



Rants and Randomness with Luvvie Ajayi

Consume the Room (with June Ambrose) - Episode 39

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Yo my people, welcome to Rants and Randomness. I'm Luvvie, and this is my show where I'm talking about the things I'm loving, things I'm side-eyeing, and having great convo with awesome people. I'm here at the Chicago Recording Company, bringing y'all the radio voice as always.

And on this episode, my feel good is I have a little namesake now. My rant is how we need to wash our hands and this should not be revolutionary. And I'm spotlighting the show that I'm obsessed with on Netflix called Love is Blind. My guest is the incredibly iconic June Ambrose, stylist to the stars.

So let's jump into it.

Rants and Randomness Sponsor

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Feel Good

[00:01:21]

My feel good is, if you follow me on Instagram, which you should, I'm [@Luvvie](#) there, you should see that I recently [learned about a little girl named Liberty Grace Luvi](#) who was named after me. I received a message from her mom who said that she follows me, she's inspired by my work, and she decided to name her daughter me. Or, well, give her daughter my name as her middle name. Her name is spelled L-U-V-I, they left out the V and the E, which is cool.

During this month, I think about how the work that we're doing now is to ensure that the world that our young girls grow up in is one that will be kinder to them, more gentle with them, and more affirming to their existence. I want Liberty Grace to grow up unburdened in ways that we didn't have the chance. For her to carry my name is an honor. Names are major. So it, honesty, was one of the

most affirming things I've seen yet in terms of things have happened in my career, or because of my career. These are the things that will ensure that I keep going when things get tough, I will think about that little girl who now has my name as her middle name and use that for some joy in moments if I need it. So thank you so much for Liberty Grace's new name, I'm excited about it.

Rant

[00:02:40]

My rant this week, y'all, it's not even really a rant as much as it's a PSA, a public service announcement. You know, thanks to the Coronavirus, we now know that there are a bunch of nasty people who don't wash their hands. Well you know what? Let me not make that judgment, because some people don't think they're nasty because they don't wash their hands. I will say, you are not thinking like you should, okay? Because here's the thing, since this whole COVID-19 virus popped up, the one thing that health workers have been telling us to do to minimize risk is to thoroughly wash our hands. They're saying that for 20 seconds, soap and water, go to work.

And people have kind of pushed back at it. Some folks are like, wait, wash our hands? What else do you need us to do? How about you just wash your hands? And I just don't understand why this is even a thing, why this is a revolutionary ask now. We literally learned that we should wash our hands when we were toddlers. Suddenly, we have lines out of men's bathrooms because they're actually washing their hands now because they weren't before. I found out that apparently, people go to the bathroom as a habit and don't wash their hands afterwards.

It's especially bad when men do it, because men have to hold their junk while they're doing it. So I'm concerned. I'm just like, so y'all were just going to the bathroom and walking clean out and not washing your hands? It's wild, wild. I feel like a bit of my innocence has been taking away in learning this. I feel like I don't want to touch anybody. So it's just weird, this virus, there's a lot of things to learn with the whole COVID-19, coronavirus pandemic that is happening in the world right now. But one of the things that I need us to understand, we have to wash our hands.

So all types of shelves at grocery stores are out of hand sanitizer because people are thinking that's what we need to do, is just use hand sanitizer. No, nothing beats soap and water. Please and thank you.

So yeah, this is also why I'm probably no longer hugging people. I mean, I was already not a hugger if it was somebody who I didn't know. Now, I'm especially not. If you see me in these streets, I am very honored that you recognize me or you read my work. Let us either elbow tap, Wakanda Forever salute, or ankle tap. Because the hand shaking, that's not going to happen with me for the next who knows how long, until everybody figures out how to wash their hands.

So no shade, I love you. I see you. I appreciate you. But let us just Wakanda Forever. And everybody, please wash your hands. It's not even much deeper than that, apparently. They're saying this is the first

line of defense. It is simple. Wash your hands, clean your phones, and try to be as non-germy as possible, that's all we can do. And cough into your elbows. Thank you.

Randomness Spotlight

[00:05:27]

All right, so my spotlight, [Love is Blind](#) on Netflix. It's this TV show where people learn and, well, they started dating each other through these pods, didn't see each other's faces. Through connecting via voice alone, they had to make the decision to get engaged to this person on the other side. I ended up binge watching it in two days, it is such trash and it is the best thing ever. I love it so much. It's the first season, ended up being five couples making it past the pods who decided to get engaged and two couples, spoiler alert, two couples end up getting married for real for real.

But the show was just really good. I think right now, we need mindless entertainment. We need things that will bring us some type of levity. We will need things that will entertain us because if you think about the state of affairs in the world, it's easy to go through a rabbit hole. But I really recommend [Love is Blind](#) because you just want some trash TV for a hot second. One of the characters, Jessica, is a whole dickhead. Giannina is a brat, but she ended up getting her life together for the reunion. Amber was a hobosexual, basically, which means when you date really because you want to make sure you have a roof over your head.

Mark was definitely a simp. Barnett is a forever frat boy. The only people who I really stay on that show, Lauren and Cameron, I love them, they've been everywhere. I am rooting for the Hamilton's, okay? So yeah, check out [Love is Blind](#) on Netflix. At this point, my Netflix queue is very long because I plan on having a lot of mindless entertainment distract me from the state of affairs. And this one's a good one. It's a good one. It is full of mess and drama and ridiculousness and you will yell at your TV screen. And yeah, it's a good distraction. So check it out on Netflix, it is about, I think, 10 episodes and then the finale episode and then the reunion. Watch it all. Then after that, go read what everybody's saying on social media.

Interview with June Ambrose

[00:7:34]

LUVVIE All right, smooth voice.

