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Sun, May 07, 2023 2:40PM 42:06

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

work, studies, adhd, episode, feel, katrina, podcast, bachelor, elle, medication, talk, therapist, working, care, mom, clinical research, treatments, good, ricki, magic wand

SPEAKERS

Elle Billing, Katrina Billing

E Elle Billing 00:00

Hi, my name is Elle Billing. I am a chronically ill queer femme, and I'm tired. I'm here this episode and every episode to dig at the roots of our collective fatigue, explore ways to direct our care and compassionate and sustainable ways and harness creative expression to heal ourselves and our world. And welcome to Hoorf! Radical care in a late capitalist heckscape. My guest this episode is Katrina Billing. Katrina is a certified clinical research coordinator. She has been part of several groundbreaking pharmaceutical trials as well as some boring ones. She makes her home in Minnesota with her fiance, his two children, two dogs and a cat. She is 100% the person who has a closet just for her dog's clothing I apologize in advance for any confusion that this episode creates. I've been told that Katrina -- who is my younger sister -- and I sound a lot alike and that our voices sound almost actually exactly the same. I've actually been told this by my own mother. So I apologize. This might be a good time to download the transcript for this episode, which is available at Hoorf podcast.com. In order to keep track of who was speaking when. That said, I'm really happy to have my sister, as my guest today on the podcast. Hi, Katrina.

K Katrina Billing 01:47

Hi. Elle,

E Elle Billing 01:49

hi,how are you?

K Katrina Billing 01:51

I'm well, Elle, how are you? Do you think your listeners can tell if there's two people?

E

Elle Billing 01:55

I don't know. I thought about that right away. What's going to be really hard is I used to have somebody type my transcripts for me, my friend Jen, but things got a little busy in her life. And so she couldn't do it for a while. And so I've been using otter AI for my transcripts. And it already has a hard enough time separating out who's speaking. It is going to be a disaster. It's going to be a train wreck this time because we sound the same. Or so we've been told.

K

Katrina Billing 02:20

I don't hear it.

E

Elle Billing 02:21

Yeah, but our parents do. And the reason I say our parents, oh, big reveal here. Today, I'm interviewing my sister.

K

Katrina Billing 02:29

That's me.

E

Elle Billing 02:31

Yeah. That's you, Katrina. I'm Elle. You know what I'm gonna get started on just the first question. And then we'll go into whatever comes from this. Because it's gonna be great. I have some ideas. Okay. How have you received care this week?

K

Katrina Billing 02:45

My fiance and my tiny dog and I went on a walk in our neighborhood. We just bought a house. And the weather's finally nice in Minnesota. And Dexter, my tiny dog smiled the whole way. He loves being outside and just like being outside with him. Like It filled my heart and it's also Star Wars Day. It's been a very good day for me.

E

Elle Billing 03:10

Yes, we are recording this on May the fourth. So may the fourth be with you?

K

Katrina Billing 03:13

And also with you.

E Elle Billing 03:15

Yeah. And how cool is it that may the fourth is like right before your birthday too. It's like the greatest ever.

K Katrina Billing 03:20

It makes the beginning of May kind of my favorite time of year selfishly.

E Elle Billing 03:25

That's not selfish. That's just life. So cool. That sounds like a really nice thing. Dexter's adorable. Is he wearing a shirt? And which shirt was he wearing?

K Katrina Billing 03:34

He was not wearing a shirt

E Elle Billing 03:36

'cause it was nice out today.

K Katrina Billing 03:38

It was like 82 The real feel. But he's him too chunky for for his harness.

E Elle Billing 03:45

Oh, no,

K Katrina Billing 03:46

we couldn't get it clipped. So since he's, he's a good boy. And he's too scared to run away. We just put the leash on his collar. And it was fine. But yeah, the lead the harness that I've had for him since I moved here in 2019. him a little too chunky over the winter months.

E Elle Billing 04:07

You know, it was a long, cold, wet winter. I think we all got a little chunky. And that's okay. We're all feeling it, we're all northern folk. That chunk keeps us alive. There's no body shaming.

K Katrina Billing 04:20

Today felt like a spring day. We've had warm days where I've been outside and taken walks. But I don't know what it was about today that I was like, okay, it is spring and it just being out and taking that walk was refreshing.

E Elle Billing 04:38

I felt really good here too because I was in Fargo with our mom and it was gorgeous. It was absolutely gorgeous out I was like finally and today is the first day our dad went into the field. Like it was a really good day their planting. it's a great day. So hats off or spring weather? Yes. So we had to wait till I got home. And then until after you were done with Work to record, so you have a full time job or part time job?

