

Transcript

Episode Title: “Being a Digital Nomad” with Wanda Duncan in Malaysia

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WANDA [00:00:00] People also should keep in mind Instagram is a lie. The people that post there, are vacationers and that's a huge distinction to keep in mind. They go with the equipment, they go with their time off, they're gonna get their content. If you are a digital nomad, you're living somewhere else. You're washing dishes somewhere else. So the lifestyle is just different. There may be cool things that you see and do you know you make time for that. But that is a distinction.

CHRISTINE [00:00:34] Hey, everyone, welcome back to *Flourish In The Foreign*. The podcast that celebrates, elevates and affirms the voices and stories of Black women living and thriving abroad. I'm your host, Christine Job a Black American woman. Currently based in Spain, I'm not only a podcaster. But I'm also a business strategist that helps Black women and women of color, leverage their talents and their expertise into viable businesses, businesses that can help them not only be financially abundant, but professionally fulfilled while pursuing thriving lives abroad. If you're interested in building a business abroad, definitely check out my free resource, *Build a Business Abroad* at the website <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/>. I also have a new resource for all of you. It's called *Moving Abroad with Intention* and it is an almost 50 page guide to help you get clear and confident on your journey abroad. It is designed to make sure that you are moving in alignment with who you are, who you are hoping to become. But also with your vision of a life well lived not anyone else's. So if you have not grabbed the *Moving Abroad with Intention* guide, go ahead and grab that also, as a website <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/> all right. So you all know that *Flourish in The Foreign* is a labor of love, but labor nonetheless. And that is why I asked all of you to please support this hear podcast, there are a number of ways for you to support the podcast, you can become a *Patreon* subscriber at <http://www.patreon.com/flourishforeign> you can *CashApp* the podcast at *\$flourishforeign*, you can *buy Me a Coffee* at <http://www.buymeacoffee.com/flourishforeign>. You can also purchase a piece of production equipment via our Amazon wishlist which you can find at <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/support>. I also want to thank all of you that have written reviews of the podcast. Thank you so much. Please keep them coming. And make sure that you are sharing this podcast with all of your friends, if your family and across all of your social media channels. All right, on to the next episode. So today's guest is Wanda from Black Women Travel Pod. You may have heard of her podcast, showcasing Black women's experiences traveling and how travel has really impacted their life. I'm excited to share this story with you because I feel like Wanda's experience and her journey abroad is quite relatable. You know, sometimes things are not on a linear path. But if you believe in yourself, and you believe that life can just be better and more or at least different then you know the universe provides and I think that one this story exemplifies that, but I will let her tell you all about it.

WANDA [00:04:16] My name is Wanda Duncan. I am 38 years old and my location is Penang, Malaysia. My hometown is Marion, Illinois, is Southern Illinois, a couple hours from St. Louis for reference. I don't have any specific memories of wanting to go a specific place. I do have specific memories of wanting to leave. I remember saying to myself, "You have to be smart, because college is going to be your only way out." I don't know how old I was. I think I was maybe in high school when I had that idea. So that just kind of set the course for all of my actions afterwards. Always try to do really well in school because something about the place where I was, it just wasn't for me. I wasn't connecting with the people there. And I knew I wasn't going to stay there given the choice. So that's what I did. I just, I focused on leaving. And it didn't really matter where to me. I don't think at that point, I have even thought about international. I just wanted to get away, even locally. So part of that was going to college and the next town over studying abroad wasn't on my radar at all. Actually, I went to Southern Illinois University Carbondale and I studied Radio TV production. And I have a minor in Spanish. I hadn't traveled much at all up to that point, I think I'd been to New York with a religious group I was a part of, and maybe St. Louis, and maybe Chicago, up to that point. So after I graduated with my degree, I moved down to Atlanta. I started working at CNN and hit my head on the glass ceiling, got cut up. And I was like, there just has to be something else. So I quit. And I went to El Salvador, I looked for some nonprofit positions that I could work. And I forget the website I used. But that just happened to come up. I don't know that I was even searching internationally, I applied for some positions, and got this position down in El Salvador, doing some newsletter management and videography type stuff. So I left. And it was wonderful-terrible. I got to meet some interesting people, I got to make some really cool mistakes, just in terms of packing and like preparation, and you know, not being prepared. It's one thing to visit a place for a while, it's another thing to live in a place and to, you know, have their holidays and understand when the stores are open or in El Salvador, a random door could be a store and you could get like a chocolate banana where you can get fresh made cheese. And you just have to know that that's what's behind that door. I spent about six months there. Another position didn't end up working out. So I was like, "If I'm going to spend my time trying to figure out how to stay abroad. I'm going to do it in Jamaica". So I left El Salvador, had a little stop off back in Atlanta and went down to Jamaica. And I spent about three months there. And I just was challenged in my ideas of what it meant to live and to have a fulfilling life. So I ended up coming back in Jamaica. One that time point, Jamaica, yeah, Jamaica one that time.

