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MBS ([00:00](#)):

We all have labels. I mean, I can tick off some pretty mainstream ones for me. I'm white. I'm male. I'm cis. I'm straight. And I can add some others that are a little less common. I'm an author. I'm a Rhodes Scholar. I'm child-free. I'm a person with a speech impediment. Some labels are given to us and some labels we give ourselves. But it's how you think about those labels, and perhaps even more importantly, how you word them that can really make the difference.

MBS ([00:34](#)):

Welcome to 2 Pages with MBS, the podcast where brilliant people read two pages from a favorite book, a book that's moved them, a book that's shaped them. Now, Christa Couture is brilliant. And by her own admission, she is a woman with many labels.



Christa ([00:54](#)):

I am a writer, musician, broadcaster, currently based in Toronto, Canada. I am also queer. I'm indigenous. I'm mixed Korean-Scandinavian. I'm disabled and I'm a mom.

MBS ([01:08](#)):

Oh. So, that's interesting. Christa calls herself disabled. And I've been thinking I should be calling people a person with a disability. I mean, have I got that wrong?

Christa ([01:19](#)):

I say disabled person, which is identity first language. And it's important to me for a few reasons. One, is that it's not a bad word. Disabled is not a bad word. I don't need it to be this kind of afterthought that's a bit hush-hush. It's also that it's such a, I mean, I acquired my disability. My left leg was amputated above the knee and that surgery was when I was 13. It was the cure for the bone cancer I had at the time. But that has been, I mean, I'll be 43 of this year, so 30 years in this disabled body and it's such a integral part of who I am I can't separate it.

Christa ([02:01](#)):

And these other parts of my identity. I'm not a person with Cree-ness. I'm not a person with motherhood. I am a mom. I am queer. I am Cree. I am a cis woman. I don't have cis gender-ness in my back pocket somewhere. And so for me, that's a part of it.

Christa ([02:21](#)):

I also don't think we should have to reiterate that a person is a person, but I think that people with disabilities often do have to assert their humanity. And I think sometimes that's where a person first language comes from. And I know that I have the privilege of my disability, where first of all, I can hide it. I can pass for non-disabled. I mean, if I put on pants and stand very still. But some people,



a lot of people can't. And there are people with more severe disabilities who are treated terribly and we need to be reminding the world that they're a person. And so I have the privilege where I'm not faced with that in a regular way, but I also think the word disabled, like to be a disabled person, can help us identify what is disabling.

Christa ([03:08](#)):

There's the idea of the social versus medical model of disability. And in the social model, what's disabling are the attitudes around us, are the structures and the systems around us. And so me here with one leg, I'm disabled by a restaurant with stairs, by the TTC here in Toronto where only like two of the stops have elevators and half the time they're aren't working or whatever. I'm disabled by those things and so it can help put the onus of disability on the issues of equity versus me, the individual, who has this thing and it's my problem that no one else has to deal with when actually I feel like we should all, as a society, be making room and accommodations for difference.

MBS ([03:50](#)):

I think this is quite brilliant. And I hadn't thought of it like this before. A disabled person is disabled by how society fails them. Now, Christa has dealt with loss and more than just to her leg. One of the labels that she mentioned was being a mother and there's a reason why her memoir is called *How To Lose Everything*.

Christa ([04:12](#)):

I talk in my book about the decision to try and have my daughter who was my third child. I have two sons that both died. My son, Emmet, died during labor effectively, I mean, officially the day after he was born and my son Ford who died when he was 14 months old. And my book, it's called *How To Lose Everything*, and each chapter focuses on a different loss, but really my sons are everything. They are the biggest, the most still present absence if we can call it that. And so the decision to even try to have another child, which is first



conceiving, carrying to term, having a live birth, there's a lot of hurdles before you have a baby.

Christa ([05:05](#)):

And it was a decision that I sat with for many years. Yes, I want to try. No, I don't want to. Yes, I can be open to another loss. No, I absolutely can't. My life will feel empty without a child. No, there's all these other things that are fulfilling. And there was a lot of processing for a long time.

MBS ([05:25](#)):

Amazing, yeah.