K Katrina Billing 05:11

It's full time.

E Elle Billing 05:12

Full time. And you're going to school. And you are planning a wedding,

K Katrina Billing 05:15

yeah, planning a wedding

E Elle Billing 05:16

and you share custody of your fiance's children.

K Katrina Billing 05:20

Yeah, we got two kids.

E Elle Billing 05:22

So how do you take care of how do you practice self care? With all of that going on? Do you have a self care routine? Like how do you take care of yourself with all that's going on in your life right now? I interview mostly creative people, but other people too. But like, Do you have a creative practice? Well, I actually know the answer to this. Your creative practice looks different than mine.

K Katrina Billing 05:44

Very much. If I need a creative outlet, it is more often than not makeup. But the fun thing with that being the creative outlet is I get to start my day with my creative outlet.

E Elle Billing 05:57

Oh, that's great.

K Katrina Billing 05:58

So getting ready in the morning, being able to like do that. Well, this is going to be a great segue, I actually think into what we intended to talk about. I get to decide literally what mask to put on my face in the morning before work. How am I feeling? Do I feel presentable? Can I sit in front of the camera in meetings today bare faced? Or do I feel like I need to look the part of the account executive who's on top of her training. If I need that extra layer? I get that right away in the morning with my creative outlet.

E Elle Billing 06:38

Okay, so why do you need a mask when you go to work? Did I jump into that too fast?

K Katrina Billing 06:45

It's cool. It's cool. It's cool. It's cool. It's cool. We're good. We're good. We're good. We're good. Why do I need a mask? Um, because for as long as I can remember, I've played characters. I developed characters for different scenarios in my life. Because come to find out in my 30s I, I have a touch of the tisms.

E Elle Billing 07:06

Okay, so you're on the spectrum.

K Katrina Billing 07:08

Yes. Self diagnosed, which is valid,

E Elle Billing 07:13

that is valid

K Katrina Billing 07:14
peer validated.

E Elle Billing 07:17
You have peer reviewed autism. That's what I call it. So I'm gonna step in here and just say that, as far as I understand, the Autistic community accepts and validates self discovery and self diagnosis because of the inaccessibility of the medical industry, like not everybody can. It's so expensive. And so there are so many gatekeepers,

K Katrina Billing 07:41
it's so expensive, and it's additionally more difficult for women to get a diagnosis, and that's across the board as someone who has a background in research,

E Elle Billing 07:55
specifically medical research, yes?

K Katrina Billing 07:57
yes, medical and clinical research. So much of what we quote unquote, know, is actually just what we know about white men.

E Elle Billing 08:06
Yeah,

K Katrina Billing 08:07
there was in clinical research. So testing medications. For the longest time, women weren't even allowed in the studies, because they thought that the female's menstrual cycle would somehow throw off the concentration of medication in the bloodstream that you're testing for. So instead of looking at that, and going, Wow, that should probably be looked into.

E Elle Billing 08:35
I feel like that's something we should know if it does happen, right.

K Katrina Billing 08:38

Instead, they're just like, we won't put them in the studies. So a lot of our until recently, and by recently, I mean, like the past couple of decades, at least for this. Everything we knew about how medications are absorbed and how they work was based on how they work in men.

E Elle Billing 08:55

That reminds me of the early days of trains and steam engines, how they wouldn't let women ride in trains because they thought their uterus is would be like thrown from their bodies.

K Katrina Billing 09:07

I wish I mine would be thrown from my body. I have no use for it.

E Elle Billing 09:10

There are days.

K Katrina Billing 09:13

There are days.

E Elle Billing 09:15

I'm glad you brought that up about the medication and the clinical research and diagnostics. Mom and I were actually just talking about that in the car. That you know, the average, you know, women are more likely to die of. Okay, I'm speaking in very like cis heteronormative terms here, which is totally not how I usually speak. But unfortunately, a lot of the medical field is still stuck. The studies on the medical misogyny unfortunately are still cis heteronormative and misogynistic. But women are more likely to die of heart attacks than men. Because all of the warning signs of a heart attack that were published for years and years were done on heart disease in men. The symptoms look different in women and women have a harder time getting doctors to believe them about pain. And, you know, it takes us seven to 10 years to get correct diagnoses for chronic pain disorders. And can you tell I had a migraine this morning? My words are gone. Autoimmune diseases -- a thing I have that I can't think of the name of! -- you know, chronic pain disorders and autoimmune diseases because people just don't believe us.