CHRISTINE [00:07:59] I asked one to tell me about her experience in Jamaica.

WANDA [00:08:04] The first time I went, it was amazing. And then reality hits you in the face right away. So I flew into Montego Bay, the very first time my friend and I went and the moment you step out of the airport, first of all the airport's amazing. But the moment you step out of the airport, do you see the shanty towns in the hills, and that's what Jamaica is, is very that. So living there, it was very, that you have your highs and your lows, you have your people living very well, you know, working for the embassies, again, foreigners working for the embassies, or they have their own businesses or whatever. And then you have local people who don't have toilets, or legal electricity, they hook up wires to get electricity to their places. So it was very, that there's something about being in the streets of Jamaica that's just so alive and so bright and so

vivid. It's not just the heat, it's the attitude is the energy that the people walk around with. And it's also like a sense of impending fear. You would think a party on the beach would be amazing in Jamaica, no, not with Jamaicans because everybody's afraid something's gonna pop off. So we're everybody's looking around to look for that moment of trouble to see if they have to run. And like, you know, there's the whole ego thing and not wanting to offend another person kind of thing that's heavy, heavy there. So you don't get mistaken for disrespecting somebody and then something pop off. So everybody just kind of keep their hands and keep them space.

CHRISTINE [00:09:43] After being in Jamaica for some time. Wanda decided to return to Atlanta, and I asked her to describe her experience.

WANDA [00:09:53] I was just having, I was super heavy. I was disappointed and I was hurt. I was trying to find a job. And that was really difficult. I went back to Atlanta and was just like, "Oh, maybe it's me, maybe I'm, I'm too fanciful. You're not supposed to be able to live abroad, you're not supposed to be able to figure things out," really, it was just the fear that swallowed me up, it was a money thing, because I was finding ways to make money. But it was a lack of faith in myself to continue to be able to sustain myself. And so that's why I ended up back in Atlanta, and I got to brew on that lesson for some time. The people that I had relationships with before, came with the job, and I didn't have that job anymore. And that's something else that I learned about, you know, just growing up, you know, you talk to people, and you're at work. And I don't have a lot of people that are close to me. And so I had the tendency of putting people inside my heart. And it took me a long time to learn not to do that. So what I ended up doing was, I'm huge into music. So while there, I had to occupy my actual brain, because no job could ever do that. So I started a tech company, it was called *Stage Huddle*. And what it did was take social media for musicians, and map out where their fans and followers were, it was an app in the App Store. So I had that built and went through some Georgia Tech programs. And I forget what the community there is called, but they have a whole building full of startups. And I would go to hackathons, which is where people with an idea. People who have design skills, user experience design skills. And then people who are programmers who do the back end work of building the actual functions, that when you click a button, it actually works. So those three types of people would come together, and they would build a prototype over a weekend. So I was mixing in and out with those folks and trying to find a technical co-founder for my app since it was already built. But it was built on social media platforms that changed like every day, so I wasn't functioning. And I was also doing live music stuff. So I got together this ragtag band of individuals who also played musical instruments, and I ended up doing a music hackathon. So people with the idea to help push the music industry forward. I invited them to come together to create a prototype and to present in front of judges and go through the process of creating that event and getting sponsors for the event. So yeah, I just, I kept busy until I think after the second hackathon, I did. I was just like, "this isn't enough. I'm, this is fun." Um, well, it was kind of fun, because I kept getting screwed over by people who told me they could produce so I paid two or three different programmers to create the stuff that I wanted to create for the music industry and never got anything, never got any code, never got any results. I was just like this saying that I don't want to stay here. Now I'm forcing myself to stay here before I wanted to just duke it out. See if there was anything salvageable here. And I found out there wasn't. So I set

my sights on leaving, I was aggressively saving. And I was aggressively planning to leave. And it didn't even really matter where I literally didn't care where. But I was leaving. And I had a better idea of what I needed to do to make that sustainable. So and that was like, maybe a year. So I guess the year of 2015.

