Corey Andrew Powell ([00:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hello everyone and welcome to a special pride episode of Motivational Mondays. Our guest today is the one and only Miss Peppermint accomplished drag performer, singer, songwriter, and actress who is making it big now in entertainment. She's released six albums, appeared in the successful Hulu film, Fire Island, and the groundbreaking Ryan Murphy series Pose, which y'all know I love. I always talk about that. Now, she first gained notoriety as a runner up in the ninth season of RuPaul's Drag Race and has since become a trailblazer for the LGBTQ+ community. Miss Peppermint, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Peppermint ([00:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Corey, thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, well thank you. We're excited to have you as well too. And I wanna begin though, by saying I've been in New York for a long time performing, auditioning. I mean, I was in the same kind of entertainment circles I would imagine, as you were. So I wanna just say, I remember before RuPaul's Drag Race, you were really putting in the work <laugh>. I remember seeing you promoting and doing your show. So I want people to know, like people think things are like overnight, but you have been putting in the work prior to that. So talk a little bit about the pre RuPaul days when you were just a New York performer, like all of us struggling, trying to make it happen.

Peppermint ([01:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I moved to New York, uh, to go to acting school and uh, would do that during the day and at night. I would work at all the drag clubs, and at first it was just every once in a while and sometimes not even for money. And then I eventually after school a few years later, was just going to enough competitions and performances and meeting enough people, sort of networking in the city and getting to know people, honestly, making friends and lasting connections that I still have today. Some of those people were like some drunk go-go dancer one year, and then five years later they own the Club. <laugh>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's New York. <laugh>.

Peppermint ([01:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, there was a lot of that happening. And then I ended up eventually working, getting my first show, and then another one and another one to the point where at a certain point, by 2008 I had a show and all the major bars and clubs in the city. I was working seven nights a week, many weeks. I even had the opportunity to travel and I recorded some music for, it was supposed to be just like a performance in a club with Johnny McGovern and he wanted to record the song, and I was like, okay. So we recorded it for one performance of one show of one time, and then he ended up putting all those onto what he called the East Village Mixtape, an album or a cd. I was like, well, I'm gonna make a music video for this. And I made a music video and then it went on to the logo channel, had a program called the Click List, which is kind of like TRL, like you could call in and request the video whatever.

Peppermint ([02:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I was featured on that and was number one on the click list for weeks and weeks. And at the time was the first drag entertainer to have a music video to play on the logo channel. Because of that, in those years, people would travel to New York from other countries, other places, bar and club owners, people in the nightlife industry, entertainment folks to see what was happening in New York City nightlife, and then they would bring it to wherever they were. So my first time out of the country, a couple of guys from England saw my performance at a club and were like, we want you to come to London. And they flew me out there and they put me up. And then, so I was traveling and performing and doing all these things and making music before I even thought before Drag Race was even on TV. And then eventually, obviously I went on to the show.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Absolutely. So when it comes to drag as an art form itself, had that been something that you had aspired to do beforehand or was it more like an organic extension of performing once you got to New York and you saw an opportunity?

Peppermint ([03:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'd done drag a bit before moving to New York. It was very fun and I loved it and I couldn't explain why. Now it's probably a lot more obvious <laugh>, you know? But at the time it didn't even occur to me that a person could work and hold a job as a drag entertainer and make ends meet or do what they needed to do or be successful. When I was a kid, we only heard, what do you wanna be? Your options? Are a police, a doctor, a lawyer, or a firefighter? Like that's what we heard. I wasn't really thinking about drag as a career. I didn't even think of it as a job until I moved to New York where I'm from. I'm from Pennsylvania and near Philadelphia. And people at the time, drag entertainers were not doing drag for money. They were just doing it. Maybe they would, it would be a contest and they would win the prize, but that'd be it. And then it certainly wasn't a career or a job that you would go to. It wasn't until I moved to New York that I was able to envision working in the clubs and doing it on a weekly basis where people were coming back and you were getting paid to be there and they wanted me to be there. Once that happened, I realized, okay, maybe there's a future here.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, and it's fascinating too because as you mentioned, there's an evolution that happens, whereas even for me growing up, there was all negativity around any man who would wear makeup, so to speak, in that sort of very basic term, drag was this sort of very taboo thing, sort of back room. And I remember for me, the moment that I saw the original RuPaul show on vh1, it blew my mind because <laugh>, I was like, but did he just land an actual like major cable TV show and full drag? And that was an amazing moment where, I mean, obviously it became the catalyst for so many of you all who have gone on to do great things. Did that show impact you at all when it first started, or was it something you realized later?

