

**Ear Hustle**  
**Episode 99: Shine Some Light**  
**November 29, 2023**

**Shanna:** *The translation to that is like, I'm that worthless. I'm that worthless that somebody's going to come by and just whip it out, get it done, walk by, go back. And when you say that recovery is a fulltime job, I think that self-worth, it's still coming back because you were like a used rag that could get thrown aside. I don't think I've ever said that before. So that's an interesting revelation.*

**Earlonne:** We knew that working on this episode was going to be intense for everyone, especially the person who we're talking to, whose name is Shanna.

**Nigel:** Yeah, I mean, Earlonne, we haven't really done an episode like this. There's some tough stuff in here, and I really wanted to make sure that we handled it with care.

**Earlonne:** Indeed. And this is a good time to let everyone know that this episode is not suitable for all listeners. Some of you may want to wait for the next one.

**Nigel:** I'm Nigel Poor.

**Earlonne:** And I'm Earlonne Woods. This is Ear Hustle from PRX's Radiotopia.

**Shanna:** *So, it's the night of April 19th, about like 10:30 at night. So, I just wanted to share just the meditation practice that was given to me when I shared my fear of speaking on this podcast.*

**Earlonne:** Shanna is a yoga therapist. Most of the year, she lives in India, but the stories she's going to tell us take place in Sacramento, where she's from.

**Nigel:** In the weeks before she came in for this interview, we asked Shanna to record audio diaries for us on her phone.

**Shanna:** *So, you just come to a comfortable lying position.*

**Earlonne:** And in them sometimes she'd take herself through a meditation.

**Shanna:** *Since I'm right before bed, I'm going to lay down and just take about 5 to 10 slow, deep breaths. And as I do that, just close the eyes, see myself there.*

**Nigel:** So, when the day of the interview arrived, we thought that would be a good place to start. So, we played one of those recordings back to her.

**Shanna:** And looking into the mirror and visualizing.

**Audio Recording:** *I'm looking into the mirror and visualizing what I imagine to be my highest self. This could be maybe just one image or many images of things that you see yourself doing as you visualize your highest self.*

**Earlonne:** How do you feel today?

**Shanna:** *Nervous. But it's a bit of nervous anxiety. It's the kind that it feels like I'm supposed to step into. So--*

**Earlonne:** *Indeed.*

**Shanna:** But it's scary. Yeah, it's really scary. I had some emotions yesterday.

**Nigel:** What kind of emotions?

**Shanna:** Of all things to get nervous about. It was like, "What do I wear? Okay, San Francisco's cold," and like [chuckles] all those nervous things. And then I just realized that I was doing that nervous, fidgety kind of thing. And that's how it was showing up with what you were wearing. And then I just sat down for a second and I just let myself feel it.

**Nigel:** All the things that you said, I had those exact same feelings, and I thought about what I was going to wear. I don't think that, that's such an inconsequential thing, because I believe that your external presentation says something to people. You're trying to express something about who you are, I think, through what you put on.

**Earlonne:** Why did you agree to say yes to this interview?

**Shanna:** I didn't know it was a yes until we actually set the date. Meaning, I got the message from my lawyers, and it was like, "Okay, I'll get some more information." And then it was like, I'll meet with Nigel and Amy, and it was, "Okay, I guess I'll take the next step." I feel connected sometimes to the universe, but I kept asking what I'm supposed to do next and then trusted the feeling that was coming. I do feel called to serve. Like, "Why else did I go through this experience the whole 10 years of healing? Why else did I go through that if it wasn't to somehow share it with others?"

**Nigel:** One of the things that I was really struck by was when you told us that recovery is a full-time job. I'd never thought about that before, so that's a lot of what I want to talk to you about. But in order to talk about that, we do have to go back and revisit what happened to you and establish who you were at that time.

[music]

**Nigel:** Could you just give us a couple of adjectives to describe who you were then?

**Shanna:** Outgoing, starting to get excited for life again. It was endless, what I could have chosen to do at that time.

[upbeat music]

**Earlonne:** This story Shanna had come to tell us began about 10 years ago when she was 26.

**Nigel:** At the time, she was living in Sacramento, and she was working at this fancy restaurant called The Firehouse, which Earlonne and I have actually been to, and it's very good. And she was also making plans to go to nursing school.