JUNE One two, one two. One two, one two.

LUVVIE Yo, this is so cool. I am so excited.

My Rants folks, we have an iconic guest today, I am excited to announce and welcome the amazing [June Ambrose](#) to the podcast. June.

JUNE Luvvie, finally.

LUVVIE Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh, we made it happen.

JUNE I was starting to feel left out, you were interviewing all the cool people and I was trying to get a request.

LUVVIE Listen, June, I had to make sure.

JUNE We have to make this good.

LUVVIE We have to make it good. Let me give people your bio so they understand me. They already know who you are, but I'm going to give them the bio, all right?

JUNE I always just assume no one knows who I am. How about that?

LUVVIE You know what? It's a good assumption, it's a good assumption.

JUNE Yeah, yeah.

LUVVIE But it's got to be a false one, but it's all right, it keeps us humble.

JUNE Keeps us grounded, yeah.

LUVVIE Fashion designer, celebrity stylist and author, [June Ambrose](#) has a career in style that has spanned over two decades. Her A-list roster includes names like Jay-Z, Missy Elliott, Mary J. Blige, Alicia Keys, Gabrielle Union, and more. Basically, she styles all the cool kids. She's been featured on numerous TV shows including the Oprah Winfrey Show, the Today Show, and she had her own show on VH1 called [Styled by June](#). She's the author of the book [Effortless Style](#), and she has over one million followers across her social media platforms that witness her demonstrate her iconic style as she shares her larger than life presence.

June is a unicorn and noir pixie dust carrier, and I love her dearly, and I'm so excited for her to be here. June, welcome.

JUNE Now I want a whole t-shirt line that says, "I'm a unicorn."

LUVVIE Yes. June is a unicorn.

JUNE And thank you for inspiring that, that was great.

LUVVIE You know what? Take it. Run with it. I want to see you wearing that t-shirt in one of your videos on social where you're trying on things.

JUNE Say no more. That will fit right in. How many ways can you style this T?

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE I think it's going to be my next big challenge.

LUVVIE Yes. Oh my gosh.

JUNE Yeah. Thank you.

LUVVIE So I start by asking my guests what did you want to do or be when you were growing up?

JUNE I wanted to be free. From a very young age, I was fortunate enough not to be one of those being raised by a mom who put you in the corner and said, "Speak when you're spoken to." Or, "Simmer down." She didn't dim my light. She allowed me to be as free and expressive as I wanted to be. And kept me safe. There would be sometimes she would say, "Please don't wear these slippery shoes in the snow." And I'd be like, "But they go with the outfit." Then I'd come back five minutes later crying because I slipped in the snow.

Yeah, I wanted to be someone who made a difference in peoples' lives, that you remembered me long after I walked away. That you thought about me when I wasn't in your presence. This is something that I didn't have the words for in my early years. Then my mom shared some of those words with me, close people that loved me shared those words with me. Then I also discovered what it is that was my superpower. I was able to put words to that. There's one word that really describes it all and it's just freedom.

LUVVIE Freedom. So how was seven year old June? What was she like?

JUNE I was precocious. People thought that I was going to be a minister.

LUVVIE Really?

JUNE Yeah, because I used to always be like ... I've gotten kind of quiet over the years. I used to literally would walk into a room ... Either a minister or a strip dancer. Because I would just walk into the room and jump on a table or couch and be like, "listen up." You know, I'd always have an announcement. I was always announcing. I delivered the news with enthusiasm. But I was also an entrepreneur.

At a very young age, in school, I was constantly implementing, hustling, figuring out ways to make extra lunch money. I remember making crepe paper bags and little pencil holders out of the grocery bags from the supermarket or crepe paper. Then I would sew them with yarn, then I would sell them to the kids in the class. I think it was 50 cents, 25 cents, whatever. I would get the parents involved. After school, I would approach the parents and say, "Your daughter wanted this little pencil case." And they would buy it from me. So I was always hustling. You know? I was always selling something.

LUVVIE I love that.

JUNE It comes to no surprise that I think I'm still selling stuff. It's like, more.

LUVVIE Except you're basically getting paid to be yourself.

JUNE Yeah. Yeah. Well, yeah, I'm selling ideas constantly.

LUVVIE So in high school and elementary school, you were doing this. What did you end up doing?

JUNE In high school, I studied theater. I was an actress. In junior high school, I was in the theater program, then I went to a performing arts high school. I was a drama major, dance minor, so I

came up in the arts. When I didn't get the role, the theatrical role that I wanted in the piece in different semesters, I would then take on the costume designing role. So it kind of showed me two axis of character developing. I would explain the character, there were no small characters or small actors. My drama teacher at the time, he would always say, "There's no small parts, just the small actors." So if you think small ...

That kind of resonated with me all the time and I thought, no matter what role you have in life, no matter what small part you play, it's a big part in the bigger picture. So I carried that throughout whatever project or career choices I had fallen into, that always stuck with me. Every little opportunity I was given, I made it into a big deal.

LUVVIE You've basically been like that since you were little. You're saying you walked into rooms, jumped on tables, announced yourself.

JUNE I was a mess, yes. I didn't let the room consume me, I consumed the room.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE It's also a really great way of avoiding, I think, anxieties that some people may have. They come into a room with this expectation of it making them feel good. But I like to walk into a room and be the feel good. So that no matter what's going on in it, it doesn't necessarily change me, you know what I mean? It's really hard to go through life that way because life changes you.

LUVVIE Right.

JUNE It's not a perfect life, but it was a coping life. I was able to cope with certain ... The personality that you have is your personality. Some people tend to pack away their personality to fit into society's conform. I just kind of, I think, was able to escape some of that in a way.