Peppermint ([05:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, personally, it didn't, first of all, RuPaul has obviously always been a trailblazer for me, I think for the community and definitely for the art form of drag. And I remember watching the RuPaul show on vh1, the talk show, obviously 10 years years, it was like 1992.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right before, yeah.

Peppermint ([06:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And or maybe 1996 actually, whatever it was in the nineties. And that was obviously before Drag Race came out, obviously knew who RuPaul was, always really inspired by Ru I mean the fact that when RuPaul released Supermodel and it was playing on MTV next to all of the, in 1990, next to all of, or maybe 91 whatever next to all of these mainstream artists in music and television, that also blew my mind that it felt like one of us had sort of arrived. Obviously that was like 15 years before Drag Race ever came around. And so there was still more to be done. But when Drag Race came out on tv, I mean before it actually ever aired, one of the producers or someone <laugh> representing the show was going around to a lot of the bars and clubs in New York, probably around the country, but definitely in New York, and asking if we wanted to audition. They asked me if I wanted to to be on the show, and I said, no, I don't even think they asked me to audition. I think they were like, we're doing this show, would you like to do it? And I was like, this sounds shady

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

<laugh>, because it was so uniquely different. Right. You didn't know what this was like, is this a bad thing?

Peppermint ([07:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

No, there was no, I had no idea what it could have been. I thought what they were gonna do, cuz at the time, the only time we'd ever really seen drag on regular sort of mainstream TV programming was on talk shows where drag entertainers, there was this thing, this really transphobic thing that talk daytime TV like to do where they would bring trans women on and drag entertainers or cis women. They would just bring on a bunch of different femmes and be like, who's the man who's a natural woman, who's real, who's not? And they would scream, man, man, man. You know? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Terrible. Very Geraldo. Very,

Peppermint ([07:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, very much

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Phil Donahue <laugh>. Yeah.

Peppermint ([07:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And that's what I thought was gonna happen. I was like, they're gonna put us in some kind of precarious situation. We're gonna be humiliated for the sake of some reality TV show. And I wasn't into that. I didn't wanna do it. I'm glad I didn't at the time. And also after the first one or two seasons, the prize at the time was, I think the first prize was $25,000 and a headlining spot on the Absolute pride tour, which basically meant doing some pride gigs at some gay pride parades in marches. I was already doing that kind of stuff. I was traveling to London and Amsterdam and Australia. So I was like, what do I wanna do this for?

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

<laugh> Right.

Peppermint ([08:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And it wasn't until later that the show became more popular, the platform got bigger, the opportunities for people were getting larger as drag, because as a result of the show was becoming more part of the mainstream, and then the desire for it also grew. Now people want drag entertainers at their birthday parties and at their drag queen story hours if it's not banned.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, yeah, unfortunately <laugh>, because you just mentioned all these beautiful things about the evolution of the art form and that it really is an art form. Now, as we pivot to that, how do you feel when you now have to be faced with what seemed to be this progressive evolution of a going forward and being inclusive and drag being this actually part of a American fiber where Ru has won like a bazillion Emmys for the show?

Peppermint ([09:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I mean, right. The has a lot of Emmys, <laugh>,

Corey Andrew Powell ([09:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

He has a lot of Emmys, and now, but then fast forward to like banning drag performances across the country to the point where in some instances it could be a felony. What are your reflections on that? What do you feel?

Peppermint ([09:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's obviously upsetting, and I don't want these things to happen. And I think it's a signal to us that we need to do whatever it is that we need to do to fight back against these things, to speak out against them, to show people the truth. Because a lot of these things are just really overblown, conflated, really not accurate representation of whatever it is that they're talking about. Whether it's drag shows or whether it's trans healthcare or the accurate portrayal and account of black history in our country. They're lying about it and saying it's one thing, and it's when it's really another. I think that it's important that we tell the truth and tell our own stories. I believe we should participate as best we can in the voting process if you're not being blocked from that as well.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Cause there's a whole other dynamic there by which people who kinda look like you and me are facing a lot of voter suppression acts across the country. So that's also a problem. Yeah.

Peppermint ([10:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

There's always something that can be done. I try my best to lead with empathy and just give people the benefit of the doubt and assume they're not being shady. But a lot of these things, these attacks on our community, I think what, what they're trying to do is make everyone, including us, feel like they are the norm and that they're widespread and that it's millions of people trying to ban drag and trying to ban this. And it, it's not, it's just a very small group of people. And if we look and do the research, it's actually literally the same human beings doing it in every state, like traveling from state to state saying, I can help you with your drag queen problem.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? Right. Trying to organize, they're trying to organize like an opposition to drag statewide. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> the same people, right?

