

Wendy Wood on Fractal Friends

Tue, 10/13 12:59PM 1:36:17

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, conflict, harm, compassion, trauma, duncan, fractal, community, world, practices, rwanda, healing, mm, talking, create, ways, peace, building, culture, work

SPEAKERS

Duncan Autrey, Wendy Wood



Wendy Wood 00:00

This is where what's happening today in the US causes us such pain in many ways, is because it does separate us. And we are not meant to be separate, you know, we are neurologically wired to connect with each other. And when there are forces at play that don't allow that to happen, or our barriers to that happening, it doesn't sit well with any of us. And that chaos and the surprises that we're running across and multiple domains, but not just politically, not even just environmentally. It's affecting us spiritually, emotionally, biologically, in such a way that we're really struggling. And this is where I do believe if we can embrace practices that can help us become more authentic human beings, more compassionate human beings, be more present, use our words more wisely and listen more deeply to each other. And we can come out and and it's not that hard.



Duncan Autrey 01:03

Hello there. My name is Duncan Autrey, and you are listening to Fractal Friends, the podcast where we explore our self similarity across our diversity. We all have a role to play in the whole. And the purpose of the show is to interview people with interesting perspectives on the world, and see what it is that we can all learn from one another. In this episode, I talk with Wendy wood. Wendy is a conflict transformation colleague of mine. She is also one of the cofounders of the Karuna center for mindful engagement. And she's the co author of the book, do no harm, mindful engagement for a world and crisis. Wendy's work has brought her to participate in reconciliation processes in Rwanda, and

work with communities and organizations throughout the United States. Wendy and I are part of the democracy politics and conflict engagement initiative of mediators beyond borders, also known as the DPACE Initiative, we're dedicated to bring in concrete engagement skills to political organizations and social change movements. In this conversation, we talk about how compassion works in two directions, healing both ourselves and others. And how great this is, because it complements the fact that harm also works in two directions, affecting both ourselves and others. We talk about Wendy's work to promote mindful and trauma informed approaches to addressing conflict, and then all of the things we do. And we talk about the huge challenge that we face in the United States and the world. And we celebrate the fact that we have a solution to all those challenges. If we choose to use them, we've got this y'all. This episode fits into the theme of season three fits into this time, because it both it takes a hard look at reality, and gives us beautiful ways to think about how we can personally and collectively work together to start building the world that we all want to live in. Thank you so much for listening to Fractal Friends. If you enjoy the show, please share it with someone and come visit [Fractal friends.us](https://fractalfriends.us) where you can get more information about Wendy and all the things we discuss in this episode. This episode page particularly includes great resources about practices from mindful engagement with life, as well as other conflict transformation resources. Also, check out the archive of dozens of Fractal Friends episodes. I also want to implore you to help support the sustainable ability of Fractal Friends. You can do that by either making a donation or becoming a patron of Fractal Friends. You can make donations on the episode page at [Fractal friends.us](https://fractalfriends.us). And as you know, I am dedicated to helping the world improve its capacity to communicate across our differences. Do you know political and social change organizations they want to have even more impact and engage with conflict with even better capacity and skill. You can learn more about my work with Wendy and the democracy politics in conflict engagement initiative at [DPACEinitiative.org](https://dpaceinitiative.org). That's [DPACEInitiative.ORG](https://dpaceinitiative.org) now let's go ahead and get on with the show. This episode was recorded into September of the year 2020. Please enjoy this conversation with Wendy wood. Welcome Wendy to Fractal Friends. I'm excited to have you on the show and Thanks for being here.



Wendy Wood 05:02

Oh, thanks for having me, Duncan, this is looking forward to it.



Duncan Autrey 05:06

We know each other as professional colleagues, we're both in the leadership of the Democracy, Politics and Conflict Engagement Initiative of Mediators Beyond Borders, but

I also know you to be hosts of Tibetan monks as a gardener. And someone who brings like a lot of attention to the importance of being mindful in how we engage with the world. And also like, is very conscious of the role of trauma. And this is related to your work in the Karuna Center, is you're an author, and you're doing work there. But I wonder if you'd be willing to just introduce yourself a bit and just explain, you know, how do you tell talk about yourself in this world?

