

## **Session 12.2: A Conversation with Pancho Ramos Stierle**

Living in the Gift

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(Audio begins mid sentence.)

***Pancho Ramos Stierle (PRS)*** : ....A culture of consent or generosity in a way, so to be able to hold space is one of the first great practices to start seeing different reality, you know how to connect with that subtle and subtlest reality that is there. It doesn't need words and that, it is really, real.

***Charles Eisenstein (CE)*** I just had the recording off, but I turned it back on again because this might be a good point to start with. So you were saying in western culture we tend to fill up empty spaces, silent spaces and you were relating that to a sense of entitlement. For me it's more a kind of anxiety that comes from ...laughter...it is not OK here. I don't belong here so I have to impose some kind of control over reality.

PRS: Yeah, and for me it became super clear because you know on Monday's I practice silences so I remember when I was in a partnership and my partner at the time, we were exploring that piece where I came to this insight that on silent Mondays, just because I was in silence there is this space and then really, really often people will just fill it up, just because I'm not speaking then they speak to me. If I want to, or not that was out of the question, that was just fill it up. And I had been pretty OK with that, this is a practice I have been doing for awhile but I was just noticing but "oh my goodness" that is exactly what I do when I am starting to get more intimate with you I was telling her that, I have this drive, just because there's space doesn't mean, when we intimate that's great but to go further in that intimacy without that consent or ....And it was OK you know you want to get a little more intimate that's fine, in the end you are in a relationship, in a romantic relationship and those moments are fluid and that's great but there was something a little bit of taking that space for granted without having that conversation so that was that immediate insight for me to start practicing that in other areas of my life not just fill it up. Oh and then I see it all the time you know living in the gift or when you do things that are not traditionally valued in the financial wealth system, a lot of the times we tend to monetise that . There's like a vacuum created with this new way of being then we have the tendency as humans in this day and age to try to monetise it and put it a price, what is the price of this ? Or they might be missing out so we are going to start go fund me or spread the word about what we are doing because there might be misuse, under use of the resources.

CE: I have a comment on that, laughing, but I just want to ask Carey to be quiet.

PRS: It's OK, no it's OK!

CE (*speaking to son*) "Carey can you be a little more quiet?"

PRS: laughing

CE: Thank you sweetie

PRS: That's real wealth, you know part of my recognition of wealth, you know people talk about this but ah people talk about "financial wealth" as if it is the only kind of wealth, you know there are a lot of kinds of wealth. So you have a kid around an environment or chickens you know in Oakland and in the Bay Area roosters and chickens are banned! You cannot have like, but of course in Oakland if you're... *inaudible* ...we don't care, right? Around here in my neighbourhood there is like 6 chickens around here (laughing) but I just love seeing those lenses, seeing that wealth in many other ways. So I love to have Carey, sounds around, that's life! DNA of the movement... celebrate DNA of the movement.

CE: Yeah, so one thing that I was thinking about, yeah I am happy to have him around too but when he gets real loud I have trouble concentrating.

PRS: laughing

CE: So what you were kind of saying about silence and consent, it reminded me of the Quaker practice or the Quaker guideline for when to speak in a meeting, which is, if it an improvement on the silence then you can speak.

PRS: Wow, what about that...

CE: ....which is a very high standard!

PRS: laughing, well what about that!

CE: And really, what you're asking, is this a gift? Is this a gift to the space?

PRS: Phew...what a great motto right, having that in your awareness right there?

CE: Yeah, and then of course, like you were saying you can translate that into other situations, other conversations and begin to be aware, where is my speech coming from and why am I speaking, what am I serving in this speech and I find it is a tricky practice because it can so easily be hi-jacked by what I call, the war against the self where it is about condemning your bad ego motives. Punishing yourself for that.

PRS: Yes

CE: But I find it actually so much more effective as a change strategy to just give attention to it, like "oh yeah, I was serving my self importance", "oh yeah I was trying to make myself look smart" Oh yeah, OK.

PRS: That is such a great practice because usually in other circles and spheres here and spirituality and meditators and other kind of same eco-systems, that part is very overlooked. On the one hand we have these experiences of oneness and the undivided nature of all that is and wonder and it's beautiful and then the other part is that we have these blind spots and just because we have those experiences doesn't mean that we got rid of slavery or that we got rid of the way that we treat our women or reflected in the way that we are treating Mother Earth and we kind of don't look at those shadows and that is just a huge disservice and how would we address that part of ourselves is key because that's the way, how we are connecting with other people who might be a little bit having a different perspective on life and it's a practice of being gentle. I remember the last kind of image of my Mum cradling the suffering of the world that starts with one son.

CE: Oh by the way, in case I was supposed to introduce you

PRS and CE: laughing

CE: This is my friend, Pancho. I never know how to pronounce your last name. Can you pronounce your last name for me.

PRS: Yes it's RAMOS and then the last name from the side of my Mum is STIERLE (SH-TER-LE)

CE: Stierle

PRS: Steirle and in German it means "little bull" and so "dorito" and actually my Lakota, Dakota, Nakota family, water protectors and other folk they call me so "little bull" because of that sometimes so my family calls me Pancho or Little Bull and yes. RAMOS STIERLE.

CE: So your ancestors are from Mexico and Germany?

PRS: That's right; it's a mix, a mix of citizenship of the world from all over.

CE: Awesome, OK. So the reason that I, I would love to talk to you about lots of things. The one that is on my mind and especially when I am out, relating to seeing with generous eyes

PRS: Yes

CE: And the basic idea is that the way that we see a person and the story that we hold of that person becomes and invitation to be that.

PRS: Yes.

CE: So if we see people as, say irredeemable racists or people who hate nature or something like that, we're not creating space for them to be anything else.

PRS: No. I have a great story, great story fresh from the oven

CE: Great

PRS: Your gonna love it

CE: Yeah, please

PRS: Yeah, right now?

CE: Yeah, sure.