Peppermint ([11:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. And so that is upsetting, but at the end of the day, we come from a long line of ancestors and ancestors, and as a black person, a defendant of enslaved people in this country, you're gonna have to do a lot more than what you think you're already doing to really keep me down.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? Yeah. <laugh>, I, I, I feel the same way. I'm like, well, you know, if that original thing that shackled us didn't do us and everything else,

Peppermint ([11:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Then what You going here? Yeah. Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

We're gonna survive all the others. And it's important too, because this is a leadership podcast and a large part of our audience are young college age kids, or young adults I should say. And it's a big community of over like 1.7 million. And so in that community, there's a mixture of everything. So conversations like this, what I hope to accomplish is taking some of the fear away from people who are confused by all the misinformation. Things like pronouns or even terminology of what is a trans person versus a cis person. Like all these labels, I think maybe in some ways might have confused and conflated the plight for equality and made it a bit more isolating. That's my take sometimes I think about that. But what do you think about that? I mean, do you think, are we over labeling ourselves when it comes to trying to have gender identity and equality?

Peppermint ([12:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I think that there's something that's going on in the world, in humanity in the time that we're in right now. If you got in a time machine and went back a hundred years or 200 years, or even 50 years, we would basically have the same needs and wants that we would've had years later, years in the future. But the way we go about doing things is a particular way. And it feels like everything has been sort of realigned to this new way of doing things. And what I mean by that is take newspapers, take reading. We seem to only operate in headlines and quick sound bites these days. We are in the instant gratification world and realm where everything you get, whether it's food, music, entertainment, streaming, something, whether it's something you're gonna read a book, people aren't even reading the book, it's audio books these days.

Peppermint ([13:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And people just want the headlines of things, right. Just the quickest little thing because there's so much more information that's flying it through us. So I guess the natural response to that is we only deal in headlines. So I'm sure that there's a lot of people who just read the headlines of the different articles that come up in their newsfeed without really going into depth. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> without really looking into it. And that's how a lot of these things, like the book bands, for instance, are able to be put through because there's one group of people that are one couple of people who are saying, take this book, it's bad. It has this, this, this, this, this, this, this and this. And then the PTA group or whoever is considering that ban on the book, just accepts it as fact without actually reading and knowing what's going on. Oh, sure, sure. I do think that that has affected how human beings interact, how we've searched for what we need, how we make decisions and choices, that sort of commodification of everything, information and resources. Plus the fact that everything has to be boiled down to one little thing means that people are buying and selling everything and nobody's looking at what the real receipts are.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, yeah. No, I love that.

Peppermint ([14:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And that has a negative effect on us, I think.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I agree. Because we're not consuming the actual context, which is, as you said, skimming the headlines, reacting to the headlines. And when as you were reading that, I know I have, I'm guilty of that. I'll be on social media.

Peppermint ([14:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Me too. Myself included. Right.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

We're human and what's the headline? The next thing you know the neck is going and you

Peppermint ([14:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, oh no, she didn't. I see. I knew it. I knew it. I knew it didn't know nothing.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right. And then you read it after you're like, Ooh, they weren't saying that. I should've really taken a moment. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And so I do love that you're stressing that we need to absorb information a lot more willfully and intently because that is going to potentially do away with a lot of the misinformation. Trailblazers, though. One of my favorites, who I've spoken to and did a great interview with was is Laverne Cox. And we spoke of course about her trailblazing role on Orange is The New Black. But you as well, you have an experienced too, if my information is not incorrect as the first out trans woman to originate a role on Broadway. Is that correct?

Peppermint ([15:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

The distinction is kind of specific. It is, as I know it, the first out trans woman to originate a principle role in a Broadway musical.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Broadway musical. Okay. That's huge though. I mean it's, it is Broadway, right?

Peppermint ([15:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's a distinction and it's an honor. I mean, my dream when going to acting school, when I moved to New York was to eventually be on Broadway and then it, that took years and years because they weren't ready. They weren't ready for me, but they weren't also ready to cast a six foot tall black trans woman in anything. And at the time, I wasn't necessarily out as trans to people I was auditioning for, but you can read the energy and there was no room for any of the queerness and swish this, especially not in a primary role in a show, like in a leading role. And so since then we have seen that. And I'm really grateful and happy to see sort of where the entertainment world goes, because I do think that while it's important that we again, participate in voting and participate in the, in every other aspect of life and are aware of what's happening politically, laws get written in and they get written right back out.