K Katrina Billing 10:21

Right? Tough out here for for women. Yeah.

E Elle Billing 10:26

Iust like non men. It's tough out here for non- men. And yeah. So anyway. you out on a mask

just like how when it's tough out here for non-ment and you can't do anything, you put on a mask for work? Because yeah, you were late, diagnosed late self discovery, self identification. And much like that I wasn't diagnosed with ADHD until I was in my 30s as well. And now we're like, oh, so much about our childhood makes sense now. Like, not just our childhood, but like our teenage years? Our years in college or our attempts previous attempts at college?

K Katrina Billing 11:00

I have a few.

E Elle Billing 11:01

Yeah, right. I dropped... So I have an incomplete master's degree. And I dropped out of community college, even though I graduated with a bachelor's with honors. We're right, like, Oh, what happened there? Oh, ADHD. I mean, it's a little more complex. It's a little more complicated than that. But like, systems aren't built for us.

K Katrina Billing 11:22

Oh, not at all. They are not accommodating. My favorite game to play with you recently has been messaging you and saying, Alright, in this round of, it wasn't a quirk, It was a symptom. I've come to understand a lot more about certain things about growing up,

E Elle Billing 11:42

right. And I do that I text you the same things. I call them your your weekly, your weekly autistic validation text, where I'll find I'll find a meme that's like, oh, that sounds like Katrina, when we were little. Or all find, I'll remember something from when we were growing up. And all of a sudden, it makes sense. In a way it didn't before. Like, hey, remember that time you went two years refusing to wear jeans because they felt icky?

K Katrina Billing 12:09

I don't like hard pants, man. That was so though when like tech pants were big.

E Elle Billing 12:16

You called jeans hard pants.

K Katrina Billing 12:19

Yeah, I didn't say they were too hard. Like that was it was middle school. And that was when like the tech pant was in so like your bright colored like almost windbreaker material with the caroo nockets and 79 zippers like-- those were mv iam. That was what I wanted.

large pockets and 75 zippers like - those were my jam. That was what I wanted.

E Elle Billing 12:38
It was the 90s

K Katrina Billing 12:40
Yeah. Yeah, it would have been late 90s

E Elle Billing 12:44
And we did so our own wind pants in bright colors with matching top stitching.

K Katrina Billing 12:52
And lining.

E Elle Billing 12:53
Oh, yeah. The lining.

K Katrina Billing 12:57
Because I have like a blue, orange. And like a goldenrod color. I want to say

E Elle Billing 13:04
I thought yours was blue, orange and lime green.

K Katrina Billing 13:07
I had multiple I made many tracksuits in my youth.

E Elle Billing 13:13
That's true. We have photographic evidence which I might use for publicity.

K Katrina Billing 13:20

Whenever I am like in a new work environment and like you find your work friends and they start to like learn more about you. My era of competitive sewing is always people's favorite.

E Elle Billing 13:32
Yeah, same.

K Katrina Billing 13:34
And you have a matching windsuits with I had a floral lining and then the colors that were in the lining were what the exterior of the tracksuit.

E Elle Billing 13:45
I forgot about the floral lining.

K Katrina Billing 13:48
I didn't

E Elle Billing 13:50
clearly

K Katrina Billing 13:50
no matter how hard I tried

E Elle Billing 13:54
No kidding. Okay, so we grew up neurospicy, but undiagnosed, so our house had kind of a fun zone. We had friends who would come over for dinner, because ..

K Katrina Billing 14:06
We had friends?!

E Elle Billing 14:07
We had friends. A few. we had a few friends. who were probably also a little spicy. But they would come over for dinner because it was entertainina.

K Katrina Billing 14:17
Yeah,

E Elle Billing 14:17
because like in our I had an episode with another autistic person prior to the holidays. And you know, they and I were talking about how we just live through movie lines and TV characters and song lyrics. And that's just our normal, that's how we relate to people in the world and each other. And then you become an adult and you start reading character like lists and stuff and you're like, oh, most people don't do that. That's like...

K Katrina Billing 14:47
I apparently am today years old. Most people don't do that?

E Elle Billing 14:51
They Don't. they Don't. that's not common. Apparently???

K Katrina Billing 14:55
quoting, quoting pop culture is my love language.