LUVVIE You, as a black woman, have been taking up space for a long time. You talk about your mom giving you the freedom to actually do that from such a young age. Growing up, was there anybody who tried to talk you out of it?

JUNE Yeah, of course. We had the elders. My grandma would be like, "Tell her to settle down." First of all, I was hyperactive. Now they call that ADHD, but I was all over the place. They didn't diagnose me back then. I was super bouncing off the walls, I was so hyper. I used to sleepwalk, I had so much energy. Just to settle me down for bed was a task, because I just had to talk. I'd wake up, I'd go get my mom and go get my grandma and go get my sister and be like, "Let's talk." I had ideas in my head and I was like, "Let's talk." And they'd be like, "Oh my God, this girl."

As an adult, people would tell you, wait your turn or it's just not your time, or you're not the type for this. They'll try and talk you out of ... Maybe you need to change this and try this if you want this. It's easy to be convinced by that because you're seeing everyone getting opportunity in certain things and you're like, maybe it's something I'm doing wrong. It takes so much out of you to turn the page and stop letting that particular story being written, that takes a lot.

But I've had to do it many times, and sometimes I've fallen victim to maybe you need to be something else for this. It doesn't last very long, because I really enjoy being me. And I've really

realized, as I've tried to convert over to what could potentially be what they're looking for, that it's just me being an actress and role playing. When the scene is over, I'm like, "I'm just going to go back to being June because I like her way better."

LUVVIE I couldn't imagine you not being this person.

JUNE [crosstalk 00:16:44] right?

LUVVIE Because your career has been so big, because you are so big. But what people don't realize is, you started in finance.

JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE The most gray, navy blue, black suit industry possible.

JUNE Yeah. The corporate world.

LUVVIE And now you are the June Ambrose.

JUNE Yeah but it trained me, and it really prepared me for my entrepreneurial journey. This journey that I'm still on. Going out and really saying, "I'm going to build a business and create, and write my own ticket in this world that I wanted to be so much a part of." If I didn't have that corporate experience, I think, that foundation, I wouldn't have known that I needed a 401K. I wouldn't have known that I needed a business manager. I wouldn't have known that I needed insurance. That I needed to put away money for retirement. All of this little nuances that creatives don't necessarily ...

Because we're unicorns, right? We're fairies. We're sprinkling happy dust everywhere. But I think the corporate experience really kind of showed me a couple things. That I'm not a corporate girl. But I am a CEO. I've created that ... Key things that I've taken from the corporate experience and brought it into a world where you think there's not supposed to necessarily be any business and structure.

Because when people think about fashion, people, they think, "They just talk about clothes." Put this together, or what should I wear? You know when you meet people who are like, "Tell me, tell me, tell me, what should I wear? oh my God, how do I look?" And the conversation is still kind of like ... They're in these boxes, right?

LUVVIE Right.

JUNE You never think about a bigger picture when it comes to people that are into character developing, costume design, until you understand exactly what the craft is, right? Until you can understand exactly the contribution that the art form lends. I think then your questions become a little bit more provocative. For me, the one thing I love to indulge in, when you talk to me further about positioning, marketing, character development. What was your approach that you took when you were working on this particular video or this particular artist, or with this campaign? I mean, those conversations to me are just so much more exciting to have.

LUVVIE So I want people to know, how did you even get into the finance piece? Because it's always interesting to learn about the journey. People see a June or a Courtney, or they'll see Beyoncé. They'll see who we are today, or who those people are today and assume a lot. The fact that you started in finance and it's actually informed a lot of your work is fascinating.

JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE So how did you actually get into that?

JUNE When I was in high school, because I joined the program directly after high school. I had applied for college but I didn't necessarily end up furthering my education. I actually furthered my education on the job. Even though finance wasn't someplace I wanted to go into, I was taking classes on the outside. Acting classes, classes that made sense in different areas. Then I had this corporate job during the day, and I was studying theater at night.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE I was the school president, and I was very close with my principal. They had these great programs with these corporate companies and they needed someone in the research department at this firm called S. G. Warburg. He set me up with the interview, and I went in, they loved me. I spent about two years there. Understanding at this time, things weren't ... All the research information wasn't on the computers yet. Now you can Google everything. It's just for Google.

LUVVIE Right, right.

JUNE Right, yeah. All the guys, the brokers, would come, and all the information they would need. I was like a librarian, in a sense. We were inputting and formatting certain things into the system, but they could come to us if they needed research, analytic research and information, they would come to my department.

I would come in plaid skirts and combat boots. I would get pulled from my dress code all the time. Anyway, I grew so depressed because it was just not fun. Also, I was doing off Broadway shows at night, I was exhausted, I was falling asleep in bathroom stalls. But the money was great, the experience, the relationships, the knowledge was priceless. When I left the company, I had a nice portfolio, I had a beautiful insurance package that I held onto when I started freelancing.

LUVVIE Nice.

JUNE It really set me up. It really, really set me up. When I started my own firm in 1997, yeah, '97, it was a creative service agency. Because at the time, well, I left there to take an internship at a record company. And I've told this story many, many times. People hear this story and they think, okay, she left, she did an internship at a record company then everything happened. No, and the climate was so different. When I came to the music industry with this concept of costume design, like Luna from the Incredibles with these, they'll be superhero ideas.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE It was at a time when there weren't many, there weren't stylists. There were rock bands, there were hip hop groups, there were alternative music, they were dressing themselves. Kind of like what it is now.

LUVVIE Yeah, yeah.

