

The Women Tribe Presents  
Interview with Melissa Diamond  
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The upcoming series of interviews explores the unscripted lives of women working in various industries in New York City. We discuss pop culture's influence on their respected fields' and get insider's perspective about what improvements need to be made.

Over the next few weeks we will take a deeper look into what it's like to work in the mental health and wellness field, becoming a rising comedian, and the ins and outs of being a podcast host. Each woman shares her journey, opens up about ways that she has overcome adversity, shares personal mantras and discusses how she is able to find happiness.

Today we're here with the purpose of interviewing Melissa Diamond, founder of He Said What podcast. He Said What is a podcast about what men and women are really thinking about sex, dating and relationships. Join us as we uncover her inspiration for the podcast, adversity she has had to overcome, how her podcast has affected her personal life, and how she stays focused! Melissa Diamond is a humorous, taboo-shattering woman that is happily following her path. Getting validation from her own work ethic and her ability to have meaningful conversations with an extremely diverse group of people through her podcast, Melissa is absolutely thriving!

***"I know that whatever someone else's opinion of me is- that's NONE of my business."***  
***-Melissa Diamond***

**What inspired you to start He Said What Podcast?**

*I was dumped in a relationship that I did NOT think was coming to an end. I thought I had a good intuition on men and how to read them; I was clearly wrong. A few months had gone by and I started dated a lot. I was dating a ton of different guys at the same time, which I had never done before, and I had SO many questions about men and what they were thinking.*

*I understand the women's brain pretty well. So, I started having candid conversations with my guy friends and my girl friends (about sex, dating and relationships). I am the type of person that when I decide I want to do something, I do it. I said I was going to have a podcast and start this, and here we are!*

## **How do you find the people you want to interview on the show?**

*The people that I seek to be on the show are either comedians active in the sex/love/dating/ or LGBTQ sphere. There's no limits on the people I want to interview. But every one of my episodes also ties in a comedic twist. As deep as our conversations get, it is important to have some kind of lightness in the situation. Life is so serious. I find that it's nice to have a gander at someone else's perspective but also feel like you can relate to it from an unbiased lens.*

*I like to have a plethora of different personalities because each person will contribute a different perspective, rather than just interviewing the same types of people over and over again. It's based on their personality, their job and how they put themselves out there.*

Since February 2018, Melissa has recorded and released 27 episodes and counting. Some of her guests include Jon Lester, an actor, and comedian who happens to be managed by the same team as Kevin Hart, Aziz Ansari, and Tina Fey. Alex Fine, CEO, and Founder of the sex toy company Dame Products, and who was also featured in Forbes 30 Under 30. Comedian Mark Normand, who has appeared on Conan 5 times, The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, Late Show with Stephen Colbert, Showtime's "Live at SXSW", but most recently produced a series with Amy Schumer called "Don't Be Yourself. Hannah Orenstein, a dating editor at Elite Daily and so many more!

## **What was recording the first episode like?**

*That episode was shit. I honestly had no idea what I was doing and I was like 'I have to have a really juicy kickoff'. So I contacted one of my guy friends who was the biggest horndog I knew of. I know that he's gone after so many girls and got rejected over and over again. But also, he's gotten really lucky.*

*I told him that he could be anonymous, 'you just have to tell us some stories'. He did not hold back and he really said some offensive things. That was not the goal of the podcast, and that was not the impression I wanted to give off, and not how I wanted to be perceived. I get that guys have different perspectives but you have to be sensitive to people's feelings and what people are going to say. So that episode was a learning experience.*

*I definitely had backlash from the first episode. I had people say that it was discriminatory. There was a joke that he had made about a "token Asian" - a very beautiful Asian woman. Understandably, people took offense to that. So, that was a learning experience. I am more aware of what questions to ask. I am also more confident about challenging things that are said on the show.*

**What types of adversity, challenges and obstacles have you faced (and overcome) through the journey of being the host of He Said What podcast?**

*When I started this podcast I really thought I had thick skin; I always had thought that my entire life. I think it's when you finally put yourself out there and get negative feedback its the true internal test of whether or not this is really what you are supposed to be doing. I had multiple family members that said negative things which really hurt my ego. Family is one of the most important things to me, so having someone that you love say that, 'I am lowering myself' or that, 'the podcast is not appropriate' hurt me a lot. But to be honest, I know that whatever someone else's opinion of me is- thats NONE of my business.*

*Every person is on their own journey. You can be so different than someone that you share the same blood with. They don't have to agree with what you're doing but that doesn't mean what you're doing is not incredible. I felt for a while that I needed validation from certain family members. It got to a certain point where my mom said to me, 'you can give up but if you want to do this- you're going to do it. If this makes you happy, do it. If it doesn't you can stop.' It kept making me happy and making me happy and making me happy. I am not going to stop. I will deal with the criticism. I will deal with someone giving me a shitty review on iTunes. I'll get past that online bullying because at the end of the day I know what I am doing is great because I have people reaching out to me expressing that. That's all that matters. If I can impact one persons' life and make them feel happy, or that they can relate to someone, or gain some knowledge, or take their mind off whatever the hell they are going through; that is what my goal is.*

**What is the most unexpected thing you have learned about yourself through the process of creating a podcast with this type of content?**