E Elle Billing 14:58
Right and we only hang out with other people who do that we have like the kind of tunnel vision about it.

K Katrina Billing 15:04
Birds of a feather,

E Elle Billing 15:06
birds of a feather. So that was us growing up. And by growing up, I mean also now I think I had at least one boyfriend who, who said that seeing the two of us together was terrifying and illuminating.

K

Katrina Billing 15:21

Yeah, yep. I've heard similar feedback that partners only ever show like, the half of the conversation or interaction that they're on. So they've heard me on the phone with you, and then you kind of like, man, you and your sister seem crazy. And it's like, maybe a little. And then they see us together in the same environment. They're like, okay, no, you are like that is something you got to prepare yourself for. They I've heard it said that we have our own language, and that they had no idea what we talked about for a decent like chunk of the conversation because it was all either quotes, lyrics, inside jokes, like references that they had no idea about.

E

Elle Billing 16:07

It's like that one episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation, when there's that race of aliens who only speak in oblique references to their culture. So the tran--, like the universal translator works, but no one understands what they're saying. Because they're not members of their culture. It's all socio linguistic references. And that's basically what it's like to be a guest in our family. It's like, multiple layers of translation.

K

Katrina Billing 16:38

Yeah.

E

Elle Billing 16:39

And like, it's really no surprise that your fiance has pretty significant ADHD and that's why he fits in.

K

Katrina Billing 16:45

Yeah, that's, it kind of compliments, my autistic traits, tendencies, whatever we want to call them and his ADHD manifestations. Luckily for us, more often than not, they're complementary to each other.

E

Elle Billing 17:04

Right.

K

Katrina Billing 17:04

It does cause them like other problems when they happen to clash. But yeah, it's another layer of the relationship that I mean, it requires work. It's work that's worth it. But he was recently diagnosed also in his 30s. So it's been a learning process for both of us at the same time, within ourselves, and then what we bring to the relationship as well.

E

Elle Billing 17:29

Right. Yeah. I mean, my partner, Ricki has been going through the ADHD situation and getting a second opinion and trying, you know, and Ricki and I both ran into the issue of a neuropsychologist basically saying, you're, you're too smart to have ADHD, just buckle down. And it's like,

K

Katrina Billing 17:51

that's wildly invalidating.

E

Elle Billing 17:54

Yeah. Um, intelligence is a made up idea, IQ is racist. And for how smart I supposedly am, I should be doing way better in my life.

K

Katrina Billing 18:08

Preach.

E

Elle Billing 18:09

like that. It was so frustrating. So yeah, fun times.

K

Katrina Billing 18:14

Did your did the professional ask you what you would change if you had a magic wand?

E

Elle Billing 18:21

He did not. He was insulting in different ways. Well, we can get to the magic wand. The neuropsychologist who assessed me this was when I was on medical leave, experiencing severe burnout and having, you know, like I was having limb numbness and severe brain fog. And like, problems with balance. So like, I needed a neuro psych eval anyway, because something was really wrong with me. And we were trying to narrow it down and pinpoint it and, but I also knew I had ADHD, and ADHD burnout and autistic burnout are very real things. And I was suspecting that there was some kind of neuro fatigue, like it was something with neurologically wrong. There was neuro fatigue or burnout that was related to a diagnosis, and I was looking for answers. And so I did this, like six hour, eight hour tests, battery of tests with him and when I came back, for my results, he had done like a pain survey. And I was like, great, we're gonna be talking about chronic pain. And he's like, you think about your pain too much. That's your problem.

K Katrina Billing 19:29
What?

E Elle Billing 19:30

Yeah, he was like your problem is one of your problems is that you think about your pain too much and by and you'd like perseverate on your pain you catastrophize and I was like, I understand that I sometimes catastrophize that that I do. However, if you you know, chronic pain, like have you experienced chronic pain? because I feel like if you woke up every morning in pain, you too would think about it a lot. If your livelihood depended on your arms and hands because I taught at a deaf school and I signed and you woke up and every day your arms were a little bit more numb. And you could use them a little bit less, you would think about it and worry about it a lot too

K Katrina Billing 20:12
my question...

E Elle Billing 20:13

Like that was so I didn't get the magic wand talk that you got, I got the like, you think about your

K Katrina Billing 20:19
freeze your frozen.