Christa ([05:27](#)):

And I was waiting for a moment of clarity and then I was like, "Well, maybe it's just not going to come." And then I got a royalty check in the mail. What would that be? [inaudible 00:05:41], right-

MBS ([05:41](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([05:42](#)):

... for a song of mine that had unbeknownst to me done really well on some satellite radio station. And the minute that I opened this envelope and got this check, in US dollars, which as a Canadian is always like-

MBS ([05:55](#)):

Exactly. So exciting. It's like [crosstalk 00:05:57] 25% immediately.

Christa ([05:58](#)):

Amazing. In that moment, the first thing I thought of was like, "I'm going to have a baby."



MBS ([06:03](#)):

Oh.

Christa ([06:04](#)):

And I realized after I was like, "Oh wow. Was I just waiting for it to feel like I could afford it? Like, is that what's holding, because if that's it, then yes, I'm going to have a baby. I'll figure the money thing out."

MBS ([06:15](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Christa ([06:17](#)):

But there was something about that check arriving and it taking away a kind of immediate worry, especially because I was planning to try and be, I was a single mother by choice and so I was doing an IUI with donor sperm and there's expenses and all of that stuff. And so the fact that the financial piece was no longer a question, I had the answer. And it was really interesting that that was the reveal, that it was that I kind of feel bad that it's the money that made the difference, but it's such a real thing and it's a real worry. But it helped me realize that even if that check hadn't arrived, it was like, "Oh, I do really want to try. I am ready to try."

MBS ([06:57](#)):

Right.

Christa ([06:58](#)):

"I'm ready to be hopeful. I'm ready to be open to whatever comes."

MBS ([07:02](#)):

Yes.



Christa ([07:03](#)):

But that was the kicker. That's what did it.

MBS ([07:06](#)):

Christa, how have you learned to stay open to another loss? That is such a powerful phrase and one of the things that must happen when you accumulate losses, particularly as profound as the death of your two first children, your two first sons, is to not be open to another loss. You're like, "I'm just not going to throw the dice because if I don't throw the dice, I might not win, but I also definitely won't lose." And I'm wondering, through the process of writing the book, *How To Lose Everything*, have you found ways of understanding how to stay open and maybe courageous enough to have another go even though you may lose again?

Christa ([07:51](#)):

Right. It's been a number of things. Some of them are the same as getting into my body, "Now have a shower, listen to music, calm yourself down."

MBS ([08:04](#)):

Right.

Christa ([08:08](#)):

Because to be hopeful or to be open to another loss is to face fear. And so there are ways of grounding and talking myself through like, "Okay, what am I afraid of? What's actually happening right now? I am afraid of what happened in the past." And reminding myself that it's in the past. And time passing.

Christa ([08:34](#)):

I think sometimes someone asked me a couple of years ago, "How are you okay?" And I was like, "Because time has passed." I was not okay for a while there, after my first son died, after my second son died. I even remember after



my first son died, feeling like I could never try again, that I couldn't possibly, possibly face another loss and I didn't want to risk it. And then I had Ford and it happened again.

Christa ([09:01](#)):

I don't know I've ever been able to pinpoint what it is, but it is time passing. It's been the resources that I've been blessed with, of therapy, of there's practical things like being housed and fed and I've always had those things and I've been cared for. And I've had a family with resources to just pick me up, literally pick me up, when I've needed it. And all of those things around me are what made it possible to be open to whatever might happen and knowing that might be another loss because I've had those supports in place.

MBS ([09:45](#)):

That's important. I mean, just as you said at the start of the conversation around, "I have a disability, but I'm disabled by the systems and structures around me that make it impossible for me to easily get down into the subway system because the lifts aren't working," and you keep pulling us back to how the system influences our experience in the world and supports us around that.

Christa ([10:08](#)):

Yeah. And I think there's, I go on about resilience sometimes and it's not to downplay my spirit and my strength and my part in all this. But at the same time, I think there's too much emphasis when it comes to success and quote unquote "failure" on the individual in so many different aspects of our life. And the ways I talk about that with resilience, I mean, there's first of all, this idea that resilience, I quote my therapist in the book who said, "Resilience sucks."