W

Wendy Wood 05:45

Well, thanks, Duncan, I think you've kind of captured in many ways, the essence of the way I've navigated my world personally, and professionally over time, I'm a native California, and I've been in both Southern California and Northern California for most of my life, all of my life, actually, and have a long history of working in the fields of peace and reconciliation, in women and children's health and welfare work. And at the same time raising a large family of five, three wonderful sons and two wonderful daughters, and a host of grandkids at this point in our life. But the essence of my work, I think it's really fair to say is this idea of finding ways to navigate whatever it is we're doing within our personal lives, our community lives, our friends, our family, and our work, the thought of how we could do this in ways that don't harm others, and also not harm the planet as we make it through our days.



Duncan Autrey 06:56

Yeah, I think it's interesting. There's a book that I know, it's like, some number of lessons from the history of non violence. And one of the lessons is that there isn't actually a word for nonviolence, you know, it only can be spoken in the negative in almost any language. So like, do no harm Ahimsa is A (not) himsa (harm). Right? And, and I think that's why Gandhi came up with Satyagraha , like, you know, truth force, you know, to try to give it this positive thing. And the nonviolence movement has actually worked to like, say, like, these are one word, because it actually is a whole action. And it's interesting, because do no harm is like this negative thing. But it's, it's also it's an active way of being in the world. And I think that's something that you really seem to capture really well.

W

Wendy Wood 07:44

Well, thank you, Duncan. It's interesting how it's developed over time, this thinking, but I really believe that it's been part of the essence of my personal existence. In many ways. I think I learned this lesson very early on, and it's carried through and so many things that I've done over time. And what I found is that has been giving me the most clarity around

this concept is this idea of compassion. And the concept of what happens to me happens to you, and what happens to you happens to me, I think we can't negate that. It's not just a concept that rests in social thinking and community and the way we interact with each other. But it's also become clear from science that that's, that's a fact. That's the way that we, as human beings, and as nature, intersect with each other, we can't separate ourselves from others, we can't separate ourselves from the planet. We can't separate ourselves from the thinking and acting of other people. Really, this concept of compassion has driven a lot of my thinking, and at least my practice in my actions.



Duncan Autrey 09:07

Yeah, there's a couple things I want to pull out of that. One is, I think it's really important this piece of recognizing that this is like a two way thing, that if, you know, if I'm harming other person, in a certain way, I am taking on that harm, because I'm a human who cares. And sometimes I think about how harm or trauma or karma even you know, like has it's like perfect accounting, you know, that if I heard someone like, that person will obviously go need to go through some healing experience, but I am going to also have to do some sort of internal healing, you know, in order to do that, and if not, I'll just pass it on to someone else. And you know, and that's one of the real challenges of like harm and trauma is that just like, just echoes out and it goes out. It does



Wendy Wood 09:51

Duncan and it can and does move itself from generation to generation. Mm. Look at us, as he And beings and you look at the planet, the harm that we cause each other moves from one generation to the next generation, and we can see it. And in many ways, it's easier to see it. And when we look at the planet itself, and we look at the earth, and what we've been doing, and what we continue to do, Mm hmm. Where trauma is not as visible. Yeah, a fascinating concept, yet, they are interlinked in so many ways.



Duncan Autrey 10:27

Oh, so I want to talk a little bit more about compassion in the way that it can like, move in different ways. And I think that this, like, comment about this generational trauma, and the environment, and, and so forth is like really important, I think a lot about how we know that people who have been harmed generations past and carry that trauma forward. And as we were just talking about, like those, you know, who perpetuate harm, also then carry that forward as well. And so we're having this moment, at least in our country, where we're like, dealing, for example, with the legacy of slavery, right. And as someone who is the

descendant of slave holders, like I'm carrying stuff that I'm trying to figure out how to heal around, you know, just as people who have been who, you know, were used as slaves, you know, like, like, their descendants are also dealing with that. And it's hard. Like, it's hard to face this stuff. It's hard to, to face the the harm we've done, and it's hard to face the harm we've received. But it seems like compassion has a big role there. And I'm curious if you'd be willing to unpack a little bit like, how you understand compassion, and like, what its role is in this process?

