Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hello everyone. I am Corey Andrew Powell. And I amm so excited today to welcome to the show, a truly inspiring individual. Her name is Victoria Vesce, and she is a remarkable woman based in the vibrant city of Miami, which is one of my favorite places on earth. She's a successful swimwear model and a proud graduate of North Carolina State University, and she has a juris doctorate from the Charleston School of Law. That's a lot of brain power there. But ironically, Victoria is also a brain tumor survivor. And as an advocate, she works on behalf of the National Brain Tumor Society, which is the organization that helped her during her radiation treatments at Duke Cancer Institute. Victoria, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Victoria Vesce ([00:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hi, I am so excited to be here.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, well, gosh, we're happy to have you here as well. And, uh, as I mentioned, you know, we, I just think your story is so remarkable, full of transparency. The audience will really identify with it. So I know we had some technical difficulties getting connected today to our, um, our call here, but we finally got connected and here we are.

Victoria Vesce ([01:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

We're here. That's all that matters.

Corey Andrew Powell ([01:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, yeah. I wanted to really just, uh, just to begin by sharing your story, and as I said, it's really fascinating how you overcame such adversity to end up doing some, uh, extraordinary things. So if you wouldn't mind, share a little bit about that backstory, uh, when you were diagnosed with your brain tumor and what life was like for you at the time of that diagnosis.

Victoria Vesce ([01:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, uh, man, it's such a crazy story and it's hard to really annotate it, but I'm gonna do my best to give a smart, spark notes version of my life a little bit. But I was an NBA dancer, um, dancing for the Charlotte Hornets. And I just remember, um, during my third year dancing, I, I got, I started getting sick outta nowhere and I'm like, why am I sleeping so much? Why am I having so many migraines? I just didn't know my body was continually just, uh, not seemingly right. I, I, and I went to multiple doctors and they're like, oh, you're so healthy. You're okay. And I'm like, okay, well, maybe it's all in my head. Literally, it ended up being all in my head. So probably about six months of misdiagnoses. I, I was getting, I, I was worse. I was sleeping just as much as my dog.

Victoria Vesce ([02:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Um, my blood pressure was fairly low. I had lost most of my hearing at that point in my right ear, and I'm like, what is going on? The tinnitus, I was struggling with just the ringing in your ears constant. I, it was just a lot of symptoms piling on top of each other, and I was fainting a lot. And my mom, I remember when she was still alive, um, luckily at the time, she was a nurse before all of her kids started doing stuff. She just became a full-time mom. But she was like, there's something wrong with you, Victoria, and I don't think the doctors got it right. So we went and saw a couple specialists and they finally gave me a scan and I found out, um, I remember 'cause it was like a two and a half hour drive to get a scan crazy enough. And then I drove, was driving to NBA dance practice, and lo and behold, they told me I had a tumor. And I was 23 on the cusp of 24 at the time. And yeah, I was someone who's been completely healthy their whole life and only had like a, a little cold. I was shocked. I didn't know what that meant. And to me it seemed like a death sentence and, uh, yeah, that, that was just the beginning

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And you kind of felt the way you just kind of brush it off and read it, like it was just maybe a cold or something. You, you really thought that?

Victoria Vesce ([03:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I, I felt like I could do whatever I want and then I'll be, and like, oh, it's fine. It's just a migraine. It's fine. Okay. By the 10th migraine, oh, it's just migraine <laugh>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. I mean, it's one of those things you read about that kind of happens to other people like in a lifetime movie or something, you know, that young cheerleader who has everything to live for and all of a sudden she gets cancer. I mean, it's, it's almost like a scripted, mellow drama.

Victoria Vesce ([03:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You know, but it's real life for you.

Victoria Vesce ([03:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I knew like deep down I'm like, this something is not right. Something like, why am I losing my hearing? I mean, I was suffering with hearing loss for almost four months, and I'm just like, oh, it's okay. It's just a, a stuffed up ear. Like I, I just can't believe how much I, I blew it off. But, you know, luckily I had a, a parent at the time who was very meticulous about my life and my health about everything for children. And I'm very blessed to have have had a mom like that because I just overlooked it. And I really thought I was, I mean, I never thought something like that would happen to me. So,

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I think that's a big part of your story too, right? That you know, you had someone say, no, we're gonna get a second or a third opinion, right? I mean, that's important.

