

Season-2-Episode-14-Angelas-ADHD-Queer-Autistic-Wonderland

Tue, Jan 31, 2023 8:22AM 51:11

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

adhd, people, understand, life, angela, conversation, medication, sensory, wanted, person, autistic, talking, nervous system, drudgery, partner, called, diagnosis, podcast, numb, shit

SPEAKERS

Molly Hicks, Angela Locashio



Molly Hicks 00:00

Welcome to Drudgery, Dreams and In Between, the podcast for neurodivergent weirdos and queers who, forget about struggling to adult, we're struggling to human.



Angela Locashio 00:07

At least that's what everyone's telling us.



Molly Hicks 00:09

You're right,



Angela Locashio 00:10

Per usual...Hey, I'm Angela. Bringing sense to the conversation. From here on my soapbox, I shed light on the thing society doesn't want you to talk about, you know, the real shit that matters. Intersectional thinking, Sexuality, Queerness, Neurodiversity, Consent, and the fact that Self-care is Bullshit. For me, it's all about community, and how we can care for each other.



Molly Hicks 00:37

And I'm Molly giving a big Fork you to Cookie-Cutter Solutions I help burnt out busy as Fuck neurodivergent and queer entrepreneurs make shit happen by providing out of the box solutions and sustainable systems to grow your biz. For me, it's all about doing what makes sense for your brain.



Angela Locashio 00:54

Enough the chitchat, let's get to it.



Molly Hicks 00:57

Keep listening. And Together, we'll explore the drudgery, dreams, and all that shit in between. Get ready to call bullshit on what everyone's saying you should be doing



Angela Locashio 01:07

as we navigate the spectrum between what really matters to you, and the shit keeping you from it.



Molly Hicks 01:15

Hey, everybody.



Angela Locashio 01:19

Hi.



Molly Hicks 01:20

Angela and I are always behind the scenes like dancing it out to the intro.



Angela Locashio 01:24

Yeah,



Molly Hicks 01:25

It's like a little mini workout before we get started. Oh, yes. So today is a very important day. Because we've decided that it's damn near time that we start telling our stories and we're gonna kick it off with Angela's story of them. Um, so, Angela, you I think we've talked about this a little bit, and like sneaky peeks throughout the course of the podcast. But if I remember correctly, you were like, eight or something when you realize what you wanted to do with your life?



Angela Locashio 02:11

-

Um, yeah, I mean, pretty early on, right? Like, early on, I recognize, let's say, let's at 15 I knew for sure what I wanted to do. Did I do that? No, I did not. Thank you society. I did not. But at 15 I 100% knew what my dream was.



Molly Hicks 02:34

Yes. And, um, and you eventually got to that, but there's a whole story that we have to get into like to go into that. I always just find that to be like a really interesting fact. Because some people are like, yeah, when I was five, I wanted to be a doctor. I'm a plumber, like, you know, yeah. And you actually eventually made that, Make your dreams a reality. But like,



Angela Locashio 03:00

so. But I did have interests in this at the age of eight. I did have interests in human relationships, communication, sexuality. I was asking a lot of questions. I wanted to know everything. And I never once not one single time in my life thought it was weird or gross. Yeah. I mean,



Molly Hicks 03:32

we shouldn't think those things are weird or gross. But you know,



Angela Locashio 03:35

right. Maybe we grew up. We grew up in says, we don't talk about tax.



Molly Hicks 03:43

Talk about Bruno.



Angela Locashio 03:45

Right, exactly. Like we don't talk about it. And, you know, growing up in the family that I grew up in with the conservative values. It's, you know, surprising that I never had some of those those feelings, but I just didn't, it just didn't make sense to me. All right.



Molly Hicks 04:05

Well, I feel like I need to stop trying to guide your conversation here and let you go. So tell us like, I guess my first I know, I'm gonna guide this. For what, you know, I

-



Angela Locashio 04:19

do better when I have questions.



Molly Hicks 04:21

Right. Like, yeah, okay, so I know that you were diagnosed later in life. But did you as a kid ever think she's dying weird?



Angela Locashio 04:34

Did I think that? No, did everybody tell me that?