PRS: No it's because it was so startling on my face, I couldn't believe it. You know because I think that I, I'm kind of, my ego says that I am kind of far out, my learning curve about with humans about not label them and I'm cool with that and I think that I developed some skilful means to interact even in very tense situations so I'm cool with humans. I love them and its so, so awesome and so again it was silent Monday, there was a, it was, there's something about silent Monday's where I've had a lot of experiences that I have supported my growth. So it was silent Monday, just last Monday and I'm right here as you see me right now and I started hearing this really heavy breathing of a dog. So I just open the door and look out, what do I see? I see two great pit bulls that I've never seen before here in the co-housing where we live we're like four houses and this one adult pit bull, pretty strong and a puppy, a puppy pit bull that I never seen. So what happened to my mind, the first thing is like, oh my goodness we have a 2 year old, we have a 4 year old, we have a 5 year old, I would be the dad of those kids like, I would be like what's going on here so we make the first eye contact with the pit bulls and so they know that they're in trouble and I know, hmmm, I know that I wasn't coming from a loving place at all, I was like what are you doing here, you better go out you know. I was in silence, that was the whole thing right? So I give them little bit of space and a chance to try to see if I can escort them through the right way, they didn't. They went to the more open area of the garden. I'm getting a little bit concerned because I'd never seen these dogs before and then there is a point where one of the co-housing has a little aisle where they could go back to the street and there's a bigger drive way on the other side. So my intention was oh maybe they could get the message and go through the aisle and go back to their place. So when I did that then there, then I learned later the name was Smokey. Smokey was the adult pit bull, he didn't get the message. So he just lunged at me and tried to bite me and just like start barking and growling at me, ra,ra,ra you know. I'm just retreating 5 metres and I have yellow paddle that was there on the ground because of the kids and so I just grab it he was like this close to biting me and I was like this, I grab him, he saw the yellow paddle he just like stood back and then one of the neighbours comes out. He's like "what's going on?" And then the five year old comes out this girl and she's totally scared you know, "what's going on?" And then the Mom said "Oh OK, Pancho's trying to get this dogs outside, I see. And we give a little bit more space and that and then something

beautiful happened. The Mom, just looks from kind of like a terrace, she looks down into the garden. she looks sat Smokey and says “Go home”, that’s the only thing that she say. Then Smokey like “ Oh” and starts kind of getting kind of faster pace and going to the drive way and then starts going out and the little puppy stayed. The I’m started following like 10 metres behind Smokey and I see that he goes on the sidewalk and start walking and it was like 200 metres he went back to his place, you know because I used to live in this neighbourhood down the street so I see that he goes into this place that I know that there was a lot of people that were there and then I said “OK”. He didn’t even glance once that I was behind him. He just went home. So I come back and I am clearly in a different mind set right now. This was not working, clearly. Why? Because you have all of these images that you have from people that they’re dangerous. It was the speciesism and racism at its best, just creating that image from the get go and it was not creative. So what I did when I came back, I just put my hands on the ground and kneeled down and started making, don’t tell anybody because it was silent Monday but I was like **clicking sounds**, you know making these noises to the little puppy and put my hands like as a sign of play, totally welcome and then the puppy just came running after me like wiggling his tale and he was so happy and then he was running, it was a great encounter out there. So I just started walking towards the home where these guys were going and the puppy was following me here or there, we stopped and I rubbed his belly and just one house before where he was living I just carried, carried the puppy and then turning into the drive way of this house of this of the other neighbour and what do I see? Smokey’s right there! We look and we look again but we was kind of different because the other puppy was like licking me so he could feel that there was some love going on already so he didn’t do much. So I just knocked really loudly on the hood of the car to bring attention to the humans and then the brother that takes care of these puppies comes out and he’s like “Oh did he cross your backyard” and I’m silent, I just smile and give the puppy back to this brother , you know, to this brother and then Smokey comes and then I just my hand and touch his head and it’s a sign, he’s telling me “no hard feelings !” and I’m telling him “no hard feelings !” still making eye contact but having this moment of silent reconciliation or restoration of love. And I just went back and it was so powerful for me because when this Mom, first she used her voice to say “go home” she was not talking only to Smokey, she was talking to me as well. She was saying “Pancho, go home. What is your place that you can be loving and playful? “So now I have in my tool box, the next time I see two peoples, or non human animals that I don’t know, instead of getting my gear, because I was, I had the yellow paddle in my mind since we first saw each other. Later it manifested in a physical but I had it in my mind so of course when everyone has their paddles, Smokey was freaking out because he was scared that he might not have an exit and this human that I don’t know looks scary like, I’m just the last thing I have to do is just attack and defend myself, that what he did from my ....And then when this Mom in her lovingly fierceful, motherly love says “go home” reminders that we needed to go home and we can loving and playful and the other puppy was just amazing, was the mirror **inaudible** the whole thing you know how it played out so this was just fresh from the oven so I am like “oh my goodness this is exactly how racism works, this

is speciesism if you will and all the stories that I have from the junk that I hear so that is why it is so important to see what kind of food or entertainment and media we are putting in our heart- minds because this is there and if you're not aware of that last thing you know we are all with our paddles instead of just playing with each other.

CE: Right. The system that we live in, and the media conditions us to see people in a certain way.

PRS: That's right.

CE: Like super hero movies and things like that. They condition us to see that there are evil people out in the world. And you never know whose going to be an evil person and the world is dangerous. The economic system conditions us to an environment where everybody is out for themselves and everybody is seeking a deal and possibly trying to take advantage of you so it becomes a vicious circle so we get conditioned with that and then we put that out there ...

PRS: Exactly

CE: Always thinking of that paddle

PRS: Exactly where's my boat and it becomes a self fulfilling prophecy, right?

CE: Right

PRS: It is how we underestimate the power of thoughts. Once you have that, "Oh people are so dangerous they eat babies, they **inaudible** so you better watch out and this is about survival. You know there might be like, there are humans that are out of their minds but definitely to have kind and generous thoughts at that point changes that interaction and it had to take an external longing for his Mum, like wise, that she was just strong and also it showed me a little bit, am I too unflexbile ? Why did I need to say go home with my voice and break silent Mondays, my vow of silence on Mondays, right?

CE: Yeah

PRS: That was kind of an emergency; if I was with some of the kids maybe I would do it if that might happen another time....

CE: Yeah, what does the silence serve?

PRS: **Laughing**

CE: Just an identity piece you know.

PRS: Laughing...Totally, 100%, I was like, Smokey's such a great teacher but more the Mom that was like "go home" and just with that "go home" she told Smokey and me, OK now reconnect to your true essence you know, this beautiful network of undivided love and connection and recognise each other ! Be playful!  
CE: I want to read you a quote here, from one of the Saints of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Mr. Rogers.

PRS: *Laughing*

CE: I believe that appreciation is a holy thing. That when we look for the best in a person that we happen to be in the moment we're doing what God does all the time. So in loving and appreciating our neighbour we are participating in something sacred. I want to ask you to elaborate on this idea that it's not something that we're just doing to be like God but that it actually changes the way that people respond and I'm thinking even how does this translate into political situations, how does this translate into interactions with people who might start out being hostile. How does it translate if you're in jail? How does it translate if you're confronting police or if you're confronting violent people? Or people who, or even that? Violent people are they violent people or are they in conditions that breed violence and maybe that encounter, they are like the pit bull, I they're scared of something so like, yeah how do you apply this in actual situations?

PRS: Yeah, the way that I started saying that, I think I got so far with humans is for example the last 8 years we never lock the door of the home here in East Oakland and people are shocked and like "What! It's Oakland!" and all this. Like violence and crime, you know now that the new slave, the new negro is now criminal. That's the word to use to justify and dehumanise folks.