E Elle Billing 20:21

I was like, I've literally can't not think about my pain. It's always there. How do you not think about something that's always there? That's what chronic means. And like when he told me that I burst into tears. So I probably proved his point to him. That yes, I do. catastrophize and when someone points it out, I cry like, okay. Oh, okay, so that was my bad experience. What was your experience? Like? You mentioned the magic wand thing. What was that about?

K Katrina Billing 20:52

It was my first exposure to therapy, which, like, in retrospect, I think I wish my first experience had been better, because maybe if it had been better I'd have stuck with it, and I could have had better tools to deal with my life. But when I was in high school, a friend was concerned about me, reached out to mom and said, Hey, like, you need to get Katie to talk to someone

like she's, she's struggling. Please get your daughter help. So she took me to a therapist. And I was like, alright, we're like, we're finally going to do it. We're going to be honest, we're going to work through stuff. And I get to my appointment, and this therapist, immediately condescending. Her voice was like this. Hello? Hi. Okay. And she answered, I don't know if was a call or a page because it's like 20 years ago now.

 Elle Billing 21:53

It was that long ago, wasn't it? Yeah.

 21:57

14 was like, almost 22 years ago. And she turned to talk to someone else and switched into a normal voice just like, can you move my lunch tomorrow until one? Thanks. Okay, so what were we talking about? And immediately, then I was like, Nope, we're done with this. She wasn't done because we had, you know, like, 50 minutes left in the appointment. And one of her questions was, now if you had a magic wand and could change anything in your life, what would it be? And it took what little self control I had to not say to her if I had a magic wand, I would shove it where the sun don't shine. It was so condescending, and just invalidating to be talked to like that.

 Elle Billing 22:50


Like it might have worked for a little kid. So she was a pediatric therapist. Right?

 Katrina Billing 22:55

And maybe it did work. But man a

 Elle Billing 22:57

not for 14 year old,

 Katrina Billing 22:59

a 14 year old in middle school, right. I just gotten into high school. Anyways, we don't we don't want to be talked to like that.

 Elle Billing 23:07

You were a sophomore. And I was a senior.

K Katrina Billing 23:12

Okay, I am story tracks. Yeah. So no, a 14 year old doesn't want to be asked about magic wands. Okay. and it left is really sour taste in my mouth. And I was very, like, I had an aversion to therapy. Because that was my only experience. And I'm like, why would I want to go back to that? And then I found a good therapist. And I was like, Why didn't I do this sooner?

E Elle Billing 23:44

Yeah, we had a decent therapist after that one you've we found? Yeah, Lori. Lori was good.

K Katrina Billing 23:52

Oh, my God. I forgot about Laurie. That was at Prairie.

E Elle Billing 23:56

That was it. Yeah, that was at the walkin... no, the outpatient.

K Katrina Billing 23:59

Yeah. mad props to Lori. Wherever you are out there.

E Elle Billing 24:04

Yeah, she's probably the reason we're both still here. If I'm being super honest.

K Katrina Billing 24:10

Oh, yeah. Yeah,

E Elle Billing 24:13

she was awesome. The first lady not so much. Like I'm glad that you went through the terrible therapists before I got in like so you had like, tested the waters and then I went?

K Katrina Billing 24:24

Yeah. it's what brings siblings together. Bad experiences.

—

- E** Elle Billing 24:30
It does but also getting into therapy and getting on medication is the reason you and I have a relationship at all because prior to that, we did not, so
- K** Katrina Billing 24:40
high school was not kind to us and I unfortunately was not kind to you. Yeah.
- E** Elle Billing 24:47
Yeah. I mean, we were both struggling in our own way. So
- K** Katrina Billing 24:51
Hey, there's me taking taking accountability for being mean to
- E** Elle Billing 24:58
you did it in front of strangers.
- K** Katrina Billing 25:01
I know!
- E** Elle Billing 25:03
Thanks. That was nice.
- K** Katrina Billing 25:05
Yeah, I love you.
- E** Elle Billing 25:07
I love you too. Why did we sound like Muppets when we said that?
- K** Katrina Billing 25:12
We're unwell?

E Elle Billing 25:15
It's better than we could be.

K Katrina Billing 25:19
Yeah. Okay, sure.

E Elle Billing 25:22
Yeah. So you're going to school? What are you studying?

K Katrina Billing 25:26
I am going to school online. Arizona State University go what? Sun Devils? Go Sun Devils.

E Elle Billing 25:34
that was just my crossword that dad and I did!

K Katrina Billing 25:41
so, yeah. I'm getting my bachelor's in science, in biology with a concentration in biomedical.