MBS ([10:43](#)):

Yeah.



Christa ([10:43](#)):

And what he meant was is that you only discover you're resilient through suffering so it sucks. Because if you're resilient, that means you've endured some kind of hardship. Your resilience doesn't make itself known for no reason.

MBS ([10:59](#)):

Right.

Christa ([10:59](#)):

But at the same time, if someone's not resilient, that idea, right, pull yourself together. What if someone can't on their own?

MBS ([11:06](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([11:06](#)):

That is not a failure. And if someone needs more help than someone else or circumstances or their social location has meant they don't have that help, I don't think that can be put on the individual. And so I sometimes push back on the idea of resilience because some people will really lift me up as some kind of superhero who's overcome all of these things and like the question, "How am I okay?" But it's all of these things around me. It's not just my inner flame and determination but it's all of these things that have been out of my control in the same way as some of these hardships have been out of my control, the ways I've been carried through them are, as well.

Christa ([11:48](#)):

And the onus can't be on the individual. We need community care. We need each other. We need to take care of each other.



MBS ([11:59](#)):

Right, right.

Christa ([11:59](#)):

And there's also this, I think as indigenous people, we sometimes are like, "Indigenous community, resilient people." I was like, "Well, stop fucking shitting on them so they don't have to be."

MBS ([12:05](#)):

Right, exactly.

Christa ([12:08](#)):

It's sort of this excuse. And that's not to discredit resiliency, it's kind of like-

MBS ([12:15](#)):

No, but it would be awesome if they could have just a bit of a break where they didn't have to be resilient and they could just carry on having a pleasant life.

Christa ([12:19](#)):

Yes, yes, exactly. Not being extraordinary. So, yeah. Don't know where I was going with that, but...

MBS ([12:29](#)):

It was a perfect answer. Hey, Christa, tell us about the book that you've chosen to read for us.

Christa ([12:32](#)):

Yes. I have chosen the book Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure by Eli Clare.



MBS ([12:39](#)):

And how did that book come into your life?

Christa ([12:42](#)):

I was reading Kaleigh Trace's memoir, which is called *Hot, Wet, & Shaking: How I Learned to Talk About Sex in 2016* and she-

MBS ([12:52](#)):

A great title.

Christa ([12:54](#)):

Great title. She's a queer disabled sex therapist and who I'd found on Twitter and it's a great memoir. But in it, she, in one kind of paragraph mentioned a number of disability justice activists. And I hadn't heard of any of them when I read Kaleigh's book. One of them was Eli Clare, and it just so happened that that year was the year his now long anticipated second book had come out. Kaleigh and I went to his book launch in Toronto and I got the book, I spoke to him afterwards, and it was my introduction into disability justice. I now have read others. Someone else could have been my first, but he was that first person. And it's thanks to Kaleigh that I encountered this world of work.

MBS ([13:47](#)):

Amazing. I think I know what disability justice is, but can you explain, just frame what disability justice is?

Christa ([13:59](#)):

Disability justice, like other social justice movements or aspects is the centering of disability when it comes to human rights and equity and equal access, in part. I am actually not an expert on that.



MBS ([14:17](#)):

I'm not holding it to you, but you're a bridge between me, who doesn't know much about how to speak about it, and people like Eli, who probably are articulate champions around that work.

Christa ([14:28](#)):

Yes. Yes.

MBS ([14:30](#)):

And which two pages did you choose from the book to read? Can you introduce those to us?

Christa ([14:34](#)):

Yes, I can. It was a challenge to pick two pages. When I thought about, I mean, I love this premise, two pages from a meaningful book, and a lot of books come to mind. There are so many books where I would want to read you the two pages of the most beautiful language or the most exciting moment. And with this book, it's like as a whole, this book changed my life and changed how I see myself in the world. And so it was a challenge to find what are the two pages that reflect that, or are a moment where I enjoyed the writing. I mean, it's a book of disability studies, but it's memoir, it's history. There's poems in it, Eli's a poet. And so I wanted to find a section that tied it all together.