**Earlonne:** And this was a second start for Shanna. She'd had problems with drug addiction ever since she was 18 and got prescribed OxyContin for an injury. Eventually, she'd gotten off the pills, but some of the old habits had started to creep back in.

**Nigel:** Yeah. I mean, she had been sober, but when you work at a restaurant, there's so much pressure to go out and get a drink after, just be social with your coworkers. And it was one of those nights that the story she told us begins.

**Earlonne:** Hmm.

**Nigel:** So, in whatever way you can talk about it, can you describe just very broadly what happened at the night of the attack?

**Shanna:** I think I drank after work. There was some wine tasting or something. And then I would always bring a change of clothes so that I could go to the bars with my friends. I didn't want to go in my work clothes. I went out, and I had brought my car, even though it was one mile away from my house, I could have walked. Late in the night after the bars had closed, I got in my car to drive, and I don't know if you know that road where the CalPERs building is-

**Nigel:** I do actually.

**Shanna:** -on the other side of the river.

**Nigel:** It's isolated, isn't it?

**Shanna:** Its very isolated.

**Nigel:** Yes.

**Shanna:** It's dark.

**Nigel:** So, this particular spot not far from her house, Shanna knew well because she'd driven it a million times, and there's this little bump in the road. And, Earlonne, I can totally relate to this because I've done this a ton of times, you know that bump is coming up and you kind of gun it, so you catch a little air in the car and it's this giddy feeling. You've done that, right? No?

**Earlonne:** [laughs] No comment.

**Nigel:** [laughs] So Shanna had just done this and was pulling up in front of her house.

**Earlonne:** And that's when she saw the cop.

**Shanna:** He had pulled in behind me. I just was like, "What's up? I'm home. Don't worry. Don't worry. I'm home. I'm home. No need for your services."

**Nigel:** Yeah.

**Shanna:** And I was obviously drunk, and he asked all the questions, never had a breathalyzer or anything, but could visibly tell that I had been out. And I think I was in a short skirt and a tank top.

**Nigel:** Did you feel a weird vibe from him, something wasn't right?

**Shanna:** At that time? No.

**Earlonne:** A heads up to listeners here. This next scene describes a sexual assault.

**Shanna:** So, I'm in the back of the cop car. I'm trying everything to get-- "I'm already home. Come on." Just begging, crying and begging, crying and begging. Nothing was really working. He just seemed like a really stern big guy. I finally said, "Come on, man. Don't make me go sit in jail in this short skirt. I'm going to be freezing. Please, please let me just-- At least my apartment's right there, man. At least let me go inside and change." He let me

out of the car, and I walked to my door. Handcuffs were already off. There's a tiny kitchen in the back, a window that you can't jump through, and a tiny bathroom. I opened the door, and I was like, "Okay, I'll go change, and I'll come back." And he's like, "No, no, no, I need to come inside because how do I know you're not going to run through that back window?"

I grabbed, I think sweatpants or yoga pants or something like that. And I went into the bathroom, and I sat down on the toilet, and I was just crying, maybe thinking, he'll feel sorry for me, just let me go, or something like that. Just crying, crying.

I had been in there for long enough where he was like, "All right, let's go. Let's go." Still, at this point, I didn't know anything was weird. And when he was going to go put the handcuffs on was when it happened.

They say there's fight, flight, or freeze. I froze. I very much froze, which I think I always felt really bad about freezing. A lot of shame about freezing. Maybe thinking that somehow, I caused it or maybe I gave the wrong impression that was invited in some way. It was very quick. It was quick, and there was nothing I could really do to stop it.

I don't even know if at that moment I knew that I had been raped.

I mean, maybe I'm getting into too many details now, but it was just so-- I remember, I have this vivid memory as we're talking about this now, of just that he only unzipped his pants and took it out.

**Nigel:** Yeah.

**Shanna:** Like, it was just that cheap to him. I was that thing that he was making feel that cheap.

**Nigel:** Yeah, I mean, yes, that's what I imagine it was the easiest possible thing for him. Not take his pants off, just pull his dick out.

**Shanna:** In some way, I still felt like I caused it. And that denial comes in a crazy denial. Did that really just happen? I'm actually quite surprised, tears aren't coming. It's weird talking about it where I feel shaking inside, I feel heat coming inside. But something is able-- I'm able to get the words out right now.

