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Alicia Keys on Her Upcoming Album 'Keys,' Life Lessons From Her Mom, and More

The singer opened up during a special panel at *Marie Claire's* "Power Trip: Off the Grid" conference.



By [Rachel Epstein](#) Nov 9, 2021



On November 8, Alicia Keys and Emmy-winning *Entertainment Tonight* host Nischelle Turner joined *Marie Claire* for its "Power Trip: Off the Grid" event at the [Miraval Berkshires Resort & Spa](#), where the two women had a lively conversation in front of some of the country's most powerful women business leaders and executives.

The conversation began with Keys discussing her aptly titled upcoming album, KEYS, which will be released on December 10. "It's this exploration of unlocking and this idea of opening up," explains Keys. "I've come to a place where I'm allowing myself to feel good. There's also a piece of ourselves that stops us from feeling good. We feel like we're not supposed to feel good. If it's too good something's wrong...it's a bunch of bullsh*t that we get taught throughout our lives."

She continues, "I really want to break those chains and those oppressive behaviors that we find ourselves falling into. The allowance of feeling good is a freedom. We deserve to feel good, and you can celebrate when you feel good."



Nischelle Turner and Alicia Keys at *Marie Claire's* "Power Trip: Off the Grid" event.
Allie Holloway

Keys also talked about the "multiplicity" of herself and how she channeled it on her double album, where one side includes the original songs and the other has remixed samples of the originals that are considered the "unlocked" versions. Keys says she never expected to create a double album, but she feels very excited about it because ultimately "you can't capture yourself in one song."

Read on for more tidbits from Keys during her inspiring conversation with Turner, below.

On Keys's music and how it's evolved over the past two decades:

"At the beginning, you think it's going to be over tomorrow. The fortitude and the ability to be fluid and transform throughout all kinds of times and situations really makes me very proud," reflects Keys. "Musically, the thing that's been amazing is I always felt like I wanted to do something different. For so many years, I was chasing whatever was next for me. I find myself now coming back and I'm like, *you know what, what I was doing at the beginning was kind of amazing.* It's so interesting that you spend your life looking for more, only to find that what you always were was always enough."

On battling imposter syndrome:

"For so long, I felt like *what am I doing here?* Honestly, I still feel that in so many ways. There's an awe about it. I don't think it's necessarily a bad thing to feel like you're excited amongst the things that are coming to you in your life, but I have noticed that I've gotten much more comfortable with knowing what I'm worth and knowing what I deserve and demanding it," says Keys. "Sometimes it takes a lot because I think as women, oftentimes we do feel like we have to be so busy and so damn compromising. There's a part of me that just wants to hold on to your space and to your original thought and idea...I'm definitely done giving my power away."



Allie Holloway

On finding "her forward":

"The pandemic gave me a a super fast forward into something that I knew I would get to eventually, but I didn't exactly know how it would reveal itself. I always connected with people on a very emotional level—just a human, everyday level—but to really do that in a way that starts to allow that communication to go beyond a record or a performance and really get into a conversation about who we are, what we're doing, what can we do better. I really found that it started to reveal itself to me through the pandemic not only through the music, but from other pieces, like Keys Soulcare, which is definitely my way forward.

It makes so much sense because 'soul care' is undefinable. I would like to give it no definition in the sense of limits, but it really is a lifestyle. The concept of it is about how we are pouring into ourselves guilt-free, and what are those tools? I realized that so many people aren't introduced to meditation or positive affirmations or an idea of what you want for yourself and honoring your body, your mind, your spirit. How are you feeling those things? How are you dealing with the invisible parts of you that really create all of you?

That what Keys Soulcare is about. We started with a range of skincare because it's something that has been very difficult for me growing up dealing with so many hormones and emotions and stresses. I didn't realize that all of that was coming out, you know, physically. That was happening to me through acne and different things like that. So I was always kind of obsessed with *how can I create something that would help those issues that I have?* But it also explores more about the toxicity that we can really ingest with our relationships and the foods we eat and all these things that we're all learning about now...It's really beautiful to create a community. That's what Keys Soulcare is also about. It's a community of uplifting each other."

On activating "the divine within":

"As we were creating Keys Soulcare, I realized we have all of the 'care's,' but we don't actually have soul care. As a culture, we don't actually put the care of our soul as the top priority in our lives. It definitely was a part of the journey and I think it came a lot from experiencing a lot of energies, especially on the way to places we're all trying to go."

On her perfect day:

"Everything is very comfy and warm and cozy and I just transfer from the bed to the couch to another position and then I'm reading a little bit and maybe I'm watching a movie or meditating and sitting by the fire. I never go anywhere, and I never put on anything too difficult. Hopefully someone's cooking. And rubbing my feet. Something like that."

On not having to sacrifice herself for success:

"Of course you have to make choices. At some point you have to choose something over something else. But the ability to choose is clearly mine. I know I can have a balanced life. Before, if I wasn't working 19 hours of the 24 hours, I wasn't being accomplished. Now I understand that was not real and what's actually important is the balance between it all...you can choose to make sure to create time for yourself. That doesn't mean it's easy, but you can choose what your life looks like."

On what her mother taught her growing up that she understands now more than ever:

"She never lied to me. She always told me the truth. She has always been very raw and very honest and completely herself. I love that about her so much. She's such a powerhouse. She's my example of womanhood. My favorite thing that she ever taught me that I truly understand more than ever is the golden rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' If we could look at whatever we're doing and think *if that was happening to me, would I be happy with that?* That really gives me lot of clarity and allows me to figure out how to operate in that moral compass. I'm a strong power woman because of that woman."