W

Wendy Wood 11:31

Yeah, thanks for asking that, Duncan. And I think we often confuse compassion with other things like empathy and sympathy. We intertwine those words, which mean a lot, our words, our language, means a lot. And I think it's really important that we unpack as you say, compassion, because at the essence of compassion is altruism. This doing acting in a way for the common good. But the essence of compassion, which is such a fascinating piece, and it really links back to this interconnectedness is that in order for me to not harm others of the planet, I need to first understand my own suffering, my own pain, my own self, who I am, how I've become who I am today, in order for me to understand the suffering of others, so that I can act in a way that doesn't harm. There's this thread, that's very clear. So you can see how compassion plays a major role in us being able to live and work in ways that don't harm to heal, not just ourselves, but others. And to get a much clearer view, and a wider view as to the reality of what's what we're faced with on a daily basis.



Duncan Autrey 12:52

Recently, it was a previous guest, you know, I'm not sure if the episode will be out before after yours, with Austin Willacy, he and he was saying he was breaking down sympathy, empathy and compassion. He was basically saying that sympathy is like I'm feeling for you, like empathy is I can feel the same thing in me. And compassion is this active process of not just feeling it, but then actually doing something about it? And I thought that was like a really interesting take off.

W

Wendy Wood 13:21

Yeah, absolutely. It's extremely active bus, the essence of it is altruism, acting in ways that are for the common good. And again, with this no harm piece that's linked into it really can't get away from that part of it. But it's very introspective. It's really a way of changing our minds. And changing our minds without regret. When we develop this much deeper

understanding, it's harder, it's much easier to be empathetic or sympathetic. In some ways for most people, compassion takes practice, it takes developing more insight and a willingness to do that. It's actually very liberating in its own way, I would say, because it allows us to really link back to this piece about my actions affect you, and your accidents affect me. If we want this to create happiness, and nonviolence and all and joy and cohesion. And, and goodness, we've got to do this together, we can't do this without each other.



Duncan Autrey 14:30

Well, I somehow I'm just like having this like realization right now. Like, we're all connected, right? And so obviously, we want to be doing like, not harming others because that harm is going to come back at us. But also because we're all connected. If we can also be spreaders of joy and authentic expression and positive qualities, that also is going to ripple out and come back at us as well. You know, and it's interesting, you know, how we can just like, pay so much attention to the signs just fixing the problems that we have in this world, like, you know, just so many things we want to stop, you know, we're gonna stop racism, we're gonna stop polarization, we want to stop conflict, you know, whatever. But actually, what we really want is to create like a co generative flow of joy and happiness and kindness and such



Wendy Wood 15:20

We all want happiness, Duncan,



Duncan Autrey 15:21

everyone,



Wendy Wood 15:23

without a doubt, and we just go about doing it in much different ways. And I think this is where what's happening today in the US, and causes us such pain in many ways, is because it does separate us and we are not meant to be separate. mm We, are, you know, we are neurologically wired to connect with each other. Yeah. And when there are forces at play, that don't allow that to happen, or are barriers to that happening, it doesn't sit well with any of us. And it chaos is and the surprises that we're running across multiple domains, but not just politically, not even just environmentally. It's affecting us spiritually, emotionally, biologically, in such a way that we're really struggling. And this is where I do

believe if we can embrace compassion and practices that can help us become more authentic human beings, and more compassionate human beings, be more present, use our words more wisely and listen more deeply to each other, that we can come out. And it's not that hard.