Peppermint ([16:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And so the thing that really, I believe has a more lasting effect on people through their experiences is when they're consuming art and consuming entertainment. So if we are able to keep our community visible through entertainment, then I think that'll be an important step, an important thing to hold onto. But I was grateful for the opportunity to do Broadway. I love theater. I love live theater. I remember when I was being bullied in high school, I would run to the drama department like the room where the drama club was. And I participated in many plays. I was in lots of school plays and things like that. And that always felt like a, the place where I wanted to be certainly felt like a place where I wasn't necessarily judged and felt safe. And so I think I was searching for that in professional theater as well. And it took many years for that to happen. And I still think that the world of Broadway has some ways to go when it comes to evolving and sort of getting with the times. But I am grateful for the opportunity that I had and hopeful that I'll have another chance to do another thing on Broadway soon.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, that would be wonderful. And Tony's are a prime example of that continued evolution. I mean like wow, <laugh> that there was some amazing wins. Woo. Yeah. Wasn't that something,

Peppermint ([18:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I don't care who, I'm in a play right now. And we were, were literally performing in the play while the Tony's were happening and we were like going backstage and when usually when you're like changing your costume or doing the thing that you have to do to prepare for the next time you go on in the scene, we were backstage looking at the tv. We changed the TV and looked at the thing. It was like black body after a black body after brown body, after a white body.

Corey Andrew Powell ([18:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. It was a lot of

Peppermint ([18:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Getting honored and receiving accolades. And then, I can't believe it, this is very personal and anecdotal, but I knew several people. This is the first time where more than five or six of the people I personally knew won Tony's. And of those people, most of them were queer folks. And also performing in work that represented a particular marginalized community. Leopoldstadt an actor, Brandon won for Leopoldstadt. Okay. Which is a Jewish experience, historical experience. Also Jay Harrison Ghee in Some like it Hot. Mm-hmm.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That was amazing. Yeah.

Peppermint ([19:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Alex Newell. Alex, yes. And shocked, which is amazing. People should see it. And so I do think that Bonnie Milligan and Kimberly Akimbo, who isn't identified as far as I know, but is very much a part of Ally, the Ally community that uplifts queerness all the time. And the story of Kimberly Akimbo is about someone who's sort of an outsider, and that's the show that Bonnie won for, and I believe they won best musical watching the Tony's. It felt like a sigh of relief because then in the morning, this morning and then before that, we were able to see headlines that were focused on the discrimination and were focused on all the anti black per people of color, disabled, whatever, women, all of it that we were seeing. And then the Tony's reminded at me at least, and could serve as a reminder to others that it's the overwhelming majority of people who really do support who we are and want a diverse and more inclusive world.

Corey Andrew Powell ([20:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, absolutely. And you bring up a great point too. You know, when there's all this talk about the suppressing of de and I or and inclusion programs throughout the country and in a particular state, which we don't have to mention inclusivity and diversity inclusion, it's not just L G B T Q, you just mentioned, it's women, right? It's marginalized groups, it's the handicap, it's people who are physically challenged. It's all these things. And there's people who are literally trying to do away with DE and I programs at corporations, at schools. And so that's very perplexing because that's not the real world we live in. So it's a dangerous proposition. Not sure where they think that's gonna end. I don't think it's sustainable in the end.

Peppermint ([20:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I don't think it's sustainable. It's not sustainable because I believe many of the people who hold marginalized identities hold more than one marginalized identity. I believe when it comes to race, obviously race, when it comes to sexuality and queerness, I'll say, I believe that you're born that way. I believe you. Or if you're gay, you were born gay. Whether you came out later or not, that's who you were destined to be. That's my personal belief. If that's true, then it's in the lineage. You can't like legislate it out. You can't pass a law against black folks and then just hope that there's no gonna be no more black folks. <laugh>. We're here like yeah,

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

<laugh>, right? Hasn't worked in the past, so

Peppermint ([21:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hasn't worked work. Yeah, exactly.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Yeah. It's like a bizarre attempt to try to like remove people who are deeply established in this country. Anyway, I mean for hundreds and hundreds of years. So I'm not sure, like I said, I don't know what the end game is for doing things like banning African-American studies. I mean, it's like a, almost like a waste of time because you're not gonna erase that history. I mean, the history, like you said earlier, history kept receipts. So not sure what they think they're gonna do with that, but you are outspoken about L G B T advocacy and rights. So I do wonder with you specifically as history has shown us, sometimes celebrities get into a little bit of a pickle with the public when they are a performer and they're also outspoken against social issues. So how do you balance your identity as a performer and as trans activist who tries to have that balance of both worlds?