E Elle Billing 25:55
Okay.

K Katrina Billing 25:56
Biology. It's, it's typically what pre med students take if they want to get into med school. This is the track that they'll take this is the biology pathway.

E Elle Billing 26:10
Okay, are you going to med school?

K Katrina Billing 26:12
Oh, heavens, no. I find the body super interesting. And I want to learn everything about it. But

Oh, heavens, no. I find the body super interesting. And I want to learn everything about it. But in no way shape or form do I ever want a profession? Where I hold someone's life in my hands?

E

Elle Billing 26:25

Hmm.

K

Katrina Billing 26:26

It's too much responsibility. It's too much pressure. So doctor, no, no. I went back for the bachelors of science to further my career in clinical research. I got to a level where depending on the company, some companies will hire you on without a bachelor's and just through your experience and your work at that company, they'll continue to elevate your position. And then other companies don't even want you to start at the bottom without a bachelor's.

E

Elle Billing 27:02

oh wow

K

Katrina Billing 27:03

especially won't let you elevate without it. And it kind of got to the point where I was like, Okay, I'm gonna plateau or might have to accept a lesser position at some companies because what I'm actually capable of I don't have the bachelors to back it up. So I have wanted to go back and have said multiple times. Since I was last in school in 2014. I should go back. I want to go back should I go? I eventually will go back. And I didn't tell you I didn't tell mom or dad. I barely told David that I was going to do it. It was more like, oh, I applied to college. I got in and my classes start in two weeks. It's all online. Okay, good talk. Thank you. Because I knew I just needed I seem to do it. If I talked to someone about it. I could have talked myself out of it. They could have talked myself out of it. Like I thought this could be good. And I went and did it. And it's been good.

E

Elle Billing 28:06

That's kind of how I ended up in grad school, too. was like this is a thing I need to do for myself. Yeah.

K

Katrina Billing 28:13

So I just finished my first session on the 30th of April.

E

Elle Billing 28:19

Okay, so yeah, ASU does two sessions per semester. I had another friend who got their

Okay, so yeah, ASU does two sessions per semester, I had another friend who got their bachelor's there.

K Katrina Billing 28:25

Yes. Yeah.

E Elle Billing 28:26

So you got into clinical research quite by accident.

K Katrina Billing 28:30

Very much by accident.

E Elle Billing 28:32

You started out emptying urine samples at a pharmaceutical testing facility. When you were 19.

K Katrina Billing 28:41

Yep, I was 19. I was working at the mall and retail

E Elle Billing 28:46

BOOOOO... I'm not booing anybody who works there, like Good on you if you can handle that, but like you didn't enjoy it.

K Katrina Billing 28:53

I didn't Nooooo

E Elle Billing 28:54

you were good at it. But you didn't like it.

K Katrina Billing 28:57

And like it, but I was also going to massage therapy school in the evenings. And obviously, you get to know your classmates, was lamenting about the terrible retail job. And a classmate was like, hey, you need to apply here, my husband's in charge of the part time staff. I'll put in a

good word for you. Like, let's get you a job you don't despise. So I applied for this job. And I don't know if that actually even told you this. But what I thought I was applying for, was not what I applied for, and was not the job I got.

E

Elle Billing 29:31

I didn't know that.

K

Katrina Billing 29:32

I thought I'd be working on the second floor of this building processing blood samples that were a part of the research study. What I actually ended up applying for and getting was working on the first floor processing the blood and urine samples for people who were screening for eligibility purposes. And that job was a lot of scanning barcodes on Test Tube labels and urine cups, dumping old urine samples and rotating shipments of like reagent that we needed for the lab machines. And that's how I got into clinical research, by accident at the age of 19. And have just moved to the next position got to know that one kind of, you know, let that position play out, move this, you know, the next step up into the next position, and I got into it by accident, I stayed, because the money was good. And then finally really decided to like commit to it as a career long term because of mom's diagnosis.

E

Elle Billing 30:47

Right? Yeah, you had the opportunity to work on some Alzheimer's and dementia studies.

K

Katrina Billing 30:52

Yeah, which is fascinating. All diseases, deserve treatment, all number of ailments, like all of them deserve attention. But there is something to be said, When you get to work on a project that hits super close to home that is extremely validating to be able to be a part of it, even in some small way. So yeah, that Alzheimer's study that I was a part of that was that that one did something to me.

E

Elle Billing 31:22

Yeah, I imagine. So you just that's what you want to keep doing? That's cool.

