



## Asking for What You're Worth and Meaning It

Felicia Pride has big ambitions for her production company, Honey Chile, but her sense of responsibility makes it hard to acknowledge the value she brings to creative projects, collaborators, and her team. Stevon helps us avoid burnout by honoring our needs and asking others for the time and money we deserve.

---

Stevon Lewis:

What's up, everybody? Welcome to How to Talk to High Achievers About Anything. I'm Stevon Lewis, a licensed psychotherapist. Today, we welcome Felicia. Felicia Pride is a TV writer, producer, and award-winning filmmaker. In addition, she runs her own production company, HONEY CHILE. Felicia has big ambitions about the impact she wants her work to have on the lives of Black women over 40, like herself. And because of that, she's very intentional about building her company around the values she wants to prioritize and encourage in others. But living those values out in her day to day is a constant challenge. Let's get into it.

Felicia: Hi, my name is Felicia Pride, and I am a film and TV writer and producer. I am also the head honey at HONEY CHILE, and we are a production company that tells stories by, about, or for honeys, Black women over 40.

Something happens when you turn 40, and I want to explore that and I also wanted to encourage that. And then also my experience of moving to Hollywood at 35 years old, turning 39 in my first writer's room, for me, there was something there about being a Black woman over 40 in this space, bringing a different skill set to the table, bringing years of experience as both just living life and career experience, and wanting to harness that.

A couple of days ago, I was looking back at old files in my Google drive. And I had a file of HONEY CHILE plans, and it was all the way back from 2018. It just reminded me of how a lot of times there are many things that we want to do or there things that are burning within us that take a backseat, that we are too scared to do or too overwhelmed.

At the end of 2021, I hit a wall. I was completely spread thin because I have a full-time job as a TV writer, also have projects outside of that, that I'm writing. And

then building HONEY CHILE, I was completely overwhelmed to the point where it was, I was of course exhausted, but I also felt like particularly in a couple of projects, I wasn't able to bring my best work. And when the work starts to suffer, that for me is when everything needs to stop, because the work is the most important thing. To me, it's where joy's derived, where pleasure's derived, but also because of the particular work that I do, it is for an underrepresented audience. I feel like I have to show up as my best self for them.

So I had to kind of check out for a little bit. I had to call producers and collaborators and be like, "Look, I ain't got it." And that's a humbling place, but also, it was a place of empowering at the same time where it's like, I am human. I am not a machine. And I need to recognize that. It was a big lesson to me in many, many ways of how I need to set boundaries, of how I need to do less.

I sometimes look at the work that we want to do as freeing work. I want those stories to help Black women get free. I want us to be able to see representations of ourselves, see ourselves failing, see ourselves succeeding, and wanting to hopefully translate something into our own lives. So that's one piece. The other piece, though, is to actually live that. I want to live that in my own life. So I was in Costa Rica over Christmas, and I just had such a beautiful experience. And I was like, I want more of this. I work really, really hard, and I want more of this.

So in thinking about in the overwhelm of starting a production company, I'm trying to also find a way for us to be prioritizing rest, to be prioritizing pleasure and play as part of those things. What I've been doing is when it's work time and when I am working, trying to do deep work, trying to be focused. But then when I am playing, when I am indulging, really being present and mindful.

I think also too, there's just a history for particularly people of color, particularly Black women, having to work twice as hard, and the reality of that. But then also for me, the sort of rejection of that. How do I still do my best work and reject having to work twice as hard is something that I think about a lot. I personally had to do a lot of self work around value because there is the reality that you do have to work twice as hard. I mean, there's the reality and the facts and the figures in terms of the amount of money that Black women make, and when they make it as compared to white men. So there's the reality of that.

But then for me, I had to do self work around my value and asking for my worth, understanding the value that I bring to million dollar and billion dollar entities, asking for that value, and being okay to walk away. I even sometimes still lean on the team to help me make sure I'm not undervaluing us. So surrounding myself with team members who are like, "No, no, no, we're going to charge this." Or, "No, no, no, we're going to go after this brand." So that also has been helpful. That's

how I navigate it from a personal level, but then there's just the systemic institutional level that requires a lot more disbanding.

Lewis: Felicia, thanks for coming on the show and sharing what you're going through. When I listened to Felicia's story, what stood out to me was how much she embraced her age and kind of start in this field in Hollywood, in the writer's rooms, a later start than what we expect for most, but for her, it was not a negative experience or a negative kind of attribute for her.

As she was speaking, initially I was wondering, how did she end up on this show? Because it sounds like everything is going fantastically well and she's super dialed in and connected to her own success. And then she started to speak about hitting this wall. Here's a clip of what she said.

Felicia: I was of course exhausted, but I also felt like particularly in a couple of projects, I wasn't able to bring my best work. And when the work starts to suffer, that for me is when everything needs to stop, because the work is the most important thing.

Lewis: To me when she says hitting a wall, it made me think about burnout. And I see burnout as being the result of pushing past the signs that we need to slow down or take a break. And for me, that was kind of a revelation moment in her experience of where I can see there's this tendency that she has, that's common to most high achievers or most individuals that might struggle with imposter syndrome, that are doing amazing things, that she has attached herself or attached her success to the idea of doing, so that producing or being productive really defines your self worth.

