

Yonii Bock by Kate Sadoff

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Abstract: In this interview, Yonii Bock, 32, discusses her lifelong membership with Kolot Chayeinu: Voices of Our Lives, which has spanned three generations of her family and persisted through physical distance and the pandemic. Bock discusses being biracial in an all-white family, and being a Jew of color at a predominantly white, Ashkenazi synagogue. She describes her roles as co-chair of the Race Working Group and the Membership Committee, as well as her hopes for the future of Kolot. Bock reflects upon the community and relationships formed through Kolot, and the role Kolot has played in finding her own identity as a person and a mother.

Keywords: Community, PWI, being spiritually fed, JOC, growth, family, motherhood.

This interview has been lightly edited for readability.

KS 0:00

We are recording. It is October 30 2022. I'm Kate Sadoff and I'm in Middlebury, Vermont. I'm interviewing Yonii Bock who is in Windham, Maine. This interview is for the Kolot Chayeinu Oral History Project. Can you start by telling me about yourself and your journey with Kolot?

YB 00:23

Okay, my name is Yonii. Um. I'm from Brooklyn, New York. I've been a member of Kolot— my mom joined when I was four, Um. I've had, like I feel like, I...my...Kolot, it's like it's a weird really talk about Kolot I think for me, because it's like... Kolot is really all I know. It's like a family member. Right? It's uh, um.. I'm 32 and I've never been a member of another shul.¹ I've always been a member of Kolot. Um. No, it's, it's so strange. Like I feel so strange sometimes, like awkward thing because I feel like I have like... Kolot is like that Aunt that I love so much that I want to spend so much time with. But at the same time I get disappointed [laughs] sometimes by my aunt's actions. [laughs] But yeah, I, we I've been a member since I was four, when.. My first memory of Kolot— I was actually talking to my mom about this when I was talking about like doing this— and we I was trying to think of like my first memory. And I remember a specific member, a member, we used to meet in people's houses, right? So I just remember, like, on a Saturday going to this specific person's house, and she had animals, and we were praying, and then there were animals. And I just was like, woah, this is a lot different than my grandma's synagogue [laughing slightly]. And just thinking it was so cool. Um.. Yeah, that was like my first, I forgot the question to be really honest [laughs]. But that was like my first memory of Kolot. And I mean, I think growing up in Kolot, there's like this one life of like growing up in Kolot because I, I am still was a part of Kolot after my mitzvah, like I still was a

¹ *Shul* is the Yiddish word for synagogue.

part of Kolot. And then there's like this whole realm and relationship in my life, my life as an adult at Kolot. So there's like, two, two different...

KS 2:48

So you were there. Obviously, at the beginning, when it was around Rabbi Ellen Lippmann's² dining room table? Can you talk a little bit about the evolution of Kolot starting, you know, from when you were tiny to now?

YB 3:03

Mm hmm. Um, so I think like, so it was around like a kitchen- I don't like remem— so to be clear, like, I was four. So I have like, I have like, specific memories that I remember that are mine. And it could be wrong. So. But like, I don't remember High Holy Days³ or anything like that. I think like my first concrete memory, like, visa vie, like Hebrew school was like, we were one class. It was like one group. And... I just remember when we when we shifted, right, so we became too big to be around- in people's homes. And that's when we went to Gethsemane.⁴ And we used to meet up top, which if anyone's been to Kolot, we met up top at first, I think, yeah. And then Um, I-we used to have Hebrew school in the basement. And you know, we grew at such a rapid rate. But I think like, like, for me, it didn't, I wasn't rushed. Because I was a kid... I feel like Kolot took care of the kids in the sense of like, for example, like the bar and bat mitzvah⁵ groups, like after you were bar and bat mitzvahed, and one of the things that I loved is that we still got together. So there was this, I never can remember her name, but there's this woman that used to meet with us. And we used to meet at like these random places. So it'd be like meet for like dumplings one time and like, we'd meet for like coffee another time or ice cream, or we'd be at someone's house and we'd watch a movie. Like I was really connected with the other kids who were being bar and bat mitzvahed, which is actually like at 32, like, I'm still connected with some of those people who were in that, that that group with me. And it's so interesting that we like I'm thinking about someone in particular, we both have kids, and our kids are around the same age. And so it's been nice to like, we can like reconnect. It's almost like no time has passed. But I think the evolution of Kolot, being a kid, you don't really pay attention to that kind of stuff. But I do like remember, like, the first time we did High Holy Days, and it was um...it was like, in/at a different location than Gethsemane, and I just remember looking around and it being packed. Like it must have been like, in high school, like, before I went to boarding

² Ellen Lippmann is the founding rabbi of Kolot Chayeinu and is now the Rabbi Emerita. Lippmann is also a narrator in the Kolot Chayeinu Oral History Project. Learn more about Ellen Lippmann and the founding of Kolot Chayeinu [here](#).

³ “High Holy Days” or “High Holidays” refer to *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year, and *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. The 10 days in between these holidays are referred to as the “Days of Awe.” Learn more about these holidays [here](#).

⁴ In 1995, Kolot Chayeinu began meeting at Church of Gethsemane, a presbyterian church located on 8th avenue in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

⁵ *Bar* and *bat mitzvah* translated literally to “son or daughter of the commandments.” The term refers to a Jewish coming of age ceremony marking the time when a child becomes a Jewish adult. Ceremonies typically happen around the age of 12 or 13 following years of Torah study and Hebrew school.

school- I went to boarding school [slight laugh]. So like, I remember saying to my mom, I was like, wow, like [whispers] there's a lot of people, [laughing] and my mom was like, yeah, it's why we needed a bigger space. And I was like, you know, I really, I really appreciated that. And then you also get to get to see people like, if you've ever been to a Kolot, High Holy Days, it's like being in a family reunion. Minus the barbecue. Like, it really is like, you go and you're seeing people that you know, I've known, since I was four, and people who I've, you know, newer members, too, it's just really it's such a special, special place and such a special connections to have with other people.

KS 6:23

Do you want to talk about maybe how Kolot changed when you became a mother and what that experience was like bringing your son to Kolot to services?