K

Katrina Billing 31:28

Yeah, I want to keep working in research, it's fascinating to see what's going on, because like the general public will hear about these studies. In five to seven business years, once the study is done, the data is collected, interpreted, compiled, reviewed. So it's kind of nice to be essentially behind the scenes kind of knowing what's coming down the pipeline for these different treatments for different diseases,

E

Elle Billing 31:59

right. So you've been involved in various studies, you're 30-- Well, by the time this, this, actually, this episode comes out on your birthday. So

K

Katrina Billing 32:08

I'm 36,

E

Elle Billing 32:09

you're 36. You've been doing this a while. I'm sure there's a lot of confidentiality, things that you have to sign and be, you know, super careful what you do talk about, but can you share any of the studies that, or give a little information about some studies that you've been involved in, that are like, now we have these drugs, or these medicines or treatments, and you can say, Hey, I was part of that.

K

Katrina Billing 32:35

Yeah, um, when I started in clinical research, the facility I worked at did what's called Bio equivalence studies. And that is your generics versus your name brands. So medication A is invented by a company, they get a patent on it, no one can do that medication until the patent runs out. And then it is literally a race to the finish line for other companies to get their generic approved. So I spent four years doing generic and name brand studies, one of which, I was part of the study that tested the generic for the antidepressant that I used to be on.

E

Elle Billing 33:19

Well, that's cool.

K

Katrina Billing 33:21

Yeah, I'm not on that one anymore. But it's called Vybriid, and that we were working on testing the generic for that. So that was exciting from a, let's make health care more affordable standpoint. But from a like, let's break new ground on health care, I was part of the team that tested Eli Lilly's COVID infusion that got an emergency use approval by the FDA, my first week of being a part of that study, as a new employee, I flew out to Colorado to help out the team there. And like my first night there, they're like, we got the approval. So I got to feel like I was a part of the things that were being developed for COVID treatment. not feel like being a part of I was a part of it. I shouldn't diminish my accomplishments. Recently, also in the news, they've been talking about different Alzheimer's treatments.

E Elle Billing 34:25
I just saw one on on my phone today. Yeah,

K Katrina Billing 34:29
yeah. I worked on that one. Yeah, that's, that's also Eli Lilly and the Alzheimer's research. It's, it's fascinating. It's wild. What they're able even to test like the knowledge we have about it, but yeah, I worked on that one. Some vaccine trials I've been a part of. Yeah.

E Elle Billing 34:54
So I guess to bring this full circle you said that your, your self care, your artistic outlet is your makeup.

K Katrina Billing 35:02
Yes,

E Elle Billing 35:02
you watch a lot of makeup tutorials. What I have in paint brushes and and paint you have in makeup palettes and makeup brushes.

K Katrina Billing 35:12
Oh yeah,

E Elle Billing 35:13
probably pound for pound for pound, at least dollar for dollar,

K Katrina Billing 35:18
Ohhhhhhh dollar for dollar.

E Elle Billing 35:21
When you were doing the COVID research, you were flying to all these sites all over the country, you were covered 95% PPE.

K Katrina Billing 35:30
Yeah,

E Elle Billing 35:30
your eye makeup was always on point. Like you will always you would post these selfies from these trial sites. And you would you would have like a gown and gloves and your hair was covered. And you had a mask and a face shield and glass and like protective glasses, but behind those protective glasses and that face shield, your eye makeup was amazing.

K Katrina Billing 35:58
THANK youuuuuu

E Elle Billing 35:59
Yeah, and I was like, I really hope that these people at the nursing home really appreciate how much effort she put into looking good for them. Because like, that's a work of art. She's a mermaid under there.

K Katrina Billing 36:13
Yeah, it was the only part of me that was showing, so I had to make sure that it was looking good.

E Elle Billing 36:20
Like 95% PPE 5% eye make up

K Katrina Billing 36:24
at the end of the day. Once like all the PPE came off that's what I should have taken a picture of.

E Elle Billing 36:31
Oh, gross!

K Katrina Billing 36:32
because I have like lines across my forehead because we had to wear like hair nets. So there

, because I have like, lines across my forehead because we had to wear like hair nets. So there was like an elastic thing there. The face mask leaves marks on your nose and kind of I have Cabbage Patch face. So like really round cheeks

E Elle Billing 36:47

Oh you're so cute.

K Katrina Billing 36:50

Okay, sure, Jan, but the mask would leave marks and there just be this one block of pristine makeup on my eyes and everything around it was a dumpster fire.