JUNE A lot of these urban artists, they're really kind of falling in love with fashion, and you see them out in the stores and they're shopping and blah blah blah. It's kind of like, they didn't necessarily have anyone to bring that concept to fruition back then. So Puffy was working at the record label, and he was just becoming an A&R. I was in the right place at the right time. I carpe diemed the moment, I went to seize it. I raised my hand. I helped him write his first little bio, I was listening all the time, I was in everybody's little business trying to figure out what was going on, how can I create an opportunity for myself.

That's what I always tell people - Don't worry about what I did 20 something years ago, think about what the climate is now and how you can create an opportunity, carve out your link, tell your story, make yourself a uniquely creative individual as you can so that you're desirable and you're creating and building a legacy for yourself. It seems like such a daunting feat. But if you don't think about, I don't know, it's hard to say. Don't think about the money, think about the art. Just be as creatively free as you can.

When all that magic starts happening, then you'll start to really form your business. But initially, if you're looking for these jobs to pay the bills, you're so stressed out you can't even be creative.

LUVVIE Facts. Facts. It's kind of like the chicken before the egg.

JUNE Yeah. Listen, I was also extremely fortunate that I took an internship, that I had money, right? Because I was coming from a job, two years, I was stacking money, I had a portfolio, I had something for a rainy day. I wasn't living above my means.

LUVVIE Right.

JUNE I could do certain things. Listen, the internship was very short lived. It wasn't like I spent a year interning. It was a couple months and I had to figure it out quickly, and I was off to the running, you know? I worked with Billy Richards on my first music video and I remember being under prepared. And I remember after that knowing that I was never going to do that again. So just so much that you can learn from others, so much you can learn from life, so much you can learn from experiences.

But you also have to be willing to be a sponge and you also have to be willing to take the utmost risk when it comes to taking leaps of faith. What I did was truly a leap of faith. I could've stayed in a very comfortable place, and lived out the rest of my days. Yeah.

LUVVIE I mean, the world would've missed out on a lot of magic had you stayed in that office.

JUNE Oh my God I would've missed out.

LUVVIE You would've missed out, right.
JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE But I'm over here selfishly like, we would've missed out.

JUNE Yeah. I don't know, yeah, I don't know. I couldn't imagine. Nope. I never could.

LUVVIE Man, that's wild. A lot of us are in careers now that 20, 30 years ago, unheard of, did not exist. The life that we live, undesigned. Yours is truly one. Because you're one of the first really big name stylists. Usually stylists, unseen, unheard, nobody knows who's doing the stuff, we just see this work on the artists.

JUNE I never thought about it like that.

LUVVIE You're one of the big names. Yeah you actually made this name.

JUNE It really gives me butterflies. Because when I'm out and the stylists that are doing so well now, they're so gracious, they come to me and they say, "I just want to thank you for paving the way." It makes my heart just so full. Because it is confirmation that the journey that I set out to, when I was that little girl who said, "I want to make a difference in peoples' lives." That it has happened. You don't get to experience it because you don't necessarily ... It's not a thankful job, you know what I mean? You do things, and the artists, they take it and they run. You don't look for a thank you. You do the work, you know?

You don't really get it quite often. Then when you do, when you get it from your peers, or from people that are coming after you, for me, it makes me feel so loved and just so relevant. I think that is a beautiful word, relevancy.

LUVVIE Relevant, yep.

JUNE To be able to stay relevant over 20 something years is God's greatest gift.

LUVVIE I think one of the things that you do well is you evolve. If anybody's been following you for a long time, we just see that you're not one of the people who's just like, "oh my God, what's social media? Yeah, I'm not going to do that, I'm just going to do my work." You've been in this career for a long time, how do you continue to learn? How do you continue to grow in your craft?

JUNE Yeah. Well I think that evolution is super, super important. I mean, even like me, personally, style-wise, I look back ... I just posted a video the other day from 10 years ago. I'm like, oh my God, I was shopping and pulling stuff. These designers, I was out on six inch heels and I was dressed like I was the Clinch. I was like ... I'm lost. I respect it. Then I looked at myself now and I was like, you would think that I would've matured then actually ... Because I don't think we grow old, I think we grow young.

Now you see, I'm in my sneakers, I'm in baggy clothes. I've kind of evolved back to that. Because in my spirit, I'm regressing back to that little, fearless girl. That teenager. That before you have problems kind of life.

LUVVIE Yes, yes, before we had bills.

JUNE Yeah. I tell people, I said, it's kind of to tap into that. It's psychologically really just a beautiful thing. It keeps you inquisitive. I'm always asking questions. I'm always challenging myself. I'm always putting myself in environments that I've never been before that makes me uncomfortable. I think these things are so, so important to evolving, to staying fresh. I'm not afraid of not being the popular girl at the moment, you know what I mean? I'm not afraid of cheering others on.

JUNE Because people think if they do that, then they're no longer relevant. I've passed the crown. I haven't passed any crown.

LUVVIE Nope.

JUNE I haven't passed the torch, I'm still in it.

LUVVIE Right.

JUNE To me, that happens when I pass on to another universe. But within this universe, I'm still visiting other planets. I'm still diggable, you know what I mean? I still want to explore and understand what is this person into? Or what are they thinking about? Or what's next? Whether it's technology, whether it's sustainability. Whether it's in wellness. Because think about it, things have gotten so that our life expectancy used to be when we were in our 50's, then it went into the 60's and 70's. And now people are living to 105.

LUVVIE Yep.

JUNE I'm just like, what is it that I can do to maintain a good quality of life? So that I can still do the things that I enjoy. That's one of the reasons that I went plant-based, because I just really didn't want to succumb to feeling that way. Not being able to run across the street. Not being able to lunge and pick up something or put on these tight pair of pants.