YB 6:34

Yeah, that's, to me, that's such a funny thing. So like, and I really, it's like, I really have to give credit to my mom. Like my mom was always like, I think her upbringing and her relationship, visa vie to like being Jewish and what that meant and shul and tradition and her way of being spiritually fed. Like when I was a kid, my mom was a single mom, she brought me like, it was just me and my mom, she brought me. And so even when I was in high school, a young, like young adult, she always brought me. So when I had my son, and I moved back to New York, one of the things I looked forward to was taking my son to shul [laughs] and that's exactly, exactly what I did, which is I, my mom would go to Torah study. And me being me, I didn't want to, I didn't want to take the bus to the train. So I would like drive with my mom and would bring the stroller and toys and snacks. And... I would just wait, I would wait for my mom to get done with Torah study, and then I would just wait. And like, for me, like, as an adult, I've, I've really been in tune with myself and I like want to be spiritually fed. So like the music and the prayers and being in the space, like to me that fulfills something inside me that I need. And so to go to shul, and bring my son like, I was just like, I remember one specific, one specific Kolotnik⁶ had a kid, like almost the same age as my son, Oliver. And I remember running into her and she was like, you... do you go to go to shul? Like, and I could tell like, like, it's a foreign concept. And I was like, Oh, girl, yes, I do. Yes, every Saturday come. And so it became like a little group of people who brought their kids. And then I thought it was great. Like, at some point. I think Franny Silverman,⁷ she was like, a staff person, like reached out to me and was like, like, I just want to get some feedback. Like, would it be great to have a spot in the back with like, some activities or some things like for kids to be? And so it was really like, like, like to see Kolot... see something and then evolve so quickly and be so accommodating, was really comforting. And the only thing

⁶ Kolotnik refers to a member of the congregation Kolot Chayeinu.

⁷ Franny Silverman is also a narrator in the Kolot Chayeinu Oral History Project. She became the Director of Youth Education at Kolot in 2013 and the Director of the Learning and Action Kolot in 2016 before leaving Kolot in 2019. You can find Silverman's interview [here](#).

is also, like, I'm 32, right? So when I was a kid, the CLP⁸ from what I can remember was like, very small, so it was like, one teacher, one person, one group. That's how I remember it. Whether it was I don't know. But now it's like a whole big like, whole big thing and so when Oliver there had like a K'tanim⁹ and Torah Tots¹⁰ and I was like, wow, when I was a kid I went to pull up that and like they have a song about the Shabbat feeling and it's like, where do you have the Shabbat feeling?¹¹ And so Oliver and one of his little friends who he's made from from being in Brooklyn, we do like a Zoom, a zoom uh lighting of the Shabbat candles on Friday nights. My mom tries to do it every week. And so the two of them get into it and they really sing this song and it like warms my heart that he will let you know he loves that. He always wants to sing where his Shabbat feeling is.

KS 10:04

So is it? Um, I feel like when we've talked before you've referenced having like cousins. And like, that's there. So is it? Did you? Is that blood family or is that chosen family?

YB 10:16

So I feel so I feel like it's really just¹² so I'm adopted right and so I, one of the interesting things I think about Kolot is that my grandparents, I would say were borderline Orthodox.¹³ They- my grandma worked at a, um, my grandma worked at a Hebrew school as a substitute teacher. My aunt and uncle like, speak Hebrew, went to Hebrew school, keep kosher. Their kids were really like, it was really like an intense— to me— an intense level of Judaism. Whereas my mom was like, I really want to find like a shul that will be like, comforting to my biracial child, me as a white Ashkenazi Jew, and at the same time, can give me what I need. And so um, I, what I understand it to be is that at some point in our, in my life, my grandma, before I was born, had cancer. And when I was in high school, she was re-diagnosed with cancer. And then my grandpa was diagnosed with dementia. And Ellen, Rabbi Ellen? No. I don't remember what she doesn't like to be called, I always just call her Ellen. So we'll call her Ellen. That won't be fancy in this moment. Ellen, we've known her so long, and when my grandpa died, like my grandma, they needed to like a rabbi and mom was, I was like, [whispers] Ellen, Grandma, Ellen. And so my, my grandma was like, okay. And so she like helped us with the Shiva¹⁴ and the funeral and stuff.

⁸ CLP stands for the Children's Learning Program at Kolot Chayeinu.

⁹ *K'tanim* translates to "little ones" in Hebrew. Kolot Chayeinu's early childhood programming offers "Kolot K'tanim" for children pre-K to first grade and their parents. Programming includes child friendly exploration of Judaism. See more about Kolot's early childhood programming [here](#).

¹⁰ Also part of Kolot Chayeinu's early childhood programming, Torah Tots provides a multi-sensory exploration of Shabbat for kids ages 0-4.

¹¹ *Shabbat* translates to "he rested" and signifies the day of rest on the 7th day of the Jewish week. Observing *Shabbat* typically begins with the lighting of candles at Friday night dinner and carries through Saturday. Kolot Chayeinu offers in-person *Shabbat* services every Saturday at 10:30 am, with a bi-monthly after-service nosh. Learn more about *Shabbat* at Kolot [here](#).

¹² Slightly unclear what is said here.

¹³ Orthodox Judaism is a denomination of Judaism defined by strict adherence to rabbinic interpretations of traditional Jewish law. Learn more about the different denominations of Judaism [here](#).

¹⁴ *Shiva* refers to the week of mourning in Judaism following the death of a family member.

And so you know... being the only person of color, Jew of color, in an all white family. I feel like I always my entire life h- have looked for chosen family where I could be comfortable. And so I think what this happened is that especially from Kolot, the relationships, like I don't know how to describe it. Like it's kind of like magic. Like the relationships that form between people are magic and they're- you love heavy, you are part of something that is just so different. So I think, yeah, you know, I, my I, my mom has a lot of connections and a lot of friends, which is interesting, right? So my mom has her own lane of friends and people who she is really connected with, we have people who we are both equally love and connected with and I have my own lane of people now as an adult, and I'm doing all the stuff in Kolot my own lane of people that I love and am connected with. But yeah, I think family like I, I co chair, the person I co-chair the Race Working Group¹⁵ with, for all intents and purposes is my aunt. My son calls her tía and her husband tío and I speak to her on a regular basis like she is... I love her just like I would love anyone in my immediate family.¹⁶

KS 13:57

Wow, that's really beautiful to hear. Do you want to get into talking about the Race Working Group?

YB Sure.

KS I guess do you...

YB Sure, sure.

KS Yeah. Do you want to just talk about what how you became involved with the group and then what led you to become co-chair?