CE: Right

PRS: Like full of crime and criminals there. We just never lock the door!

CE: *Inaudible*

PRS: That's right, that's right. When there's somebody, there's a human being that comes, that we don't know, we celebrate that! Say hey brother, how can we serve you? You know we give away fruit every Sunday and it's organic and it's fresh and the neighbours come and give that and then you see little by little how they are starting to ...oh...and here you can have some hyper local apples and they just grab one and there's the season of grapes, we also have some grapes and hey come, let me show you the garden ...

CE: They come in maybe intending to steal something or something like that

PRS: Maybe...that's the beautiful thing. I have another story of fresh from the oven from yesterday from a houseless, wise 20 year old. Because you don't know, so that's the trick. The mind has all these stories and almost all the time mostly

always gets things wrong. ...**Laughing**.... So you don't know who's this person that's showing up, so in the same way that Smokey showed up there, like why would you, if I was like from get go been celebrating and say hey, hello I have some food for you, right? With humans I have that very well trained or integrated, let's say that I have that integrated. It was kind of far out with no humans but when I do that then you can see how they start changing and sometimes you might think that it's very likely they may want to have with a different intention because you never seen that and that's I think the key. When people come, or strangers to your neighbourhood and I try to remember who told me that story but someone when they were travelling all over the planet they say the Bedouins in the dessert when a stranger comes to their home, it's so far away in the middle of the dessert that they, they get so happy they go "Oh my goodness, stranger come here, here's some tea, new story, like tell me your pilgrimage, we're so excited that you are here". And I believe that that is great, and it's not something new, it's a great culture of hospitality, a culture of generosity, culture of seeing with generous eyes that we can definitely do and we've been doing here and it works. I have to say that so far in 8 years like no one has taken anything and that's the other part, being really open that, if people want to take meditation cushions, great! We need people to have more still minds, they want to get yoga mats, wonderful, we need people to be in their bodies, they want to take organic food, excellent we need to get rid of diabetes, diabetes and obesity, right? They want to take books on non violence and the gift ecology and the non violent revolution, wonderful, we need more people to take that so we're not attached to that.

CE: Yeah, I noticed when I was at your house that most of the houses on the street had like bars on their windows and stuff and yours has a wide open door and people.... so in 8 years, nothing was ever taken?

PRS: Nothing. I think a couple of shoes there when we have gatherings there is always tonnes of shoes then something ...**inaudible**....we got a couple of shoes that were gone but other than that and it's that culture that now people are like "oh those are the crazy people that are giving fresh fruit every single Sunday", it doesn't matter if it is raining or sunny or not they're always doing that and there's a fight and they're the one's trying to break it up with as much respect and love as they can so they know. And the door is wide open people can come when they have issues so kids know that, grandma's know that, everybody knows that and that's a different culture on this block. And we have folks from all over the planet over here. We have a sister from a part of the planet called Iraq, she came in tears so many times, I can say at least 10 times on the Sundays because she is a refugee and she's taking care of American kids, kids from this part of the planet when a lot of the kids that have been killed in that part of the planet and she said like if we all could have this on every block on the planet. And she couldn't believe it, she just films every time we are giving away fruit and veggies and share it with her Dad who sometimes and there's dates and other things from the part of the planet we call Iraq and he's just sharing that love and I don't think it's that difficult there's like a flow. Mum's coming with their strollers with their babies,

when before it was really dangerous to be doing that kind of thing and then is contagious, right? It is something that we call... *inaudible*...it is so familiar, motherly love is so familiar we feel a little bit more welcome, a little bit more peaceful.

CE: So I have two questions. One is do you have any stories, an encounter perhaps, with someone who started out belligerent but through the power of how he was seen, or she, became, changed into a different reality and, you can think about that if a story comes up and thinking about the woman pushing her kid in the stroller in a quote “dangerous neighbourhood” and how even the act of doing that is sending out a message that this is a safe neighbourhood otherwise I wouldn’t be doing this. It confronts people with a data point that doesn’t fit the story of a dangerous neighbourhood.

PRS: Totally, totally. That’s why I say, when people say, oh you live in a , this is poor neighbourhood and we are poor and I was like, hmm, you no what again let’s see a brother spectrum of wealth. Financial wealth? Yes. We may have something physically here that we have to help. Yes. But spiritually and culturally you have Mom’s with strollers or have the Elder and the grandmas saying hello. Hey, come here son and they don’t know you and they’re on their porches willing to have a conversation, that is real wealth and you go to more financially affluent neighbourhoods here in Oakland and they have security cameras and patrols and in big constant fear that someone is going to take something nice and they don’t even make eye contact and there is no time for that connection. That for me is huge poverty.

CE: Yeah

PRS: Because of what you say and that human part is stolen from them so here is kind of raw that you have maybe gunshots and prostitution and people selling drugs and then we’re trying to over come that and give people choice. But then there’s this other party where there’s this salad of cultural humility. You have people from the part of the planet called China and Vietnam and Honduras and Mexico and Iraq and everywhere and people come and interact in a harmonious way, so that’s definitely, it is contagious what you were saying , it doesn’t fit into this narrative and then to bring people more aware of that about the different kind of wealth and practices.

CE: What I was going to ask was, you could almost say, under certain circumstances it might just be irresponsible or naïve to, say for a woman to walk alone at night in some neighbourhood or to push a baby around in some neighbourhood. Do you make that distinction or is that an illusionary distinction?

PRS: No, it is very real. I think if we have the slightest sign of a yellow paddle, you know in the story how we started you are going to protect or as Martin Luther King Jr. put it one time he was wearing a gun just in case he need it and then one day he realises this is not non violence this is not fearlessness and unconditional

love and beloved community, and it was until then that he broke up into a different place so if we identify and that's the tricky part like there's like the slightest sign within us of fear or kind of want protection and not coming from that place of love, it'd be irresponsible, it would be like sending people to swim when they don't know how to swim.

CE: You're not saying that if you feel fear ignore that fear and go and walk at night in that neighbourhood anyway. You're saying, maybe you can say it better than I could, what are you saying ?

PRS: **Laughter.** What I am saying is, I like to make an analogy of people who used to hold slaves. I'm a free person but you own human beings, you own slaves- that is not a free human being. In the same way if you say "I'm not afraid of anything, I'm fearless but people are afraid of you that's not being fearless. In the same way that Ghandi said it many times when doing this peace army or this brigade of peace, peace brigade that I could make a non violent person out of a violent person that's a raw energy but I cannot make a non violent person, a fearless person out of a coward of an apathetic at that point. Not saying that people cannot have that transition but it would cause way more work.