MBS ([15:23](#)):

Exactly. Just embody the entire impact of this entire book in two pages, please. It's hard to do.

Christa ([15:28](#)):

It's a big ask what you're doing here.



MBS ([15:30](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([15:32](#)):

And so there was a few different sections that I thought of, but I settled on one.

MBS ([15:38](#)):

Beautiful. So let me introduce you and then we'll get to hear these two pages I am super keen to hear. So Christa Couture, a woman of many labels, but amongst other things, a musician and an author and author of a debut memoir, *How To Lose Everything*. And Christa is reading from Eli Clare's book, *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*. Christa, over to you.

Christa ([16:01](#)):

Thank you. And so you should know, before I read these two pages, Eli has cerebral palsy and uses the term body-mind. I think it's in this section a couple of times, referring to this idea that our minds and our bodies are not two separate things. If we're talking about our health, our body, they're kind of one. So when we hear that word, you'll know what that means.

Christa ([16:34](#)):

For many decades, we've been promised cures just around the corner. Consider the Muscular Dystrophy Association, MDA. The organization churns out fundraising ads enthusing about how close scientists are to finding a cure for muscular dystrophy. In one, a pretty white girl is photographed in black and white, her hands curled under her chin, big dark eyes staring into the distance, her wheelchair visible, but downplayed. The tagline reads, "In dreams, she runs. Muscular dystrophy must be stopped and it will be."



Christa ([17:07](#)):

In another more recent ad, they've switched to color photography, dropped the child model and revised the familiar don't walk signal to read can't walk. The tagline declares, "With enough hope and help, this light will change." The MDA just keeps on asking for money for cure.

Christa ([17:24](#)):

The premise, that muscular dystrophy must be eradicated, is always presented as an inarguable truth. But the seeming imperative is actually an arbitrary cultural value that arises from prioritizing walking over rolling, devaluing disability and disabled people and fearing the possibilities of death that come with some but not all forms of muscular dystrophy.

Christa ([17:46](#)):

Even if we accept the notion that the world will be a better place without this body-mind condition, the girl in the black and white MDA ad still has a life to live here and now, a life that will be made better by material and attitudinal access. The quest to eliminate muscular dystrophy is a commitment to the future, projecting values and priorities into the months, years, and decades to come.

Christa ([18:08](#)):

This agenda is reflected in cure research more generally, whether it's focused on preventing polio or ending the AIDS epidemic. Certainly these endeavors have saved many lives. AIDS, syphilis, and tuberculosis no longer predictably kill people, at least those who have access to the treatments or cures.

Christa ([18:26](#)):

At the same time, we mustn't ignore the ways in which research's future focused commitment has served to devalue people in the present. For instance, treating wheelchair users with muscular dystrophy as tragic and vilifying HIV-positive



pregnant women who might pass the virus on to their children. If the US government and nonprofit organizations, private corporations, and university laboratories are going to dedicate money and time to the future, they also need to do so for the present. They need to fund accessible buses, schools, classrooms, movie theaters, restrooms, housing, and workplaces. They should support campaigns to end bullying, employment discrimination, social isolation, and the ongoing institutionalizing of disabled people with the same enthusiasm with which they implement cure research.

Christa ([19:11](#)):

I want money for accessible playgrounds, tree houses and sandboxes so that wheelchair using kids aren't left twiddling their thumbs in the present while they dream of running in the future. If we choose to wait for the always just around the corner cures, lavishing them with resources, energy, and media attention, we risk suspending our present day lives.

Christa ([19:31](#)):

The belief in cure tethers us not only to what we remember of our embodied selves in the past, but also to what we hope for in the future. And when those hopes are predicated on cure technology not yet invented, our body-minds easily become fantasies and projections. What do we need to make peace with our visceral selves today, to let go of the fantasies even if we hope beyond hope that our flesh and bones, organs, and neurons might be different someday down the line? I ask, because I don't know the answers.

Christa ([20:02](#)):

When non-disabled folks ask me whether I'd take an imaginary cure pill for cerebral palsy, they're inviting me to engage in fantasy on so many levels. That technology doesn't exist, nor is it in the making, unlike the promised cures for breast cancer, diabetes, autism. The question is nothing but a thought experiment that underlines the devaluing of disability.