YB 14:14

Okay. So, um [laughs] Race Working Group. I, from what I remember, there was a certain, there was like a specific ummm... specific, uhh High Holy Days where the Race Working Group had offered up something. And I, I must have been living somewhere else at the time. And I was visiting. And I went to the High Holidays and when I got there on the bimah¹⁷ it had a Black Lives Matter¹⁸ sign, which we don't have enough time right now to unpack my feelings about the signs. But I was really upset. Like really upset. And so I think that first day I left. And my mom and I had this long conversation and I was like, Okay, well, I'm gonna come back the next day. And I'm just going to try again. And so that day the Race Working Group had offered like this big drash¹⁹ or something. And I stayed, and I saw it. But I had a ton of questions. So I reached

¹⁵ The Kolot Chayeinu Race Working Group officially began in 2012. Read more about it, as it stands today, [here](#).

¹⁶ *Tía* and *tío* are the Spanish words for “aunt” and “uncle.”

¹⁷ A *bimah* is a raised-platform typically at the front of a synagogue from which the Torah is read and some services are delivered.

¹⁸ “Black Lives Matter” is the namesake of the social justice movement that began in the U.S. in 2013, in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer. The name has since been widely used as a slogan to signify anti-racist values and the eradication of white supremacy. Read more about Black Lives Matter as an organization [here](#).

¹⁹ *Drash* refers to a sermon given on the interpretation of a biblical text.

out to I think, the then co-chair, which happens to be my tía, Lisa²⁰ and say, Hey, like, Could I come? I have questions. She was like, yeah, the meetings at my house come on down, come. So I went, and I, I was intrigued. I had questions, but I was intrigued. And in true Yonii fashion, I moved, and I was, God knows where. And then I came back after I had my son Oliver. And I had a long talk with some people, with my mom, and I was like, you know, what, I'm, I'm gonna be here, I'm, I have a kid. It's almost like having roots. So I'm putting down roots, I want to, I want to be a part of Kolot, but I want to, I want to understand more. Um... Because I felt like I was like, missing, you know, like, you're, you're listening and you hear and you see, but you're like, I feel like I'm missing something. Like, it doesn't make any sense to my lived experience. And so I was like, okay, you know, what, I'm gonna, I'm gonna join. So I went through the process to join and then became a member. And, umm I really got, when I had joined was when just when they were deciding about putting being an anti-racist congregation into the, umm, into the mission statement.²¹ So I joined at a very crucial time, I think, for understanding what it means to be an anti-racist congregation. And what does that mean? And what does that look like and what work we needed to do. And so I became, like, just a member at large as you would say. And I did that for a while. And because of COVID, like, I don't like when I think many people are like this, but I have no concept of time. So I know, like, this is a five year— because my son's going to be five in November—so I know we're talking about four years. So I was I was co-chair, I was on the Membership²² for a while. And then, um, I got something happened to me, which I won't unpack all of it. But something happened to me. And I was like, really thrown back that I came to the realization that Kolot... Growing up in Kolot, I- I didn't have blinders, but like my Kolot life, growing up was so special and so amazing. And so great. But I had blinders on. And there were things that happened that I don't, I don't think I could even know or explain or understand. And I think at a certain point, after this specific incident, I was like, if I want to affect change, and I want to be part of making it better, I have to stand in a leadership position. Because that's the only way I feel like I could affect change. And the other thing is also like, I felt like it was time for Kolot to have like, like a black caucus space. And so that's something that I didn't feel like I could hold up or I didn't feel like I was trained enough to be able to lead. And so I wanted to try to switch places with someone else so that they could do that. And then I could lead the Race Working Group. And so I became the co-chair of the Race Working Group, which I, I have been doing it for a while now. I haven't been fired, which I don't think people get fired. But I've been. I've been doing it now for a while. It's incredibly hard. It's incredibly hard because I spend a lot of I spend in most life, I talk a lot like I'll just talk and talk and talk and you about hair color, you want to talk about makeup, you want to talk about any TV show, basically I could talk, but in this instance, I always think, I always feel like I'm learning. So I spend a lot of time listening. And

²⁰ Lisa Zbar is a long-time congregant of Kolot and serves as the co-chair of the Race Working Group with Bock.

²¹ The mission statement was updated in 2018 to demonstrate Kolot's commitment to anti-racism. The mission currently states "We share a commitment to ending structural racism and becoming an antiracist congregation." Read the full mission statement [here](#).

²² Referring to Kolot Chayeinu's Membership Committee, which is discussed in detail in this interview, starting at 40:47.

this is the first instance, I think in life, where sometimes I hear hard things, and I don't know how to fix them. I don't know how to make them better. But I am listening. And I hear a lot of times how the place that I feel safe, the place that I love, the place that I probably couldn't live life without.. is.. is struggling and is not doing well. So it's tough. It is tough, but I wouldn't trade it. Still gonna do it as long as they'll have me. But it's, it's it's hard

KS 20:46

should -um.. Do you want to talk about the report?²³ And maybe

YB

Oh the report? Did you read the report?

KS I read the report. Maybe the process of getting that grant and then maybe summarize the report a little bit and like your thoughts and feelings on it.

YB 21:09

Ummm.. summarizing the report is hard for me because it's a lot, it was a lot. What I can give you, is that... race working– this before I was co-chair– the Race Working Group got the grant. They hired what I thought were phenomenal, amazing. What do you call them? I'm drawing a blank at what Bari and Tanya are...Consultants.²⁴ They hired amazing consultants who I thought were- the reason why I thought they were amazing and I think it was really important- is that each of them in their own, in their own way had had a connection to Kolot. So they weren't like they-they weren't coming into it not knowing Kolot at all. But they had ,each of them had had some- their pulse on Kolot at some point. And knew about Kolot, were they been to the High Holy Days or been to Shabbat services or something they had been..they knew Kolot. And I have to say like, they did all this stuff, they spoke to people. And umm, I just remember the day we-were got the report back. So I'm dyslexic. I'm very honest about this, as an adult, I'm dyslexic, the percentage that I'll read something is probably like slim. I'll usually say I read it and then I use like an app and it reads it to me. So I was like, in that moment, there was no way I was gonna read this report. But in the– I was reading the room. And I could just tell that it was just disappoint-disappointment, like people were disappointed. And so that's when I skimmed it, and I was disappointed. I mean, you you look at situations, right? You, I don't know how other people do, but you look at situations. And you think you know. And that piece of paper just told us that

²³ The report refers to a written report published in April of 2019 by Organizational Racial Equity consultants, Bari Katz and Tanya Williams. The process began in 2018, when consultants were hired by Kolot after receiving an Open-tent Grant from the United Jewish Appeal-Federation of New York (UJA). The grant gave Kolot 10,000 dollars towards “Creating an AntiRacist Congregation.” The report gave Kolot recommendations on how to move forward with anti-racist work as a congregation, following a 7 month long process of reviewing documents, conducting interviews and surveys with congregants, and conversations with leadership. The consultants met with the Race Working Group, reviewed the 73 responses received from a congregation wide survey, and held affinity-based groups for staff, young people, white people, and people of color.