CHRISTINE [00:13:58] Atlanta was not working out for Wanda at all. So I asked her, What did she decide to do next?

WANDA [00:14:06] The goal was really to travel with community in mind. So I was trying to go where there were other hubs of digital nomads, and I thought that Vietnam would be a good start, for whatever reason, so I planned for Vietnam, a friend of mine, her boyfriend worked for Delta. So I got a buddy pass. And I was like it's about to go down it's December 2015. Let's do it. Gonna stop through Japan, because that's one of the routes that Delta takes. So I tried to get on a flight and it never really worked out. I guess they were doing payload, which is where they choose to carry things over people. And it was the holidays. So I just kept going to the airport, kept going to the airport. I think I spent one night at the airport trying to get out. So I finally just went to the Delta desk and met this couple who I didn't know was a couple at the time. But I was just like, "Where can I go? And they were like London's wide open and you get that business class," and I was like, "Sign me up." I actually got on the flight. I have my champagne. And it was a done deal. So I went to London with Vietnam close.

CHRISTINE [00:15:18] So instead of going to Vietnam, Wanda has decided to go to London. And so I had to ask her if she had a game plan in mind. Upon her arrival in London.

WANDA [00:15:30] None I was chilling, I have the champagne. So I have the champagne. I have my little pod. I would not have minded if the flight were a little bit longer. I love my little pod and them bringing me whatever I want, when I want and my blanket. After I landed, I guess I was tipsy enough to not mind how rude immigration was. I definitely noticed the next time I went and that makes me never want to go to London ever again. At least not through Heathrow. Is it Heathrow? Yeah, Heathrow. Maybe try a different airport because it was just terrible. They give you the worst shakedown out of I've been traveling for four and a half years now at all the airports. Out of all the airports. They've been the absolute worst. Don't, nobody wants your raggedy country, honey. Okay? It's in the shade 95% of the time, okay? You have three days of summer, get out of my face, and the attitudes to match seriously. British people are the most stiff, efficient chips is your national dish, homie, you don't even season that. That's how y'all are. I'm gonna get started on that. But I will say that they rated the world for spices and didn't learn how to use one of them anyway. So after I was tipsy enough to just barely notice how ugly immigration was. I had to crack open my laptop, I had nowhere to stay. So I had to crack over my laptop and get to finding a place to stay. I had racked up a whole bunch of points. I was point hacking. I was intentionally building up points before I left. So I'll use some points to book a few nights for a hotel proactively. I had also signed up for trusted house sitters. While I was staying at the place I was staying, looking for houses and ended up getting one for I think it was two or three months at a place just outside of London. It was a military family. So it was a military community. And it was cold and the dogs were super cheeky. You had to super super tidy up or

they would eat any and everything. It was a nightmare. Never knowing just like, "Did I, did I lock everything up?" and then coming down in the morning and not knowing what you will find. And then like one of them dodged off at one point and that was terrible. So I get back to their house and the owners calling and I'm like, "Hey, girl," she's like, "Is everything okay?" And "Well, actually," she's like, "Yes, somebody in the neighborhood Facebook group says they have her and they're going to bring her by." "Oh my god. Okay, hey, thanks". But they had this gorgeous wooded area in the back. And I still think about the wooded area in the back. It was so wonderful and lovely. The neighborhood wasn't really accessible. There was a bus that ran to a little town that was near. But I was just happy to be out, honestly. So even though it wasn't the most convenient. I really appreciated that experience.

CHRISTINE [00:18:30] I asked Wanda what she was doing for work at the time.

