

## Transcript

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You're listening to the My Simplified Life podcast and this is episode number 248. Welcome to the My Simplified Life podcast, a place where you will learn that your past and even your present don't define your future. Regardless of what stage of life you're in, I want you to feel inspired and encouraged to pursue your dreams, simplify your life, and start taking action. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac, author of How to Get on Podcasts, the podcast matchmaker.

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and CEO and founder of the MLG Collective. I'm excited to share my stories and life lessons with you while taking you on my own journey. This is my simplified life.

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Hey friends, welcome back to another episode. I'm your host, Michelle Glogovac. I feel like people come into your life for a reason. And oftentimes it's at the most perfect time. And I feel that way about my guest today. Her name is Katie Prentiss. She is an actress, a photographer, a filmmaker. And on top of all of that, she's award-winning many times over. She is a wonderful human being who

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connected with me after hearing a podcast episode, and we quickly became online friends, and we're taking it to the next level of being in real life friends, because we are peas in a pod. I just love everything that Katie is about. I love that she discovered and pivoted to this new career in mid-life of becoming an actress and a filmmaker, and that is so rare. If you know,

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Anything about the film industry for someone past, I don't know, 30, to begin fresh and starting is really different and unique. And the films that Katie is making are extraordinary. She's a storyteller and she's telling stories that are close to her. They're meaningful. They bring an education and empathy.

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and they tell a story that you might not otherwise hear. I am so excited to get to introduce you all to Katie Prentice.

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Hi, Katie. Hello, Michelle. I'm so glad my daughter's not home because she'd be like, hi, mom, what, what? Oh, you have a daughter named Katie. I have a Katie, yes. I love that. But she uses her big girl name at school. She's Katherine. Katherine, yes. I'm a Katherine as well. With an A and a K. With a K, correct. Yeah. Can you introduce yourself to everybody, please? Yes, my name is Katie Prentiss.

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I am an actor, filmmaker, photographer, I don't know, multi-hyphenate. We'll just go with that. Do a lot of things, but I'm glad to be here. I only recently learned of the word multi-hyphenate from Hithapalapoo. Yes. I listened to that podcast episode. It was really great. And yeah, I think that it's such a great way to just, yeah, we do a lot of things. You are one as well. Thank you. When she said that in the book, I went, oh.

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like the light bulbs went off of, yeah, I like that title because you can be all the things you don't have to fit into one. I feel like that's, you know, niche down, niche down, niche down, however you want to say it, stay in your lane. I'm like, no, but I can't. Yeah, exactly. And I think we're always expanding and or change. We're able to change lanes and move where we want to move in life. And yeah, I like that.

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I like that label because it's like, I don't want to just be like one thing. Yeah. So let's talk about actress Katie, filmmaker Katie, because I am so intrigued by what you do and how you got into it and the projects you're working on. Take me back to when Katie decided to be an actress. Is that just how it started? Like, I'm just going to act and make films. I mean, it's so...

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I feel like I stumbled into it, which sounds ludicrous, but it's... So I look at my life and I look back and I'm like, how did I end up where I am? Like making movies and acting is not something I would have predicted. But when I look back, I'm like, it does make sense. I was an English major in college. So that's kind of the start is what I think. And then I became...

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photographer and did portrait photography. I've done that for like the past 17 years. And then I moved into acting and then filmmaking. And I think about all of those categories combined. Well, let's not let's not overlook being a mother of four children either, because I was a primary caregiver, stay at home mom for a number of years as well. And I think all of those things shape you into or should have shaped me into a storyteller.

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And to tell stories through film makes so much sense to me. Now, I've always been a person who loves people, I think which has gravitated me toward English, toward literature, toward photography, and now toward acting and filmmaking. One of my favorite people in the world who is my acting coach, his name is Ben Mathis, just recently said,

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If you don't love people, you can't really be a good actor, which is a controversial statement. But I thought, oh, that makes me feel so confident as an actor because I genuinely love people. You know, I think, I heard something years ago that said if people can hate for no reason, then people can love for no reason. I latched onto that so quickly of like, yeah, I'm going to love you.