²⁴ Bari Katz and Tanya Williams are NYC based consultants, each with their own practices committed to social justice. After meeting in 2011 and establishing a connection rooted in shared beliefs, they partnered to work with organizations to disrupt deeply rooted white supremacist patterns and cultures. Read about Katz’s practice, Bari Katz Consulting, [here](#). Read about Williams’ practice, Authentic Coaching and Consulting, [here](#).

what we thought we knew, or as far as we thought we were, was not where we were. And I will tell you that.. it's very interesting, because I think in life, right? I always want to be transparent. I always want to be honest. If it's something that's really hard, I want to tell the truth, because I don't like to sugarcoat. So, we get this report, we got this report and what do you do with that? Right. So [laughs], I laugh because this is just really how it went. I got this in my mind. Because I- we do these annual meetings that people, people, different groups will go to these annual meetings and talk and we knew that we had a time slot at this annual meeting. And so I said to the then co-chair, so usually like the Race Working Group will be like a white person as the co-chair and then like a person of color. They try to do it like that. And so I went to the person of color, the JOC, at that point was a JOC.²⁵ And I said, I want to I want to I want to talk at the the annual meeting. And she was like, Well, what do you want to say? And I remember just saying I want to tell the truth.

YB 24:50

I just want to tell the truth. I get emotional because you know I don't- It's hard to want to tell the truth in a place that you love so much. Because I never want to hurt anybody.

YB 25:07

So, I with someone else on the Race Working Group decided that we were going to speak at the annual meaning, that we were going to make it clear that we weren't going to take any questions. And we were going to give like, a little soundbite of what the report back- the report looked like. But we were going to give some real, raw, truthful examples of real racism that happens at Kolot. Now, if you're going to understand like....

YB 25:55

Most people use examples that are like 10 years old. 20, like 20 years old, like the Shamas²⁶ who was like, it's always about the Shamas. If you ask anybody, it's about the Shamas, but like to give real examples. So I remember like, practicing and reading, reading it out loud and, and gearing up to do this and talking with Bari and Tanya, and them like, not really sure if we should do this. And I remember the day of like, I'm gonna do this. I was so nervous. I brought my kid to the meeting. I was like, He's cute. Like, let me just bring him like, it's gonna be okay. And I remember like, being just so proud of myself, that I stood there and I, um, I just told the truth. And I feel like that was like the first step. And like me, me realizing in my brain that like, I, I wanted to be the co-chair, like, I wanted to shift the narrative. I wanted to just be start just leaning on... this truth of like, yes, this happens at Kolot. Yes, we need to do better. But we're all learning. I'm learning. You're learning. We're all learning. And it is, it was, it's tough.

²⁵ JOC stands for Jew of color.

²⁶ *Shamas*, also spelled *shammash*, refers to a person in a secretarial or administrative position at a synagogue. A *shamas* at Kolot facilitates greeting members at services and signing them in to aid in creating a community feel. Read more about the Shamas at Kolot [here](#).

KS 27:42

Thank you for sharing that. Do you feel like when you became a mother, it changed your relationship to Kolot, or maybe pushed you further into your role?

YB It's interesting, I think when I became a mom, and I think when anybody becomes a mom, it's not about you anymore. So I looked at, I look at Oliver. And I look at, like I and I, there's a very specific example. So like, I look at Oliver, and he has a, I'm not gonna say her name, but there's another little girl. And I think I told you like, there's, there's a group of kids all around Oliver's age, and they're all for the most part, I think they all identify at least, at least three or four identify as like JOC or POC families, biracial families. And I, when I became a mother, and then I joined the Race Working Group, and I just started realizing like, like it's not about me anymore. I don't want the bad feelings and the things that are happening to me to happen to them collectively. And so I started to pick up on more things, and I started to be more upset and more driven. And even in general, like more, more conscientious, conscientious of the fact that I just, I wanna, I want I want this situation in general to be better.

KS 29:12

What do you hope for the Kolot that your son is gonna grow into? Like, do you have sort of, you know, do you have an ideal or where you want to see it down the line in like 10 years.

YB 29:29

I hope that that Kolot ... can hold on to the authenticity and the genuineness about being around a kitchen table, as you get larger. I think it's maybe an unpopular opinion. But I think Kolot has lost some of that camaraderie and genuineness that was going on around the kitchen table. And listen, and I get it, you have to raise money, I, you have to— people need to get paid. Umm, I mean, people get titles they become, they have like, these l-labels. And I get it. But I think that somewhere along the line, it's got lost, something's got lost.

KS 30:42

Do you think people like do you talk to your mom about this ever? Do you think people have a similar consensus about that?

YB 30:51

So interesting. My mother. My mom— ayayay... Um... I think that... my mom closed the walls and isn't as open as she was 10 years ago. Like, yeah, she's friendly. Fun. I'm the funny one. But yeah, she's like, friendly. And she's, you know, she's a Shabbat regular. But I think that my mom... I don't know how to say this without feeling like, I mean, I think at some point, my mom has just really been like throwing up the towel and been like, this is just how it is. And I can either take it or I can, I can go. But like, I think my mom has a routine, right? So my mom goes

to Shabbat ser- she goes to at least Torah study every single week.²⁷ And that's for years, like years, she goes every single week. And so like, occasionally, like something will come up and she'll be interested. I will say, I don't know if you know about the program that they ca- that Kolot has called WAG. It's like the white, anti-racist, affinity group, something like that, like WAG. And like it is it was a subgroup of the Race Working Group. So it's only for white people. And it's really to unpack, like, racism around people where you can actually... I think it's a great group. But you really can ask the question, I never did it to be clear, but from what I understand, like to really ask the questions in a safe space, and not to tokenize JOCs or POCs, but to be able to unpack racism and that stuff. It's a really great program. And it's been on hiatus now for a little bit. And like, I asked my mom to do it. And the reason why I asked my mom to do it, is I wanted her to sit on this I wanted... I always feel like my mom and I sit on opposite sides of the street. And I wanted her to be on the same side of the street as me and kind of understand some of the things that I was going through that she just doesn't understand. And I think it was a good experience for her. At the same time, I think...to answer your question that you asked me, I think my mom and other people who have been Kolot for a very long time... miss it the way it used to be. But I mean, and it's so sad, because I don't mean to be negative, but I think it's just it's it's such an unique, rare, rare place. Like there's nothing like, name a place like Kolot. I will be here all day in silence because you can't name a place like that. Can't name a place like that.