WANDA [00:18:34] There wasn't any work involved. So financially, I have put myself in a position. When I told you before that I had planned to go to school that included applying for scholarships. I was doing a live, the other day and some of the participants, and some of the panelists were talking about student loans. I didn't have that. But I built my life to not have that. That's just the kind of forethought that I had. So I got a bunch of scholarships for college. So I didn't have to pay for college. So I didn't have those bills. And I didn't really live like that in Atlanta where I had a bunch of credit cards, by consumer that all I had was savings and points, which is another kind of savings. So when I was in London, I had space. I wasn't paying for housing and housing is your most expensive cost no matter where you are. And so since that was taken care of and all I had to do was pay for food and like transportation. Then I had some freedom. And that's like for the first time in a long time and forever time freedom to explore the things I was interested in. So I was spending some time learning WordPress, or learning coding Ruby on Rails. I just spent time dabbling in whatever I wanted to dabble in, I got some rest and you know walk the dogs in the woods and just spent my time however, I wanted to spend my time, but it was usually on my laptop. To be fair, I was also really big into photography at the time. So I was taking a lot of photos and I had a lot of video and you know, playing around with editing and stuff like that. So that's how I spent my time I didn't have any income, I was just living off my savings

CHRISTINE [00:20:22] after her first house in London, I asked her, where did she decide to go next.

WANDA [00:20:29] But after London, I got a house-sit in Spain, and also got another house-sit back in London, with a different place. I spent quite a bit of time in London, I don't remember how much exactly right now, but I made it to several different parts, before I went to Spain, and then one of them wanted me to come back. So I went back to London. Then I went to Italy for a little bit. And then I have a couple different houses in France. And then I spent I think two months in Ireland on a house sit and that was just really beautiful. And then after Ireland, that's when I left to go to Vietnam.

CHRISTINE [00:21:09] So Wanda finally head to Vietnam. And I asked her, What was it like to finally land in the country that you had originally planned on going to? Was it everything you dreamed of, and more?

WANDA [00:21:24] You know, you have an idea about something but you just never really know if it's for you until you experience it, everybody's experience is going to be different. Everybody's body is different. Everybody's skin is different. Hair is different, your ancestors are different, stuff is just going to hit differently. So I get to Vietnam, and I'm looking around for the digital nomads, I thought were there. And they were not, not that I saw not in any meaningful kind of way. But at the time, you had to get a year visa. And I'm not one to waste money. So I spent three months in Hachiman, or Saigon. And then I spent another six months in Danang. And then after that I went to Chiang Mai.

CHRISTINE [00:22:10] I asked Wanda to describe to me her experience as a Black woman in Asia.

WANDA [00:22:15] So I've been to Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Those are the countries that I visited. I haven't made it to, anywhere else. Vietnam is the absolute pit. For me. I don't like the pointing, and the laughing. I just don't understand it. I don't understand how you can look another human being in the face. And obviously make fun of them. And think that that's okay. And I don't like how people try to pathologize their behavior either. And make excuses for them. That's almost as far as them making fun of you directly. Thailand is very different. In Thailand, they don't care. You walk around, do whatever you want. People may look, they may be curious. I don't even see them really linger look, not really. I was in Myanmar for two seconds on a visa run, a border run from Thailand. And they were super, super curious. But no, just looking at your way. They just kind of stare. Everybody stared just because you're just super different. Everybody stared. But it was just a passive kind of staring at your way. For some reason I wasn't uncomfortable. Maybe if I lived there, I would be like I said it was just a matter of maybe an hour. And for reference, I've been like, in several different parts of Thailand, the Southern and not so much the Middle actually. But Northern and Southern, and a few of the islands in the Southern part. So Indonesia is split up, you have West Sumatra, which is right next to Malaysia, then you get down to East Java, which is an extension of that, essentially. And then all the other parts. So many different islands, Indonesia has just a whole bunch of areas. So the only parts that I've been to are Bali, and they pretty much keep (English word, inaudible). And they just worried about serving their ancestors, you'll see the banana leaf and the rice, the colorful rice and the flowers put out as offerings everywhere. They've just turned into the people and they're not really worried about nobody else. But West Sumatra, I've been to three different areas. And that's where I encountered racism at the airport. And I wrote about it. It's basically racial profiling. So if you're Black and you're flying into the country, they assume that you have something to do with drugs with drug dealing. And so like, I was taken into a room and very intimately pat down once, that was in Mason, which is in the northern part of West Sumatra. And then, the other places were just a, well actually not both, the other place they tried to and because I had been through that other experience I protested loudly and wanted to file a report and they told me I couldn't file a report which was a bold faced lie. And then the other place it