Victoria Vesce ([04:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. I think that's what's really huge is because <laugh>, I, I just kind of took the first doctor. I was like, all right, I gotta ear infection and just kept going on with it. And then it just kept getting worse and worse and worse. And I'm not saying, and you know, looking back and at everything and realizing what happened and the brevity of it all and then talking to my doctors that do, 'cause I was a little upset for a long time, like, why didn't this doctor see it? You know, we're all human, there's human error. Like I can't expect a doctor to, to know everything, so I will, um, get that first doctor credit for that. And my tumor was so right here. My doctor at Duke was like, he would never have seen that in his whole tenure. So, um, I was a little upsetting, but you know, each doc I've learned, 'cause you always think someone who's not really an expertise in the medical field, you just go to like urgent care and you're like, okay, that's it. We're good. Like all doctors know everything. And I think that's something I like, there's specialists in specialized fields even in law, and that's like getting into law. Like, you know, there's corporate law, there's business law, family law. So it's the same concept with doctors. And then just being someone just going through the motions all my life, I never really realized that.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's funny, I hear people say that, you know, they, oh, I need a lawyer. And I'm like, okay, well what's it for? And they're like, it's a corporation situation. And they're like, okay, well my cousin's a trademark attorney. He's like, okay, that's completely not the same thing. Like <laugh>, they have nothing to do with each other. So, um, I've been reading more about you and there were the reasons, you know, there were reasons you were getting the loss of hearing. It was terrifying to read because if I'm not mistaken, the tumor was growing into your, your ear canal.

Victoria Vesce ([06:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, it was growing out my ear canal, that's how, that's how big it was. My tumor was spreading and it was like a glomus jugulare tumor. So it, they are prone to create that kind of hearing loss. But the amount that I have is completely gone at this point because when they had to resect the tumor, it was so huge. They overs sewed my ear together. I love it when I go like, get a ear checkup or something, and like, the doctor don't really know, and they look at my ear, they're like, oh, what is this? You ears? Like, yeah, I don't even, like, honestly, I don't even produce ear wax in this ear. It's just, uh, I call it my show ear now because it's literally here just for show and or where, you know, dangling earring from time to time. But yet I, that, that was shocking to me, realizing I would never get my hearing back on that side. And sometimes, honestly, I call it a blessing, especially if I go to New York City, I need to sleep and it's loud turn over to my left side <laugh>, so

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh my gosh. Yes. You're adapting <laugh>, you're adapting.

Victoria Vesce ([07:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'm adapting.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, you know. Wow. That's funny. Well, listen, be again, another leadership lesson that we, you know, we stress all the time here is that sometimes in life the things that, you know, we think are happening to us are happening for us. And I've learned that from quite a few people here on Motivational Mondays who've turned negative situations into something positive. So, um, you know, I I, and but, but on that same note, I do want to ask you about grief specifically, because I can imagine with that, you know, with this sort of ordeal going through that, especially as a young person, what that must be like for you, everything going for you and you're like, Hey, this is it, and then all of a sudden, bam, where the hell did this come from? There must be this grievance that happens, you know? And, and if so, how'd you, how were you able to get through that and, and get back on track to, to get to your success?

Victoria Vesce ([08:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'm, I'm still, I'm gonna just start out that I'm still working through it because I think I, I, I was grieving my grandpa at first. At first, like, I, I never really had an even close to me pass away. Now it was like the first thing my grandpa passed away and then I dealt with my tumor, then my grandma passed away, then my mom passed away, then my grandma passed away. It was just like a series of each year dealing with some sort of grief, whether it's a family member passing or like me losing my hearing and having to go through that. That was just a grief, kind of felt like I lost a sense of self. And then if, you know, Italian families, they are all very, very close <laugh>. And so we're very tight knit and we're all like best friends. So I was not only, I lost a family member, I lost my best friend.

Victoria Vesce ([08:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I, you know, there's, there's been a lot of work, like places that helped me at grief share. Like I've been able to go to this church and, um, I was in Boca Raton at the time and they helped me through like, a lot of the initial steps, just getting over it and, and dealing with it. But you, you just never really hear about these emotions and how to deal with like, the anger from grief and the deep sadness and, um, just the realization. And it, it's more than just your regular heartbreak. And believe me, I've been through a bunch of those, but realizing like they're, they're never coming back. And that was the hard, I mean, I told myself I'd rather go through a million brain tumors and have to deal with this ever, but, um, you know, this is just how life is.