KS 34:31

Do you think that having your mom do the WAG group, did that change your relationship at all? Or like how has kind of Kolot like bred, like, the relationship between you and your mom? I guess

YB 34:48

You know, let's just be honest. You know, my mom and I, it's like oil and water. It's never gonna mix. Never gonna mix. And we just are different people. But I think, can I feel emotional? I think in my entire life, the only place that was like safe ground was like Kolot. Like in high school, I got kicked out of my house. And I was homeless. I lived in a homeless shelter. I..II was trying to find my way, I was very difficult as a teenager. And yeah, like I would that that was like where I could go. Like, if I wanted to go to Shabbat services. I could go yeah, we're, it's difficult. It's difficult. The other thing is like I do, I do like a zillion, like, I do a good handful of Kolot stuff. My mom's not interested in that kind of stuff. I mean, she does. She does do stuff like she does. She does stuff like Torah study. They have a group, which I call it The Golden Girls. It's not the Golden Girls, but it to me you ever seen that show the Golden Girls? Okay, well, it's a bunch of old, older Kolotniks, like, and when I mean older, I don't mean age. So please don't come at me. But like, you know, like, people have been like, older ladies. And they hang out.

²⁷ Kolot Chayeinu offers Torah study every Saturday at 9am in person or online. Each week, the *parsha* is read, which is the Torah portion designated for that specific week, as the Torah is read in accordance with the Jewish year. Read more about Torah study at Kolot [here](#).

And it's, I want to go, now I can't go, but to go and be a part of that group. And I think I don't know, I remember when my mom said to me that she... I think like for New Year's resolution was gonna go to Torah study, every Saturday. This was like, maybe 15 years ago. And I chuckled and I was like, No you're not. My mom worked a lot, like, no you're not, you're not gonna do that. And my mom's been going every single Saturday, and she carries her book. And she's really, and like, I've gotten a couple times. And I thought it was like so amazing. I actually a couple times when Oliver was a newborn. And like, Oliver was sick as a kid, like as a baby. And so I couldn't really go very many places, and I couldn't have people touch him. So for a while, she wouldn't let me go with her to shul because she didn't want me to endanger Oliver. And then when I could go, I could go but I had to make sure nobody, nobody was allowed to touch him. And so because he got RSV,²⁸ it's like a common cold for for babies. But because they're under four months, they can't fight it. So like he had to get a spinal tap and like, we spent Christmas in the hospital. It was like really bad. So like, my mom was super protective, as am I, but like she was like, I know you want to go but you just can't. And so when we first started going back I, I went to Torah study, and we would try to find common areas and I think with Kolot stuff, especially when I joined the Race Working Group, I couldn't talk to her about things. But I'd be upset. And she was like really supportive of the fact that I was trying to help with change and I wanted to do it. But we're different. We are very different. And I'm happy to say that at 32 today, our relationship is probably the best it's ever been. And, um, we just take it day by day. But I think we both agree that like, one of the things that I appreciate about my mom about when I look back about, like my childhood and growing up, one that she brought me to Kolot, or she found Kolot. And that, like she encouraged me. And the relationships, she could encourage the relationships. And she encouraged me to go, like it was just known. We went every Saturday that was like, we went, every Saturday, that was what we did....And if I lived in Brooklyn, I'd make Oliver go every Saturday, just to be clear.

KS 39:22

Yeah. Like, I don't know, does it feel weird to be away from Kolot like right now? I know, you moved sort of recently.

YB 39:30

Um, so I've been here since January. I don't really feel very far, because it's now in this new realm of Zoom. Connected. But like, Oliver was going to like, K'tanim. And he was doing his "Shabbat Feeling" and doing all that stuff. And, you know, I, you know, it's it's a different world out here. And I'm not interested in joining another shul. There is another shul. Do I want to join it? No, I don't. So it's interesting. I'm still processing it, you know, we still we, again, in 2022 with this with the Zoom and stuff like that, it makes it nice, because we can do stuff this way.

²⁸ RSV stands for Respiratory Syncytial Virus.

Whereas before when I was a kid, we didn't have this. This is not what we did. So it changed it. Is it the same? No. Does it fulfill when I need? Not at all, but it's just how it is right now.

KS 40:34

Um, let's shift gears a little. I'm curious about your role now more focused on the Membership Committee.²⁹ How did you....

YB I love talking about Membership Committee.

KS Yeah. How did you get there? What do you do for the Membership Committee?

YB 40:47

Okay, cool. So the Membership Committee. I like to call the Sh'bah³⁰ squad. The Sh'bah squad... So what had happened was, is Oliver was a baby. And I got my mom... my mom was like, this woman, Deborah, from the Membership Committee wants to see if you want to join, 'would you would you talk to her?' I was like, Yeah, and so my mom connected me. And this is a prime example at Kolot, where like, I'm a face person. So if I've seen your face once, I will remember your face till the day I die. Will I remember your name? Not at all. So that being said, I was like, I I connected with this woman, I'm gonna go to a meeting, I go to the meeting. She's there. And I'm like, Oh, I know this lady. I know her. Like I know her. So I joined the Membership Committee. And I was just like, again, a membership, a member at large. And then, um, I just I want to say they were looking for a co chair. And I'm gonna be honest, in my mind, I was like, I'm the only person— JOC on this committee. I want to be the co-chair, because I like to have, I like to have fun. Now, that being said, Sherry, I love her so much. I think I always have this joke that one day, she's just gonna be like, you know, you know what, thank you so much. [laughing] but we don't need your help anymore. But I have to say it's a great space for me because one of the things I love about Kolot is that they one, know how to throw a great party and two, the connecting with other people. And it... Yes, Kolot is a shul. Yes, we are here to pray and be spiritually fed. We are also here to eat food. We are also here to hang out, we are also here to get to know each other, and we are social, social, social people. And so, what happened was I joined the committee. I then became the co-chair. And then I started having these ideas. Give you an example. I started noticing at Shabbat services before COVID, that people were knitting and crocheting. And I was like [laughing]. But as you can see my blanket my grandma made this I did not make this be clear. I was like, oh my gosh, this is just— how many people you think, how many people you think like knit, maybe like two or three. So I ran it to the Membership Committee and I was like, Am I crazy? Like please just I always say, if— I'm tell me I'm crazy, but I want to do a knitting circle. And I want the knitting circle to be like most groups, you have to be a member. I was like, membership. Think about this, you have a knitting circle. If you're a member, bring a— bring a friend, whoever can come. And it's a great way to hang out with people, get to know them. And then they have membership questions, stuff like that. And the knitting

²⁹ The Membership Committee at Kolot is a committee dedicated to gaining membership and making new members feel a part of the long-standing Kolot community.