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Like you can make me like want to stand far, far away, but I'm going to start with that. So yeah, so my journey, my acting journey began, honestly on a whim. I thought I saw productions happening in Portland, some like really fun shows like Grim and Portlandia and such were filming in town and some near my home. And I would see these productions. I'm like, that seems so exciting.

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what are they doing? Like, I want to be on set. I just think it'd be really cool to witness it and see what it's like. I didn't have a plan. I didn't have like a real ambition to have a new career, but I did have a major curiosity and I thought I'm going to put this on my bucket list to be on a set. And in that process just came upon some background casting and I got my kids like to do

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work so I could live vicariously. I'm like do you all want to do this? And they were like yes, and I got them on a show and I was like what was it like? And then I found a casting notification on a female entrepreneurial Facebook page. So again wasn't really like on an acting site trying to get an agent. I didn't know anything about the industry. In fact

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Acting saying you wanted to be an actor sounded to me like saying, I'm going to be like a famous rock star at this stage. Like that's not a, it didn't seem like a viable career because I didn't understand the industry. So I, I, this is a long story. I'm going to try to make it briefer, but I submitted for a role. It asked my husband to help me audition. I didn't know what I was doing is probably the worst audition known to man. And

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somehow I booked that role and it was on a feature film called Sophie Jones that was filmed here in Portland. It was beautiful film. It ended up getting distribution. You can watch it now. And in that experience of booking that role, I thought it was going to be like a, oh my gosh, now I can say I was in a movie type of thing and check it off the bucket list. But instead I got to set and I was blown away by it.

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the collaborative journey of telling a story with cameras, lights, directors, actors, like everyone is working so hard to create this picture of a story. And I had been an entrepreneur for so many years, working by myself and I love people. So I was enamored with the thought of getting to have a community around this aspect.

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So pretty quickly on after that, I joined the acting class. I started just figuring out the industry, hustling my little booty off, trying to figure out if I could... I really thought this way, Michelle. I thought, got away with it once. I wonder if I could get away with it again. That's kind of what I thought. But then very quickly, I'm like, people will take you as seriously as you take yourself. And so I'm gonna show up.

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as professionally as I can. I'm gonna learn as much as I can and work as hard as I can to like, try, make it happen. And honestly, it's been a very rewarding journey, like kind of beyond my expectations of what I count as like success is like living your dreams, you know, getting to act, getting to make movies. So.

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I love this. You just put it out there and you're like, yeah, we'll see what happens. Okay, now I'm going to do it. And you did it and you made it happen. And then you became a filmmaker. So at what point were you like, okay, acting is cool. Now I'm going to make the films. Yeah, thank you for asking that. I think it wasn't long before you realize, okay, I'm in midlife. I'm acting for the first time. It's pretty quickly that you realize this industry really isn't set up to reward women in midlife.

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with great roles. This industry, you know, the percentage of female directors, the percentage of female lead stories, you know, lead roles of women in midlife or beyond are just few and far between. And my first acting coach, who I love, Scott Rogers, suggested that we create our own work if we're able. And

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I think that bug got in my ear of like, oh, I could create my own work, meaning like make a film myself. And I'm very much a person who learns by doing. I have to kind of just jump in the puddle and splash around and see what happens. So I was in this journey of, I had lost my mom eight years ago. I was in that grief process and I thought, if I'm gonna make a film.

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I want to make a story that means a lot to me because I feel like if my heart is really attached to it, it'll help me fulfill and complete the project. So I made my first film loosely based on my experience with my mom having dementia in her sixties. It's called FTD, frontotemporal dementia, the type she had, which is not like typical Alzheimer's.