LUVVIE There is just so much joy in how you approach your work, how you approach life in general. When things get tough, when you are in these spaces where you're still having to prove yourself, even though you've been in this industry for a long time, how do you keep moving? How do you keep your spirits up? And how do you make sure you're like, you know what? I know I'm hitting this wall, but I'm going to go through it.

JUNE Yeah. That's a really, really good question. Because I had just recently, I just, like I said earlier in the conversation, I just always assumed that I'm the new kid on the block, that someone doesn't know me. It's those two things that keeps you humble. But it also keeps you really fresh, right? I still get butterflies when I do a job. Because I just did the [Justin Timberlake / SZA video for Trolls](#). And I had never worked with SZA before. I had to go in with the expertise and the knowledge.

But also with some humility, because it could've gone any which way, you know what I mean? I had to go in with some grace. I wanted her to feel safe, and I wanted Justin to know I had it covered, and I was going to try to give them what they needed. But I think it's just that. It's the

feeling, it's that butterfly. I want to always have butterflies. I always want to feel like I'm as good as my last contribution, there's someone out there that's better than me.

You tell your kids, you have to work just as hard, even harder. I still put that on myself. There's been heartaches, there's been conflict. But you have to figure out resolution. You have to figure out a way to protect yourself. What does that show look like? How do you not show fear? It has to happen quickly because sometimes you're faced with it in such a ... It's like the flip of a switch. One thing could be going really good in a fitting, next thing you know, everything, it's a shit show.

I'm not a reactive person. I like to stay calm in the midst of chaos. I like to think things through before I react because that's, one, how I was raised. And two, I just have so much empathy for someone who is confused or in pain or angry and they're having a difficult time in an experience. I have such empathy for them, and I know that it's not about me. So if I go into a situation not thinking that it's about me, then I'm able to resolve it a little bit better with a clear mind, to have some empathy and be able to give them space if they need it to kind of go through the emotions. And not try to fix it immediately, or not try to calm them.

Sometimes people need to be outraged, they need to cry. It's like grief. You know what I mean? It's like, you have to go through these stages in life in order to feel alive. You have to feel pain. I had to learn that. It became such a reality to me two years ago when I lost my mom what that feeling was like, because I didn't know that feeling. It's the greatest loss in one's life is to lose a parent. I always tout that philosophy, but it kind of allowed me to reintroduce myself to all those core beliefs. Sometimes you feel so helpless and you start to question why things happened to you, or why you're not getting something that you want right away. It's the process.

No matter what you believe in, whether you're God fearing, Allah, whatever, to the most high, whoever you look to for that strength, whoever your God is, I think it's really important that you have these moments of reflection and giving that compliment to the power that you know is not yours in that moment of need. Because you always look and you say, "God give me grace. Give me strength." You're reaching out to something that you know that you don't have in that moment, so you have to be vulnerable. You have to render yourself. You have to let it go. You have to breathe. You just have to take your time. Take your time with the emotions.

LUVVIE Take your time.

JUNE And feel it. Take your time.

LUVVIE Yeah, I remember around the time when your mother passed, because I remember calling you. What did grief teach you?

JUNE That's a good question. It taught me that it was okay not to be happy all the time. Because that was an unnatural experience for me. Because when you're a happy child, some people are just really blessed with this joy, this light, and you take it for granted. You don't realize that there are so many people that are suffering, that you can't necessarily feel that way, and you don't realize that it's this beautiful gift. Then when it's lost and you feel it for the first time, we feel hurt. But grief? Grief is something else.

LUVVIE It sure it.

JUNE Grief, to me, is earth shattering. It almost makes everything seem to just stop, and it's a stillness. It's heavy, right? So in order for you to lift that weight off of you, you almost have to let go. It's like being in water. They always say if you're learning to swim and you don't ... You're not going to float if you're panicking.

LUVVIE Yep.

JUNE So I literally had to let the pain run through me. Let the tears, let the feeling ... Don't stop it. You know how people are like, don't cry, don't cry? No, no, no, no, no.

LUVVIE Cry.

JUNE [inaudible 00:37:58] let it go. Let it go, let it go, let it go.

LUVVIE I had [Yvette Noel Schure](#) on and she was talking about when her mother passed and she said, "Love saved me."

JUNE Yeah, that's a good one. Yeah, because you have all these sense memories. You can feel their heartbeat.

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE You remember all these gentle moments. The softness of the skin. Your life literally flashes before your eyes, and a lot of things become trauma, too. I realize it's a trauma. I'm still healing. I'm different from the experience. I'm so different from it. I won't be the same. That's okay. But it is a trauma.

LUVVIE You have this incredible daughter, [Summer Hope](#), who's your role dawg.

JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE Did that change how you and her interact? Did that deepen anything with you? I mean, you all are pretty much besties, it's so fun.

JUNE Yeah, well you know, both my kids, because I have an 18 year old who's going off to college, my son. He's my first born. And people don't talk about him a lot because they don't really see him. They see Summer.

LUVVIE Yeah. They see Summer.

JUNE They see Summer a lot. But both of them were just really gracious during that time. They felt for me, you know what I mean? You raise kids and you want them to have empathy and the way they dealt with it all was just really, really ... I can't even describe it. It just makes you so proud. I mean, really, really gentle, just super sweet. Yeah. Even my partner, everybody was just really ... I went on the road right after, I went back to work a week and a half later.

LUVVIE Really?

JUNE Yeah. I had to get to business because I couldn't ... I had to do the things that ... The timing of my mother's death, the things that I did after would not have taken place if she was still suffering and in the hospital. I wouldn't have gone. So it was almost like she was giving me the permission to go and go and do this.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE So it felt like what I was supposed to do. It was just what I was supposed to do.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE I think staying busy and getting back to life ... Because here's the reality, Luvvie, we all transition on. People, they grieve us for a couple days.