Victoria Vesce ([09:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I've, I've come to terms with it and I don't wanna be like, oh, glass half full. Like, this is how life is. We live and we die. But it's, it's the truth. And that's why I've told myself in the past two years of after losing my mom that I, I need to live even bigger. I was living big but not big enough. And the only thing that matters, you can't take things. You can't take money. You can't take all these like tangible things that we love designer purses. When you die, all you have when you, uh, pass away is the legacy that you l left behind. And that's my mom. I remember she left such an impactful legacy on our little, like North Carolina hometown and people, she, she, everyone called her momma V. She was always smiling, always just, uh, willing to always help someone out and always made someone's life better.

Victoria Vesce ([10:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And that's what my mom did for other people. And I remember at her funeral, I look up 'cause I just couldn't even look at anyone. I see the whole funeral room's packed and I'm like, that, that's a last legacy I wanna live. I want my funeral to be packed. People who miss me when I'm gone. And, uh, just realizing that and kind come to terms like, it's not all about the things. It's about, it's about what the legacy you leave behind and how the impact you make on people. So that's really what I've been pushing through through the grief. And I know like my mom and my grandparents and would all want me to live. And I still have my dad and I still have my brother. And I mean, it's not like I'm completely alone and I have my dog and everything, but, um, life definitely isn't the same without someone you truly love.

Victoria Vesce ([11:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I truly believe my mom is my soulmate. Me and her did everything together, <laugh>. So anyone going through that, I like, I know it's cliche or everyone says that, but you know, life keeps going on. I truly believe, like this is the fuel to my fire. My mom and my grandparents and the rest of my family who have passed on, they would truly want me to be living my life the best life and not to end it. So that's my, that's my fuel going forward, um, for my life and just to live, leave that legacy. Hmm.

Corey Andrew Powell ([11:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Powerful stuff. That's very powerful. Because you know, what's really going on there is that we're talking about mental health really at that point. We're talking about, you know, your mental state, the way you navigate through life, being able to function because you're mentally capable of doing and handling grief. So, you know, what you just said is a direct, almost like rechanneling of the grief into how can I make this something positive? And in your case, it's, um, I'm going to continue on with the legacy that was instilled in me. You know, that that wonderful thing my mother gave me, that my family had, the world needs it, so I'm gonna carry that forward. And that's a really great way to look at it, right? I mean, that's like a way to almost like rechannel your grief and see how you can make it manifest into another direction and turn that into something positive. I mean, that's what I really got from what you just shared.

Victoria Vesce ([12:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. That's, you're hitting the nail on the head like rechanneling. I mean, I, I did that even with my tumor when I was in pain. I'd rechannel that pain and like make it fuel myself to like walk up 'cause I couldn't walk for a period of time after my tumor. Your brain, you don't realize how much your brain really is controls everything. It's the control center for your whole body. So when one thing even a little part of your brain messes up, it can, you know, almost mess up everything. If you stroke, like obviously memory loss, there's so much that goes on with your brain that has profound in me over the years just realizing like how much it controls. And I, I couldn't walk for a period of time and I remember turn channeling that pain I was having and turning into power for myself.

Victoria Vesce ([13:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's why I've made my like, pretty much my tagline for me is turning my pain into power. And, and, and it is that rechanneling. 'cause if I don't for personally and other people have different ways of, of dealing with their grief, but personally for me, and I found out through some other peers of mine really using that pain and using that grief and using that heartbreak and hurt and turning it into something the greater good. We see so many times in this world where, you know, if you just turn on the news and, and you see everything just horrifying going on and it is just kind of overwhelming. But instead of doing all that we can turn that, you know, heartbreak that pain and turn it into our power and fuel ourselves into doing more and greater. I mean the world needs <laugh> more good stories, especially now and, and stories about, um, really overcoming. So that's, that's what I'm trying to put out there.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, and that's, and that's like so on time too. You're right because I mean, it's all on time. It's on time right now because you know, very often I'm like, gosh, you know, because of the line of work I'm in and I do social commentary sometimes on TV and political commentaries and all that, so I need to stay informed. But it's so overwhelmingly dark currently in our news cycle with what's going on and it can really shape you and you know, sort of like, it can really just kind of alter your mental state in a negative. So every now and then I have to force myself to turn that off and like, you know what my partner says, turn it off CNN <laugh> tonight, we're gonna watch The Masked Singer, you know, <laugh> no more of this. So yeah,