CE: Uh, huh

PRS: In the same way with fearlessness if you recognise that fear in you and you do not overlook, you do not put it under the rug and you befriend it you are going to be closer to be fearless than someone that is not. So in that way, when you see that fear arises in you then just observe it and see how it changes, it morphs and not act from that place just give them....We also were talking about holding space , it's not only in space but it's space/time as well and not act from that. Wait a little bit more and see how can you respond from a place that is not coming from that. And then maybe the wisest choice is to not go out in to a walk. Go into a walk with 5 or 10 other people if you feel that is bringing you a sense of more security and be careful also to not use the same tools right? I feel more secure walking with my gun well maybe yes but what is that bringing you know that into the mix. We are trying to compost those things because that actually is inviting the yellow paddle again , I don't know if people will get us with these values but I really like that plus you have your yellow paddle there, your cooked could and it happened to me, it happened with me and Smokey and hopefully that was a happy ending and I've been thinking, thinking about him and love every time now I pass in the past 4 days blasting love to Smokey and I can't wait to see him again and give him some food and to apologise and say "I'm sorry bro" like. "That was a really rough interaction but you've been a great teacher and how can I redeem that?"

CE: You know so I think maybe what it is, there's a process. First you become aware of a fear and you give it loving attention and then there comes a point where you recognise that fear is ready to go.

PRS: Yep

CE: Than there's that moment where you're like , yeah I'm going to walk out there and it's not that I'm going to have this fear and overcome it and do it anyway, it's that I'm ready to walk out there without the fear. Are these transitional moments from a fear state to a less fear state?

PRS: Yes

CE: ...and I wonder how that transition happens and how that's accelerated and how can we bring each other into fearlessness.

PRS: I do believe that's from, that's a great point, **inaudible**. A friend that we have **inaudible** a friend who **inaudible** Cas. He likes to say, if you are into working out and want to do a, how you call it, its bench press, that's how you call it right? 300 pounds or 400 pounds you never done that in your life and you're there and you're ready to do that, good luck, go and do it. But if you've been training with little 5 pounds and 10 pounds and you do small repetitions then you might be able to do that later on. I think the same thing works with kindness and generosity that, if all of a sudden you want to go head on with a very disruptive, violent situation that is not harmonious without having all those little moments of being kind to your Mom and to your Dad or to your neighbour or to your self really hard in this instance, it's hard but if you been doing that for a while all of a sudden people are like "how did you make that?". Well it's creating a culture of gratitude, a culture of, it's like can you see the gift in a pit bull like Smokey who shows up to you door, out of curiosity. I mean he did a pilgrimage of 200 yards, just to your spot, unsupervised, **what is the gift?** And now I am convinced there was some divine intervention, you know here's an agnostic atheist saying it was a divine intervention , send me this gift of Smokey to learn and to say "Pancho, wake up bro, go home and be playful and be less rigid " and like, yeah so I think that's that part of exercising those muscles every moment that we can be a little bit more kind, a little bit more gentler, a little bit more gracious, a little bit more humble, a little bit more vulnerable, especially us you know, we have all this testosterone and baggage that we have. How can we do more in contact with our tenderness and show it in a way that doesn't force or coerce other people.

CE: Aaah, I remember a story, well I don't know , I think, I was thinking about testosterone

PRS: **Laughing**...yeah . I think that you, do you remember that you asked me to share a story about a human being that they **inaudible**. I remember you came , I don't remember how many years ago but it was really fresh and at that time I choose not to be recorded , I think to hold the sacredness and it's around here to and now I think it's OK to share the story and I wrote it a few months ago. And the story, it's a long story but the short version of it was that a neighbour was in prison for 6 months and when he came out no one was waiting for him. Not the Dad, the Mom, the brothers, it was really sad. He came, we were the first ones

and our house at that time was Casa de Pas and we have an interaction with him and it was work party day, we were doing some gardening work. So I really hold him, I hug him for a couple of minutes. It was really beautiful, you know, welcome back brother! And then he just went on his day and then later when we were about to have lunch and we started to hear this rough kind of energy coming from the street and he was having an issue with a friend that apparently pick him up from the jail, I think it was jail, he was in prison, yeah it was Santa Rita. He was being picked up and they were having a discussion to the point that she was really verbally abusive to him and he was like “ If you don’t shut up I am going to go and whack you” and that’s what he did and so when he was going on his way I just heard that and went there but I was behind him so when I got there he was like “ if you don’t stop” and she didn’t stop and boom he just like slapped her and she couldn’t believe that that happened. He was like “whoa” and then he just went down and I came with a sister and was like are you OK? She was in tears then this brother, the neighbour Willy we have a lot of shared reality and experiences and he’s like “ and you’re the next one Pancho, I’m gonna slice you if you don’t get out, get out of my house now “ because I was on the stairs and he started yelling at me and threatened that he was going to beat me up and slice me and then a friend of his, very sweet, he was key in thaty, he’s like the Mom in the previous story with the pit bull. This brother was really key. He was holding...”don’t be ridiculous, are you going to slice Pancho, come on, he’s only given you love and forgiveness, chill out “. He was able to deescalate that piece, then that sister left, the beaten up sister. I’m making this really short because all of this was perhaps in the span of about 3 or 4 hours because and then we were just holding space for an hour when he was just speaking there , “I’m tired of being the jerk of the street and I don’t want to go back to jail , I don’t want to be locked up again you know” and it’s like because I can do this and he just stopped all the cars flowing for 5 minutes and didn’t let cars pass, there in the middle of the street, you see I can do this but I don’t want to do that, it’s not why he was doing it. He was kind of drinking a little bit. Last thing you know there was a.... **long pause...**car coming after a while and it was this sister she was coming, the sister who was slapped, her friend. Then she stays in the middle of the street and her other friend is saying “c’mon like, make peaces” and the brother that came out from **inaudible** was just there, closer to the driving seat, he was outside he was getting in to the door and they were just making eye contact, she was saying nothing, he was there and it was just a matter of time until another car will show up, right? Because they were like blocking the traffic and “Come on guys, just like, say I’m sorry “ and none of them were saying sorry about what happened and then lo and behold another car comes up and then after half a minute, she’s not moving, this guy’s just out there . We’re kind of like, “they need to pass” and then the guy there ... honk...I need to go through and then the brother who came out just went “what the heck” and started insulting this guy and the guy from the car gets out, opens the door, pulls out a gun and points over him and he’s dressing as the opposite gang of the one that is there. So in that moment people kind of flew, I just put myself in between them and started walking towards him and then the first thing that I did is I put my hand close to his face and said “brother, you don’t need to be doing this. I love you. This man just came out of

the kitchen as they call it you know, and no one was waiting for him “. I was kind of reaching out to him and he said “don’t touch me” and I’m like, “alright, I just want you to know that that bullet needs to pass through my heart first to get there because no one was waiting for him”. So he got it, he just put the gun down. By then the other guy was just jump into the car with the friend which is crazy and they just left. Which was like “What? What just happened there?” Then the other guy went in to his car and it was alright and left”.