Molly Hicks 04:37

Yes. Oh, okay.



Angela Locashio 04:42

Yeah, I mean, I didn't. I think one of the moments. This was in high school, one of the moments and for some reason this has really been on my mind lately. A defining moment for me was I always do that when I He talked. Everybody got really quiet. Oh, and not in my family. When I talked to my family and I talked about the stuff I was interested in. I was always like, it was just weird. It was it was out of the box stuff for them. It didn't make sense for them. And my nickname was motormouth. They call me Eminem. Because I would get talking about something and I wouldn't stop. Right. And it was usually something that none of them really cared about. And which is fine. They don't have to care about the same things that I do. But you know, wanting to have in depth conversations about Alice's Adventures in Wonderland when you're five, like,



Molly Hicks 05:46

because you read it. I did.



Angela Locashio 05:49

Yes, I did. Yes. Angela,



Molly Hicks 05:53

you did a very young age. Uh, yes,



Angela Locashio 05:55

I could. Um, so. So yeah, I mean, people, people thought I was weird. People thought, you know, I was often called, you know, like, oh, well, you're just a smarty pants and you're a smart ass. And you think that you're better than a Why do you? Why do you? Why are you talking like that? So there were those kinds of things. But back to back to this, like pivotal moment. I have this friend who's just, she's just beautiful. Like, unbelievably beautiful. Inside and out. She has this beautiful hair, this beautiful face, beautiful teeth, beautiful body. And beautiful, like, personhood.



Molly Hicks 06:42

I thought you were gonna say boobs.



Angela Locashio 06:45

Oh, yes, she has very nice. She has very nice boobs. And, and you know, like the perfect hourglass figure and beautiful, like, Jessica Rabbit type, you know, that kind of beauty. Naturally, and but also this really beautiful, like spirit and kindness that she's always had. And she, we were I don't, I don't know where we were. But she came walking in. And I said, you know, that must be nice that when you walk into a room, all of the heads turn. All eyes are on you. Now, you know me, I like to be up on a stage and having everybody listen, right? Yes, you do. Her comment to me though was It must be nice that every time you open your mouth, the room goes silent and everybody listens. Oh, oh, but both of us have the same experience of it's not actually that nice. Like, for her being the beautiful buxom person who she is was not nice attention was not always nice. And for me, it's the same. Like, I want that attention. I like that attention. But at the same time, a lot of times, like, conversation just got shut down. Not necessarily by other people, but people were so like, trying to figure out what I'm saying and how they could possibly respond. So that's kind of been my experience from a very young age. And, and the the pieces that go with that of you know, like I said, being called a smart or a No at all, or arrogant. I know I still to this day very much come off as arrogant. And and I'm not like I don't believe that I'm better than anybody else. I believe that there are things that I'm better at. I believe that I may have evidence against what you're saying. But I still want to hear what you're saying. And I'm open to being wrong. If you can provide evidence that guides me in another direction. So I don't think I don't think that I'm actually arrogant. Right? Yes. But I know that my demeanor is, you know, right. Self Care is bullshit. That sounds very arrogant. But let's have that conversation. Right?



Molly Hicks 09:30

Yeah, no know. I mean, there's a difference between saying something that's going to obviously get people's attention and have a conversation. Well, I mean, you do feel like self care is bullshit, but like, but I



Angela Locashio 09:43

do but it doesn't come from arrogance. It comes from let's have a conversation about this,



Molly Hicks 09:46

right? It's like your definition in my definition are two different things and blah, blah, like there's a whole thing. Um, okay. So well In. Oh, okay, well, we'll go down a queer side quest for a minute. Um, yeah



Molly Hicks 10:13

I'm like thinking back to my own childhood, how or how young were you when you had your first crush on a girl or a person that is not a cisgendered? Male? Um



Angela Locashio 10:41

I would say maybe six or seven.



Molly Hicks 10:48

I feel like we all did it like that age, like, like who I mean, I mean test. But like,



Angela Locashio 10:53

that's the thing is that I was interested in everybody.



Molly Hicks 10:56

Right?