**Nigel:** So curious to me, and I don't know victims of other crimes, how often people blame themselves and think it's their fault. Why do we internalize that somehow, we brought this honor that it's our fault? I don't know if you have any thoughts on that, but I think it's very common.

**Shanna:** That's why the biggest part of your healing afterwards is dealing with your guilt and shame. And shame that it happened. The guilt of, "If I didn't drive drunk that night, if I didn't even relapse on alcohol that night, if I would have walked to work, if I didn't wear that short little fucking skirt. What if I gave him the wrong impression that was invited or something?"

**Nigel:** Right. The freezing part resonates with me too, because I think you would just be like, "This isn't happening. Just get it over with," big disbelief. So, I can totally understand that freezing. And I think we have this fantasy that we would fight somebody off, but I'm not sure that's really the case.

**Shanna:** I mean, he had a gun.

**Nigel:** Yeah, he's a freaking police officer.

**Shanna:** *He's a police officer with a gun.*

**Nigel:** *So, it seems like it's self-preservation in a way, to just go deep within yourself.*

**Shanna:** *But the mind doesn't even go there at that time. The mind doesn't go, "Oh, I can do this. I can do that. But he has a gun, so I better not do this." It goes to-- blank.*

**Nigel:** *Something I want to ask you about rape and pass on this one. I think there's so many things that are vile about it, but one of the things that always keeps coming back to me is this horrible sense of having somebody in your body, and it's such a horrible violation. And can you get rid of that feeling, that memory of someone literally being inside of you?*

**Shanna:** *The memory will never go. The memory will never go. You have to completely change your relationship with yourself. There's a huge disconnect. Dissociation, I think, is the word they use. You just feel so disconnected from the mind and the body that it feels like it's not attached to you anymore. And it's almost maybe it's a self-preservation thing because you don't want that feeling.*

**Earlonne:** *After the assault, the cop left Shanna's apartment. But in the days and weeks after, he kept coming back.*

**Nigel:** *Sometimes he'd threaten her, saying he'd arrest her if she told anyone what had happened. And other times, he would just sit there in his car.*

**Shanna:** *I lived on a cul-de-sac, so he would show up and just be parked at the end of my street. I could tell by the silhouette that it was him, and I was also scared to drive at that time. So, I was riding my bike home back from work. I just saw the silhouette of his hat just going like this, almost in slow motion, watching me. I remember thinking it was really weird that he was in normal clothes, and that was more scary to me. Like, that he was lurking around my place, and I never knew when he would be lurking around, which was quite often, actually.*

**Nigel:** *How many times do you think you saw him after the attack?*

**Shanna:** *I'd say three or four. I mean, the car I saw parked there often, but as far as actually having an interaction, it was maybe three or four times. He tried to call my phone a couple times too.*

**Nigel:** *Pretty quickly Shanna relapsed completely. Within a few weeks, she was back on pain pills and then something new to her, heroin.*

**Earlonne:** *And in hindsight, do you feel that all that you were going through is what pushed you back in that?*

**Shanna:** *Yeah. I had to numb. I couldn't sleep. Every time I closed my eyes to sleep, I would see his face, or I would see that silhouette thing. Or even if I didn't remember my dreams, I would wake up with this jolted feeling, unsafe, something had happened.*

**Nigel:** *I'm just imagining that rape and sexual assault just disconnects you so clearly from your body in the most intimate parts of the body, the part that a lot of people already have tension around and questions about and then someone violates you. And so, I feel weird saying this, but I'm going to say it anyway. So, yesterday when I was peeing, I was thinking even that act would bring you back to being violated in that part of your body. So, I was thinking, you can't even urinate without memories coming back to you. Putting in the*

*tampon, putting on everything would bring you back to that moment of intense violation. And it is all encompassing. It's everywhere you turn, there's something that's going to remind you of what happened to your body. How do you take that in and start to process that?*

**Shanna:** *I feel like it's a way that you described it is very accurate, but one of my ways, I experience it and experienced it really strongly then and still can experience it now is a distrust. Your mind would be telling you something was happening right then, and then you would feel like actually somebody's telling you that's not happening, but to you, it's really real. When the trauma comes back, you feel just as scared as you felt. Maybe it's a lack of trust, of even your perception of what you're experiencing. Like in this room, I'm looking into your eyes. Do I trust that? Is that really happening?*