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or something. But anyways, I made my first film in 2020 during the pandemic, loosely based on my experience with her. And that, to me, that again, that experience I had my my one of my goals was to finish period. And that film has had like a really big impact on people. And so I realized just like what you're doing here, sharing our stories impacts people.

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And I realized, oh, I want to learn more about filmmaking. So I'm going to make some more short films. I'm going to go through this process again, like build a community, build a team, see what we can create together. And I think I, oh my gosh, it's such a labor of love because...

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I haven't, you know, I've raised money for filmmaking and I've paid people as well as I can on my projects, but I don't make any money on the films that I've made. But it's so rewarding getting to be at the helm, getting to create the stories and then direct and act in these films has been beautiful, which has led me to now creating my first feature film that I'm.

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hoping to shoot in February of 2025. It feels very much the same because here I am getting to share these stories and I love this and yet I do pay people to edit and whatnot, but I'm not making money. You have to write it off and use it as a marketing tool somehow, but it is a labor of love. I absolutely get that. What's the feature film going to be on? Yes.

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So yeah, I think the goal that I share with you is like, we want to connect with people. We want stories to be amplified. I think about this too, like even just meeting you, it's like we can rise

together. The more, especially women, the more women support each other and amplify each other's voices, the better we are, all of us. So my feature film I'm obsessed with.

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It's called Wake Up Maggie. It is a story that, so I call the first film that I ever made a proof of development because it was about this journey I took. How do I say this?

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My first film was loosely based on my experience with my mom's dementia. And in the story, it's more highlighting those confusing moments that happen when you feel like someone's cognitive abilities are declining and you're not sure what's going on. It's 16 minutes, it's about two neighbors. Because I was filming in the pandemic, I felt like neighbors was a great thing to highlight.

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Wake Up Maggie is taking some of the context of that story and placing it into a different story. I think it's so much based on my own journey of going through midlife and being what Brene Brown calls unraveled by midlife. Not a crisis, but the midlife unraveling that allows us to move into who we really are.

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and who we're meant to be. And often that unraveling happens through circumstances that.

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get us to our core because we don't want them, like whether it's grief or, you know, for me it was definitely grief. It was caregiving for my mom and how difficult that role is and how all of us will probably end up either being a caregiver or needing a caregiver. And yet it doesn't wait for you to have time and availability when that happens to you. And so that happened to me when my kids were in...

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elementary school and one was in middle school and life was so chaotic and yet I have to bring my mom in into this mix and cope with her and basically watch this disease end her life. This is my long, I'm sorry I'm so long-winded. No, no. This is your story.

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Go. Wake Up Maggie is about a character named Maggie who is able to tightly control her life and keep things organized and do all the things for her children, for her job, for her family, for her community until she has to deal with her estranged sister who gets into trouble. And when she engages Jane, her sister, she realizes there's more going on than she realized.

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and what she walks into is like a diagnosis that she wasn't expecting. So I call this film a coming of middle-aged story. I love that. I love so much because it is about that journey that we all take. And I say it's my love letter to caregivers because these, most of us when we're in this role in our lives.

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feel very invisible and the pressure is so intense. And then I say it's to raise awareness for FTD, which is the disease. A lot of people know when I say Bruce Willis was diagnosed with FTD, it gives like a connection to this disease. So yeah, this film is super special to me and I have been working on it for over two years.

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And I cannot, it brings me so much joy. Like every time I like, you know, meet with a new person who wants to join our efforts or edit the script, I'm like, oh, I can't wait for this to come to life. So what parts have you done yourself since this is your story that you're telling? Did you write the script? What part of the film are you creating?

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yourself, you're doing that someone else is not coming in to do. I'm really curious on what exactly all of the roles and parts that you play in creating this. And I know it's going to be a lot, so I'm excited. List them, please. Only a multi-hush and it would be excited by this question. Let's just point that out. I wrote the script and that took me quite a long time.

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And just to say, I never thought I would make a feature film about this topic, but because of the attention my first film got, I felt like I had.