It's a difficult thing for high achievers to be able to recognize when it's time to slow down and take a break. They're used to operating at a very high level, and doing a lot of things and doing a lot of things well. The only instance for them to be able to recognize that maybe that's not happening is when they aren't able to produce in the way that they had before. And I think that's the moment when they need to take a beat and say, hey, maybe I need to kind of dial it back. What tends to happen is that they say, "oh, I need to push harder and work harder because I am falling behind or I'm not performing in the way that I used to."

I think the best advice I could give to someone having a difficult time being able to slow down, I think it's really important for them to engage in kind of a reprioritization of how rest is seen as important, or where we implement that or enter it into our lives. So for them, rest is usually at the end of something. And I think that they need to be more intentional about finding ways to incorporate rest along the journey. You can't be all gas all the time. And the reality is that if I'm

going so fast or I'm working so hard to do, then I'm not taking enough time to understand the impact of what's happening to myself and to those around me.

Felicia described this experience where she logically can recognize the importance of slowing down and how beneficial it will be for herself and her team and her business, and the difficulty she has with being able to do so. And part of that comes from this responsibility. I think that is an undertone that she holds on to, and most high achievers often do, of where she feels like she's the person that needs to push everything and everyone around her forward. And I think that there's this responsibility she has for Black women in particular, that she's got to show up all the time, a hundred percent. And that doesn't really sound like rest in there.

And I think that's part of the difficulty she has with being able to slow down for a bit. She's got to kind of open the doors for and provide space for others to enter into the room and give them opportunities to showcase their skills and talent. What comes with that is this idea that "I can't really charge my worth or request more from the other people that are 'giving' us opportunities." And I use air quotes around giving because I think that she earned them, and the other people in the room earned them with her, that I've got to take what is given to me because we just need as many opportunities as possible. And I find this often in women of color clients that I work with that fit into that space. They aren't really good about requesting more or requesting what they're owed or what is appropriate for where they are in their careers. And it sounds like Felicia's getting to a place of where she's recognizing that, and it sounds like she has a really good team that is holding her accountable in that way. And I think that what she's recognizing now is part of her responsibility is to not only provide opportunities, but to also request that people be treated equally and create equity.

It's a unique experience where when you're a high achiever, you are hyper focused on just doing the work, doing a good job at doing the work. Having your worth recognized is an afterthought. And so I think what happened for Felicia specifically was that she got to a place of where she hit the wall and it slowed her down and she started to evaluate, how do I still show up and produce great things, but not hit this wall? And what she identified was that she probably needs to charge more and request more from the people that she's working for or working with so that she is able to continue to do great things in the space that she's in.

So the two things I would say for high achievers and people who might see themselves in Felicia's experience to pay attention to would be one, kind of always saying yes. That would suggest to me that there is a need for you to show up and a bit of a disregard for your own needs or a neglect of your own needs in

that moment, similar to maybe what we might think of with people pleasing, but it's more of probably not seeing or recognizing your own worth. And so you're saying, I've got to accept whatever's coming, again, saying yes to everything.

The other thing would be if you notice a feeling of guilt, guilt for maybe wanting to say no, and what that's about. There's a reason you want to say no, and there's a reason why you feel guilty about doing so. Is it because you are worried more about others and their feelings and what that would mean for you in terms of opportunities, or is that because you don't feel like you are worthy of being able to request more for yourself?

I think if you are at a place where you recognize your worth is high and what you're being offered isn't commensurate with what you deserve, you want to say no. And I think if you're not saying no, then that is another key indicator that something may be amiss and you might not be really leaning into and attaching to your worth and identifying that or seeing that as the kind of paramount role in you showing up in the spaces that you do and why people are reaching out to want to work with you. And I think it'll be important for you to have that shift so that you can say, no, I know my worth, and that's okay. And if you want me, then we can do it for this amount and we can work together. And if not, you can find somebody else, but I'll still be okay because I know what I bring to the table.

And that's a wrap. Thank you so much for listening to *How to Talk to High Achievers About Anything*. We have really big plans for our show, and we want you to be a part of it. We want to hear about your successes and challenges, your sacrifices, the ways you've celebrated, and what's ahead as you grow. Send our producer, Virginia, an email, and we'll get your story on the show. She's at [virginia@lwcstudios.com](mailto:virginia@lwcstudios.com).

*How to Talk to High Achievers About Anything* is an original production of LWC Studios. Virginia Lora is the show's producer. [inaudible 00:14:40] is our mixer. [inaudible 00:14:42] is the creator and executive producer. I'm Stevon Lewis. On Twitter and Instagram, we're at @TalkToAchievers. Bye, everybody.

And that's a wrap. Thank you so much for listening to *How to Talk to High Achievers about Anything*. We have really big plans for our show, and we want you to be a part of it. We want to hear about your successes and challenges, your sacrifices, the ways you've celebrated, and what's ahead as you grow. Send our

producer Virginia an email, and we'll get your story on the show. She's at virginia@lwcstudios.com. *How to Talk to High Achievers about Anything* is an original production of LWC Studios. Virginia Lora is the show's producer. Kojin Tashiro is our mixer. Juleyka Lantigua is the creator and executive producer. I'm Stevon Lewis. On Twitter and Instagram, we're @talktoachievers. Bye, everybody.

**CITATION:**

Lewis, Stevon, host. "Is Tenure the End or the Beginning?" *How to Talk to [High Achievers] about Anything*, LWC Studios., September 5, 2022. Talktohighachievers.com

Produced by:



ERASING THE MARGINS