³⁰ *Sh'bah* means "to come" in Hebrew.

circle just at that point blew up. And it was like a group of people and they came, and there was yarn— did I ever knit anything? No, ma'am, I did not. But I was there. [laughs] And even during COVID, we met on Zoom after Shabbat services for two hours, and literally just hung out. And people knitted and talked and it was just, it was so much fun. The other thing that we start with, we did. So there's there's three things th- the knitting circle, then there was the something called the... um Sh'bahs, which is what I call the Sh'bah Squad, which is basically like it's an algorithm thing, where people ask.. ask questions, and then they get matched, and it was a dinner. So like, people would go for Havdalah dinner at someone's house. And so I signed up. And so cuz I signed up, I signed my mom and Oliver up, and we went to someone's house. And there were people there like I always, I always like know lot of people at Kolot and whatever. But I was like, I want to do this, I want to get matched just like everyone else. And I've met people that I never met before, who I've seen since then, who I felt connected to because we had this experience. And so we did it, we even, we even did it like during COVID. We did a different version of it. But it really connected people- people together. So we did, we've we've done the, which these other ideas weren't my ideas, but I was part of the group. The knitting circle was mine. And then the last thing that we've done that I feel like that's been crazy is someone had the idea of doing a prospective members brunch, where like, during High Holy Days, we really marketed and put it out there. And then it happened to the Sukkah.³¹ And people come and they get to meet the Rabbi, they get to meet the cantor. I wasn't at the last one because I'm in Maine, but I'm there talking about membership. And you know, we bring different groups and we get to talk and last year, I think a lot of the people went to the prospective members went to the new members brunch, because we do a new members brunch. So it was really great to see like the I think that what I love about the Membership Committee is it's a group of people who are there because they genuinely love Kolot. And they really want to be part of planning and making programming to bring people together. And to me, that's what I love about Kolot. So the Membership Committee, I'll be on that probably for the rest of my life, or as long as they'll have me, until they're like, no thanks. But I love— the Membership Committee is really an awesome group.

KS 47:02

That's awesome. Um, this is another one that's kind of, you know, random, but I'm really curious to know about when we were talking on the phone, you were referencing your younger self as Molly Rae and you now go by Yonii, so I'm curious about that shift.

YB 47:25

Okay, the shift. Okay. So I think, I think that a lot of people have come out or come out— we're still in like, COVID life, right. I think that a lot of people, besides from gaining weight during

³¹ A *sukkah* is a structure Jews build to commune in during the *Sukkot*. The *Sukkot* is a 7 day celebration in honor of the time Israelites spent in the wild after being freed from Egypt. Kolot most recently constructed a *sukkah* in Prospect Park.

quarantine, a lot of people h-have had identity crises. I had a big identity crisis. So I went into quarantine. Which I don't think I went I think it was like more or less like, I moved to Brooklyn to live with my mom. I had Oliver. But when quarantine hit I was nannying. So I had two nanny jobs. Yes, both my nanny jobs were Kolot. [laughs] Kolot. But I had two nanny jobs with actually at that point one was Kolotnik and the other one was Kolot-Kolotnik adjacent. But I was nannying, and Oliver was in daycare and um, I.. I remember, like the last week, I was working like I had the kid I nanny for and he was at my house. And then I remember my mom's, My mom worked in, works in television. So she was like, um, she was gonna go stay somewhere else. But then after like a week, she realized that, like, she couldn't cross contaminate. So she couldn't go from that household back here. Cuz, we live in a two bedroom, she can't work from home, so she was going to somewhere else, and then would come home on the weekends. So I just remember my mom being like, Oh, I don't know how we're going to do this. And I was like, Huh. And then I remember saying that, that Saturday, I'm gonna go to my boyfriend's house. And my mom said, No. And my mom never came home. She didn't sh- my mom left. She never came back for like, a year and a half. And so I was not, I suffer from mental health stuff. So I wasn't- I need to be prepared, like, I need to prepare mentally for anything. Period. To leave the house, I gotta be prepared. Like, if you asked me right, I would need to prepare myself, I couldn't do it. Like, I don't deal with change very well. So I, my life is very structured. And so, I know this as an adult, and I prepare accordingly. But I was not prepared for that. And so what ended up happening was, I was stuck in my childhood home, with my son, and no one else. I didn't see anybody for about 16 weeks.

YB 50:30

So in the process of that, I.... started online streaming on a social media platform. It's like, um, it's like a.. one of those platforms where like, not like, where you play video games, but it's like very similar. Where basically, there's a lot of rules like you, like kind of like this, like, you could like talk to people, you talk to people all over the world, but it's like, very strict, like what you can and can't do. So I started doing that. And I gained a like, really big following. And at first, I used my own name. And then... um they were like, you probably shouldn't use your own name. Because Molly Rae, people can find that very easily. And so I was like, okay, so I switched my name to something else. And I don't know, I just like, I started doing like these- this podcast with my friend. And we started getting into like, pronouns and being like, non-binary. And I was like, well, like, I've always felt like I was different because I was adopted, but then like, understanding like, like the term non non-binary, and it just kind of connected and kind of really made sense. And I was like, well, maybe I'm just non-binary. And that's like, maybe that just makes sense. So I was like, fluctuating with that for a little bit. And then I did this like podcast, a podcast with my friend about sexuality, and what that like. Like the difference between like, like, straight or bi, pan, gay and we were also talking about like, like, female anatomy, and one of the things that I

