as an old and wizened lady now 😂 *[Lauren laughed at this text]*
But I have never felt more childlike *[Lauren loved this text]*

Lauren: Haha, I love that for you

Legacy: What this moment has done is that it has turned all of us inside out
I think we are truly operating in complex systems of space and time
Lots of bending there

Lauren: Yes!!! ^ ^ ^

Legacy: And so it gives me hope because I remember being 18 8,000,000 years ago – and I was ‘older’ then
As we age we release the things that age us
It’s a weird process

Lauren: I want that to be my senior quote

Dia:

- Legacy: So I know that you growing will go backward and forwards re: time
- Lauren: “As we age we release the things that age us”, so powerful
- Legacy: It actually was my senior quote – just reading aloud from my year book 😂
- Lauren: No way!!!!!!
- Legacy: Jk jk *[sent with spotlight effect]*
- Lauren: Haha I love that
- Legacy: No but seriously – what you’re saying is so important because you’re talking about how beginnings and ends shift how we are thinking about future
If it is the end of times but also the start of maybe a new world, how to build anything at all? Is it even possible?
- Lauren: I was thinking about this question about the “end of times” a lot
The end and the beginning of stages of life, and new worlds, it’s not that everything that happened before will be erased
It’s like there a moment where we are forced to be agile, and refresh our toolbox
[Legacy liked this text]
Abandoning the things that served their purpose in a time specific space, and taking the things that are timeless and valuable, like wisdom
- Legacy: 🤔🔥
You had asked about the ‘key to the future’ in your questions...
- Lauren: Yes!
- Legacy: If past isn’t only key – what is the key?
Super meta q
- Lauren: Haha yes it is *[Legacy loved this text]*
- Legacy: But honestly we are in that cloud of existentialism rn
/ captured the condition of ‘the now’
- Lauren: Yes, the now
I think that specific traits that only exist in our present are also key. Things like perseverance, knowledge, kindness toward others, they are these key tools that are not necessarily past or future, but rather something we possess currently *[Legacy loved this text]*
Those things that make us, well, us *[Legacy emphasized this text]*
- Legacy: 🏹🏹🏹🏹🏹🏹 What to take with us? To the future? 🧜‍♂️
(And is the world worth ending so we can rebuild it?)

Dia:

- Lauren: I think we should take the lessons from our own hardship. Too often we repeat history because we refuse to look at the cold, unfiltered truth of it
If we made the mistake, we owe it to the next generation to teach them not to
[Legacy loved this text]
We usher in a world free of problems we've already solved (kind of)
As to the question about the world, I say yes, in some ways yes
With some of the systems that have been built into our status quo, we have to stop picking at the branches and uproot the tree so we can reform it
This draws back to that question of leaving things in the past and learning from our mistakes
- Legacy: *[Legacy replied to "With some of the systems that have been built into our status quo, we have to stop picking at the branches and uproot the tree so we can reform it"]* Reminds me of Antigone – "bend or you shall break"
Giving time to do that healing work, but also with flexibility
Being prepared to adapt as a mode of living, not just surviving or coping
Which is HARD
- Lauren: Yes, flexibility is so important. Drawing back to urgency, I think it's difficult to, as you mentioned, practice tranquility in the face of alarm bells
How do you practice healing in the face of so many urgent matters?
- Legacy: I do big things like write and engage in dialogue and try to think about where to make a generative and positive impact
And then I do small things – like sit in the kitchen listening to music and eating a cinnamon donut *[Lauren loved this text]*
- Lauren: Cinnamon donut 🍩🍩
- Legacy: It is good to scale one's healing
Sometimes it can't happen all at the same size, volume, frequency
- Lauren: Yes!! I think that's something I realized in quarantine actually. That healing really shouldn't be confined to a schedule
- Legacy: I find sometimes the simple little things – taking a bath, lighting a candle, unlocks deep relief, joy, calm
I feel myself expanding and contracting
- Lauren: I don't think I've ever talked with someone about how damaging rushing the healing process can be
- Legacy: *[Legacy replied to: "Yes!! I think that's something I realized in quarantine actually. That healing really shouldn't be confined to a schedule"]* It sometimes can't be!
There are also moments where one day we sit up and that thing that hurt so badly, it just hurts a little less
And in that place is something delightful *[Lauren loved this text]*
I think the challenge w this moment is everyone wants to feel better N O W

Dia:

- Lauren: I like this idea of getting in touch with your physical self as a part of this healing
[Legacy loved this text]
- Legacy: but perhaps slowness allows for a different way of doing this work *[Lauren loved this text]*
In a moment where everything feels like an emergency – sometimes all we have are the small quiet moments that confirm that we are still here, still breathing, still alive
Reminders that we were whole when we arrived here, and that this situation doesn't take that away
- Lauren: I was reading Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, and the main character always has these moments of "sublime", where he sees nature and he feels himself within that landscape *[Legacy loved this text]*
- Legacy: Oooooo! Fire! Such an important text
- Lauren: Like there's this healing in truly feeling your place in the natural world
- Legacy: Considering what is a 'monster' rn, especially *[Lauren emphasized this text]*
- Lauren: Yes!! We could go on for hours about that
- Legacy: When there is so much to fear !
That will have to be a part two :) :) *[Lauren loved this text]*
But it brings us back to this question of URGENCY
our sort of final touch point
what say you, dear Lauren?
- Lauren: As to what I think a monster is right now?
- Legacy: Hmmm sure. Or as well what is urgent. You had some neat thoughts on this.
(((This idea of vice or virtue as tied to urgency)))
- Lauren: Ahhh yes I see
I think that there is a pressure, an urgency we all feel that can be drawn from society, our parents, and different kinds of media
This urgency to be everything they want you to be before your time *[Legacy liked this text]*
And that I think is a sort of manufactured urgency *[Legacy emphasized this text]*
A negative side of it that has more to do with conformity
I think the goodness in urgency comes in when it's truly about positive growth in the person and their community
- Legacy: Yes !!!!! Dang
This is so important to think about
And great to consider here – what urgency looks like as an act of care, that perhaps it can help us do a certain type of maintenance work
And re-prioritise based on this *[Lauren loved this text]*

Dia:

I think the impossibly violent structure of the world at present does so much to distract us from this

Lauren: Self evaluation is sooo important!

Legacy: And really that's the world and work we need to center

Lauren: I think urgently, we need to care for each other
Especially now when we're all so far apart

Legacy: So proud of you Lauren!!! Can't wait to see you keep shining in school (And art-making too!!!) *[Lauren loved this text]*
Absolutely – this conversation right here is a place of such delight and hope and care

I'm looking forward to us continuing as pen pals :) :)
And celebrating you for being 18. In a pandemic. And yet still IN DESPITE OF IT ALL – shining so brilliantly ✨✨✨✨

Lauren: Me too! It's wonderful to have someone like you to guide me through these times, and share pictures of our dogs with *[Legacy laughed at this text]*

Legacy: *[Image description: photograph of a brown dog curled up amongst pillows on a bed with a blue and white bedspread]*

Lauren: Thank you thank you thank youuu ✨ ✨ *[Sent with love effect]*

Legacy: Great to talk today!
Looking fwd to our 2.0 🥰🥰🥰🥰🥰🥰
Big hug!

Lauren: Same here! Sending the best vibes your way ✨ ✨ ✨

Legacy: Just stopped recording :))