Victoria Vesce ([14:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I love The Mask Singer. That's a good show.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh wow. Isn't it good? I know I'm always wrong too. Like every season I'm always like wrong. I never get it right who's under there. But, um, <laugh>

Victoria Vesce ([14:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I used to not wanna escape from time to time, but I also think a little feel good escapes are are not bad. I'm always always telling like, no, go, go, go. And lately in um, these past two years after losing my mom, I've learned a little breaks are good and saying no is good and, and taking time for yourself. I think that has also helped me in a, in a good mentality and stay positive, is taking a little breaks for myself and doing things like, Hey, you know what, let's take some time off of trying to push so hard and to working so hard <laugh> and, and just having a nice little day with my dog or something and, and turn off the phone or whatever. And uh, those little mental, little mental health breaks are always very important. And I used to not take pride in those, but now I do and I love 'em out. I a good Netflix binge day.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. No, it's true. You have to recharge. And so many people I speak to on this podcast, you know, they're like a range of people mostly who are, who found success in business or you know, whatever they're doing much like yourself as well. They found success in their, their per very respected fields. But there's a component where all of them have said there was a point they had to say, I need to make time for myself for self care. They were getting burned out, you know, which can lead to all other kinds of stress related illness. And so there's that correlation between really needing to take a time out for yourself and um, before you possibly get sick if you don't. And that's a direct correlation.

Victoria Vesce ([16:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, that's true. And especially with my brain tumor. I mean, brain tumors thrive on, on stress <laugh>. So I personally also thrive on stress, which crazy enough, I feel like some, some of us all do a little bit. It makes me like, ooh, wanna go. But I have to realize, hey, you know, this is not good for your health and putting your health first, um, is something I haven't wanted to do. I'm not gonna lie, I'm be honest. I'd rather work and be out there and trying to do more and more and be at every single event that I can. But then I have, I also realized it, it's, it's burning out my body, burning out my mind and my soul and I having these little mental health breaks are super important.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I'm the same. I'm, you know, it's funny too, as we get older, I have to laugh because I was telling you before we began recording, I was telling you that, um, you know, I worked in fashion as well as a model booker and you're a model. So I know that world a lot very well, uh, here in New York City. And when I first got to New York, I was trying to go to, you know, every party I could get invited to, I just had to be invited. I wanted to go to everything. And, um, now like really I realized, um, I just wanted to be invited. Like, I really don't want to go that's <laugh>. Like, just know that I'm here so I can say no and then get back to my hawk and Dawson, my slippers. Thank you very much. That <laugh>.

Victoria Vesce ([17:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So that's exactly how I, I'm like, I just wanna be on the invite list. <laugh>,

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You know, speaking of you as a model though, you sort of like hit the jackpot with the holy grail of swimwear modeling by getting booked in Sports Illustrated, which is literally like the pinnacle for a swimwear model. And this happened though after the tumor, right? This is like post tumor, after you had healed and you got back in the game a little bit, that's when you booked Sports Illustrated. Correct.

Victoria Vesce ([18:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Talking about turning your pain into power. I mean that was post my tumor, but it was also post my mom passing away and only three months after she, uh, four months, excuse me, after she had passed, did I book that. So it was crazy. I was just like, I, I gotta, I gotta keep going 'cause part of me personally for myself, if I'm one of those people and like we talk about mental health breaks and yes, that's good, but if I stop myself for too long, I, I kind of lose my sense of self. And especially in a time of grief, if I just kept sitting there and my grief and mourning, I was withering away. And so I started to get back up in the bandwagon, started doing my social media more again, even though I didn't feel like myself. But it, I think in certain aspects, and obviously everybody's gotta evaluate how they are mentally, but personally for myself, I I, I felt like it's, it's okay to show that I'm really sad right now.

Victoria Vesce ([19:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I don't think there's anything wrong 'cause showing that on social media 'cause it's real and people need to see that. Not everything's always rainbows, butterflies. We're going on the private jet tomorrow or this, that and the other. I think it's nice to see like, hey, you know, I'm still pushing my mom passed away may you know, this amount of time ago, but I'm still pushing through and I think people really need to see that sometimes. So I told myself, okay, not only do people may wanna see it, but I need to see it for myself. And so that period of time it was like push, push, push, push. And I pushed till something hit and I, I booked that and it was, it was crazy. I I was, I remember that day I cryed when they called me. I was crying, jumping up and down.