LUVVIE Then they keep moving.

JUNE I struggled with the fact that, you know, a week later, a couple days after, everybody just went back to their lives. My sister and I were the last to mourn, it was our experience. My kids couldn't even feel what I was feeling. No one, other than my sister and I, could feel what we were feeling. But it was like ... Listen, I felt guilty with my first smile. I was like, is it too soon to smile?

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE You just don't know what's appropriate. But then you just, people tell you, "You're going to feel her, she's going to come to you." That doesn't happen right away for a lot of people. I think everybody's journey is so different with that. I always say that I think it's so important that you just go about it as it feels natural, if that makes sense.

LUVVIE It does make sense.

JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE I've heard people say they felt guilty. Because you're like, whoa, does life just keep going? Actually, it does. Oddly enough.

JUNE Yeah, everybody, they move on. They lay the person ... Everybody's just, listen, we're living our lives. Because that's what we're supposed to do, until we meet again, right?

LUVVIE Yeah. Yeah.

JUNE So I looked at Kobe's wife and his daughter the other day in the photo she posted, and she was smiling. I so connected with why.

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE Because she had to live. There was nothing you could do to change it. That's something that just makes you feel, it breaks your heart. Because there's nothing you can do to change it.

LUVVIE That's real. That's real. What are you most proud of about your life or your work? Just what are you most proud of?

JUNE About work?

LUVVIE Anything.

JUNE Or just in general?

LUVVIE In general. When you wake up and you're looking at June in the mirror, what are you most proud of?

JUNE I think that I could still look at myself in the mirror and like me. That's really not as easy ... That's not easy. That comes from being able to do certain things in life that you feel like it was the right choice for you, and listen, we all do things that affects others in ways that aren't great outcomes. I always say to people, as long as you can look at yourself in the mirror and be okay, then life is good. Then you can live with this? Okay.

So what I'm saying is, I'm most proud of the fact that I can live with my life the way it is now, right?

LUVVIE Word.

JUNE Yeah, I have so much that I want to get done. I have so much to do. But if I don't accept and love the way it is now, then I don't have the strength to move forward.

LUVVIE Word.

JUNE So I'm most proud of the contribution that I make as a citizen, as a human being. That if I say good morning to someone in the morning that was having a bad day, that I made them feel better. That makes me very proud, that I can do that. When I meet people that are like, "oh my God, you got me through such a difficult time, you don't even realize." That makes me proud, that I shifted the culture and changed the narrative of what people looked at. It's like they look at kids growing up in the inner city, I'm most proud that I grew up in a single parent home in a one bedroom tenement and I made it out.

So I'm proud of that. I'm proud that I have the voice to tell other young people that they are gifted and worthy and that super power, it exists. They have to find it. Dig deep, you know what I mean? Don't be afraid to do it on your own. Because I think constantly we're always searching for somebody to help us. And then we get angry. We're like, "Well no one's helping me." There's so much access out there right now, and there's so many ways to get to people, just be aggressive.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE Don't give up.

LUVVIE You dressed a generation, June. Do you realize that? I basically got into my own rabbit hole, and I was thinking about the impact of stylists. I feel like people don't really understand the impact of stylists in culture. Stylists who dress our favorite artists and actors and creatives. They end up dictating what we're now thinking is cool.

JUNE They're storytellers.

LUVVIE What we want to wear on our favorite days, what are we wearing to prom? What are we wearing to the special event? And you've been in this industry for over 20 years. You've basically dressed two generations.

JUNE Yeah.

LUVVIE Do you ever stop and ponder how big that is? Or do you just keep it moving?

JUNE No, I'm unpacking those bags. Because those assets that I've used to leverage other opportunities that I'm getting involved with. These are things that I have to say, "Hey, listen. I forecasted this, I was involved with this. These are receipts, right?"

LUVVIE Yeah, you've got laminated receipts.

JUNE Right. Thank you. So these are receipts that I then share with potential partners that I want to be in business with, that I say, "This is why you should be in business with me." Because I was involved in this, or I shifted this, or I changed the narrative here. Or I understood this culturally, I protected the integrity of this culture and beyond, we influenced this culture. Because we were not afraid to take ownership of that and call it out, I blew the whistle on this and said, "No, no, we own this." Creative license.

Quite often, people don't feel like they need to pay for our creative license. Yeah, but you have to sometimes. Because we have ownership over that.

LUVVIE I love that.

JUNE If you copyright something, you have creative license to this intellectual property that you're building that we're speaking on right now. Right? I dare you to come and start something else that sounds exactly like it with the same name, I'm going to call you out.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE I think it's just we're in that time where we have to have these really provocative adult conversations. Like Rihanna said, you want to go to dinner with us, you want to hang out with us, but pull up.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE So I'm using all of those things, I serve on the board of the [Fresh Air Fund](#). It's an organization that's been sending inner city kids in the tri-state area from all the five boroughs to summer camp. We opened [Camp Junior](#) last year in upstate New York. This is all privately funded. We've been around for over 150 something years.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE 53 years. It's like, we're getting kids out of the inner city for two weeks and we're letting them feel the fresh air. Jay-Z was a Fresh Air Fund kid, Puffy was a Fresh Air Fund kid, Michelle Obama was a Fresh Air Fund counselor.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE Yeah. We have some really great alumni. To be able to serve on the board, being a Bronx-raised kid, being a West Indies immigrant, came to this country, raised in the Bronx. Understanding how important getting outside of your environment is, how life shifting it is, and being able to pay that forward, I'm also proud of that.