**Nigel:** *So, when you were talking about trust before, I thought it was more trust of other people. But you're talking about trusting yourself.*

**Shanna:** *A huge distrust in myself. Yeah, and I still feel like maybe only just recently, within the last couple of years, I've started to learn that I can trust that inner voice.*

**Nigel:** *What would be an example of something you wouldn't be sure you could trust?*

**Shanna:** *Like you're interacting with somebody, you heard a tone, your perception of it could be a certain way that's different from the reality that everybody else is feeling it. Oftentimes mine would go to angry, defensive. I'm alone, backed into a corner, and I need to bite everybody else. Like that crazy defensive mode.*

**Nigel:** *Does it all go back to that initial? You not trusting what happened to you and questioning yourself if you brought it on somehow or if you were responsible, does it go back to that reaction?*

**Shanna:** *Probably. "What if I caused it? What if this-- I was drunk. I don't know if I remember everything. What if I gave the wrong idea? What if it was what I wore? What if I didn't drink that night?" All those choices I made that night still made me not trust myself because it ended up in that way. Even though consciously now, I know that I was doing the best I could.*

**Nigel:** *This period, the eight months after the attack, were Shauna's lowest she lost her job, and the drugs were making it impossible to function. But no one knew why because she hadn't told anyone what had happened. She was scared of what the cop would do to her if she did.*

**Earlonne:** *Eventually, one of Shanna's neighbors noticed that this cop had been hanging out in front of the apartment complex and thought some seemed off. They reported it.*

**Nigel:** *It turned out the city was already investigating this cop for assaulting other women in West Sacramento. One day, a couple of detectives showed up at Shanna's apartment.*

**Shanna:** *I thought it was his buddies. I thought it was his buddies coming to check if I'm going to say something. I think they showed me a picture of him. Did he pull you over? And I was like, "Yeah, but did anything weird happen?" "No, no, no." After that happened, he showed up again. This time, he had gotten into my gate. His demeanor had changed, he seemed more nervous than anything. And I was like, "Get out of here. I'm not drinking. I'm not driving. There's no reason for you to be here. And you can tell your friends to stop coming by and checking on me." And he's like, "What friends?" And I was like, "Those guys that came by to check on if you pulled me over and all this. Don't worry. I didn't tell. Just get the fuck out of here."*

*A short time later, I have no idea how much time, I got a call from my mom, and my mom just knew that I had gotten pulled over, and there was something weird that I didn't want to tell her about that night, but she called me, and she said, "Will you turn on the news?" And I was like, "Yeah, yeah." "Do you see this guy on the news, is that the one that pulled you over?" And I said, "Yeah." Then she was just like, "Is there more that you have to tell me about that night?" And she was just so upset that I didn't tell her. Because we're super close. So upset that I didn't tell her.*

**Nigel:** The day after Shanna told her mom what happened, the detectives came to see her again. This time, she told them the truth and agreed to testify against the cop in court.

**Earlonne:** But when the case went to trial, Shanna wasn't a part of it. She didn't fit the narrative that the prosecutor wanted to present.

**Nigel:** Most of the other victims were sex workers, out on the streets late at night in a rough part of town. Shanna's case was different, so they left her out.

**Earlonne:** They actually thought it would hurt the case against him because she didn't fit the victim's profile.

**Nigel:** And this was devastating for her. Because she felt like her voice just didn't matter.

**Earlonne:** In 2014, the cop was convicted and sentenced to 205 years in prison. Then a year later, there was a second lawsuit, this time a civil case. It was a chance for victims to sue the city and police force.

**Nigel:** In 2015, there was a mediation, and this is a really strange and interesting process that, again, we've never talked about on the show before. Earlonne, how do you put a dollar amount on somebody's worth and their pain?

**Earlonne:** Well, in Shanna's case, it was one long negotiation over the course of a day. It took place in an office building, each victim and their lawyer in a separate conference room.