Angela Locashio 10:57

Right. So I don't know, at that age, if it was like a crush, or just like, oh, that's a really interesting person. And I want to watch them and see what they do. Now, here's the thing. I felt closer to the weirdos. Right? Always. Basically, if they wore glasses, I was more likely to have a crush on them. So there was that. But then there was also the I'm glad you find that funny. But there was also the like, I want to take care of you. My mom says that I've always been a very, very nurturing person. So there was there was that, like, I see that somebody's not being kind to you. And I want to make sure that I am kind to you. So I would say that I had more of the connection feeling. But it didn't. It didn't matter to me. Whether they were boys or girls. Like I didn't notice, I guess.



Molly Hicks 11:10



Yeah, I get that.



Angela Locashio 11:29

But I know that I was told and called young lady all of the time. And I still hate that young lady. Really don't like that. But I fought against that. I guess I didn't like it. I specifically remember at four or five coming out of my room and I I just had a pair of like jean shorts on and no shirt. And my brothers were there for the weekend. And they're like, Dad, tell Angela to put her shirt on. And my dad was like, young lady. Oh, no, put your shirt on. And I'm like, but you don't have your shirt on. Right? Right. Like I did not understand. It wasn't very many years after that. That I you know, I have had the body that I have now. since before I was 10. And so I I would wrap my breasts I did not want them. Right, like a lot of people think genitals, but I didn't care about that. I just didn't want these things. Yes. Right. Like, no, no, no, no, no, wait, go back. Go back. Go away. I don't want you. So, I mean, I had that. Young, as soon as that started. I was not I was not happy. I'm fine. Now. I love my breasts today. I could care less. You know, either way. I like breasts. I like not breastfeed or whatever. But that's what I remember most from that time. And, and especially before, like, before, I really understood the gender differences. Like, why that's dumb. Why do I have to wear a shirt? Like, I was just like you. You know, like, it just i? It didn't make sense. And maybe that was neurodiversity? Well, there's no maybe about it. I'm sure that that was neurodiversity. Because the other people around me were not having that same experience of trying to understand why and trying to argue about it. It was just because that's how things are. That's the response that I would get, you know, even from my cousins who were just a couple years older than me, well, that's how things are. You're a girl. I'd be like, Why are things like that? So yeah.



Molly Hicks 14:55

Okay, so let's keep going down. This path



Molly Hicks 15:13

so at 15, I'm slightly changing subjects. At 15, you were like sex, sexology something,



Angela Locashio 15:24

I'm gonna be a sex therapist, I was like, I am gonna be a sex therapist. This is what I'm gonna do. And I had a car, and I spent time at the library, and I researched all the things. And I started researching about BDSM. And trying to understand that and trying to understand the different feelings in the body, and why I would get really frustrated when somebody would, you know, brush against me, or, or, like what you're doing right now. Like,



Molly Hicks 15:55

oh, no, I'm pressing extremely high. I cannot do butterfly touches.



Angela Locashio 16:01

Right, like? Um, and then, like, Why did I? Why did it relax me so much to play that game, where your friend would like sit on your legs and draw on your back? And you had to guess what they're drawing? Like, I love that game.



Molly Hicks 16:26

My childhood what happened?



Angela Locashio 16:28

I don't know. I don't know if everybody did that or not. But I did. Why, and why were people so frustrated and angsty about my relationship with my cousin, who was the person who I felt the most comfortable around the most safe around? And and and like, when they hugged me, it felt so much better than what anybody else hugged me. And that kind of stuff and why people thought there was something wrong with that. And then why people were attributing that to being sexual when there was absolutely no sexual anything. So you know, that made me really think and I already had this interest in communication and psychology and sex. And so that like to get that next step of wanting to understand myself, but also wanting to understand everybody else. Trying to figure out how I fit. Yeah, am I am I weird, right? Am I weird? Or am I normal? By the way? The answer is, yes. You're normal.



Molly Hicks 17:37

Lots of air quotes this episode.



Angela Locashio 17:43

So, yeah, that was that, you know, and I knew that's what I wanted to do. Even though I didn't do it, because that wasn't the lady like an appropriate thing to do. And, you know, whatever. So I just didn't go to school at all.