was just a cursory, the man was asking me what was in a sealed tea bag. So you know how packets of tea come when you buy-in-a-box. The thing is, is it was written in Bahasa I think I bought it in Malaysia or whatever. So it was written in Bahasa, and they speak Bahasa other words were the same in both languages, Indonesian Bahasa and Malaysian Bahasa. So why are you asking me what it is when it clearly says on the package what it is? So those were my three encounters. That lady that I protested, she was trying to get loud, but she didn't know I was gonna get louder, because she wasn't about to do with what other lady did three. So that's my experience with Indonesia in terms of the people, they're curious, and they'll stare quite a bit. But racism at the airport. Malaysia doesn't care about anything. You might not even get a second glance, it depends on where you are. So ethnically mixed, you have the Chinese to Indian to Malay. You also have they call them Orang Asli, they are original folks whose land everybody's actually on, but you don't really see them. So yeah, it just kind of depends. Chinese might stare a little bit more than anybody else.

CHRISTINE [00:26:31] I asked Wanda about her experience dating abroad,

WANDA [00:26:35] Men are gross everywhere. For me, it seems more like who are you willing to work it out with when it comes to a romantic partner. And that's, on that last period, who are you willing to work it out with, there are going to be problems, you're not going to see eye to eye. But who are you willing to do the work with. Also part of that equation is somebody that's willing to do the work with you, if you're working and the other person isn't working? That doesn't work. I don't know what kind of relationships other people have. Because a lot of times you don't get to see inside them. You don't see the petty fights, you don't see the serious fights, you don't see the harm, that they cause one another. All you see is what they present the photos, the videos, or even you know, just seeing them out together. But you never really know the inside. And then all the things that you see about the inside of relationships, it has to be bull, right? It has to be complete, fakery. If, first of all, if you're attracted to men, I'm sorry. Sorry about it. There's a lot of men out there who live in, not doing their own work. And they think they're a prize. And that is the patriarchal society that a lot of women find those are the patriarchal waters, a lot of women find themselves swimming in men who put themselves and their mothers who also put them there. And so they expect you to put them there too, on that pedestal. It's really tricky, it's really, really tricky. Finding a man who is putting down his privilege. Black men too, don't think they're absolved. They got, absolutely have privilege. So yeah, good luck. You're gonna need it.

CHRISTINE [00:28:25] I asked Wanda, what her family thought of all of her travels, in her living abroad?

WANDA [00:28:33] Do you have to ask them? I don't know how they feel or think or anything. I don't even know their phone numbers. I don't talk to my family. So I'm the youngest of 10 children. And it's always been that way we've never been close. So sometimes what happens when you travel is you have time to process right? Well, I did quite a bit of that before. But I've been able to give it maybe more meaning in my travels in these last four and a half years. So I've been able to develop some language and identify some patterns and stuff regarding my

family, or at least put a name to it to what I was experiencing. So yeah, I don't, I don't miss them at all. There's one sister that I'll message from time to time, but there's just like a whole lot of hurt, a whole lot of pain.

CHRISTINE [00:29:24] Hey, I hope that you are enjoying this episode of *Flourish In The Foreign* and if you are please consider supporting the podcast by either becoming a *Patreon* subscriber at <http://www.patreon.com/flourishforeign> tipping the podcast via *CashApp* at \$flourishforeign *Buy Me A Coffee* at <http://www.buymeacoffee.com/flourishforeign> or purchasing a piece of production equipment via our Amazon wishlist at <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/support>. I also want to invite you all to check out the plethora of resources that I've compiled for you all, at the website <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/resources> you will find a book list to help you get stay and thrive abroad, as well as the build a business abroad guide in *Moving Abroad With Intention* guide. All right. Let's continue the show. So this interview was recorded about nine months ago. And so a lot of things have changed. But I definitely want to include Wanda's thoughts on the Covid 19 pandemic, while living in Malaysia. And if she had any thoughts on the Malaysian government's response to the pandemic.