**Shanna:** *It seemed almost like a business negotiation. The lawyers would go away and make their deal, make their offer, and then my lawyer would come back in and say, "This is what they offered this time, we're going to counter with this." I was clean for about 30 days by then, and so I had come in probably with a little bit of an ego that I look presentable. I'm clean today. I had this false sense of confidence and able to hold my head high, but also comparing. It's probably the main time that I had interaction with the other girls.*

**Nigel:** So, what was that interaction like?

**Shanna:** *Not much interaction. I think I tried to make eye contact, and most of them were looking the other way.*

**Nigel:** So, there was no feeling that this horrible experience bonded you somehow?

**Shanna:** *There was no feeling like that in whatever way it felt like competitive.*

**Nigel:** Do you think competitive for the settlement or competitive for who had the most trauma?

**Shanna:** *Yeah, maybe that. That bitchy girl attitude between each other. A couple of the girls, I mean, I feel such compassion for them. I hope they're still alive, because they had trouble, like, locating them. They were on the street. One girl brought her dog, and I don't*

*think that painted the picture very well for her with the lawyers. What I heard, actually, is-- then this part's fucked up. The monetary amount was based on what was lost.*

**Nigel:** Before the attack, Shanna had a job, an apartment, plans. After it, she lost all of that.

**Earlonne:** So that contrast between where she started out and where she was after the attack, plus the fact that the cop kept coming back to her apartment to intimidate her.

**Nigel:** Both of those things put Shanna in a special category.

**Shanna:** *They put a monetary amount on what they feel was the value of what you lost, what that experience actually took away from you. But how do you quantify that? I got paid the most out of all of those victims that day. Some of them got 200,000 or something like that. Not to mention the lawyer fees coming out. And the other girl that was more like me got about double that, 500 or something, and mine was 950.*

**Nigel:** *Do you think if you had been in a trial or you had the opportunity to interact with him, is there anything that you could have said that would have expressed to him what he did to you?*

**Shanna:** *Just like you rocked my whole world, you fucked up my whole world. I was on my way-- I was on my way, you know. What was taken from me was more my hope for the future, for what my future had in store. I had a lot of hope at that time, and I think it was taken. I still have trouble trusting the world. I had to move halfway across the world to feel safe to walk out of my door. And even now, I'm just at my parent's house when I come visit, and there's this uneasy feeling, and it's like I can't fully enjoy the town that I was in love with before I left. Coming home is also revisiting those versions of yourself that had to live through that.*

*[somber music]*

**Nigel:** *Yeah. That's so infuriating to me that it's not just the act, it's the years after. It's the emotional payment, the payment in time, the payment in possibilities. All these things that somebody did beyond that physical act. Anyway, I just had never thought about it deeply enough, that deeply enough.*

**Shanna:** *It really-- full time job, if you want to think of it as anything else, I feel bad for the people that have to go through this and have kids and a family and careers and all that. I lost all of that as I was trying to build it. So what else was I going to do except for put everything into my healing?*

**Nigel:** And that included stepping back from all the addictions she had been using to cope, one by one.

**Shanna:** *Heroin and meth to marijuana. I mean, marijuana and alcohol probably at the same time, and then to cigarettes, and then quite a bit down the line was vaping. [chuckles] I had to let go of that. That was probably the last one. The next one I went to was food. Food and caffeine. So, it was like, I couldn't get enough caffeine, I couldn't get enough cake. Then it was men. Then it was shopping. All of the things I would do to numb. You can't just let it go and have it not create this next hole in you. The only way it worked is to replace it with healthy practices. We say in yoga and ayurveda, Satvik practices, which are those practices that are light and illuminating and revealing. If you think of the quality of light. What does it do? You shine it on some darkness it reveals.*

**Earlonne:** Shine light on the darkness, I like that. Maybe it's what we're doing here.



**Nigel:** This is a dark topic, and maybe we were a little cautious about taking it on, but I think that's the point. Shine some light and see what's there.

**Earlonne:** We're going to take a short break.

**Nigel:** And we'll be right back.

[somber music]

**Shanna:** *So, bring this visualization a little deeper and become aware of what you're feeling in this space through all of your senses. So, notice what you're taking in through the eyes. Any special colors that feel calm and safe to you, maybe any sounds. The air on the skin, the taste in the mouth, just feel it into it with all of the senses.*

**Earlonne:** Our plan with Shanna was to bring her in for two interviews several months apart.

**Nigel:** Yeah. I mean, we wanted to know how talking about this had affected her, not just immediately after the first conversation, but after she'd had some time to reflect on it.