Molly Hicks 17:57

Fuck it, if you're not gonna let me do what I want, I won't do anything.



Angela Locashio 18:02

Instead, I took it upon myself of okay, so I this is what it means. This is what life is supposed to be. I'm going to try it your way. And instead of going to college, even though I had a full ride scholarship offered to me, I bought a house moved in with a guy and had a very tumultuous,

not healthy relationship.



Molly Hicks 18:28

But obviously, that's what society wanted you to do. So that's what you did.



Angela Locashio 18:32

I mean, let's face it. That's normal. Right?



Molly Hicks 18:35

We don't think that's actually normal. Like, it's not healthy, FYI.



Angela Locashio 18:41

Right. But that is what is looked upon as being okay. Yeah. And unfortunately, unfortunately, that happens more often than people being who they are and pursuing their dreams and, and doing it their way in the way that their brain works. So yeah, I did that. Still don't have a diagnosis of any kind of did well. Go ahead.



Molly Hicks 19:18

In all of your research, did it ever, like have a light bulb like that? That feels a little bit like me, like, did anything because you were studying psychological concepts? Any of that? Did it ever be like, did it ever be like that, as I say that? Was it ever one of those moments of like, this feels familiar.



Angela Locashio 19:38

So yes, and that's actually what happened. Um, so I was studying a lot and I was learning about this thing called ADHD. And by this time, my cousin had been diagnosed with multiple things. ADHD being the one when they started treating the ADHD, all of the other diagnoses kind of fell away. Not all of them. But like the anxiety was still there, like a lot of anxiety still there, right? But that's when they realized, okay, we were not correct. Like, this is not like schizophrenia. This is ADHD. And I think if he were still alive today, he would definitely have an autism diagnosis. I think there's absolutely no doubt about that. But he and I talked a lot about ADHD. And what I was learning was, it was a bunch of white boys. And all of the research was white boys. Yes. And I was like, Where are all of the other people? Is this really something that is just a, a white boy thing? Right. And mind you, at this time, I had been doing, you know, my fair share of alcohol and recreational drugs, and all of this. And I also had my own insurance. So I could go to the doctor and start having some conversations. And I was getting diagnosed with clinical depression, and generalized anxiety, and



Molly Hicks 21:24

tons of symptoms, but not a root cause. Right,



Angela Locashio 21:27

and borderline personality and being put on medication, and I was like, nananana, no, this isn't right. This isn't right. This isn't right. So finally, I went to a psychologist who was recommended to me as being somebody who was kind of a progressive thinker, very, very knowledgeable. And who would not therapies me, because I don't like being therapist. But somebody who would legitimately have a conversation with me. And intellectual conversation with me, that was really important. So I went to this person, and in our first session, he was asking me questions about drug use. And I was like, oh, yeah, I like them all. I don't do needles, but I like them all, except speed. So any of those, you know, the speed, the meth, like, I use that to help me go to sleep. And I don't use it when I go to parties, because then I just fall asleep while everybody else is having a good time. So I like that one, but only in certain circumstances. And here are the circumstances and he's like, Oh, for Fuck sake, you have ADHD, let's get you a prescription. And he wrote the notes and everything to my doctor to get me prescription. And my first prescription for my ADHD diagnosis was Ritalin. Which worked better for me than any of the others. I don't take medication specifically for that now, after spending a lot of years doing some behavior work on myself, and identifying the things that helped me without taking medication. I do, though, take Wellbutrin, which can be used for ADHD. And I also, but it's a non stimulant, which I appreciate. And then I also use Intuniv, which is for sensory processing. That's guanfacine. Right? Once the same, yes. So I also take that, which has been added in the last couple of years. So I do take medication. And I also do behavior work on myself, specifically sensory environment stuff, which, at 22, when I got my ADHD diagnosis, I was not aware of all of the sensory stuff. Like I had the sex stuff over here that I was understanding. And then I have the ADHD stuff over here that I was understanding, but I had yet to merge those together for me. I hadn't merged them together for me. However, I did get a teaching degree, were very specifically when I went into my teaching degree, I wanted to do something with ESL and linguistics because the understanding that I had of how people understood language was very similar to my own way of understanding and processing English. So I was like, okay, I can help here. Not to mention I really kind of had this obsession with the Mexican culture. And like the, the everything about it, I loved the stories and I loved the artwork. And so I kind of had that which led me He in the 90s, to want to, to be part of this community. And how could I do that? By providing a skill that I had to support. So I did that. But I also leaned heavily into the working with students with exceptionalities. So whether that be