CE: So one moment, you saw the guy with the gun you saw him as a decent human being who had never wanted to hurt somebody....

PRS : You don’t want to do that and I see that this works all the time when you remind folks “***you don’t have to be doing this***”, I’ve been, I’ve been using that phrase, really meaning it and what I say is I didn’t have a trace, not even a thought came that he’s going to shoot me or he’s going to shoot them I didn’t have that thought, I just went there with as much presence as love as we can and say hey brother like this is what’s going on and I love you generally. I love you! And this was my way to show him and so that gave him the opportunity to not be the guy that is going to do that and then create a crazy scenario, lose/lose for everybody. This is happening, there’s some neighbours watching and a 7 year old watching and I’m sure that the thing that I escaped and to underline it right now is that for the last kind of couple of years we’ve been having this greening of the block so we these fruit trees, you might remember we have we have like grapes and plums and apricots and pears and pomegranates and all those trees were there holding that vibration and that love of life. So they were the 24/7 volunteers and all those hours that we use with volunteers and the neighbours planting that and seeing all those fruits and I have no doubt today that they were holding that space and vibration for calling us and reminding us of who we really are including that other neighbour, that really powerful , undocumented Mom that was right there, I’m sure she was doing her thing right there she was holding space so that, so it was not that part, you know it was a lot of people involved in circumstances to hold the space to be on the side of love.

CE: So I was, one question I like to ask people sometimes as a, almost as a colon or something

PRS: ***chuckling....***

CE: What is the origin of courage?

PRS: Hmmm. It’s the H of the heart, no?.

CE: Yeah. No it looks in this world that people are going to have to do very brave things for the planet to heal. So what is the nature of courage? And in this example, what is coming to me is that, so most people would say that was very courageous of you to step out in front of a gun and talk to this guy. From what I hear, you’re saying that the origin of the courage was how you saw him. In that

moment you, you said that you didn't have the slightest possibility that he was going to actually shoot you because you were seeing him as "of course you don't want to be doing that!" You're like "I know you, you are a beautiful man, you are a caring man, you have sympathy for a brother that's been in jail, and of course you're not going to shoot".

PRS: you know, you know how that is. Imagine yourself and they know if you've been 6 months locked up and no one is here of course you're gonna be sad, it's cool, of course you're going to be doing silly things and he was able to empathise. That was I think was the courageous part was that this brother, that didn't pull the trigger and that was able to connect with his fellow brother that has been for many reasons into that circumstance. That's was, among the fruit trees, you know those are the real heroes of the story for me because then you see the shiny fruit there but no it was the whole context. I agree 100%. And it was not even that I was having the thought that oh he's not going to pull the trigger, I think that's the other part that sometimes and that's why we need to do so much meditation of practices that cleans up our sub conscious because if you try to fake it or it has like a blink of a, imagine a fraction of a second that you're trying to do something even intellectually, even verbalising something and that is not coming from that place of love you're cooked I recommend you do that and I been banging my head many times.

CE: Right

PRS: But it could be fatal in that way....

CE: It's not that, yes, it's not that you're operating in an ideology that says people are good it's not that you're using a mental trick

PRS: That's right.

CE and PRS: (*talking over each other*)... *inaudible*

PRS: And Mom's are great for that, Mom's are great for that, it's like "Go home!" *laughing*...right? It was that like, authority and love and firmness like "Go home! Alright! Smokey and Pancho go home" Alright! We'll go home.

CE: Right

PRS: Plus we're in among ah, interspecies love is good. So yeah, I agree and that's very natural. I think that's the part that we are trying to reconnect. I call it now the "heart/mind" right? The longest path is from our heads to our heart so how can we be in that constant connection and now one of the things that I have been really amazed and it's bitter sweet because I mean nobody enjoys the loss of our loved one. When my Mum unexpectedly passed away last April, I been feeling her presence and her teachings, right here in my heart and there's this quality of being that I say like all the time, she really wanted me to become a better human

being, to cultivate more human kindness in me. And a way to honour her existence and her love is to embody that and so that goes, I think how we started too you said you were reconnecting very beautifully with your Mom without words in this stage of her life and there's something to that subtle and subtlest reality that makes it really powerful. That we can imagine if we were to go to schools and universities and why not and learn how to be in contact with that subtlest of reality and that connection that is always there to strengthen that muscle of the subtlest of reality that you cannot see but that is really, you can really feel it.

CE: Yeah, she's kind of like the fruit trees holding, like the fruit trees they're holding it all the time and they're seeing all of us .

PRS: Yes

CE: And they're not in some kind of story that how we are evil people and our Mother's the same. A friend of mine recently said "Nobody will ever love you like you're mother".

PRS: *Laughing*

CE: You know, you were part of her body and then you came out and she took care of you and saw you completely, you had no guard, you had no defence, you had no mask, so yeah, I think that I can, sometimes I probably do, in fact that's one reason why I am able to do some of the work that I do in the world is that I had a very, very loving mother.

PRS: Yeah, yeah

CE: Loved me unconditionally and that knowledge, that I am worthy of love.

PRS: Oh, that is beautiful.

CE: yeah, that's part of me.....

P.R.S.: Lemme share some story. I just got goose bumps because it's been so rich my life lately, but in the last month, it was the craziest thing, I thought I got a pimple here. I never got pimples in my life and apparently I got that and after three days it was getting kind of painful so I pop it up and put some hydrogen peroxide on it. The scab was not letting it drain a little bit so after three or four days it was really big, really painful. I connected with a local doctor here, a dear friend, and she cleaned it up and said, "hmm Pancho, this doesn't look good, but if at any moment your eyes start getting closer," and that's the story of the blurry vision stuff. You just go to the E.R. forget about it. Nope, just go. Lo and behold the next day, she give me this, I never take medicine or antibiotics. I started taking them because it was getting interesting and the next day I was like a boxer after a match, after 12 rounds, my eyes almost closed and it was, "alright, this is

not looking good.” So I went to the E.R. and they told me, “I.D. Do you have an I.D.?” I don’t have an I.D. and the very first thing they did was put my name and birthday down on some scratch paper like that. A few minutes later I’m being interviewed. “What happened here? Do you have health insurance?” I’ve been living without conventional currency for eleven years. Five minutes later I’m inside, inside of the E.R., and then another sister comes and interviews me and says, “we’re gonna need to get a package for you. Where do you work?” Well you see, before this pimple I would be organizing with the caravans that are coming south to north and perhaps one north to south so that we can have the largest celebration and welcoming party of the border the world has ever seen with all the brothers and sisters including the military. We want to make this party so that we can all celebrate that and she started tearing up. I was like, “oh my goodness.” My roots are from the part of the planet call El Salvador and she came back and said. “we have a plan for undocumented folks and people with no resources so here is this for you,” and ten minutes later they accommodate the whole procedure and mini-surgery over there and here I am. My eye came back and what I share about this story is that I was treated with so much respect and dignity and not that, even love. And that’s what you were saying. What was the phrase that you used about you Mom? It’s unconditional love, but...