Duncan Autrey 16:35

Hmm. So I was poking around in your book, that kind of a new edition of what you and Thais had created. And one of the things you talk about his responsibility, and I would just recently was kind of doing a deep dive into the responsibility. Because in my work with Spoke & Wheel, we're putting together a training program on building trust, and teams, especially in like a virtual environment. And so we're talking about building trust and responsibility is like one of the things I did a little dive into the etymology of it, because I was trying to see if this parallel of saying, like being responsible, and being response, able, will actually like was just like some sort of trick of words. But it actually is kind of what that word means is like, the ability to respond, is where it kind of the origins are. And so I've been, I was thinking that if I want to be developing responsibility, really, what that means is, I need to be able to develop, first of all my own Sovereign Domain control over my own life, right, like, I know that I'm responsible for my own actions, and I'm going to take responsibility for that maybe the harm I've created or my own healing, and then when I'm taking responsibility for my own sovereign self, that then makes me able to respond to you. Because now you can have your experience and I understand that that's your experience. And I'm able to respond as like a full person to you. And so when I'm thinking about this like compassion piece, it's like, can I have compassion for myself, and then that allows me to be able to respond to you with compassion, this is making sense?



Wendy Wood 18:20

It does make sense. And I can see how they're, they're interlinked in so many ways, if you look at what tribal groups have, have done and created for themselves, people who are not just responsible for themselves, but they're responsible for their community, we see it in indigenous peoples so often in indigenous communities find it so valuable for their survival, for their safety for their well being, and for the just enter joy and cohesion amongst their groups. This piece about responsibility overlays so much of it, because without each other, they're not going to do well. And that also means that they have to take into account the differences that all of us bring into this space and support each other in understanding what works and what doesn't work in such a way that they can carry on collectively, rather than isolate others into outside of their group, which is not very effective at the end of the day for them to be able to respond in ways that are going to create this group cohesion and happiness at the end of the day. And so yeah, you look

at there's this phrase in Hawaii for indigenous Hawaiians is called Kulyana. And it is misrepresented oftentimes in traditional literature often written by Westerners. The essence of this is, once again, this aspect of responsibility for the whole, not just yourself. And it's a really beautiful concept. Because where it comes to fruition is that I can look at you and say Duncan has Kulyana. And Duncan can look at Wendy and say, Wendy has Kulyana. That means that we are in this together essentially, responsible for each other. And it's a quality that we really want to embrace. And being response-able, Duncan also links into this idea around the trauma and how it affects our abilities to respond, rather than react to whatever situations we're faced with. So that this response-able quality that we're all trying to, at least hopefully, trying to integrate into our lives, also has other aspects, other experiences that are affecting our ability to be response-able and responsible. We have to really think deeply about that. It's not fair to say, you need to be responsible, without giving some meaning to what that that really is. And some skills to be that way. I mean, ask a kid to be responsible for picking up their socks, and they look at you and having no idea what you're asking them to do other than pick up their, their socks, but there's no, they don't understand the reason for that they don't even connect responsible to socks. So we really need to think more deeply about what that means.



Duncan Autrey 21:52

Yeah. I mean, it's one of the things I've been, like, reflecting on a lot in these last couple episodes of this, like new season Fractal Friends is just how hard it is to talk about, you know, like paying attention to the self and paying attention to the other in the same phrase, you know, and since it's often, you know, we're either being individualistic or paying attention to the collective, you know, we'd like these, we, but I love this term, Kulyana. mean, I don't even know, but like the slogan of like fractalfriends.us, is, we all have a role to play in the whole. And it's like, basically, a fract..., you know, it's basically Kulyana, and I love that. Yes, like the way it speaks to our interdependence. And, yeah, and that this idea of like, responsibility is, you know, just like compassion, or just like trauma or just like harms, like yourself and your other, we're all tied into each other. And just even just like, wrapping your head around that, you know, I was looking for this preparing for this article, or... when I was preparing for our conversation, I was rereading this article by Kazu Haga, who is a recent guest, and he's a teacher of Kingian non violence. And this article is about trauma and protests. And he was saying that, like, when we're preparing our communities for nonviolent action, they should not only consists of traditional non violence training methodologies, like blockades and medic training and legal observation, etc. It should also include learning emotional regulation tools in the short term, and a long term commitment for each of us to learn our own triggers and heal from our own wounds. You know, there's, you know, going into spaces that are where