WANDA [00:30:47] So Malaysia is kind of like America light a little bit. This is the place where everybody comes to work from a lot of surrounding countries, illegally or legally. So whenever COVID started getting serious, they locked everything down, told everybody to stay inside, tell people they were not allowed to come out in groups. If you were coming shopping, only one person from the family was supposed to come to do that to take care of the shopping, there were queues for shopping, they wanted you to sign in, they eventually developed some technology, where you could just scan yourself in sign in like your name and your phone number so they could track they also took your temperature. And then they have different things to be able to take your temperature now, aside from the little forehead joints, they only open the country back up a little bit. Because people needed to make money. I don't remember how long. It was the movement control order phase one. I don't remember how long that lasted, but just long enough for them to be like "Alright, yeah, somebody's got to make some money out here." They sent Malaysian some money, the electricity company was supposed to be given some discounts. I don't know if it's a real discount or just a, "Hey, this is what you actually used. And we won't charge you for it now. But you'll pay later." We'll see. But yeah, so they started opening up some businesses. And then they started opening up more businesses. So right now they're at the phase where pretty much everything is open, except for maybe massage parlors or something like that. People can go outside and do exercise. They couldn't do that before. I think you could even like swim at your community pool. If you live in a place like that a lot of the foreigners were really pissed about not being able to swim in their pools. I think you're still not legally supposed to go enjoy riding with your friends. If there's more than two people in a vehicle or on a vehicle, I guess, motorbikes count. They're supposed to be families. So the city where I am is easier to control maybe because a smaller, I think larger cities have a bigger problem controlling their population, they allowed interstate travel, especially for some, I think it was a holiday that kind of prompted that where maybe it was the end of Ramadan, I want to say, I'm not for sure. Where they wanted people to be able to go to their hometowns to visit with their people like they always do. So they started interstate travel. And now what's

happening is because in KL (Kuala Lumpur), which is I think four hours away by car, some people from KL, were transporting the disease. And so now they're trying to super enforce which they kind of already had. People just relax about it. But they're starting back to super enforce the mask policy to wear your mask. I don't think that they have resumed religious services. I don't think people can go to the mosque. Or maybe they can because Hajj was just here. And I think that they did. I'm not super sure because I don't go outside. Anyway, overall, I think the response has been good.

CHRISTINE [00:34:10] As I mentioned at the beginning, Wanda is the host and creator of Black Women Travel Podcast. I asked her to tell me more about it and tell me the inspiration behind creating Black Women Travel Podcast.

WANDA [00:34:27] So when I was bumbling around Vietnam not meeting the people I wanted to meet, I encountered some Black women. And I was like there have to be more of us and we don't have a place to touch base. So I started the Black Woman Digital Nomad Entrepreneur Group. And I was the super long title right? So it's basically like, location independent Black woman. So in the group, I wasn't selling anything. I tried a lot of the stuff that the other groups were doing, you know, prompts every couple of days to get your talk and inspiration, all that kind of stuff. And it wasn't a lot of people, but they weren't engaged either. So I let it sit. So I wanted to find a way to bring the ladies in that group closer together. So that's when I started the podcast. But what I found, instead of it bringing the group closer together, it just created the community that I was always looking for, of Black women travel enthusiasts. So it started with the group, I did start the interviews there. But then I went over to Twitter and found all these amazing ladies, and how wonderful and tight knit they were, if anybody asked about anything, they were so happy and so fast to put each other on and not just themselves. And that's everything I'm about, about we all need to eat. And I know from even the state level days of what it's like to put something out in the world, and the people that you know, see it, and do nothing about it, they don't share it, they don't like it, they don't say that they're going, they do nothing. And so that community was really amazing and wonderful to encounter. And so I started interviewing a lot of those. And then I came to Instagram, my arch nemesis, I do not like Instagram, but I guess Instagram don't like me either. So I guess it's mutual, right? Basically, the podcast is just very much what you're doing, Christine is very much about sharing the quiet parts out loud, telling a bigger story, getting to the details of who a person is, and the choices that led them to express themselves in the world. So it's been magical and wonderful connecting with all these different kinds of Black women with all kinds of stories from everywhere imaginable. And I can't wait to meet even more different kinds of black women from even more different places. It's been really, really important for me to include as many kinds of Black women as possible. So that's body shape, that is body capability. Are you differently abled, that is different religion that also looks like trans women being included in the conversation as well, that was extremely important to me. And then the whole gender binary concept is I don't know, it's kind of old, right? Why are we still checking this man and woman box? But I don't know. I just kind of, I guess, I don't know, we kind of need boxes. Even gender fluid is a box to check. Right? But anyway, yeah, that's, that's what the podcast is about is about all these gorgeous, beautiful travelers. Also, it was important for me to include other digital nomads, and people who like their

jobs, or who want the stability of a job. I like to find creative ways to travel within those parameters.