**Earlonne:** So, for the second interview, we wanted to start the same way we had in the first one, with a meditation. But this time, instead of playing the recording we used before, we asked Shanna to lead the meditation right there in the studio.

**Shanna:** *Sit there in that space of safety and ease and protection as this place that you can always go to at a moment's notice. At any time, you're feeling triggered, you can always go to this visual space-- [voice fades away]*

**Nigel:** *Do you think when you're doing your practice and leading practice that you have a different persona or a different way of being than your everyday being?*

**Shanna:** *I guess I hope so.*

**Nigel:** *Yeah. Your voice changes and the amount of space that you take up, somehow you take up an appropriately larger amount of space. I don't know if I'm explaining it right.*

**Shanna:** *No. That's an interesting feedback. I appreciate it.*

**Nigel:** *It feels very enveloping in a nice way. I don't know if it's a kind of confidence or just a knowing of the process.*

**Shanna:** *I experience it also. I experience it as a trust. I'm trusting something to channel through me. I think yoga is about surrendering to-- I mean, we have this slogan, Ishvara Pranidhana, where you're surrendering to whatever higher force that is and allowing that set in--*

**Nigel:** *Maybe that's what fills the room.*

**Shanna:** *I think that must be what fills the room. That's such a beautiful way of thinking of it.*

**Nigel:** *Yeah.*

**Earlonne:** *When you left, of course, we were biting our fingernails, trying to figure out, how did you feel after that interview?*

**Shanna:** There was definitely some days, probably two days or so, where I felt a little more sensitive, vulnerable. Like I opened something up that I needed to take a look at. But I did feel a bit I was prepared for that. And so, I went for a nice long drive. And I just let myself feel the feelings, including some tears. But it was like a release tear. It never felt like sadness. It felt release. There was ways that I was able to think about some certain things differently. Like new awarenesses that came out.

**Nigel:** Can you express what those were?

**Shanna:** As much as I wanted to find that old anger inside, there was a couple of questions that I was actually surprised by the answer that came out. I wasn't still filled with all that rage towards him that I used to be filled with. I wondered where that came from. And so, I was confused by that a bit because I wanted to find that rage and be like, "Yeah, fuck him." When I talked to my therapist about it, she said that, "It shows this processing has moved from the short-term memory," like the react, keeping me safe, where I can still access that. But it doesn't carry the same emotional charge. So, it was interesting, the way that was revealed to me.

**Nigel:** I was struck by what you're expressing. That the anger wasn't where I expected it to be. Where does it go and what replaces it?

**Shanna:** There was a lot of anger towards him. But I feel like dharma served its course, like he's serving his sentence. He was a sick person.

**Nigel:** I don't know how-- and we don't even have to use him, but people who do really awful things to other people, is it a harder weight to carry to be the person who does the violence or the person who's had the violence inflicted on them? Which do you think is the heavier weight?

**Shanna:** I think it must be from the person inflicting the violence. Because for me, at least, I've had a freedom. The weight isn't so heavy anymore. In fact, sometimes it just feels like a little light touch that's there. If you're going to think of versus heavy weighing down. And not to say that it doesn't come up still, as still a way that it feels heavy and it's weighing me down. It's more of, there's still a sense of freedom.

**Nigel:** So, I mean, could you even put into words what he's taken from you?

**Shanna:** Oh, man, so much. One new one that just came out for me that I realized is years that it's like, actually there's years lost. I'm 37, I only just got married. I'm never going to have kids. Maybe that would have happened if I didn't go through this and have to focus only my healing. Maybe I would have gone back to college. Maybe I would have not been just starting my career at 36, 37, things like that. I think of the 10 years that if I didn't have all of this to focus on, what maybe I could have done.

**Nigel:** Is there something-- I've been wondering about if this makes sense to you, that there might be too much of a focus on this idea of complete healing, and that listening to you, it just seems like it is a lifelong process and that we're making people feel maybe more stressed by saying, you need to heal, you need to heal. When that's not really what's going to happen. It's that you're going to learn to cope, but you are going to be dealing with it in some way for the rest of your life. And that is the success, is that you learn how to deal with it and move forward, and the goal is not to completely heal. The goal is to live your life.