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE Being able to look back and say I gave other aspiring young stylists an opportunity to work underneath me and grow and introduce them to certain contacts and connections, and now they have great careers of their own, I'm really proud of that.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE Being able to raise two incredible young adults, now teenagers, and soon to be 16 and an 18 year old, that are really just great humans, I'm doing the work. The work is not done, and I enjoy it. It's like my favorite, it's the best job in life, I think. But there's so much to be done. I feel like I'm so underserved, I have so much that I have to get done. I feel, that's the big part of the puzzle. Always feel like there's a sense of, you're super successful at this. Well, it ain't over. You've got so much more to get done. I'm ready to start new chapters, I'm ready to start new ...

There's so many beautiful things I have to get done, I look forward to every day, in time, developing them and working towards them. You know, evolving and growing. I've got my master's in styling and costume design.

LUVVIE Come on, drop these credentials on them.

JUNE I feel like, yeah, I feel like, what's next, June? You're not going to be 70 years old just doing that. For me, my call to action is global. My calling, my mom always said to me, "You're such a superstar." It's okay. You don't really, like you said something earlier in the conversation, you were one of the first to kind of be celebrated for it. I didn't go into it looking to be celebrated.

LUVVIE Right.

JUNE Right? That was the gift. But I did go in with the idea of I'm also an artist.

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE I was open to collaborative experiences. I always really designed the opportunity to have that mutual respect with the client. Because otherwise, how do you build your own brand? This is before that whole term was even ...

LUVVIE A thing.

JUNE ... popping, a thing.

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE 20 something years ago, and I was like, no, no, no. It was like, you're applying for a class, so am I.

LUVVIE Okay, come on, come on, let them know.

JUNE It's just, you adjust your crown.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE I look at my kids and I look at the 15 year old's and I'm like, "Always hold your head and your chest high because if you don't walk into a door with that kind of subtle arrogance, but gracious and humble when the introduction is made, then you'll get treated where they think they could've saw you."

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE Right?

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE You could change your narrative immediately and still be who you are. I just want to ...

LUVVIE No, go ahead.

JUNE Yeah. I just want the kids who are feeling down, who don't feel like they have a chance, to know that don't let those distractions cloud their judgment. Like, straighten your back up, let's go, come on, you got this.

LUVVIE Straighten your back up.

JUNE You know? Yeah, they need a pep talk. Who's talking to the teens right now?

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE Even teen content is so mature. I remember being able to play on the fire escape with my dolls when I was 14 or 15 years old, that was normal.

LUVVIE Yeah.

JUNE That's not normal anymore, right?

LUVVIE Wow.

JUNE So the conversations are so much more sexually provocative, everything. If a young girl could feel really sexy and cool in a baggy pair of pants, then that's a revolution.

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE Go figure. You would think it would be, she can show her cleavage, she's liberated. But now it's like, she's liberated because she's a tomboy.

LUVVIE Which is why I'm looking forward to ... I'm sure you've thought about it, of course, but is it going to happen soon? A clothing line? Because I totally want to wear a June Ambrose collection. And a hat collection too? June, bless the masses.

JUNE I'm in the labs, this is things we're working on.

LUVVIE Okay, okay.

JUNE I'm hoping I'll be able to bring some things to the market in the next two years. It takes time.

LUVVIE If you're looking for testers, June, I'm sample size.

JUNE You're the perfect muse, darling. You check all the boxes.

LUVVIE Listen, I'm available to give you any type of help you need as a tester.

JUNE You check all the boxes.

LUVVIE I'm like, look, a June Ambrose hat game? Look.

JUNE We're the same ... You know what's crazy? Hats are so niche, you know what I mean?

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE It's a small, it's an accessory, but it's very niche. People really are into them now. It's really fun to see.

LUVVIE Listen, I've been into hats. I finally was able to really start wearing my hats again once I cut off my locks. Because at that point, I'd worn all my hats. All my old hats, I was like, now I can wear them again. So I'm back to ...

JUNE But you are wearing them just like tilted on top of the head right?

LUVVIE Yes.

JUNE They weren't leaning to the side?

LUVVIE They were not. But you know, I'm a fedora girl.

JUNE Right.

LUVVIE So I'm trying to do more turbans, too. I've got to find the ones that don't bother my head.

JUNE You know I love a turban.

LUVVIE I know you love a good turban.

JUNE Well next time we get together, we'll do a turban tying video.

LUVVIE Yes, please, teach me.

JUNE We'll do it for the Gram.

LUVVIE Do it for the Gram.

JUNE We'll do it for the Gram.

LUVVIE Because your Gram is also epic. You do these Friday videos that I look forward to.

JUNE My [Fashion Fridays](#)?

LUVVIE Your Fashion Fridays are everything to me, okay? So I'm like, listen.

JUNE I remember when I first started doing that, people were like ... My family were like ... One person from my family was like, "is she okay? Is she having a break?" They thought I was going through some psychotic kind of ... that I had gone through. I got a phone call from a friend in Paris who was like, "Darling, darling, don't do too many of these. It's not on your brand. It's not brand." I said, "Okay."

LUVVIE Okay.

JUNE I got a couple phone calls, they didn't get it.

LUVVIE They didn't get it. Do they get it now?

JUNE I'm like, thank God I don't have to answer to you guys. Because if I did, life would be no fun.

LUVVIE June.

JUNE That was my response. I was like, "Did I ask for your permission about what I'm doing on this platform, child?"

LUVVIE Say that again. Did I ask for your permission?

JUNE I'm like, give me a break. I'm like, there's nothing even remotely salacious or provocative about these things. Some of the stuff that I see on the Gram is almost pornography? I'm in the safe zone. So I don't even worry about it.

LUVVIE Right, right. No, those videos are amazing, and I think it's so fun.