Molly Hicks 25:19

wonder why,



Angela Locashio 25:21

yeah, whether that be working with students who were identified as gifted, or with students who had a reading challenges, or behavior, I really like working with behavior. Because I didn't think that it was done well. I didn't like how it was handled when I was in school, I didn't want

people to have the same experiences that I did in school. So I did put that together, right? Like the sensory stuff, like, how can I create my classroom, so that the behaviors don't even show up there? Because the nervous system is regulated in my space. But I still didn't do that for myself. I read that put two and two together,



Molly Hicks 26:09

right. But we're our own worst, like, whether you're a teacher or a business owner, whatever expertise you have, you are always your own worst patient, client, whatever, child when you're parenting yourself. So I mean, that makes absolute sense that you would have,



Angela Locashio 26:28

and I may have had great understanding of ADHD and a lot of behaviors. I had a piss poor understanding about autism. And I had the biases that went along with what does it mean to be autistic? Right? Being that if you're autistic, you have these massive issues with communication. Right. Now, I understood perfectly that people could be able to communicate if they were non speaking. But I had this idea of this reciprocity that happened and eye contact, you know, I have been told my whole life and, like, beaten into me that if you don't make eye contact, then you're a liar.



Molly Hicks 27:18

Oh,



Angela Locashio 27:20

right. So it was one of two things. You're either a liar, or you're, you have a developmental disorder. Right, that makes it impossible for you to do that. So that couldn't possibly be something for me. I had worked on and I was able to have eye contact, whether I liked it or not. So I just didn't see I didn't see. Until I did,



Molly Hicks 27:50

right. I remember that day. So I feel like we've we've jumped over a couple of things that are important to your story. There's a couple of girlfriends in there.



Angela Locashio 28:03

Oh, yeah. A child.



Molly Hicks 28:04

Yeah. So before you because the autism thing was recent, because I was I was around for that. Let's go back 15 years, 20 years, I guess, because you're



Angela Locashio 28:18

Are you gonna bring up the time that I was harassed by Fred Phelps. You know, because I lived in Topeka, Kansas. And Fred Phelps and the Westboro Baptist Church. Is there in a yes, the Westboro Baptist Church. Is there, Kansas? And yes, I was harassed on several occasions by them for kissing my girlfriend.



Molly Hicks 28:45

Yes, yes. I was not going there. But that's a good story. We will point them that touch on that point. I was just making a short like, there's milestones there of like, before your current partner, you've you that sounded weird. It was in my head, but it sounded weird. You live life in a good way. I mean, in a good way. And see, I can't get this to come out in any way. That doesn't sound weird.



Angela Locashio 29:22

So I live life very way now with my current partner. I lived my life in a good way. Prior to my first marriage, yes. But in between that good life and this good life, there was some serious shit. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. But my first true love my first like, the first person who I fell head over heels in love with was a female when I was 11, and she was As my very best friend other than my cousin. And in fact, the three of us did lots of stuff together for many, many, many, many years. And tell the conversation, right really came to light. Well, my cousin brought it up to her one day and said, Are you stupid? She's been in love with you for 20 years.



Molly Hicks 30:28

Oh, no.



Angela Locashio 30:32

And unfortunately, that seemed to start the process of unraveling.



Molly Hicks 30:38

The friendship. Is this Jessica Rabbit?



Angela Locashio 30:41

This is not Jessica Rabbit. No. Okay.



Molly Hicks 30:45

Wait, Jessica Rabbit?



Angela Locashio 30:48

Rabbit? No. Okay.