people are acting out their trauma, causing trauma, creating trauma, you know, like being conscious of like your own self, and this like a certain level of responsibility. And I think this also kind of comes to like, getting to the place where you're able to engage mindfully with it, like just like, Am I aware of myself? Am I aware of what's going on? Am I aware of how I'm impacting other people, and that sort of constant ability to... you know and just be able to just be connected to our own heart there is like really important,

W

Wendy Wood 24:06

I appreciate that, what you've just read can because it, it is so important. We need to create opportunities for people to, to be able to think in ways and act in ways that help us self regulate, and to bring these practices into place, whatever they may be, in whatever context they are, to really have more of a trauma informed approach to so much of what we do. It's really at the heart of how nonviolence and nonviolent practices can thrive and the work and that we're doing to secure our democracy to secure our communities has to take into effect that, that we're not always As equipped to respond in in ways that are thoughtful, that are in ways that help us see outside of ourselves to look at other people's experiences. And if we're in this place where our brain is always thinking that there's a threat in our midst, it's going to be difficult. Mm hmm. And we must, as a community, as a nation, as a world, reintegrate into our daily lives, the things that help us self regulate. We're not asking people that everybody sit down and meditate. I think that's unfair, in many ways for us to ask that, even though we know that the act of meditation has that ability. And we know this through science to bring the parts of our brain together, that allow us to not be reactive, that makes us response able, but what we do know is that we have within ourselves, practices within our communities within our families that allow that to happen. We sing, we drum, we dance, we cook together, we take walks in nature, mm, we pray. We connect through so many different ways. We need to reinforce the value of those that helping to heal trauma, helping to bring more responsibility and compassion into our spaces.



Duncan Autrey 26:45

Yeah, I really appreciate just like the, you know, just pointing out that, you know, like, obviously, like meditations, you know, great practice and, you know, confirmed mode thousands of times over, but that we already know, the practices to do this, you know, the, just like sharing experiences breaking bread with one another, you know, taking that pause, handing things over to some sort of higher power. You know, there's all sorts of different ways that we do that. Can I give you example? yeah, I was just gonna ask

W**Wendy Wood** 27:13

of... brings this to such truth. Actually, for me, at least, a couple of years back, I was asked to work with 12, South Sudanese pastors, who were needing respite. As you can imagine, these are religious people, men and women alike, who are working in the midst of refugee camps in the midst of war, in the midst of communities were torn apart by the violence in South Sudan. And so they were invited by the World Missions Council to come to Scotland, a place of great peace and calmness in the midst of winter, to be with their hosts. And some of us who we're going to talk more about trauma and bring some more, not just knowledge, but opportunities for them to understand it in a different way. And so after we got through, talking about kind of the physical manifestations of trauma, which they are so well aware of, yet hadn't placed it in the context of trauma, Mm hmm. We started Talking about what works for them, when is it that not just themselves, but the their community, When are they able to find joy and happiness? And they one at a time they got up and started dancing? was the most beautiful exhibition of what works? Yeah, they did, the singing began, we all got involved in this process. And when they sat back down after about 10, or 15 minutes of beautiful actions that were going on, by the way, there were different tribes that were represented there, which is one of the challenges in South Sudan, as some may know, all of their dances, many of them looks different. And they started enjoying each other's dances. That interchange was so profound. When they sat back down, one of the pastors who had said very little, during the course of two days, said, I understand this, now, we have it within ourselves to do this. It's there. We simply need to not just find the opportunities, but to nurture them and encourage them in so many ways that we don't. And it was just extraordinary to watch that happen. So it's there Duncan it truly is, it's, it's within all of us. And when we stop being connected in the ways that we know that works, it's kept us sane, and so In many ways, it's hard. You know, and I think this is, we could talk about this in two or three other hour segments, but