Victoria Vesce ([19:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I picked up my dog and I was like, we made it <laugh>. You know, I was just like, thank you. Like thank you so much mom. Like I, I feel like she heard me and she knew I needed that and it was just a nice confidence boost and help me keep pushing on and forward. And I, I really enjoyed my time with that. And yeah, I have to say that was a been a bucket list of mine for a while. And I remember submitting my video for the little audition. I'm like, man, they aren't gonna pick this. This is just, I look sad, <laugh>, this is too sad. And they picked it. So I just was like, you know what, I'm just gonna sit on my couch, put in some little B-roll 'cause I went to school, my minor was in film and I'm gonna put in some little B-roll edit real quick.

Victoria Vesce ([20:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I edited about like 30 minutes or less and I was way over the time they allotted. But I was like, I'm just gonna submit it because this is me. This is real. I'm just talking, talking about my mom, talking about my journey and how I wanted to talk more about my story 'cause I hadn't done so so much and especially since my mom passed away, it just fueled me to talk even more about it because she always wanted me to like, hey, you know, talk more about your brain tumor and your story and now I wanna talk more about her. So I, I sat down on the couch and it was just, honestly, it's probably the realest time I've ever been in my entire life just talking. And yeah, it was just crazy how that <laugh> manifested into getting into Sports Illustrated in 2022. So that was, um, that just came to show me like, just be, just be real. It doesn't matter. You don't have to be, I was always a perfectionist. I'm very type A, so sometimes it's just nice to sit back, relax and just, just be me for a second. Don't have to put on some sort of show for everyone all the time.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right, right. And we admit that, you know, we have flaws. Right. We're vulnerable. That's the, the fascinating story. They, it's a lesson for all of us because you were situated where you were sort of really not sure if you were even gonna be ready to face this or not. Right. You know, publicly. But you know, whoever's in charge of this spaceship, you know, that we call life, you were rewarded by it because uh, you were being authentic and living in your truth in that moment and sharing your story. You know, something that we hear a lot about, you know, living as your most authentic self. We hear that a lot today and when it becomes cliche for some people, for others, we gotta realize it's a real thing. And you know, being your most authentic self and that experience, you were rewarded and you advanced in your career because of it.

Victoria Vesce ([21:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. You know what? And I wasn't expecting anything either. I think that was, sometimes we put so much expectation like, this has to get something. If this doesn't get something, that's the end all be all. I just submitted something and I just remember that time. And it's good to kind of remind myself 'cause I'm in a period where I'm like, I'm in a period in my life where I feel like I need to do more. And it's kind of nice to have this conversation remind myself that was a time where I had zero expectation anything was gonna happen. I had zero confidence in myself too. Which that's sad to admit, but I mean, I was just being real and being honest and just being true in the moment and just like, I'm gonna put this out there, see if it resonates with anyone. And it did.

Victoria Vesce ([22:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So, um, for anyone listening like it, sometimes you just have to go in with something with no expectations, reach for the stars and you, you never know where you might land. Uh, that's super cool <laugh> where it's like you might land them on the stars. Like, I just had no expectation. I just shot my shot. And, and there it was. That's how, how it happened. But I didn't try to put on some face for everything. And I think that's something important for a lot of people to hear 'cause we see a lot of people on social media and I have friends in social media, just I can tell, I know their stru actually, I know their struggles and they're struggling. It's not for me to tell, but the way they put on a face every day and they compartmentalize. I'm just like, I'm someone who doesn't do that <laugh>.

Victoria Vesce ([23:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So, and I just know they're struggling. Like people see them, oh, their life's perfect. They can, you know, and I'm like think to myself, no, no, it's not like it's not. And that's why I try to be authentic, but that's everyone's journey to figure out. It's everyone's journey to go through. But for me, I was just like, I don't really like putting on a face or a mask every, I don't wanna be the mask singer and uncover who I really am. I just want people to see me for me. And, um, I I, that's something important I try to carry through through my social media as well.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I mean I think that's the, the empathetic part of your personality, right? That's the part that shines through because you know, you realize that people are probably going to benefit more from the truth of your story than trying to hide it and put this fake veneer perfect life up on the internet. And so now there's plenty of people like you, you know, uh, I'm not going to bash her here, but you know, she doesn't put a lot of bad stuff out. Like let's say Kim Kardashian for example, or someone in the Kardashian clan, like, you know, they're not putting out too much of the deep stuff. You know, they're amazing business women. They do their things or again, I'm not bashing them, but their brand, you know, their brand is about the facade and the fabulosity and um, and, and she's gonna find her audience, uh, just like you'll find yours.