Molly Hicks 30:49

I'm sorry. I didn't mean like that. Was the analogy you used in the night? Yes, go with. Okay, so you also moved internationally, you got to experience life outside the US, which I'm sure was extremely eye opening, especially with where you went? And I kind of want to touch on that. And then we'll head back towards the autism, self awareness.



Angela Locashio 31:19

Yes, so when my son was two and a half, I met his dad. Right, obviously not biological gene donor. But his dad, the person who raised him. Along with me. And, and it was good. We had a lot, you know, a lot in common. We had a lot of arguments about who was smarter. You know, different, different things like that. And, you know, it was it was good. While it was good. Yeah. And then when it wasn't good anymore, it wasn't good anymore. And I understand the difficulty that he had with me. I understand that a lot of that was my ability or inability to have a healthy relationship, while also being very good at my job. And trying to maintain both. I really struggle with both.



Molly Hicks 32:32

I mean, it's hard.



Angela Locashio 32:33

Yeah, like, I really struggle, I can put my energy into work. Or I can put my energy into home. And so for the longest time, I put all of my energy into work. And none of my energy into home and any energy that I did have for home was saved for my son. And both of us having difficulty with communication. Right, me with being and he was absolutely right. He's like your roller coaster? And absolutely, I absolutely, there's no doubt about that. Because now I understand that my sensory environment plays heavily on my emotions, and my ability to even partake in conversation. And my go to reaction is anger. So it's yelling, it's being disgusted. And, uh, definitely, like, at home, I don't do anything about my facial expressions, but I have a lot of sensory issues. And so for our entire marriage, anytime he would eat, I was disgusted. And I would say, that's disgusting. You know, and whereas he would want to sit down at the table and

have a quiet dinner with no sound because he didn't like a lot of sound. He liked a very, very, very calm, quiet environment. Whereas I like loud colors, music, you know, that sort of thing. And definitely, if somebody's eating, I need there to be a lot of noise in the background, so that I'm not focused on that. And so that was that was an issue I mean, a lot of little things like that, but those little things build up. You know, the fact that he was a gentle toucher. And I'm not a gentle toucher. So, like I'm somebody who really, really responds well to Um, five minutes of a backrub it like, can do wonders for me, but it has to be like dig your elbow into my back, you know, like, I'm up against, like, the, the cabinets with the, the knobs on them, you know, like pushing as hard as I can into the corner trying to, you know, get that deep pressure in there. So for all that time, I didn't have that in my partner. Because they weren't able to do that, or they weren't able to understand that. And then the more it came out as me with me talking about, you know, this is what I need. And for us to have, you know, a satisfactory sex life, this is what I need. It was intimidating. I had always been more sexually, you know, open? And actually he was very open, but not as experienced, and therefore there was that. I mean, in his words, it was you are intimidating. You are a very intimidating person all the way around, like you are. I mean, no, and he was, he was a gentle, nice person, you know, like, I just gonna go about my business quietly through the world. And I can go all day without talking. And, you know, that that sort of thing. And, you know, eventually, we weren't able to, to move past that.



Molly Hicks 36:38

And I think that's a struggle that a lot of dual neurodivergent couples struggle with, because not all, obviously, but for a lot of us, it's like, this is what I need, and nothing else. And this is what I need and nothing else. And it's kind of hard to make them go other sides. Like it's a lot of conversations, which makes total sense. Why you so enjoy those conversations now.



Angela Locashio 37:08

Right? But But I would try to have those conversations, right. And so one of the things that he said, one of the things that he said to me, as he said, You take everything, and you put it in a box, and you wrap it up with a bow. And you know exactly the right box to put it in. And you just it has to be just right. He says that's what you do with everything. And you have to understand everything all the time. It's infuriating, drives me insane. And I'm like, okay, but you're that way with airplanes. Right? To the point that you're an avionics engineer, like, you know, like, that's what I do with people. That's what you do with airplanes.



Molly Hicks 37:58

Right? Oh, my God.



Angela Locashio 38:00

But that's difficult. Like, right, if like, I don't give a shit about your airplanes. I don't want to hear about your airplanes. I don't care. You know, whatever. Cool. You identified the five airplanes that just went by cool. Yeah, good for you. You know, but I don't want to hear about

the little insig... to me significant stuff. And you don't want to hear about me talking about the human psyche, and how the nervous system gets dysregulated and the things that we can do to regulate our nervous system.