**Duncan Autrey** 28:26

Mm hmm. I mean, I'm tempted to, I just love that example. So much. I mean, not only just like the beauty of these people, you know sharing their dances with each other, in the Scotland winter, you know, and, I mean, just like, the image is so great. But I even love the idea of them seeing each other in these dances and being and just like, Wow, I've never seen that dance before. But we have a dance too, you know, and just like that, but the really, the powerful thing is then realizing that they have this within themselves. And I think that, like, you know, what I'm tempted to sort of just, like, try to unpack here is or explore, is, after re releasing the episode of Kazu Haga, like we had a conversation, and I know that he's looking to he, in this group of this network of people are looking to think about, like, how can they prepare for like, Whatever happens after this next upcoming

election, which, you know, potentially, it could be really intense, especially given just like, the current flavor in our country. And he's like, wondering, like, what would nonviolent direct action look like that is actively contributing to our healing, as opposed to just like trying to, you know, shut shit down, you know, and I just like them picturing like this dancing, you know, just like, I just picture just like, video of like, people like blocking a highway at just dancing, and just singing. And just like how the image of this could just be like, just very moving for people like, wow, wow, I like, I can see that I can see this in these people. And I can see that they are actually trying to, like, bring attention to something that's really positive. And just I don't notice somehow just really noticing just the power of, can we make sure that our like our change work, or trying to do in this world, or especially when we're facing just horrors, you know, whether it's war, genocide, or you know, or just racism, or just whatever the horrors we're facing, And like, Can we not only try to transform that by trying to stop it, but also try to transform it by just creating beauty?



Wendy Wood 32:14

I think we need to help trade places, too.



Duncan Autrey 32:18

Hmm. Tell me more.



Wendy Wood 32:20

What are the fears that I have in this country and having worked in many places around the globe, is that this polarization that we've landed in, over the last 250 some odd years, has gotten us into a place where we've forgotten what it is that allows us to heal, I guess, and, and to navigate our lives in ways that are less violent, And I mean, it shows up in so many places in the US, and that we don't even dare go down that road. But we fail to talk to each other and know what's happening over there. And while the far left, the mid mid left, the moderate world may find that dancing and walking may be helpful. It might not be the same thing for someone on the other side, we need to understand what it is for folks on the other side, that creates this place and this space, this opportunity. It may be cooking, it may be I can imagine, not just imagine from imagining but imagining thinking about this from experience, given where I was raised and how I was raised, that we can help identify with each other what's helpful. And we don't we haven't taken an opportunity to do that about a year ago. This brings up an experience I had about a year ago, when I was doing some training for progressive national grassroots effort around conflict and, and how trauma affects us in the conflict world. And what was possible and

part of the group, one of the groups was really concerned because they've been trying to invite people in from the other side, whatever that might be, to have more dialogue, but they couldn't figure out a way to do it. And one of the options in the training that I gave them was find a way to sit down and break bread together. So they put forward an option to have a potluck, a good old fashioned potluck. They were having so much a hard time getting other people to show up who had may have different opinions. And the potluck started out slow one week and ended up being about 250 people Over a matter of about six weeks, from many sides of the spectrum, and it was a very important way for them to start having those conversations. So it really is time to help identify that with each other, not making assumptions that are cooking, or walking, or dancing or singing is going to, or being in prayer together is going to resolve this, how do we blend all of these or participate in whatever is working for all of us? I know, it's a great question. I'd love to talk to your your other colleague at some point, it'd be great.