Corey Andrew Powell ([24:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

There's enough, you know, for everybody who's going through things and um, you know, they are just going to be very, very serious. Like, you know, even for me, you know, I, I had my story where I went through something really bad, like, you know, uh, deaths, two deaths seven days apart. My grandfather and my uncle who was his son, they passed away and then, you know, 11 months later my aunt passed away. But you know, so in the past like year, that's like three coffins in my immediate family, three deaths and all that. And I was like, you know, this is terrible. But I went to social media to talk about it and I found a lot of support. You know, people were there were helping me, helping me grieve. So there is a community out there of people who can help you navigate through the authenticity of the real difficult times and help you get through them. So, um, yeah, it got me through it.

Victoria Vesce ([25:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's exactly what I did as well. And I didn't realize how many people had lost a parent or someone super close that was almost like a parent to them. And I'm like, wow, why am I, why did I know this? I've known this person for years. I didn't know they had the grief they suffered from their mom. That's when I was like, it's good to share.

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Let me ask you from an advisement standpoint, you know, like you've given so much wonderful commentary already of, of your own personal experience to this podcast today. But if you were to advise someone who's dealing with grief or their mental health struggles, you know, while they're still trying to achieve goals, right? But it hits, uh, they hit a roadblock because it's an obstacle for them. What's a bit of advice that you'd have for them?

Victoria Vesce ([25:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh boy. It could be a loaded question 'cause I feel like there's a, there's a lot of things that someone can do, but I feel like the first things first is, um, is is seek some sort of therapy. I think therapy is so beneficial and that's not talking to your friends or trauma dumping on your friends or family. That's finding someone who's like a licensed professional that can help you. And there's a multitude of ways to find, I sometimes I go on better health. Um, that's what I've been doing since I've been on the go. But I feel like therapy and going to someone that can, I can talk to, that's a third party neutral. And that, you know, has really experienced a lot and has helped patients get through times like this. And, uh, 'cause we're going through things like it's for grief for me was something I've never experienced.

Victoria Vesce ([26:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So these are all brand new feelings and it's nice to have like some companions and peers that have gone through the same thing. But it's also nice to have some sort of mentorship guidance to help me, um, through these things as well. So going to therapy I feel like for me has been very beneficial, very therapeutic for a lack of better a better word. But, um, I think therapy first. Um, you, you really gotta take care of yourself at the end of the day 'cause you're not gonna achieve anything if you can't take care of yourself first. And it's gonna be hard to help others if, if you're, if you're failing and, um, if you're struggling so bad as well, 'cause I mean, there's days I kind of get outta bed and I'm like, I can't try to help all these people and I can barely help myself.

Victoria Vesce ([27:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So therapy foremost, and I feel like that will help you lay the foundation to put the pieces and, and power through, you know, your dreams and your desires. But don't let your dreams and everything falter away because you're in a period of grief or a period of depression or in a period of hopelessness 'cause I'm telling you why the world loves to put timelines on things like you need to do, get married by you're 22 or 25. Like, you know, we have timelines such as that or have kids before you're this age. And, and I feel like everybody has a different timeline and we don't need to measure it by the world's timeline that the world has for everyone else. You see a lot of people who've risen to fame in their fifties and you know, life doesn't end as soon as you hit 30. And that's something I've had to tell myself that life is just picked and you, you own your own story and your own timeline. So you make your own timeline. You decide when is right for yourself, but don't, don't give up hope on your dreams.

Corey Andrew Powell ([28:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

We appreciate you sharing your story with us today here, Victoria. And you know, it also gives people so much hope just to hear from others who are doing things, you know, what you're going through, what you've gone through, and how they can get through adversity no matter what the situation may be. So Victoria Vesce, thank you for being here today on Motivational Mondays. We were thrilled to have you and we wish you continued success in your modeling and of course with your advocacy on behalf of the Brain Tumor Research Group. So thanks for being here today.

Victoria Vesce ([28:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you so much. I appreciate you guys.

Corey Andrew Powell ([28:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/hZBXTYcqMw6yqzYbWkJ8sHkm2CqKxvAtP4gfBR-BJGy1kDve_Dd-TJutTNByUW4i70zunTOPuz-CD2_UR0FrvBoj0bM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

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