CHRISTINE [00:38:07] I asked Wanda to share some advice with all of you who are interested in moving abroad.

WANDA [00:38:13] You cannot solve a problem from a stressed state. And what you're experiencing, you have to ask how long has this been going on. So first, you need to breathe and find a space mentally, emotionally, and possibly even physically, where you can just take some time for yourself. And just be a space where you don't have to do a whole lot. And it doesn't have to be like really complicated. It can be super simple. It could be in your bedroom, it could be in your favorite chair. It can be on the floor in your living room, but just some uninterrupted time for yourself to just be and to breathe. Because in that silence, and that peace and that quiet. And that youness you'll be able to hear. If you ask yourself the question, What do I really want? You'll be able to hear so clearly the answer. And then it's really up to you whether you answer the call or not. All the other stuff is real. But it doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to have control, the confusion, the burnout, those are just prolonged states of stress. And if you could practice taking that time, it doesn't even have to be long, really. But it can be meaningful, it can be impactful. If you don't make that time for yourself, nobody's gonna make it for you. So taking that time to sit or stand or walk. It can look a lot of different ways. You gave a walk while you do this, but you are just breathing and hearing yourself. What do I really want and then you work one more thing is that people also should keep in mind there's all this Different kinds of traveling Instagram is a lie. The people that post there are vacationers and that is something that's a huge distinction to keep in mind. They go with the equipment, they go with their time off, they're gonna get their content. If you are a digital nomad, you're living somewhere else. You're washing dishes somewhere else. You know what I mean? So, the lifestyle is just different. There may be cool things that you see. And do, you know, you make time for that. But that is a distinction.

CHRISTINE [00:40:30] I asked Wanda, where she saw herself in the foreseeable future.

WANDA [00:40:35] In a club with some bass, or a little bottle of champagne in the VIP, I mean, doing more of the same, creating more more opportunities, more high level opportunities at that. I love tea, I would love to have a curated tea box monthly tea subscription service, I want to make tea ice cream, there's so many milk teas that I think would make great ice creams. Yeah, there's just a whole bunch of other stuff I'm interested in pursuing as well, I guess I'll just continue to explore. I'm definitely ready for a home base, Malaysia has been that. But I'm ready for a new one. I don't like it anymore.

CHRISTINE [00:41:13] Wellness, my favorite part of the interview because I feel like it is always so illuminating with each and every guest. So I asked Wanda, what is her personal definition of wellness, and how she thought living abroad has influenced that practice. And that definition of wellness.

WANDA [00:41:37] Very much goes back to that little girl in Marion, Illinois, who was figuring a way out, that girl knew that she didn't belong. And she didn't know exactly where she did belong. But she knew I was there. And that was an important part of my process. And it's the same thing with the United States. There's something about my spirit, there is something about my energy, who I am as a person, being there does not lend to my wellness. And in saying yes to myself and all the scary parts that came with saying yes to myself, I was able to say yes to my wellness, to my thing myself as a whole person to taking action towards having a fulfilling holistic, and well life. And so that's mostly been my wellness. Now I have some other challenges, because of my hermit, because of my tendency towards being a hermit, I have lost some movement in my life. And I've tried a couple different things. So my wellness is not exactly where I want it to be right now. But in terms of you know, there's always something to improve. But in terms of overall, I'm not in America, and even being in Vietnam, I was not in America, and it was way better. Even though I did not like it there. And I developed anxiety there, I was not in America.

CHRISTINE [00:43:09] I asked Wanda to share with us a motto and affirmation mantra that she lives by. And this is what she shared.

WANDA [00:43:20] I've had to go through quite a few things personally. And that's part of everybody's journey of saying yes to themselves. So the thing that has gotten me through is you have not tried everything yet. I know you've tried a lot, but you have not tried everything. And maybe even some things are worth trying again, just with a different set of circumstances. So I would say that that is kind of what I live by.

CHRISTINE [00:43:46] Thank you so much Wanda for your patience and your grace and for sharing your story with all of us. If you are interested in keeping up with Wanda, you can via social media.