*I have learned that I thoroughly enjoy being in relationships and that I jump into relationships early on. I don't necessarily see those warnings or red flags that most people see in relationships. So through this process and speaking with different people I am having a lot of "AH HA" moments. Like, WOW that happened to me and it totally glazed over me. I am realizing a lot about trends that have happened in my life, or men that have done specific things to me and really understanding how those experiences have shaped me as a person.*

*I was kind of naive. My mind really has just completely opened once I started doing this (hosting a podcast). I was stuck in a certain mentality and this has really just opened my mind completely to areas that I never would have spoken about before.*

### **Have you noticed differences in your dating life since you started the podcast?**

*I would say the biggest backlash that I got was when I was dating. I would find that men would ask me out but they would always be like, 'Oh, are you using this as content?'. They would ask me about my podcast and it almost felt like their intentions were not to get to know me, it was more so, 'let me talk to this girl with a dating podcast maybe she will talk about me in some capacity'.*

*The thing about this podcast is that it can intimidate some men. They would say 'I would never date this type of girl, I could never bring this type of girl home to mom who speaks so openly about these things'. And I think of that as a positive. It weeds out types of guys that I would never truly be interested in. Because if a guy can't accept and appreciate the kind of passion and how much I enjoy what I am doing regardless of what the topic is, he's not going to be the right guy for me. It's almost a blessing in disguise.*

*I found that the majority of men that are confident- they love it. And the ones that don't, take care brush your hair. That's something my mom would literally say.*

### **What is your message to your listeners?**

*(While eating a slice of pizza) Swallow, always swallow. The end (laughing).*

*I would say my message to everyone listening is that it's OK to be different. And it's OK to beat to your own drum. Its ok to break the barriers of what is normalized and what is acceptable in society. A lot of us live in fear of really being ourselves and speaking the honest truth because we are scared of what other people think. But I can tell you as someone that has lived through a lot and will continue to live through a lot, you are the only one that is in control of your life and your happiness and your journey. What I am trying to do is just show others that you can talk about things. You can be open, you can ask questions. And none of this defines you. Have an outlet to enjoy life on another level.*

*I believe that if there is something you want in life, just run with it because you only live once. Who wants to look back 50 years down the line and say I wish I did this.*

## **Opinion: How has social media played a role in the way that we pursue one another in the dating game?**

*I am a hopeless romantic. I have never found a partner through anything but an organic way. I can be old fashioned and say that's how I see that's how I see myself meeting a significant other in my life. I have gone on apps and haven't had much success there and that's ok. I have heard amazing stories of people that have had great success. I find that guys are very comfortable messaging women through direct message on Instagram and it's almost a common occurrence.*

*You put up an Instagram story and you get at least five guys messaging you about it. I think the fact that someone can't pick up the phone and call a woman and have a rational conversation, instead of messaging through Instagram or texting is disappointing. In all of the relationships that I have been in, we have always conversed over the phone because the problem with texting is that you cannot understand someone's tonality through it.*

*So when messaging it can be perceived in different ways. The person can be trying to relay a completely different message than what you are interpreting. I personally think social media has only affected our society as far as dating goes in a negative capacity.*

**Social media has been a way for us to connect, meet new people but more than ever it is used as a tool to spy on our exes! Is it possible to ever get over an ex if you are still following them on social media?**

*That's why I try my best to block that out. Everyone's Instagram is public now and if it's not, good for you, I am sure you are saving your ex a lot of time. Even if you are not "following" someone, you can still be following them. My goal is to not do that. It's clear that I am not "following" a lot of my exes but I am still looking at their stories and I am just like 'what the fuck am I doing'.*

**How do you measure happiness? Is there a mantra that you tell yourself each day to stay motivated?**

*I meditate every morning. I take about 5 minutes and I think about all the good things going on in my life because I am the type of person that sees a lot of stress and I am not able to compartmentalize a lot of things. So when I wake up in the morning I like to reflect on the positive things in my life and meditate on those feelings and have that appreciation when I start my day. Whenever I feel stressed I repeat to myself, 'there is no fire, there is no fire, there is no fire' because a lot of us feel stressed and we can feel like it engulfs our entire mentality and our entire being. In reality, it's ok. It's just a fear, a panic. Remind yourself that there is no fire, 'I will be ok', the world is not crashing beneath you.*

*Another thing I tell myself is that I have survived worse and I will get through this. Whether it's a break up, or getting fired from a job, or having a shitty fight with your parents, or you're broke;*

*you have survived worse so you'll know at the end of the day that you will get through this. It will make you a temper person and help you see everything in life as a blessing or a lesson.*

**Do you have any final thoughts to share with the readers?**

*Anyone out there that has a passion and they are worried or concerned with the success of it or what people will think of it, screw it. Go after it! You only have one chance. Guess what? If it doesn't work out that doesn't define you as a person. Who knows where my podcast will be 5 years down the line. But I know that right now I am happy with it. You should never hesitate to pursue a dream; no matter how big or small it is. Trust your gut. If it isn't making you happy guess what? You can always stop.*

**Resources:**

Check out Melissa's hilarious podcast here!

<http://hesaidwhatshow.com/episodes/>