got out of it is like the term yoni,³² and it being just like a such a respectful term. And so I started like incorporating this podcast into my stream. And I became the yoni girl. And so I just there's something about yoni that just like connected for me. And so I just, I was like, okay, cool. So I'm gonna like, I'm gonna I'm gonna change my tagname to Yonii. So I changed my target name to Yonii. And then it just kind of like, I was like nannying kids at my house at that point. I was, I was like, I'm super resourceful. I had like a daycare center at my house, because I was like, if I'm gonna be stuck here with my kid, there's got to be other parents who are trying to work that want to be in a pod with me. So I had, I had Oliver and like two other kids and I hired my cleaning lady's niece and I had her at my house and, umm I just.. Yonii just stuck. And then what happened was, I realized that like I, my name is Yoni and like I prefer– Molly Rae it kind of irks me– but and that I am still, to this day trying to fluctuate like my pronouns. But it was really interesting so like, I went to the Race Working Group first and I was like, so here's the thing, right? So like I moved out to Maine, my roommate who I've known for 12 years, she knows my my mom, my full name everything, but I explained to her and so she was like, that's fine. I'll call you Yonii. But everyone knows out here that my name is like they know my name used to be Molly, it is now Yonii, and my job, school they call me Yonii. And then I went to the Race Working Group, and I was like, I want to introduce myself. So I introduced myself. And my pronouns as she and they, and I t– and then once I did that there, I told my mom. Now my mom had no idea. She knew that my tag name— because she had seen me stream, like I had done a couple of streams with her, which was always we do like cooking streams— that they call me Yonii. And so when I told her she was like, Okay, well, what do you prefer to be called? And I was like, Yonii. Now she struggles with it, and we're working on it. But that's just how it just kind of stuck. And then I changed my Facebook and now it's just Yonii. And it's interesting because I sent out an email to all of Kolot. So hey, so this is this is actually a great example. So one of the things that I love about Kolot is like my Facebook, I have like old member, old members that I've known since I was four, newer members on my Instagram. And so I changed my name on Facebook, and my mom was like, my mom called me and she was like, so I just want to let you know that like I'm getting a lot of messages and people reaching out about this Yonii thing. I was like mmhmm, okay. Okay And she was like, Whoa, yeah, people are like, do you even know what Yonii means? Does she know what Yonii means? And I'm like, Mom, so I know that Yoni means vagina. Yes, I do mom. But what you could do is just say to them well, why don't you call Yoni? Her number's the same. So my mom sure as heck did, and I sure as heck got phone calls. But it that is like, for me, it was just like, I'm comfortable with who I am. I'm comfortable with my sexuality, and I'm comfortable with who I am today. So I just, yeah, you only just that. Will my family call me that? Nope. But we're, we're working on it.

KS 56:33

Do you remember what it felt like... in the moment to introduce yourself? Again, at Kolot?.

³² Originating from the Sanskrit term meaning “source,” “origin,” or “womb.” In Hinduism, yoni is the symbol for the goddess Shakti, the feminine generative power. Today the term denotes female genitalia. In Hebrew, *yoni* means “God’s gift.” Read more about the etymology of yoni [here](#).

YB 56:44

As Yonii?

KS Yeah.

YB So it's very interesting. I sent out an email. Oh, oh, okay, here we go. So I don't know- do you know the story about Brittney Greer-Gree-Griner?³³ Okay, so I'll give you a little side story. She's a WNBA player. She is black. And she got arrested. She, you know, I don't know if you know this, but WNBA players —[interviewer interjection]— usually on the offseasons play overseas. Yeah. [interviewer interjects] Okay. They don't make as much as Kobe³⁴ was making. So she, I followed her career. I look up to her. I love her so much like, you have no idea. Well, she got arrested in Russia for having weed. She was sentenced to nine years in prison. She's still there. And I was, I was really upset. And so as the co-chair of the Race Working Group, and a member of Kolot, I wanted to, I wanted to to say something to the community. Because occasionally right so like with like Trayvon Martin³⁵ with— oh my god what's the other guys name— I think that the guy that bought Lucy's at the store and got suffocated. Like all these events that happen. I always think it's really great that we reach out to the community because we don't, we have no idea where people are, or what triggers or what happens for people when these things happen. So with a Brittney Griner, I was like, really upset. And so I, we were meeting and I said I want to send something out. So another one of our members was like, well, she writes for like newspapers and, and magazines and stuff. And she was like, Well, I'm writing something for a blog for a blog online. When I'm done. Why don't I send it to you? And then you can send it out to the whole Listserv. And you can add to it whatever you want to.

YB 58:43

I said, Okay, so I had been like, r- rattling my brain on how do I announce that this is going to be to Kolot? Like, I'm not going to just send an email and just say, hey. No, no, no. So I decided that with this email, I was going to add it at the bottom. Now, I was shocked because the Kolot Listserv is probably— it reminds me of like a telenovela. Like it really is like [laughs] just really bad. But it's like really funny, because like, there are rules, but no one seems to want to follow the rules. So I was like, let me just send this and I'm gonna do it. So I wrote this whole thing. And I signed it, Yonii, she/they, or may have signed it, Yonii they/ them. And so I got like a bunch of emails, like, unpacking the racist portion of the email, and I call it mansplaining, mansplaining to me, the laws and Biden. I got a couple of those. I was like, good thing I'm dyslexic. And I just took my ear pod out. And then I did- also got a couple of emails from people that I knew that were like, who were non- binary, and were, like, good for you. Like, what, like,

³³ In March of 2022, Brittany Griner was sentenced to 9 years in prison for bringing cannabis oil into Russia. Griner has been in jail for 9 months and was recently moved to a penal colony in Moscow after a Russian court rejected her appeal. The U.S. is negotiating her release. Read the latest about Griner's case [here](#).

³⁴ Kobe Bryant was one of the best basketball players in the NBA.

³⁵ In 2012, 17 year old Trayvon Martin was followed, shot, and killed by a neighborhood watchman in Florida. The acquittal of Martin's murderer catalyzed the Black Lives Matter movement. Read more about Trayvon Martin's murder [here](#).

if you need anything, I'm here. And it was genuinely like a great reaction. And I think I think especially with my Race Working Group, community, like, they make a point to repeat my name in meetings and scenarios so that other people repeat, repeat it correctly. So it's like having like, almost like a big brother, big sister kind of situation where I feel just supported.

KS 1:00:38

Yeah, do you feel like Kolot held you through your kind of like, COVID and through your existential crisis?