Molly Hicks 38:29

I'm laughing because I sent Steven or my partner a tick tock yesterday. And it was a gay couple, the guy, the one partner is Darcy. And he has ADHD. And so his partner recorded a conversation where the partner just started going on a tangent about shopping for apples at the grocery store. And like how there wasn't, I wanted to get Fuji or gala apples, but they didn't have any. So then I was starting to look at the granny smith and the, you know, Red Delicious. And then it like goes on. And eventually Darcy turns around and goes, What the Fuck are you doing? I don't give a shit about apples. Walked away. And so I sent it to my partner because I was like, this is feel familiar. And nods were sent back? Yes, yes.



Angela Locashio 39:29

Yeah.



Molly Hicks 39:32

I'm the person talking about apples in that scenario, FYI. But, so that's why I was laughing because that's literally like the same thing. And that's something we experienced as a couple ourselves. We don't have much time left. So I do want to hop into like, the pivotal moment when you realize this is not just ADHD that they're like, I'm sure you always had like there's other things at play, but when did you first go? I am autistic.



Angela Locashio 40:01

This would be after, you know, the military move and coming to where we are right now. And it being such a loud, difficult environment, for me to be basically everything about the environment is disabling for me. And that's something that I had not experienced as much before. Although I do recognize when I had my move my move prior, I had some of the, some of the same issues with the noise and being somewhere that was, you know, Kansas versus Montreal, like, you know, you're used to being in us in a quiet or space and you like being out, and being able to look up at the sky and not having any light pollution. And, you know, that sort of thing growing up in the country, like, all of that is very different from then being in the city. And, and having all of the noise and the smells, the smells. Right. Like, it's just, there's so many sensory things. So when, when that happened a couple of years ago, and I, you and I were talking, I was like, I can't anymore, I have got to see a psychiatrist, I have got to do something, I can't do this without medication anymore. I need some support. So, and I had been taking medication. So since I had cancer, I had some nerve issues, and I was taking a medication that numbed that. And eventually, I decided that I wanted to come off of that medication. You know, I had been on it for 10 years, I didn't want to take it anymore. I wanted to see if I could come off of it. It was very, very, very difficult to come off of. But I was able to regulate and deal with the pain through nervous system management, and also able to recognize that that pain is a

signifier that I'm overstimulated or getting close to, you know, if I keep this going, a burnout is going to happen, that sort of thing. So I kind of embraced that. And I liked that. So when I stopped that medication, not only did it not not only did it stop numbing that pain, it stopped numbing the other stuff. So I recognize now that there was a lot of sensory stuff that it numbed.



Molly Hicks 42:47

Oh,



Angela Locashio 42:49

I can very easily recognize that now looking at before the medication during the medication after the medication. It's like, wow, that did that for me. Right? It works on your nerves. So it makes sense. That since the sensory system is part of the nervous system, and all of that, so I had to go and try to get some medication and I wanted something that wasn't going to numb me. That wasn't going to oh



Angela Locashio 43:26

I have no idea what just happened. Neither do I. But



Molly Hicks 43:28

you're back. Okay.



Angela Locashio 43:29

So you're back. Okay, we're back. You disappeared on my side. But I bet I disappeared. Yes. Right? Of course, of course. Okay,



Molly Hicks 43:36

so you had something that you wanted something that didn't numb you that helped with the nervous system dysregulation,



Angela Locashio 43:46

right, I wanted, I wanted to be able to regulate my emotions, that was really important to me. Because I don't like the anger and that and I wanted to be able to, to address, you know, I wanted to be able to respond instead of react. And at around this time when I went back, and so we started talking about sensory, and she was like, what I really think is happening here is that you've got some sensory processing stuff going on. And then it was like, all of the years of education went, click, click, click, click, click, click. And it was what the day after my

appointment where she's like, I think there's some sensory processing stuff. We're gonna give you this medication to help with that. And, and, you know, let's, let's see, and then I came to you and I was like, You think I'm autistic.