C.E.: Worthy of love.

P.R.S.: Worthy of love, I’m worthy of love and that’s how I was seen, as a human being regardless of papers or no papers, money or not, I was treated with love and I was like, “this is how the world looks like.’ To feel from all the nurses and the doctors, because every single interaction I had with at least ten of them was that. That respect, that dignity and not only that, love. That’s fresh from the oven too.

C.E.: Thank you for that story. I love that story. So many people have the opposite experience with the medical system.

P.R.S.: That’s right. Yeah, no, if I were to have that experience in the east coast or more to the south perhaps I wouldn’t be here because this part is so sensitive from the eye to the ear to the brain that infection. I can see how 400 years ago I’d have an infection like this (snaps fingers!) gone. But here they have all the tools to keep me around to be a little more trouble making, with love of course. Fix a man with great love. (**Chuckles**)

C.E.: People on the course, the Living in the Gift course, don’t know that my mother has a pancreatic cancer diagnosis, now is at the hospital, last week or a week or two ago, and for all of the dysfunction of the medical system, for all the bureaucracy, for all the suppression of alternative modalities, etcetera, etcetera. Still, here’s this huge building, here’s all this human activity and the reason is love, really. That building was built, whatever their profit motive, whatever, society’s devoting a lot of resources to take care of people. The only reason to take my Mom is not economically productive anymore. She’s only operating in the

currency of love at this point. I was moved actually by everyone trying so hard. They might be limited by their ideology, by their world view, by the tools available, by the value system, but still underneath it all is this really sincere attempt to take care of each other, to love each other. Even within the systems of oppression there are people doing their best. Sometimes it just stops my brain in its tracks that the entire world destroying machine, the entire culture destroying machine, all of this stuff, everyone's just trying to do their best underneath it all. The search for the enemy will never bring healing. To find the enemy and destroy that enemy and finally things will be better. Find the true perpetrator that is coming from a story that is like a story that you told about the pit-bull. It's not an invitation to a more beautiful world. I like your stories that communicated that possibility to us, that communicate that it is possible and powerful to see people in a different way. I collect these stories sometimes. Nipun told me one about Julio Diaz...

P.R.S.: Amazing story for example, exactly. Incredible.

C.E.: Are there any other real gems you might share about the power of seeing with generous eyes.

P.R.S.: Hmm. Well, I guess because this is fresh and you were an athlete and I was an athlete too, I don't know if you had a chance to read a little bit the story of Peter Norman?

C.E.: Yeah you sent me that. I did...

P.R.S.: Yeah. I couldn't believe I didn't know his story, first of all because it happened in the Olympics in the part of the planet called Mexico in 1968. Everybody talks about Carlos and Smith and the black power movement.

C.E.: Right, they did the black power salute on the medal podium.

P.R.S.: And I was curious, I have to admit I was always curious, why only one glove and then this story says that they forgot the other pair of gloves and when they were there Peter Norman, this is the silver medalist of the 200 metres, he says, "hey, why don't you just share one glove each?" And that is what they did. One is with the right fist the other is with the left fist is because they forgot the other pair of gloves. Then he saw that they had these little pins or a symbol for human rights for athletes and he's like, "can I have one of those?" like Peter Norman, one of those brothers from the part of the planet called Australia. They were like, "we don't have a spare one," but there's another athlete from the US team that heard that and he's like, "here man, take mine, of course! So you see the name of the post if you can look at it is called "the white man in that photo." It's the two black brothers and this white brother just right there and you can see that there's this little joy going all through him. Then you learn they become best friends and that the most challenging part was for all of them, after that all of them were ostracized by their respective teams and they were expelled from the

team. Peter Norman then qualified every single time for the 100 metres and 200 metres in future games and he was banned to participate from that because all these activities and then later people recognised of course, here's a little bit more leverage for all that happened with the civil rights movement where they will recognise them as heroes. They created the statue that I think is here in California in San Jose of these two black brothers and then later when people learn that Peter was good friends with Carlos and Smith and they say, "well, why don't we put your statue there too?" Then he said, "no, there's many invisible people that make this possible. I want that if people would like to take a picture with them they become those allies and those heroes and so they can step on that second podium and be part of that." I thought that was such a beautiful image of him inviting many of us, you know Nipun and in the service space we use this instead of wanting to have leadership we need some "ladder ship." We're becoming ladders so others can become leaders. So he was saying, "this is how "ladder ship" looks like. You're invisible there, but that's the place that you hold to be filled in a beautiful, holistic view." That was when he was alive and then when he died unfortunately there was a lot of suffering in his life because of all these attacks and not having him, the community really, to support him in other ways. He died and then you see these two brothers, first they were competing on the tracks for gold medal and silver medal and bronze medal and then they're carrying the coffin. That moved me so much just to see that because it was not just the image, but all the different layers of seeing allies and this goes beyond the level of melanin you have in your skin. It's like this brotherhood and kinship that is always there. So where are the Carlos, Smith and Norman moments that we can bring that up? If they do it on the screen then we can certainly do it in our moment to moment life.

C.E.: I was quite moved by that story especially being a track and field fan. I even watched the race; it was a really good race.

P.R.S.: Amazing

C.E.: That little white guy was fast.

P.R.S.: Yes.

C.E.: One of the things that was mentioned, the article that you sent me was written by an Italian person.

P.R.S: I think so too, yes. You're really good at that, you go through the comments and go like, "who wrote this thing?"

C.E.: Well, the comments are interesting too. I'm very disturbed these days by the polarization and toxicity of our political culture where you read something and the first thought is "whose side are they on, my side or the other side?" My side being team good, the other side being team evil. So this article came under

criticism for elevating a white man when it should be about black people and so on.

P.R.S.: Whitewashing the story.

C.E.: Right. This is a complicated issue, but I think the template for racism is dehumanization so that when we assign our own status of evil or any other judgment we're actually practicing dehumanization. So when I talk about seeing with generous eyes, that's the opposite of judgment. It's not to replace negative judgments with positive judgments, but it's to have eyes open for all of a person, for what's behind the judgments, for the beauty that's behind the judgments. So I wonder... maybe this will be the last question I ask you because I know you have beautiful things to do today, but I wonder if you have any thoughts on the current polarized culture. How do you apply this way of seeing, to organizing, to direct action? How do you stop a direct action from turning into "let's show the world how brutal the cops are and make them rise up indignantly against the establishment?" That's just a fighting tactic. How do you keep people in the eyes of generosity in the heart of compassion?