E Elle Billing 37:04

Okay, so my problem that I ran into during COVID is that we were masked all day. I was teaching all the time. My mask changed my accent.

K Katrina Billing 37:15

No,

E Elle Billing 37:16

yes. Because it changed how I moved my mouth when I taught when I spoke.

K Katrina Billing 37:21

Yeah, yep, I get that.

E Elle Billing 37:24

Yeah, so like I mentioned it in mentioned it in another episode when the topic of my accent came up, is that betwe-- like I have the Fargo accent, and then I moved to Idaho and the Fargo-ness sort of faded. A little like enough that people could tell the difference when I had been home and come back. Right? Home right? Well, I've been back for two years now. so thick it is thick Fargo, but it's thick Fargo with like a touch of like "you lived somewhere else for a while." Plus the fact that I don't move my jaw and lips the same way that I did pre COVID Yeah, I can't. I can't get my mouth around certain words the same. It's just interesting

K Katrina Billing 38:09

I don't know if it changed the way I speak. But I would find myself mid day and like my jaw or

I don't know if it changed the way I spoke. But I would find myself mid day and like my jaw or my head would hurt. And I'm like, Why? Why is going

E Elle Billing 38:20
pulled on your ears?

K Katrina Billing 38:22
No, I was thrusting. Like my jaw forward to kind of like push the mask a little bit forward.

E Elle Billing 38:31
Yep.

K Katrina Billing 38:32
So wasn't so like smooshy on my face parts because I didn't like it touching my face parts.

E Elle Billing 38:39
Oh, cuz it was like an unpleasant sensory experience.

K Katrina Billing 38:43
It was a very unpleasant sensory experience. Weird, right? Never saw that coming.

E Elle Billing 38:50
No, not at all. Hey, Katie.

K Katrina Billing 38:53
Yeah, Elle?

E Elle Billing 38:54
remember when we were little and you would cry every time we had to take a family photo?

K Katrina Billing 38:55
Yeah, Elle?



Katrina Billing 39:02

I mean, they vaguely but there's pictures to prove it.



Elle Billing 39:06

Because it disrupted whatever you were doing. And no one gave you like a five minute countdown to get you ready for it. And you also didn't like bright flashing lights.



Katrina Billing 39:14

Still true. It wasn't a quirk it was a symptom.



Elle Billing 39:17

It wasn't a quirk it was a symptom!! Thank you for being on my podcast. Katie. Katrina sister-boo.



Katrina Billing 39:25

Anytime I had fun, so it's great.



Elle Billing 39:27

Yeah, we'll have to maybe make this like every season I interview someone in my family



Katrina Billing 39:31

that's gonna get wild,



Elle Billing 39:32

especially if I get one of the nieces.



Katrina Billing 39:36

They're so funny. Yeah, they're so smart and they're so observant and they're related to us so there's you know, a little bit of unhinged sprinkled in that



Elle Billing 39:46

they are also probably neuro enic to some degree

they are also probably neuro spicy to some degree.

K Katrina Billing 39:49

It's an absolute joy hearing what they come up with to talk about

E Elle Billing 39:54

yep, I just bought a giant can't like three ginormous, the three biggest canvases I've ever bought. Today because one of those girls thinks that I need to make a giant painting for mom and dad's anniversary, which is this month. Yes, I'm sure I can finish a 30 by 40 Canvas in three weeks.

K Katrina Billing 40:11

Jackson Pollock it just oh yeah, cuz mom loves Jackson Pollock. She does not that was the joke. Oh, oh, that was a good joke. Thank you for joining us on this episode of Hoorf. To view the complete show notes and all the links mentioned in today's episode, or to get a full transcript of the episode, visit [Hoorf podcast.com](https://hoorf.com). That's H O O R F [podcast.com](https://hoorf.com). Before you go, make sure you subscribe to the podcast so you can receive new episodes right when they're released. And if you're enjoying our podcast, I'd love to have you leave us a review and Apple podcasts. Reviews are one of the major ways that Apple ranks their podcasts. So even though it only takes you a few seconds, it really does make a difference for us. Become a patron for \$3 a month you can support the creation of this podcast, pay my editor and join a community of fellow caregivers out here just doing our best. Thank you again for joining me Elle Billing in this episode of Hoorf. Until next time, be excellent to each other.

E Elle Billing 41:37

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K Katrina Billing 42:02

Oh yeah, the lining