Peppermint ([22:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I think I came at the right time. I mean, I don't really know if that's true because I'm in my forties now and I don't know how much longer anything gonna happen. But I do think that I sort of came at the right time. Cause I definitely remember a day and age, mostly in the eighties and nineties where if you were a singer, like the whole shut up and sing thing was even more of a thing back in the day if you were an actor. And it wasn't necessarily just about politics. People did not wanna hear an actor trying to have some music, some album people would be like, what's this? And vice versa with actors going to this and changing lanes was just something that in entertainment anyway, people didn't, weren't really that supportive of. And I think the industry was wanting to focus on branding and making sure that you establish who you are in a very clear way without giving people too much to choose from. You might be a good actor who can sing or singer who can act, but you better choose one and that's the way it's gonna be. I think that's how it used to be. And now it seems like people can kind of do a lot. Everyone's creating, I mean, these days people are acting and winning Oscars and then having only fans on the side, right? <laugh>, like there's just everything. Yeah, there's a couple

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

<laugh>.

Peppermint ([23:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It just seems like the time is right. That plus the very tragic murder, starting with George Floyd and the continued, not starting with George Floyd highlighted by what happened with George Floyd and then many other black bodies, someone on camera being killed at the hands of police officers really allowed us the opportunity to have important conversations during 2020 besides talking about whether or not we watched Tiger King. And That's right. Right. I remember Kardashians clearly, I was like, if this is the best thing we get out of this, I am not gonna be a happy camper. And we were able to have these really tough conversations, not only about race, but about lots of things. Now it seems like at least for the time being, companies, corporations, organizations, politicians and what have you, are willing to have these conversations and be understand that they will be held to account a bit.

Peppermint ([24:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I feel lucky. And that's what I mean by saying I, the time is right for me because I always was ready to preach. That's probably obvious based on how I'm talking now, ready to preach and get up on my soapbox about whatever I, when I was doing my drag show, yes, I would do a Whitney Houston number and then I would immediately talk about AIDS and HIV education and prevention. I would immediately talk about the importance of voting and being registered to vote or getting tested and knowing your status. That was like a part of my show. And I do remember people saying, can't you just do that song and shut up? They would say that to me. The gays. The gays,

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Peppermint ([25:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And today, I think we're able to have these conversations. You're not gonna sign on to social media, which is essentially a form of entertainment. Now you're getting politics every other post and it's just like so infused and so I feel like gone are the days where we weren't allowed to talk about politics.

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Yeah. And I don't wanna like sort of single out the LGBTQ+ community, but you bring up a good point. I have a lot of friends who will post off the Fort Lauderdale, going to Miami and, and you know, they, and they're going to a state that's little that's going through something right now with civil liberties for gay people. And I'm saying, okay, that's great. I love those pictures you just showed from Sebastian Beach, but are you doing anything to help the local municipality, the L G B T groups in Florida while you're there? Or are you ignoring that part just to get your sun and sand and go over to Hunters and go home or go down to Wilton Manor? Like are you participating in the local legislation? Because that's the part that's missing. Right. I had friends arguing about Beyonce not winning the album of the year, but then their rights got taken away in their town for voting. And I don't hear a word. So it's the priorities that's

Peppermint ([26:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So, it's the priorities for me. Yeah, yeah. You know, and people are human, obviously. We never know what individuals are going through. People get overwhelmed and there is so much more information flying at our heads than there ever was. Like I mentioned before, people may have the urge to wanna disengage from time to time and being an activist and being outspoken about this or that, or being even politically active, or even, I guess voting sadly, isn't necessarily for everyone. Everyone can't be the community leader. Some people just need to be like, tell me where to go. Hopefully when the time comes, and I think the time is now, but hopefully when that time comes for everybody in their own time, they'll see a call to action and understand that yes, we wanna support Beyonce. Yes, we wanna do this, but we need to get up and go and get this done because they're coming for us. Hopefully people will have that occurrence.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, get involved. Yeah, you're right. I love that. Yes. I mean, it's a call to action. We're saying get involved actionable steps. Don't just have a good time and go out and hang out. Like understand that people are coming for your rights. You have to really participate in the election process to counter that.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/aemG-tQgdgwWczWHGxPnPzRSLLvhjqqzL_bvZ2oW44_WNSh8oKWot_myW1upLWdBKJZpLz7-5YIIVvSwVt3I3WZvz0I?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you for listening to Motivational Mondays presented by The National Society of Leadership and Success and available wherever you listen to your favorite podcast. I'm Corey Andrew Powell, and I'll see you again here next week.