**Shanna:** Maybe the measure of success is the length of time between the triggers. Because I've had the tools, the triggers are much fewer and far between, and they don't last so long. They're not as heavy.

**Earlonne:** *If you had the opportunity, if they placed you in the room with your attacker, which you had sat in front of him and had a conversation with him, just as some type of closure in your life?*

**Shanna:** *I mean, maybe in my past self, there would have been a lot more anger and reactive. Today, in my mind what's the function of it? I've already released it personally. Why does my ego then have to go prove a point to him and feel some release, when I've already been able to release it with my practices. If I was sitting across from him, I wouldn't even really know what to say. He would have that power over me again if he was able to visually see the reaction, and I would never want to give him that power again.*

[upbeat music]

**Earlonne:** Nyge, this episode felt like it was a long time coming.

**Nigel:** Right. Stories like Shanna's are a shadow presence in the background of a lot of our episodes. We've talked with so few victims on Ear Hustle, and there's really a lot of new ground for us to cover.

**Earlonne:** This type of conversation, it happens inside of prisons when survivors of crimes and victims of crimes come in and they tell their story. It's very important for a lot of people, and it's very important because it helps people heal. It really changed my mindset, even though I personally had made up my mind that this was it, I'm done with this lifestyle. It don't really hit you until you put a face to a victim.

**Nigel:** Oh, I remember you telling me about your experience going to one of those restorative justice circles. It was so clear to me that it had affected you-- [crosstalk]

**Earlonne:** It makes you feel it. It personalizes it.

**Nigel:** Yeah. And it's a really courageous thing for those people to do. And for Shanna, we didn't have a track record of stories like this for her to listen to, so she took a chance with us and we really appreciate it.

**Earlonne:** I hope all is well, and namaste.

**Nigel:** Ear Hustle is produced by me, Nigel Poor, Earlonne Woods, Amy Standen, Bruce Wallace and Rahsaan "New York" Thomas.

**Earlonne:** Shabnam Sigman is our managing producer.

**Nigel:** The producing team inside San Quentin includes Steve Brooks, Derrell Sadiq Davis, Tony de Trinidad, and Tam Nguyen. The inside managing producer is Tony Tafoya.

**Earlonne:** Fernando Arruda sound designed and engineered this episode with help from me, Earlonne Woods and Harry Culhane. Music in this episode comes from Antwan Williams, Rhashiyd Zinnamon, David Jassy, Earlonne Woods, and Fernando Arruda.

**Nigel:** Thanks to acting Warden Smith at San Quentin, acting Warden Hill and Lieutenant Newborg at the California Institution for Women for supporting the show. Thanks also to this woman here.

**Lt. Guim'Mara Berry:** I am Lt. Guim'Mara Berry, the Public Information Officer at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, and I approve this episode.

**Earlonne:** This episode was made possible by The Just Trust, working to amplify the voices, vision, and power of communities that are transforming the justice system.

**Nigel:** For more information about this episode, check out the show notes on Ear Hustle's website, [earhustlesq.com](http://earhustlesq.com). There you can also find a resource that Shanna wanted to share with listeners, one that was helpful to her in her recovery.

**Earlonne:** You can also find out more about the show on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram [@earhustlesq](https://www.instagram.com/earhustlesq).

**Nigel:** And tune in for our next episode. It's going to be which one, Earlonne?

**Earlonne:** Our 100th.

**Nigel:** Exactly. And it is time to celebrate, and we've got something pretty special planned, so please stay tuned.

**Earlonne:** And if you still want more Ear Hustle, subscribe to Ear Hustle Plus.

**Nigel:** We've got bonus episodes, live chats where we get to talk with you, the listeners about the show. And Earlonne, you know that's something I've always wanted to do. I'm pretty excited about it.

**Earlonne:** Me too. It's fun. Sign up at [earhustlesq.com/plus](http://earhustlesq.com/plus) if you want to chat with us.

**Nigel:** And if you don't mind, please leave us a review on Apple Podcast. That's a big help to the show, and we really appreciate it.

**Earlonne:** Ear Hustle is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, a network of independent, creator owned, listener supported podcasts.

**Nigel:** Discover audio with vision at Radiotopia.fm. I'm Nigel Poor.

**Earlonne:** I'm Earlonne Woods. Thanks for listening.

**End of Episode**

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