Christa ([20:24](#)):

I know what my answer is supposed to be. My questioners expect me to say, "Yes, of course, I'd take that pill in a heartbeat." And when I don't, they're puzzled and disbelieving. They wonder if I protest too much or am I defending myself against the unpleasant truth of my misery. How can I possibly not want a cure?

Christa ([20:44](#)):

It's simple. Having shaky hands and shaky balance isn't as awful as they imagine, even when I slip, totter, descend stairs one slow step at a time. My relationship to gravity is ambivalent. On mountain trails, I yearn to fly downhill, feet touching ground, pushing off smooth and fluid.

Christa ([21:04](#)):

Instead on steep stretches, I drop down onto my butt and slide along using both my hands and feet, for a moment becoming a four legged animal. Only then do I see the swirl marks that glaciers left in the granite, tiny orange newts climbing among the tree roots, other-worldly fungi growing on rotten logs. My shaky balance gives me this intimacy with the mountain. I would lose so much if that imaginary cure pill actually existed. Its absence lets me be unequivocal. It opens the door to brilliant imperfection.

MBS ([21:40](#)):

That's a wonderful passage and beautifully read, as well, Christa. Thank you for that.

Christa ([21:45](#)):

Thank you.



MBS ([21:45](#)):

That was really great. There is something really powerful about that tension between this imagined future and projecting everything onto that imagined future and how it will cost you the present. I'm curious to hear what struck a chord for you in particular about that section.

Christa ([22:06](#)):

I had never thought to question that kind of thinking. That to question a drive for something better quote unquote, "better, better, better." I didn't know the inherent ableism in it and now I see it kind of all over the place. That passage and that idea opened my eyes to looking at some of these things differently.

Christa ([22:37](#)):

And where it ends with Eli finding this, describing the way he experiences a mountain on all fours and that there's something so kind of sensual about it and what he sees there-

MBS ([22:50](#)):

Exactly.

Christa ([22:50](#)):

... that maybe other people don't get to see was also one of the first times that I thought about disability, my disability, as something exciting. There's everything around us, everywhere, tells us that there's basically one kind of body that is the right body. It's a non-disabled, white, cis, probably male body, right?

MBS ([23:16](#)):

Yep.



Christa ([23:17](#)):

Most of us are not that thing, I mean, or all of those things. And for my 30 years in this disabled body, I didn't encounter really until I read this book that maybe this is good enough, my body is good enough. And not only that, it's wonderful, as wonderful and as valuable and will have strengths and insights that are unique as does everyone else.

MBS ([23:48](#)):

What shifted for you when you had that moment of acceptance, or just beginning that moment of acceptance around this is something to get excited about, not something to manage around?

Christa ([24:02](#)):

Everything changed.

MBS ([24:05](#)):

Wow.

Christa ([24:06](#)):

Short answer.

MBS ([24:07](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([24:07](#)):

I mean, this book and reading this book, it came at the same time in my life that I made my prosthetic leg very visible. I wear a prosthesis that's covered in flowers.

MBS ([24:20](#)):

Gorgeous. I mean, it's beautiful. Yeah.



Christa ([24:20](#)):

It looks hand painted. It's my favorite accessory. It goes with everything.

MBS ([24:26](#)):

It really does.

Christa ([24:27](#)):

So it's this beautiful prosthetic leg, and for many years, I kept my prosthesis hidden and tried to pass for being two legged, wanted to pass. And it wasn't so much that it was a secret that I only had one leg, but I did try to keep it private, from employers, from audiences as a performer, because of the real worry that I would be discriminated against, or that people would fixate on this part of my being. And so when I got the flower leg, that started to change how I talked about my disability, how people interacted with me about it.

Christa ([25:09](#)):

And I read this book around the same time and so there was kind of a few ideas bubbling up and aligning for me. And it changed how I stand in a room. It changed the clothes I choose and how I want to look or be seen and what I want to draw attention to. In challenging my thinking about disability, I started to feel much more empowered in who I am and the experiences I've had.