Duncan Autrey 35:40

I really appreciate that. It's definitely, you know, we'd like to emphasize, like our own, you know, like, what is good for you figure out what that is. But then, with as we're like talking about, you know, an polarization or, you know, reaching across these divides, think it's really important to be communicating to people on their own terms. And I think that's a bit of where that response haibo ability, you know, comes in is like, Can I just, like, be sure enough in myself to be able to now be like, Okay, cool. What do you need? Right, you know, I'm like, what, how, what, how can I support you? You know, what is your healing look like? I'm curious, and I'm, you know, comfortable enough to be able to ask that question. I'm curious, I wanted to see if you have any stories, I know that like, you have done work in Rwanda. And that was like, part of what how you learned about trauma, healing and kind of part of your, your trauma, learning path. And as a project with Mediators Beyond Borders. And, you know, it's one thing to, you know, to be dealing with, like the polarization and trauma that we have, you know, in our country, and it's like another thing to be dealing with I'm polarization and trauma after like, there's a full on genocide, and people killing each other with machetes and just like horrors upon horrors. And they've done a huge amount of work there on like reconciliation and restoration. I know, it's like, one of the projects that I've heard is that if a community wants to get funding from the government, they have to get people from both sides of that conflict to like, build something together. They can like get funding to build like the new community center, or whatever. But they have to, like, work with each other to do something so they can co create stuff. And I'm curious if you have any examples or thoughts that sort of tie into all this. So just like seeing people communicating across that level of division and hurt?

W

Wendy Wood 37:31

Oh, yeah, I do. Rwanda is an extraordinary example of how bringing in both victims and perpetrators into the same space is not just possible. But healing and can is a way in which we can rebuild communities that are torn apart by unspeakable, unspeakable violence, I think what was so clear to me when I was working in Rwanda, and this was at a time where perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide, were coming back into and being reintegrated back into community. So you can imagine the challenges that that was bringing to their world. Yeah, they quote was so telling. And so instructional, and so profoundly impactful for me personally, was that you could see that they had the the foundations and the frame, the structure and all that already existed within their tribal nature and the tools to be able to do this and do it well.



Duncan Autrey 38:56

Hmm.

W

Wendy Wood 38:58

Which is one of the fears that I have in a country such as the US quite honestly. But Rwanda. Rwandese, and many Africans, my experience are deeply some Matic people, they understand their bodies, I think, and they're, and how their bodies respond to things in a much in a very profound way. So when they were being introduced to trauma healing methodologies, especially those that had somatic experiences associated with them, they were able to grapple that in a very effective way. They were able to see how they could self regulate, in a different way and how in many ways they were already doing it. Mm hmm. So how the value of doing that collectively was really a beautiful thing to watch. I remember the first time that we were doing some trauma literacy, bringing some more trauma informed practices that they were to create into their community, a community who had agreed to come together and heal together. And there were a group of about five young men who had been perpetrators and had recently been released from prison who coming back into this community. And this community who had agreed to do this collective healing work together. And we had, we had taught them some skills that were emotional freedom techniques skills, where you would tap, wondering if that would be a value knowing that it had been used before. But we were teaching them the more obvious ones, you know, crossing your arms and doing a butterfly tap or tapping on the sides of your chest. real obvious. And when we were practicing it, the five, all five of these young men weren't participating. They were observing, but it was very difficult for them to be so obvious in the group. Even though everyone knew who they were, I looked over and I said, you know, you can actually tap on the side of your legs. And we can do it throughout the

time when anytime we feel triggered, we could just quietly tap the side of our legs to do this work. And they listen. And within about 10, 15 minutes, you saw them doing that. And you saw, you could just see the clearing and the smiles that were starting to come forward in their faces, the relaxation, the willingness to get up and participate, you know that they realized that they could do this. Another example that was even more beautiful, that comes to light is that two of us were asked to come over to a group of women who were victims of the genocide, and we're all widows, there are about 15 of them, we were asked to come over to their village and we were getting to know them. And so we started talking about what was possible. And we had been doing that inside the inside a room, but we decided to go outside, and the women place themselves in the hill. And we were sort of integrated with them. And we were teaching them to do some somatic work. And they really understood how valuable that was. And I had these wonderful photos of them with their arms crossed across their chest, and really just tapping and touching themselves and tapping across their chest. And the next thing you know, one person stood up and started singing. Here we go again, back to this piece. Mm hmm. Woman started singing and tapping, and another woman started singing and tapping. And the next thing you know, all 15 of them, and the three of us were tapping and singing. And then they brought their arms out start dancing. And it was extraordinary went and it came on the heels of us teaching them ways when they are triggered and using their language and their experience of what triggers mean, to calm themselves down. And it was just profound to watch them do that and the smiles that happened and and the and the joy with each other that we hadn't seen. Although we've been with them for two days, during the course of this, so it's just extraordinary, the possibilities that are already within them to do what they need to do to be able to just wake up in the morning, actually,