P.R.S.: That is a great question and I won't claim that I have an answer, but I have a hunch of at least the intention and the path going through because even as you were formulation the question there it was landing in me in a different lens because that's exactly sometimes how we want to show up, it's like this is the nature of say the state or militarized police and make the contrast and then have an impact on the public opinion of how dehumanizing is that peace and in a way equally dangerous and this might be a different branch or topic, when you super-humanize people you doing equally a disservice too because it's what you said, it's not a negative judgment, it's a positive judgment but it's equally slippery because then you start putting people on pedestals and then you're robbing yourself the opportunity to practice how does it feel to be connected at that level and say, "oh no, that only is for these great saints and these people who have practiced for a while and is like, when everybody has an opportunity." Even more dangerous because it puts us in an evil place and in this culture something is really toxic, the western syndrome. We'd love to be shining our egos on that, so I would highlight on that peace, on that "how do we remove then that slight intention to be seen as martyrs or heroes" or "sheroes" in those actions and what I like to say is that it has to be so delicious and so attractive, when we are in those connections, when it becomes face to face, heart to heart, we need to be holding that presence and that possibility, that vibration, so when a team of love warriors or love magicians show up to the front lines we need to have zero yellow paddles, zero. None in your thoughts at all and not only that, but perhaps having... what would be the image, I don't know, it could be food; it could be a star, a flower. What would be the image? Instead of having a paddle, having a glass of water. When you were talking about the health care system and everybody there is trying to do it out of love. I remember in 2010 when we were in Arizona doing these non-violent direct actions against the SB 1070 of Brother Joe Arpaio and all of the sudden this minuteman and minutewomen show up with guns to the protest and to the

demonstration. Some of us decided to go and engage with them and so I'm talking with this sister and she has a gun and we started this conversation and immediately she was kind of on the defensive, antagonized and so forth so I just didn't say a word. I listen to her for a while and then what I did was reflect what I was hearing emotionally from her and there was this point where she said, "Yeah, my husband was not able to be attended in the hospital because it was full or something, For some reason, twice her husband was rejected and I said, "I see how much you love your husband and you want him to be loved and well and to keep that connection alive," and I could see tears in her eyes. She says, "you know what, I don't like the views or the politics of whatever's happening here, but I like you." Immediately I was like, "would you like to have some water?" She took the water bottle and said, "thank you." So at that moment... I'm sharing this because for me, instead of having the yellow paddle... and right now I want to be really intentional, when the yellow paddle shows up I don't want even to demonize it or crush it down or be violent with myself, just to be aware "oh, I have a yellow paddle, good. I don't need a yellow paddle," and then cultivate more and more so that I can have the water, I can have the peaches from the fruit trees and having that in mind, hard mind, so that when we go to the front lines we have those images and that possibility all the time and the Smokey moments. I think I have Smokey there for a reason, the Smokey moments are like "No." How does playful look like? Instead we hear many of us there are urban farmers. We say we're not against this war against "diabetesity." Diabetesity right, diabetes and obesity. Here if we start having healthy food and people are getting to this habit of eating healthy, fresh food without chemicals, as a by-product you get rid of diabetes and obesity. It's not that you have a full on war on diabetesity, no! That's not the purpose, the purpose is to be facilitating the growth of soil and community and that is going to be a by-product so it has to be that gift, that choice with that image of the water or the Bedouin who say, "hey stranger, how you doing?" But real, genuine, "I'm really interested in your story for real." How does it look to start developing that muscle?

C.E.: You're not manipulating.

P.R.S.: No no!

C.E.: You're not manipulating that woman with the gun. You're actually interested in her as a human being.

P.R.S.: A hundred percent. A hundred percent and then later you recognize, "actually that was a really skilful thing to do. Well next time I might use it again, and again not coming from a place of fear or manipulation or anything it's just OK; can we just see each other as human beings? Sometimes it's not the wisest thing to do if we don't have tools or the context or people might be in different mind sets. It may be slippery to do those approaches. It's proven that when we have a group of human beings who are quieting their minds and going to that stillness heart coherence starts building up in the room in broader way so imagine you go to the front lines with folks that are tuned into that without the

need to be sitting as the statue of Buddha which might be really helpful at some point. You could be having a conversation with that quality of presence, then we are talking a totally different scenario, we're talking about...

C.E.: Miracle level results.

P.R.S.: Yes, and I use your phrase so much of the time which is that miracle is impossible in the old paradigm, but possible in the new paradigm so we're all about miracles here. There's a lot of work behind the scenes of how we exercise those losses.

C.E.: Miracles sometimes come in by themselves, but if you want more of them then the more that you occupy the new paradigm the more that they have room to come in.

P.R.S.: Oh yeah. I think the buenota was saying this or how do we keep that space? We start talking about consensual, having consent of, if we have a space for any kind of well, how do we stay in that space and wait for the unearned grace to show up and then to just surrender to that and say, "yeah, this is how things need to be." Not looking for that, but just holding space for that. To manifest and to be really aware and attentive and sensitive that perhaps you won't come through the eyes of Ishmael or eyes or there is another sensor, Barry Zukov called it the "multi-sensory human being, universal human being. How can we tap into that subtle reality? It's really real over there and make things manifest for the well being of all.

C.E.: Pancho I know that you have a non violent direct action training. People are waiting for you and I want to be respectful of your time. There's a lot more we could talk about, but I'm sure the people listening to this are curious, in passing you mentioned you've not used conventional currency for 11 years. One thing people say is of course you have to make money somehow; you have to use money somehow. Do you have a couple minutes to say a thing on that?

P.R.S.: Well I love that we are practicing this because another of the practices I do to get not a yellow paddle, but the water and the banquet if you will, I don't know the equivalent, we need a word for that, but it is to not operating within the framework of scarcity. So when people say you don't have time, no! I always have time; it's just how I'm choosing to use it. I would just prioritize right now so that's been a great practice. "You are very busy." I'm not busy, I'm active. For me it creates a different way to approach that so now I feel abundant. I feel really alive and connected. I'm so grateful that you have given me... you've been the midwife of many things. Right now you're being the midwife of something that I cannot put words into it and it's great. So I don't think that everybody, now that I'm seeing that, could be living in this mode of living without conventional currency especially, you know, you have children and you need to bring food to the table and things like that. It's for me, in a way, easier to be doing the experiments of Smokey and other folks because I don't have biological family here that's

depending on me. In that way my needs are really small. I think the question goes to “enoughness.” What is enough and if people, each person, each family could find that sweet spot of enoughness, because when I say that I’ve been living without conventional currency is that I say I wear services too valuable to be sold and yet people are donating. They are giving me these green papers left and right so I just try to spread them here and there. I don’t want to use them in different ways, but I’m still using it. I’m getting increasingly excited with these crypto-currencies because it’s like, “oh my goodness, this is really working, the crypto-currencies!” But still, what is that spot of enoughness for each family or each individual?” Then the rest of that, that could be shared, you know this graph. We have some friends from the Possibility Alliance, Adam, Campbell and Ethan, who use that. I remember that was the first time that I hear that this graph where on the white axis is happiness and on the x axis the amount of money then it started just growing, growing, growing and then just goes down. When it goes down it’s because that’s enough. But then if you are aware of that point of there’s enough and you start sharing that abundance then it becomes happiness goes exponential. That enoughness is different for a nun, for a monk, for a family so each one of us will have that deflection point and more perhaps the invitation to not reduce our view of wealth to conventional currency. If we start acknowledging all the rest of the world, the spiritual, cultural, the kids and the healing practises and the playful practises, then you will see that. I say then, “no no! How do you survive with access to all those kind of wealth?”