Christa ([25:47](#)):

And in making that shift of like, "Oh, this isn't a problem with me. There are all these problems around me. It's not my fault. I am not the broken one here. There's all these other broken ideas and elevators." And so it just changed how I feel, honestly, in a daily way. And it changed the conversations I have.

MBS ([26:19](#)):

I mean, I think this is a bit different, but I think there's a connection here. Because I've had a similar moment with having a cleft lip and palette. Now a



cleft lip and palate, you're born as a kid with that opening in the top of your palate, the top of your mouth and in your lip as well. You get sewn up when you're really young, less than one or at the most two so you don't remember any of that. But what I do remember is a moment where I realized having a cleft lip and palate, this may not be a bug. It might be a feature. Because what I do in part, some of my time, anyways, I speak on stages.

MBS ([26:55](#)):

And having a cleft lip and a palette and a speech disability that's connected to that, makes me different, but in some ways it also makes me more accessible to people because I'm not super polished, I'm not flawless. I've got that slight point of difference and people can perhaps build a bridge there.

Christa ([27:15](#)):

Right.

MBS ([27:15](#)):

There are other speakers I've certainly seen where I'm like, "You know what? You are so polished that I can't actually really fully connect with you. You're somehow slightly less than human. I'm messy and I'm human." I mean, there may be a different form of connection that happens through that because you're right, I think. You can go, "This isn't a disadvantage. It's actually an advantage." Perhaps it does shift everything.

Christa ([27:41](#)):

Yeah. And I think similar to what you were just saying, I had this experience a few years ago where I made my maternity photos from my pregnancy with my daughter. I wrote an article for CBC Parents about disability and representation. And I thought I was publishing those photos for other people with disabilities who were pregnant or thinking about pregnancy because there was very little



out there. When I did a Google image search, there was not a lot out there. And I thought, "Okay, at least now my pictures will be one of the things available."

MBS ([28:15](#)):

Yes.

Christa ([28:15](#)):

But those photos went viral and all of this attention happened in a span of a week or something. But this moment, with these viral photos and all of this attention and all of these people responding to them, and what I realized is that everyone is impacted by that homogenous depiction, right?

MBS ([28:35](#)):

Right.

Christa ([28:36](#)):

Everyone, kind of consciously, if there's someone who is marginalized or is not well-represented definitely feels it explicitly, but even people who are, people want to see difference, they want to see their family and their friends and their community represented because most people feel kind of left out of that narrow depiction. And so, like you're saying with being the best speaker and being more accessible, it's the word like the double meaning, but I realized with these photos being viral was like, "Oh, everyone wants that. Everyone wants to see different bodies shown as beautiful, as strong, on a stage with a microphone." We need to be lifting up all these differences because I think most people, even if they don't realize it are kind of starved for it.

MBS ([29:25](#)):

That's interesting. Is there a connection here to shame in some way? I'm wondering if there's a moment of being able to be ashamed and then move beyond shame in terms of part of this acceptance.



Christa ([29:42](#)):

Yes. I definitely felt shame about the way that I walked, my gait, the way that clothes fit over my prosthesis, the way that I look without my prosthetic leg. I mean my prosthetic leg, especially now it's so visible and it looks really cool and I'm part robot and all that, but it looks like a leg. It's a leg shape.

MBS ([30:14](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([30:14](#)):

And I think because of Hollywood movies, people kind of have a sense of robot legs or what they would do. Without my prosthesis, I mean, it was one thing with the viral photos. It's the first photos I've done where I took it off. And I definitely encountered and had to challenge my feelings of shame around my stump, around my amputated limb, because gosh, who said it, someone will find the quote. "If you don't see it, you can't be it."

Christa ([30:46](#)):

And there's so much else that gets taught with that message, when we don't see ourselves represented. It's not just like, "Oh, maybe I can't be a speaker or a supermodel," but it's actually like, "Oh, maybe there's also something wrong with you." It's kind of the secondary message in that, right?

Christa ([31:08](#)):

And so to embrace my flower leg to make not just a visible disability, but point a neon sign to it, to take it off in photos, to decorate it and kind of celebrate it, was absolutely to challenge and walk through shame and face all of those supposed ideals of what a body should look like and dress like and move like. And that stuff hurts, right? Shame hurts.