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a responsibility to give back. But yes, I wrote the script. I have been, I'm very much a producer on this film. And what that means is bringing on the team and being at the helm of meeting with people who want to contribute to the film and see it come to life. So raising awareness and funding for the future.

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and I'm gonna be co-directing the film as well. So I do have a producer on my team named Kara Mitsuku and she has been incredible and she's been working with me since about January of this year. Also a labor of love on her part and just helping organize anything from

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grant applications to budget projections to, you know, she'll be on the grounds producer with like organizing the team and helping overseeing all of everyone's roles on the film production. So what a producer does now that I've researched them intensely.

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Yes, yes. And producer in our industry is so, the term is so complicated because on every film you'll notice like hundreds of producers on the credits, right? There's executive producer, which usually means funding, but can just mean creative control. There's a bunch of producers that could just be financial producers, meaning they contributed at a certain level to the project. And then there's producers like what you're talking about, who are just

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managing the project and I shouldn't say just. Because it is an underappreciated role in our industry. They don't have a union unlike writers and directors and actors. It's just fascinating. Producers often are the reason a project has success, and yet they don't always get the recognition. I think part of it is because that term can mean so many different things.

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And I think most of us don't know truly what it even means. In my re- as I was going down this rabbit hole last week of like, what do they do? What are the differences? And you know, it's everything from the budget and the executive producer will say, you know, okay, this is going to cost us a hundred thousand and say they get the hundred thousand, but then it turns out it only costs eighty thousand. They actually get to keep that twenty thousand because they budgeted it correctly. And I'm like, oh.

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That's pretty genius. Like if you know your numbers, executive producers, this is how you can make more money off of it. And, you know, even there was some example of like clothes pins that you name them something else in the film and industry because they can't be a line item for clothes pins. It was something totally random. And yet you can, if you name it something else, then that money comes into the budget too. And, you know, I've got a friend who does, what is it? It's like council.

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production, he counseled the storyline with his experience. It was some odd, I'm like, what is this production line? I like that. So it's really fascinating all of the different types that, you know, then you get the film credit and then there's a whole, you have to be on set so many days or so many hours in order to get the credit, in order to get the IMDB and it's complicated.

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It's super complicated and I would say like it's often all negotiable. You know, especially at a producer level. I mean, for us, we have different, um, contribution levels that allow for people to

come on as producer, like starting at \$15,000, like you can be a producer on our film if you want to donate at that level. So, so there's, there's cool opportunities, I think, to have that credit.

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even for like a film like Wake Up Maggie, and it's a truly indie project. I mean, like this industry, you know, in Hollywood it's always millions of dollars, and in Portland we're like scrappy and collaborative. And I feel like the industry here in our city I love because people are often so willing to support each other's films in really beautiful ways by like donating locations or helping support. There's...

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companies that help support with gear, like reducing rates for gear and stuff like that. It's just such a beautiful state to film in too, that I'm very excited to have my first feature be in Portland. What do you think about Hollywood versus Portland? Because I think of myself and maybe others listening think, okay, films are made in Hollywood. You have to be there. How are you making a film?

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outside of Hollywood? Does that even exist? Because my initial thought was like, well, if I wanted to be a producer, we're going to have to move because everything's going on down there. And yet then if you do some Googling, there's studios around here in the Bay Area too. So, you know, what's that perception? How is it different? Can you be successful? Obviously you can. Somewhere outside of Hollywood. But does that almost make it better?

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because you're not in Hollywood, because the pressures are so much different? I mean, it just really, there's so many differences. And I will say, like, I can't really speak to what it's like creating an indie film in LA because I haven't done that. And I'm also making my first feature in Portland. So my experience is limited with that answer. But I think that, I do think...

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If you're trying to film, like if I were trying to film my first feature in LA, I would probably be guaranteed to need a much higher budget than what it will take here in Portland because anyone in LA is going to be, one is like the regulations on locations, two is most locations are

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They know the industry so much and so much filming happens that they're not gonna just give a location, they're gonna charge, you know, because they're big budget films all the time being made so they can make money from a location. I think everyone's rates are higher in a city like LA. So if you're really wanting to build your career and make money, I do think it's a smart place to be because it's where the industry is happening, or New York. But...