WANDA [00:44:02] If you're talking socially, so yeah, now be on Instagram, but you know, I'll be having Instagram for whatever. So if you want to connect with the account there, that's cool. You can dm freely. So feel free to reach out at [@bwtpod](#) is the podcast . I've really been hanging on Twitter. I think that's where you're able to have more conversations and connect a bit more easily with people's minds, which I really enjoy. So I hang out on [@bwtpod](#) the most. I really do Facebook. I just have a group there. Wow. If you want to add me as a friend on Facebook, all I'm gonna do is share your stuff. So maybe that's for your benefit. So feel free to do that too. My name is Wanda Duncan, should be pretty easy to find on Facebook. I'm also on LinkedIn as Wanda Dunkin and hook up with me there.

CHRISTINE [00:44:58] Thank you again, Wanda. And thank you all so much for listening to this episode. If you want to learn more about Wanda definitely check out her show notes page at <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/episodes/Wanda>. As I mentioned before, I recently launched the Moving Abroad with Intention Guide, which is free on the website <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/resources>. So definitely check that out. But I have an amazing announcement, which is, I am launching the Moving Abroad With Intention course. And

if you're on the email list, you've already know that because you got the heads up early, so if you're not on the email list, make sure that you're subscribed to the email list so you can get the heads up. I'm currently in presale for the course. And that means that the course is being sold at the extremely low price of 99 Euros. And it is only going to be sold at this price for a limited time, basically until August 6, or until all of the seats have been filled, and they are filling up quite quickly. If you are interested in this presale offer, you need to check out the link in the description of this episode. and sign up. It is a five week course, we're covering everything from country selection to repatriation. So if you are interested in the presale, definitely grab it. And unfortunately, I will not be able to extend the offer. So if you hear this late, sorry. But definitely sign up if you hear now, if you're hearing it early, sign up. Now. I'm also going to be having a move with intention workshop on Sunday, August 8. And I'm gonna go over the guide and what you can expect with the course. And we're gonna have a lot of fun. So if you're interested in community, and really chatting about your move abroad, and what it looks like and go over the guide, and learning more about the course, this is the time to do so. So make sure that you are signed up for the emails and make sure that you are signed up for the workshop. Again, if you're hearing this late, sorry, I'm, we'll be having other events and things like that in the future. The thing is, is that I actually don't know when to next time I'm going to run the moving abroad with intention course, I may do so again this year, or I might wait until 2022. So if you are ready and you're serious about moving abroad, and you're ready to start getting your ducks in a row seriously, you're really ready to not only do the research but also looking for community that's going to support you in moving in an aligned and sustainable manner. Definitely sign up for this course either catch it in the presale or catch it for regular price. And if you are interested in launching your own podcast, I highly recommend joining WOC Podcasters Insiders Membership. I've been a member of this membership for a while now. And honestly, I feel that the reason the podcast has done so well. And the reason the podcast is continuing to grow and take on even more exciting opportunities is because of the support and the great advice that I get from WOC insiders. So if you're wanting to launch your podcast or just get more serious about your podcast, or perhaps monetize your podcast, definitely join the WOC Podcasters Insiders Membership today. And you can do so via the link in the description of this episode, or on the website <http://www.flourishintheforeign.com/resources>. It's a great way for you to support this podcast at no additional cost to you. If you have not followed the podcast on Youtube or on Instagram. What are you doing? There's a lot of great content on both platforms. On Instagram. I've done many, many, many Instagram lives, some solo and some with past guests that are jam packed with amazing gems on moving and living abroad. And on YouTube. I really have a lot of great conversations with some past guests about what they're up to now and how living abroad really has changed their lives. So check it out <http://www.youtube.com/flourishintheforeign> and <http://www.instagram.com/flourishforeign>. As always, thanks so much to Zachary Higgs for producing the music of this year's podcast. If you're in need of music for your next creative endeavor. He is definitely your guy. You can find all of his information in the show notes of this episode. And please remember that it's not about getting abroad. It's not about being abroad. It's about thriving abroad. So go abroad and cultivate a life well lived. See you next time. Bye. On the next episode of Flourish In The Foreign.

NEXT EPISODE GUEST [00:50:31] I don't know if it is actually exercised in our say at least the American society. We labor but do we vision we endure. What do we cultivate? We get things going, but are we present. I want so much more for us. I want so much more for you. I truly, truly do.

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