MBS ([31:41](#)):

Yes.

Christa ([31:43](#)):

Shame and betrayal are like the two, can I swear? We've already had [crosstalk 00:31:47] fucking worst feelings.

MBS ([31:51](#)):

Yeah. Right.

Christa ([31:52](#)):

And so it's hard work to face shame, but I think absolutely when we're doing work of self-acceptance, whatever that is about us, about our stories, who we are, that's a hard piece. But I think it's always present.

MBS ([32:08](#)):

And I do just want to appreciate the work you do in that, bringing some of this stuff into the light and just saying, "This is it. And I'm okay." As your book title says, I had to lose everything. And it's like, "I've lost so much and I'm still okay." Now I don't know if you've left shame behind entirely, Christa. I know I find it hard to do that with some of my stuff, but it is much diminished and perhaps that's the best way to frame it, what a gift that is. Christa, the question I love to ask at the end of a conversation like this, and it's been such a great conversation, is a final question. It's a big, tricky question so you can wrestle with it as you will. What needs to be said in this conversation between you and me, that hasn't yet been said?

Christa ([33:00](#)):

We've covered a lot of ground.



MBS ([33:03](#)):

Yeah.

Christa ([33:07](#)):

When it comes to the work I do and Eli's book and the passage I shared and I've been kind of going off on tangents in different directions. But the thing that matters to me the most is offering the suggestion, the idea, that things can be different instead of better.

Christa ([33:33](#)):

And if I haven't clearly said that so far in this interview, it's that, that is my shtick. That is my message at this moment in my life, that I want there to be space for difference instead of a pursuit of better.

MBS ([33:53](#)):

I aspire to be brave enough to be willing to go for the great things, the hard things and risk loss. The heart of my next book actually is the idea that we unlock our greatness by working on the hard things, but stepping out to the edge to the place where the risk is, that's so hard because we get dented by life. There's a saying, once bitten, twice shy, but I don't think you'd call Christa shy. You'd call her well, we're getting into labels again. And honestly, it's probably more interesting to remember what she calls herself, right?

MBS ([34:34](#)):

So maybe the last line of the passage that she read. You remember Eli walking on his hands and knees and how it opens up that new world, opens, his quote, "The door to brilliant imperfection." I wish us all, me included, the courage to find and open that door.



MBS ([34:54](#)):

You'll want to find out more about Christa, I'm sure. You can find that at her website, [christacouture](#), all one word. So let me spell it for you. C-H-R-I-S-T-A-C-O-U-T-U-R-E. And you'll find her on Facebook and Twitter, but she's most active on Instagram. So that's [@christacouture](#).

MBS ([35:14](#)):

And you are fabulous for listening to this podcast. Thank you. I really appreciate it. If you want a little bit more, maybe you'll choose to join us in the Duke Humfrey's. It's the free membership associated with this podcast. Duke Humfrey's is this great old library in Oxford. It's where they used to keep the oldest, best, most precious books. In my Duke Humfrey's, I don't have 14 century manuscripts, but I do have transcripts and unreleased videos and downloads and other giveaways. It's totally free and I'd love you to join us there if you're so interested. You'll find it at [mbs.works](#) on the podcast tab there.

MBS ([35:51](#)):

And if you're up for it, would you pass the word along? If you know people who wrestle with labels or who are champions for labels or who champion activism. Christa is such a force in this world or people who are creators, anybody you think they would love this episode, please pass it along to them. We grow listener by listener. And I don't aspire necessarily to have a bazillion listeners, but I'd love some really great listeners. And my bet is you're a great listener. And my bet is you know somebody else who would be an amazing listener and part of this conversation.

MBS ([36:26](#)):

If you're so moved to give us a review on your podcast app, I know you hear every podcast host kind of begging somewhat for that, but it does make a difference. It helps people feel assured that this is a podcast worth listening to.



And if you think it is, then that [inaudible 00:36:44] you can help me immensely. I'll just finish by saying, you're awesome and you're doing great.