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But I think that if you're curious about making a truly indie project, then coming to a secondary market like Portland that has tax incentives and community support and such like that, I think it's a great place to come. And I mean, another beautiful thing that we have here is no sales tax. So like anything you're buying.

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for set, you're gonna not pay taxes, no sales tax on. Which is like- That's saving money. Yeah. So it's interesting, like I think what you have in a secondary market is you have people who are really hungry for the work. And I'm not saying that people aren't hungry in LA, I just think it's more hoops to jump through when you're in a market like that. Because the-

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the competition is so much more immense. It's like swimming in a lake versus the ocean. So, we got Maggie will come out next year, right? We are projecting to film at the beginning of next year. So then the post-production process, I mean, it would be amazing to finish it in 2025, but I would project a year.

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of post-production. And then you have to market it and get the press out and you'll have to come back again, of course, to promote it and where everybody can see it. I love that. Apply to

festivals, I'm guessing, like all of these things. So this is like a huge undertaking. Yes. Years and years long. I say that it's like, even my short films, I'm like, it feels like you're moving.

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planning a large event like a wedding and creating a business all at the same time. And then it like wraps up and you move on to the next one. Then you got to start all over again. Which has to be weird too, because you're working with a certain group of people and it just reminds me of like pregnancy of for nine months, you're going into the office and I was going in like multiple times a month and you're with the same people and they know you and then all of a sudden poof, no more.

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Like the baby's here and I don't have to go see the same group every week. There's gotta be like a let down. I think pregnancy is a perfect analogy because it is the dream of a child, you know, that often, I mean not always, but often like gets us to the place of pregnancy, then is the growing of that child. And then the child comes out into the world and then you're like, how can I protect this?

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and nurture it and allow it to flourish as best as it can. And I think about that with my story so much, like, Wake Up Maggie, I often am like, when I'm making choices about this film, I think it's not really personal because this is my baby. Like, I have to protect the baby.

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And it feels amazing to be able to have my first film feel that important to me, you know? I don't think it would be, it would be really challenging for me to work as hard as I'm working for a film that just seems like a cool idea. But to have something that I know if I do nothing more in life, this will feel like a huge contribution on my part. That feels so rewarding.

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And there's, before we end, I do want to share there's a real personal aspect to this film that I really love to share with people because so much of making this film is about me facing my

fears. And obviously anytime we're doing creative work, it's facing our fears, but I don't mean the creative part. When my mom was diagnosed with FTD...

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Of course, watching her decline from this disease was really tough for me. And I think, my guess is that anytime you watch someone, when you lose someone to anything, you probably fear getting that thing. So for me, fear of FTD has always been very vibrant, but I would always negotiate it out of my mind by thinking, oh, it's just kind of a random.

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chance that my mom got it, blah, blah, blah. Well then in recent years, my uncle, her brother got diagnosed with FTD. And so what I realized is that it is very likely we have a genetic strain of this in our makeup. And so I think for me, my mom was diagnosed with FTD when she was 62. And...

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I think for sure she had it in her 50s. We just didn't know. And so when my uncle got it, I had to really do business with that deeper fear of the reality that I could have a genetic component of FTD. And just like when my mom was diagnosed, I think when we're facing some sort of grief or fear like that, we have to say, what are we gonna do about it?

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We can't control it. I cannot control it. There's no medicine. I can live my life as healthy as I can and as full as I can, but I can't control whether my brain is gonna have this or not. But what I can do is move into acceptance. And that's what my film is about. And that's what my life is about. It's like, if I knew for sure that I had this and that that is in my future, what would I do?