C.E.: Yeah. The way I define wealth, true wealth, is the feeling of being free to be generous. I feel abundant, I feel wealthy, of course I can share, of course I can give... because I’m rich man! I’m rich in time, I’m rich in money, I’m rich in everything so of course I can give to you and as long as you have that feeling and that experience of life, then you’re rich. And if you don’t have that... even if you have a billion dollars, if you don’t feel free to be generous with it, then you are the slave to the money.

P.R.S.: Yeah, great, or what they said too, right at the beginning of the graph, everybody’s thinking about money because they don’t have their world needs, but then when they have too much they are thinking all the time too. It becomes misery as well.

C.E.: Yeah

P.R.S. (*Laughs*) what was it, about the freedom to be generous... hmmm... I think it was just a thought that escaped. If we overcome I can share with you. Oh I see that, that I’m feeling super it does what it is right now and this experience is your freedom to give and then sometimes it becomes are you humble enough to receive? That would be a flipping on its side. Are you wealthy enough to receive? You can fill people by offering and they’re like “no I have too much, I don’t need this,” it’s actually honoring that and is what many of us call this dance between Divina Regimes, you actually don’t know who is giving and who is receiving.

C.E.: Ultimately it has to be in balance. Ultimately it's impossible to give unless you are receiving as well because we're not really the source of what we give. We're just a conduit for gift, even the gift of life.

P.R.S.: Oh I love what you said in that earlier feature, then the passage we talked about in the story of Interbeing where you say that. That's a great part.

C.E.: How did you learn the meaning of generosity Pancho? Was there a person in your life who showed you what generosity is, by example?

P.R.S.: It was immediate, the very first thing that came to heart was my Mum and then of course I have many other teachers, my Dad and then later when you have learned so much stuff you have to unlearn later. I think one of the great teachers that I had to unlearn has been Nipun. He's a great embodiment of that generosity on so many levels. These days... then you know you have those teachers... there's another sister Audrey Lean, E. Anne Lean I call her. My goodness, this is a bomb of love and she's always looking for little ways to give. This is the first stages of generosity and then you see the really skilful, developed, effortless, happy, joyous ways to be generous. It's been great and then it comes back to be really present with Mother Nature. That's how I think they ultimately serve that and if we pay attention to all that's around us in plants and non-human animals you can see how good all this being... I have this joy and almost a trip when realized in a very real way. You can talk about the sunlight, read books about the sunlight and stars, but it's only until you go out in kind of a chilly morning or afternoon like this and you feel the rays of this glorious star landing on your skin you start understanding what sunlight really means and literally that this ball of gas and this entity of the cosmos that created planets is coming from that planetary nebula of creating planets and this star has that energy which is continually showering those parts of the proto-planetary disc that creating in the right conditions to have liquid and gas and ice. All this water in the three different states and because of that there is a possibility to create life. After billions of years somehow those little organisms that were energy itself, they were the star itself, they were the sun itself, developed somehow this glorious insight to collaborate with each other and become from a unicellular "me! me! me!" kind of organism to a multicellular...

C.E.: I got to talk to you about that. There's another origin of life story that basically says that co-operative communities preceded the first cell.

P.R.S.: Beautiful. I even like that better. What I was going with... which is very, very interesting, I'd love to hear that piece and the part that I was going is to the eye, that somehow in this story of different ways which I would love to jump from the unicellular, that might be collaborating there, to the eukaryon, there's many of them, to create this organ we call the eye that is actually the Sun herself. Somehow the light and energy from the Sun was converted into this organ and then you are looking back at that and it's the Sun seeing herself again through this. Somehow having this energy and pure consciousness... I think that's the

ultimate generosity. You don't need words. To me it took minutes to even glimpse at that, but once you're walking on the redwoods or listening to the ocean or looking at the Milky Way and being showered by that mystery and showered at infinite, incredible, unmemorable for human purposes stories around our little corner of the universe. That's humbling and it's right there, you know, it's right here. When are you going to tune into this reality.

C.E.: (Sigh) That's beautiful. Maybe this is a good stopping point for now.

P.R.S.: Yes. Could you shed just a little piece of the eukaryon?

C.E.: When you were talking all kinds of things came up. One is; the whole ball of gas thing. You studied astrophysics right? You basically are a refugee from...

P.R.S.: (Laughing) I like it. I've never been called a refugee before, I like it. I said I was a recovering left brainer but I like the refugee too.

C.E.: The Sun itself has electromagnetic structures that are more complicated than those of the brain so one would think that the mind of the Sun, that it's living, it's a living being and it has an inconceivably powerful intelligence and is watching us all the time.

P.R.S.: And we're part of it. We're offspring of that.

C.E.: Yeah. The mystery is so deep and subtle that we're just barely scratching the surface. I don't have time to go deep into it now because I have a call with my mother in a couple minutes. An origin of life thing basically it starts with an autocatalytic set where each molecule catalyses the formation of another molecule that catalyses the formation of another until eventually it comes back to the first one.

P.R.S.: Oh wow, a chain reaction kind of thing.

C.E.: Yeah. Like a closed loop so each catalyses another in the group. That's a differing origin of life story than the selfish molecule creating copies of itself and out competing everybody else. There's a whole thing... I'll send you a link about that.

P.R.S.: Yeah. Circles, I like that, especially because of the circles. There's so much wisdom about circles too and spheres and things like that. It's a whole new chapter.

C.E.: One place that it takes me is that generosity is not something that we have to fight nature in order to practice. It's actually in our nature all the way down to the DNA level. Cooperation, mutual support, it's not that we have to graduate away from biological programming to enter the spiritual realm of gift. That war

against nature, that idea that goodness comes from transcending nature, that's part of the problem. It's not the solution.

P.R.S.: True.

C.E.: So anyway, there is a lot about that.

P.R.S.: There is, but it's kind of limited in a way. There is this quote by Hafez, "the Sun is never asking to the Earth, "you owe me." Look what a love like that does, it lights up the whole sky." I think that's pretty much it.

C.E.: Alright then.

P.R.S.: Hey, are you open to finish up with a couple of minutes of silence?

C.E.: Yeah, one minute, we can do that.

P.R.S.: Alright, let's do it.

**End**