YB Um, I— this is interesting. So. So. One of the things... I—I—I'm gonna cry no, I knew I was gonna cry at one point. But I made it this far. I think one of the things that I have to say is that Kolotniks show up and stand out. Like, I just decided I wanted to go back to school and get my esthetician's license. And I needed money to... umm... When I moved out here, right, when I moved out here, I came with everything I owned, which was really mostly Oliver's stuff. But I didn't really have, like, my friend gave me stuff, but I didn't have anything. And my I got, like, I would say, like, almost \$700 in Walmart gift cards to like, be able to get stuff and even when, like, just now like, I was like trying to figure out how to make this school thing happen. And I happened to be on the phone with a Kolotnik, and I was just processing. And she was like, no need to process. I'll pay for it. And I was like, what? I was like, that's not what I'm asking you. And she was like, No, y- like, you're, despite everything you've been through, you're just trying to, to land, and I want to help you. And I was like, I was like sobbing and I was like there's no way but I think even like, like give me loot, like during when I had COVID, like people brought me food and I couldn't, I had really bad I have really bad sciatica. And so the COVID flared up the sciatica so I was alone with my son, but I couldn't walk, at all. So it was just it was just it was so bad. And so it was just really nice. But I think, that's one of the things that I love about Kolot, is that no matter what it is, no matter if you just need to talk to somebody, no matter if you need help, no matter if someone else needs help. It's like a network of people who are willing and able and wanting to love and help you and be there for you. And vice versa. Like vice versa, like I, there have been situations where I like even from out here I've gotten calls and it's like so and so just needs some help, but I'm like, You know what I know so and so and let me connect you or... I really just, I really appreciate that. And I will also say back to like the Membership Committee. That's one of the things I love about the Membership Committee is so everyone that joins like, they get a, they get like a welcome packet and all that stuff. But like, after like, I think it's like a certain amount of months, you get an email and like, a member of the Membership Committee is CC'ed on that to connect you with somebody. So that if you're looking for something in Kolot, or if you need to be connected with people, like you know who to go to. And it's that connecting, it's that that sa- to me, that replaces that Saturday morning Shabbat service breakfast that we used to do all the time that now COVID is changes. It's horrible. It really, it's hard, but it's just it's horrible that COVID i'm just like is still such a thing.

KS 1:04:45

Thanks for sharing that. That's really beautiful to hear. I guess I'm thinking about the way that you talk about Kolot and it being kind of, you know, the most important thing to you. And also, you know, seeing that it needs change and that it needs to change. How do you feel like you kind of emotionally or personally navigate like these two things like that you both love Kolot so much, but also want it to change? Like what does that feel like?

YB 1:05:24

It is [long pause] I never I think— and I think I said this with the blinders— I never understood... where Kolot falls short, or where it struggles until I was in the seat. So there've been several situations where I've been like... it feels like I got hit by a Mack truck. And I [long pause] the Race Working Group has been around for seven years, maybe 10 years, long time... And long, long story short... I was in a situation where essentially, I was just asked to put my color aside and do the job that I was asked to do. That's what I took. That's what I heard. And I remember like hanging up from the Zoom call. And I have this thing where like when I'm really angry, I just, shout out to anger management, I just sob like, it's just like a sob thing. And so I remember just sitting there and I just was crying. And I remember like I was like okay, okay, okay, what what are you crying about? And I- it was like, the first moment that I realized that like... Kolot didn't feel like safe. And so what, already 2-I'm 30- 26 years I've been a member and it's ...not safe? That's like, not something that I ever thought I would....

So on the one hand you have a place that you love, a place that you do, I would do anything for, anything whatsoever, that I would give. I mean, essentially, I have worked a full time job for Kolot. At one point, I was literally on calls, multiple calls a day, for months on end— full time job. But it was my... I wasn't getting paid for my time, but I did it because I wanted to make it better. And then you have this feeling of like I got the wind knocked out of me. So it's a hard concept to love something so much. But then at the same time, you're like, it's not, it isn't where it needs to be. And I, one of the things that we were talking about before, is, you know, when we got that Bari and Tanya report back, right. And we as the Race Working Group, we're like, what do we do with this? What do we do? So we we have the animal meeting, I speak with Sierra, and it's like, we do this big—, you know, this big thing? And then where do you go from there? Because now people are like, Okay, we want to hear this report back. And so I remember, like, we were designating who was going to do the, who was going to do the, um the planning for the community. And I spearheaded it. And I was like, okay, like, Bari, and Tanya should come to Kolot, they're the ones who did the report. People will feel like they can speak directly to Bari and Tanya. And we did this, I plan, this whole thing was like me and them and we plan this whole thing. And the day, we do the report back, Right? We start going around the room. And we start talking. And people are talking about their experiences and stuff like that. And I remember, Bari, like, tapping me on the shoulder. And she was like, you know, like, should we like, like, we have like a timeframe like, should we like move this? And I said, I think we just got to let it go. Because people were just unpacking their feelings and emotions. Like it was the first time since

the Race Working Group had started, that people no matter what race could openly talk amongst one another and say whatever they were feeling. And I was blown away. And so I was sitting there and I was like, do I say something? Do I not say something? And so I remember taking the microphone, of course, start crying. And I'm like, I don't... and all I remember saying was, I don't think you understand that sometimes I don't feel safe to be in certain spaces. And I remember looking up and I remember people saw— one person in particular it was like.... I was like, Oh, okay. And that meeting kind of spearheaded again, this change of like the board and like, like, how do we get involved and like, I remember leaving that and like we had, we had brought a sign up for WAG. And it was full, like almost everybody had signed up to do WAG that day, including my mom. And so, yeah, right. So it isn't perfect. And there's ways to go, but then you and it can feel like shit. But then you look and you have this, what comes out of it. So I have this hor- these horrible times and people feeling so uncomfortable. But then look, we gave an offering. There's WAG and ev- so it was full. So I have this conversation with the co-chair of the Race Working Group all the time, and I have faith and I have hope that in the future... we're gonna get better. That doesn't erase what's happened already. But it does mean that we can continue to try to do our very best.

KS 1:13:49

Wow I feel like we have a ton of content, thank you. Is there anything do you feel like this is a good place to close? Is there anything else you want to say that you didn't mention or...

YB 1:14:07

Um... No.. I think that [long pause] I think.... you know, I try to avoid the topic but I will say that I feel like I don't like to talk about Ellen Lippmann because it makes me really sad. Umm, But I think that she really is extraordinary. And she really... she really had this idea that kind of just— I mean without her wherever we all be? Somewhere else probably. And wouldn't be as happy but you know like I I think that she really umm, she really... I'll forever be grateful to Ellen Lippmann for creating Kolot. And I am so appreciative that she... for all the things that she's done for me and my family, for all the things she's done for me.

Yeah, Ellen, that's a tough one for me but yeah, I think... Kolot... I wouldn't trade Kolot. Like I can't imagine being anywhere else. And there's so many aspects of Kolot that I love.

But um, I in my Kolot life I'm always reminded that we have so much more growing to do. And I just wish that people... that everyone could know that Kolot has just so much more growing to do. I feel just as tired right now as I do when I go to Race Working Group meeting [laughs].

KS 1:17:13

Yes, you've done a ton of sharing. Well, thank you I'm gonna stop the recording and then we can say bye off the record. Thank you so much. Yonii. This was great.

YB Of course. Okay.