JUNE Thank you.

LUVVIE It speaks to, again, how you continue to evolve. And no matter what space you're in, you find the way to make it June Ambrose. Where, I don't care if everybody else is on Instagram, I don't care if everybody else is a stylist now, you still own your lane, because you're like, this is how I do it. This is how it's authentic.

JUNE This is me.

LUVVIE This is me.

JUNE This is me.

LUVVIE That's why you keep on winning.

JUNE I'm just June. I'm just June.

LUVVIE You're winning. You keep winning. Even though, again, there's a bunch of people who are stylists now. But your old clients, people who started with you, keep coming back to you. Missy, Jay-Z. There's something there. And that's because you're you. What do you think that relationship building has done?

JUNE It's really, truly, I feel quite blessed that they see me. They see me, they recognize me. I don't have to become someone else for them. I think it's such a beautiful ... it's a family. You don't have to pretend with family, you know? They also appreciate the contributions to the art. And there are others who have, too. But now, back in the day, I used to do four and five jobs at a time, I don't want to do that now. Because there's other things that I'm working on that if I start, if I go down that rabbit hole where I'm doing three to four big artists, there's no time for the June Ambrose brand. Right?

So it's not like others haven't called, and regretfully, some of them, I couldn't do it because of the schedule. There just wasn't enough time. Because I really love to commit myself, and I love to give them that one on one, I think that's so important, that you're not sending someone else in to cover for you and all these things. That's okay, too, for certain situations. People really want to be with me, and I want to be with them.

Yeah, I'm so grateful for them, that I get an opportunity to still continue to create and build with them, and we get to feel young and giggle together, still. I think it's a beautiful thing. Relationships mean everything to me, and I like to create a life and a career that I maintain great standing relationships. That there are no misunderstandings about who I am or why a situation is what it is. I love to really address things that could potentially make me feel like I have unfinished business, if that makes sense.

LUVVIE Word, word. So as you're doing all of this, you know, styling the world, styling the culture, how are you taking care of yourself?

JUNE Well, I'm really a true fan and advocate of wellness, of the wellness space. I do my yoga, I work out, I meditate, I surround myself around like-minded people who are into wellness. Group therapy sessions are great, those are kind of ... I just started doing those, and that's really nice. To kind of unpack a bunch of things with other folks who are having maybe anxiety over all the things that are going on in the world, we get to kind of talk about them. It's kind of nice.

I take time for me. I think it's so important. It's so important. I find little corners, and I'll write stuff down. I've been writing down feelings and memoirs and ideas and things. I have a lot of little notebooks now that are really nice, I think those are super therapeutic. I like to sit in the sauna. Dry heat makes me feel like I'm in the Caribbean and I'm a Caribbean girl.

But yeah, I think those things are important. Qigong, cranial-sacral massages, just checking in. Check in with yourself. So that when you're dealing with your partner and your kids and everyone else, you can be whole, you make sense. You're not mumbling or you're not being a total buzzkill. Listen, I'm not perfect, right?

LUVVIE No one is.

JUNE But I want to be tolerable.

LUVVIE I'm not perfect but I want to be tolerable. That's a word. That's a word.

JUNE I always have to say, "Forgive me." I always say, "Forgive me." Just so you know. I can't be sorry for everything. I always say, "just try to forgive me." My mom used to always say, "Take it easy, take it easy." And I find myself when people are getting real crazy and hot around me it's like, Jesus, take it easy. Now I understand what she meant. She couldn't take it, the chaos. Take it easy.

LUVVIE Man, that's amazing. You are such a light when you walk in a room, such a joy. I always love seeing you. You give the best hugs.

JUNE Thank you, you're a good hugger too, Luvvie.

LUVVIE I'm so thankful to you for taking the time to come on my show. Because I think your story's fascinating. The way you approach the world. I think we need more joyful people like you in this world, especially in these dark times.

JUNE Thank you. Yeah.

LUVVIE So yes, you are a unicorn.

JUNE I say we need to completely just infect everyone with this energy, that's the goal, right? That we turn those ... The best curve on your body becomes your smile, and we just turn everything upside down. Because there's a lot of frowns. But I think we can do it, you know? People always

said, paradise is in heaven. That's where the happiest place is. But can we have a little bit of that on earth?

LUVVIE Can we, please?

JUNE Until we get there.

LUVVIE Can we please, while we're here?

JUNE Why do I have to wait? Why do I have to wait?

LUVVIE Exactly. Exactly. What is the point? We've got to create the joy here.

JUNE Yeah, yeah. Joyful heart.

LUVVIE Well, you are incredible.

JUNE Joyful heart, joyful start.

LUVVIE Yes, thank you so much for being on this show. I am always, always, rooting for you.

JUNE Thank you, Luvvie, for having me.

LUVVIE And always excited to support anything you're up to, and I will be stalking your fashion Friday videos as always.

JUNE No, you're truly one of a kind. Your name becomes you. So thank you.

LUVVIE Thank you so much. And we'll be in touch. I'll be hitting you up about this line.

JUNE Okay. You're on the seeding list now, I know. I'll write it down.

LUVVIE Yes, yes.

JUNE Say no more.

LUVVIE Have an amazing week.

JUNE All right, darling.

LUVVIE Bye.

JUNE Bye-bye.

All right, thank you so much to June Ambrose for joining me. She is incredible. She's incredible. You all need to follow June on Instagram, she is [@JuneAmbrose](https://www.instagram.com/juneambrose), J-U-N-A-M-B-R-O-S-E. You've got to follow her adventures,

she's just so interesting and she's so much joy. So show her some love, if you loved her interview, please let her know, comment, send her DMs, all that good stuff.

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