Molly Hicks 44:41

You said, You sent me a message and you're like, I need to talk to you. And it was very serious. And there was like this demeanor. I was like, oh my god, like, Is she kidding? Is she like? I don't know what the heck joining a band I don't know. Anyway, um, and yeah. And then you were like, you just sat there and you stared at me? Am I autistic? I was like, Yes. Which, and I try not to disclose to other people that I think they're autistic unless they asked me a question outright. So then I was like, Yes, I do. And here's my, here's all the things that I've seen. And then you were like, Yeah, me too.



Angela Locashio 45:26

Yeah, exactly. And that's just, you know, that realization and an understanding that I hid inside my ADHD for many, many, many, many years. Right, allowing the ADHD and asking the ADHD to help me survive. Right? Which it did, until it did it any longer. It was tight, which often happens when we get to that age, right? Like, I was 40. And, and, you know, I was, I had really big changes in, in my behavior. Anytime I had major hormone shifts anyway, like, when I was pregnant. When I, you know, went through puberty, when I had cancer, like, during these times, it's really easy now looking back to say, Oh, if we would have known, right. So of course, my goal now is my whole goal in life, along with, you know, being a sexologist, and helping people understand the the intersections of sexuality, and neurodiversity, and all of the other intersections that we have along with them, and how that plays into our nervous system, and our overall happiness and fulfillment in life. And to our abilities and disabilities. I want all of the research, to stop in the way that it's being done, which is five years of research with no action. And I want us to listen to the community and say, here's something that needs to happen. Here's how testing needs to change. Here's how, you know, workplace management needs to change, here's how they're happy needs to change. Here's how behavioral therapy needs to change like, and make the change now, and then do community based participatory research in that where we're making changes, and then we're making changes and we're making changes. And we're going through this loop of change, evaluate, change, some more evaluate, and it's all community led with people who have life experience, as well as professional experience coming together to so people, so our kids don't have to experience our grandkids, because my kid is an adult don't have to experience what we did. Yeah. Right. So I'm glad for the experience. I'm glad it happened the way that it did. I have all the gratitude for that. And for having my diagnosis now, I would not be who I am now, had I had a diagnosis when I was five. Right? Right. There's no doubt about that. So I am grateful for that. But now let's, let's change. Let's make some changes.



Molly Hicks 48:39

Agreed. All right. Any last words on your story? Before we sign off for today? There's a lot to pack. And we it's hard to pack your whole story in 45 minutes. There's just so much



Angela Locashio 48:53

sorry. And that was like, that was like the that was the chapter sections, not even the chapters. Right?



Molly Hicks 49:01

I, I will say this, if we've hinted on anything today, and you're like, Angela, just tell me more about this one thing, please message us or comment below, or wherever you are, contact us. And we can dig into these things more. But absolutely to say I'm sorry,



Angela Locashio 49:21

absolutely. I was just gonna say You know, my story is my story alone. And there may be similarities to some people's stories, there may be differences to some people's stories. So, as you're listening, keep your mind open either way. You know, self diagnosis is perfectly valid, but don't base your diagnosis off of Well, this was her experience and she's autistic, therefore, I must be as well. There's lots of information out there for you to go through your own process of learning about yourself and it doesn't mean that you have to spend 1000s and 1000s of dollars at at a therapists office. Getting that diagnosis, we understand that not everybody has the opportunities to make that happen.



Molly Hicks 50:16

Yes. All right. Well, then I think that it's time for our outro. And we will see you all next week.



Angela Locashio 50:29

All right. Thanks for listening to drudgery dreams and in between a weekly live podcast coming to you every Tuesday at 9am. Central 7am Pacific. If you're catching this live on YouTube, be sure to subscribe to our channel for updates when we're back here next week. For all you podcast geeks, subscribe on your favorite podcast app. We're on them all. If you'd like to support the podcast, be sure to leave a rating and review and share with your friends. To catch all the latest from us. Visit us at [drudgery and dreams.com](http://drudgeryanddreams.com) and follow on your favorite social media platforms at [drudgery and dreams](http://drudgeryanddreams.com). Thanks again. See you next time.