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And the answer that has come back with complete clarity is I would make this film. I would live my life as fully as I can. I would be with people I love and I would make this film. If I got FDD, I may not be able to make other films. But if I, my hope is that I'll go on to make a whole bunch of other films. And that's, I'm already dreaming about them like a psychopath. Like that.

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I was going to ask that next, so yay. So that's why this film is important to me because it's very, very real. And there are so many people affected by FTD, either themselves or in people they love. And so few people know about it and it gets misdiagnosed. And it takes an average of over three and a half years.

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to even get an accurate diagnosis for this disease. So the awareness piece of it is so important to me and the contribution is so important to me. And I already have a distribution plan in my mind that I'm scheming on with how we're gonna get as many eyeballs as possible on this. And movies are such a great way for people to relate and learn something that they didn't know before. So.

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Absolutely. I think the lesson that you shared too can be applicable to anything in life and should be applicable. If something's going to happen to us tomorrow, what are we going to do today to make sure that we feel complete, that we don't have any regrets, that we've lived our life to the fullest? Yes. So no matter what disease, illness, cancer that we're talking about,

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we have to live life this way, that if you have this dream, you have this creation of something in your head that you want to get out, you have to do it now. We can't wait around. We don't know how long waiting is. So I love that message. It's a beautiful lesson that we should all be taking to heart. Right. Exactly. And it's like, I tend to ask myself, what makes me feel alive? And I think that that's a great reality check.

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of like, you know, it moves me to gratitude. Like I get to do the work that I love. It moves me to like being more present with the work I'm doing, with the people I'm with, with the food I'm eating, with anything. It's like being more present and being more alive is the goal. So I just happened to be making a movie. As I was working. I loved this.

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Where can everyone go contribute to Wake Up Maggie because we need some more funds people. We need to get this out there so she can go film it next year and distribute it to the entire world. So where can they find you? Where can they contribute? Where can they do all the things? Bless you for asking that question. And really, really truly thank you. I always say like money is energy and time. And some people like...

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you know, a \$50 contribution is enormous for some people and a \$5,000 contribution is minor to others. So it's all relative. But yes, funding creates the opportunity for us to pay people to make this movie and get it on screens. You can find me at Katie Prentice on all the social medias.

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I mostly hang out on Instagram and threads. I am also at [katieprentice.com](http://katieprentice.com). I try to keep it as easy as possible, people. Wake Up Maggie is under wake and also [wakeupmaggie](#) on Instagram and Facebook. So. I need to go follow that one. Thank you. All of those, I really feel like.

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It's not too hard to find links to donate because they're all either in my bio link tree or on the website, but it's been an enormous, the wave of energy that has come behind this film and gotten us to where we are already has been humbling and exciting and inspiring and.

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People want to see this movie in our audience and support just continues to grow. And I'm so excited to see like that continue. And then when the movie is made, the community that we'll get to celebrate with is just gonna feel so exciting and rewarding. I can't wait to celebrate with you and to see the movie. Thank you. I will be there. I'm so excited. Somehow, someway we will be watching it together.



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I love it. Yes, I love it. And Michelle, we're so honored to have you be a part of this, even through this podcast or even just joining our campaign is such a gift. Oh, thank you. It's an honor. And I'm so excited that we've gotten to meet and become friends and all of this. Yes. I love new friends. Thank you so much, Katie. Absolutely. Thank you for having me.

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friends, Katie is such an absolute delight. She is gorgeous and beautiful inside and out and I am so proud to call her my friend. I can't wait to get to know her even better and to watch her movie Wake Up Maggie when it comes out to follow her journey as she's filming this next year. I encourage all of you to follow her and if you can, contribute to her film.

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Like how awesome is it to think that you could be a part of her creating this, of being able to say that you've contributed to something that is going to be on a screen and that is going to change lives and tell stories and help other people. That is such a gift, a gift to give to yourself, a gift to give to others, a gift to Katie to help her get this film created.

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and put out there for others to witness. Go follow Katie. As always, thank you and don't be afraid to tell your story.