Duncan Autrey 43:40

yeah, yeah, just being able to just like face the day to day, I mean, especially when these kinds of experiences, you know, like where everything can be a trigger, and really just appreciate this idea of like this potential, you know, just like this inborn potential for our own healing and transformation. You know, it's like really important to remember. And the comment about how we don't have a lot of these practices, like built into our current culture is interesting. I noticed that as soon as right away, too. I was like, Oh, right. This is a that's a challenge. We don't have a reconciliation, reckoning, redemption, narrative much in our culture.



Wendy Wood 44:23

We don't even have a mechanism for doing it in the US. Right. And in fact, I was speaking with a woman couple of days ago, who's from Africa. And she was sharing with me that

one of the reasons she was so interested in the Democracy, Politics and Conflict Engagement Initiative, is that she saw this as an opportunity for the US to bring some peace building mechanisms into our own culture. That what struck her when she began doing work in the US, and she has dual citizenship, by the way Was that we don't have our own peace building structure, right? We look to other countries, and we have yet to. And they're some of their structures, but we have yet to bring those into our own culture. Yeah, you had them, we've lost them. And it gave me quite an opportunity to think back, Duncan, did we ever have a moment? That's something I'm really pondering? I think maybe there was a time in our, in the history of the US, when we were more isolated and creating our own tribes, as the case may be. Maybe that was happening, but I'm not sure. Yeah, really wanting to think more deeply about that, and investigate it a little bit more.



Duncan Autrey 45:44

Well, it's this is something that I've thought about a bit and and another recently recorded episode, I talk with a colleague, conflict transformation colleague of mine named Pablo Lumeman, and he lives in Argentina. And we are talking about indigenous cultures and resistance movements to sort of multinational corporations and government moving into their communities in Argentina. And he was talking about how in this community, these Mapuche community, they have systems for dialogue and for reconciliation, and you know, they have a process, you know, of like, how do we have dialogue, right. And then, like, the western or European, you know, culture is like, what they're bringing in is like, we have courts and paperwork, and treaties, contracts and all these things. And we were talking about how there's certain way like that there's a cultural colonization, that sort of came out of European culture, that sort of, as it extended itself around the world of this is how we're going to resolve things, we have a bunch of laws, and we have structures, and we have systems, and we have judges and authorities and police and they're going to be the ones that are going to like resolve the problems. But that process for dialogue, you know, still is existing within this Mapuche community. And I think that if we go back to any of our indigenous roots, like I've talked about, before that, I imagine going back to my Scottish roots, and I have to maybe go back 1500, maybe even 2000 years, before I get to a place where my ancestors are in tune with the environment. And my guess is that they had amazing dialogue circle processes back when they were like clans and tribes and bands, you know, roaming around the Scottish Highlands or something. And that that got part of like that, whatever the colonization, whatever the powerful forces, I think it was like the Romans initially, we, you know, they came and just like, we're like, now, you're not going to do this anymore. And then that control culture, you know, expanded around the world, part of what it did was wipe out this culture. And so what's interesting is that, you know, our work in the world of mediation and conflict transformation, like we are, in a way,

revitalizing these ancient practices of dialogue and reconciliation that, in a way, are existing still unlike some more traditional indigenous cultures. And because I don't think there isn't really a place to go back to in the US culture, I mean, it's not like we were already this mixture of all the different cultures, everyone can go back to their own roots. But eventually we'll find something similar. And so I really appreciate this, this this comment from this person you're talking to that I mean, I'll just say a little bit about the DPACE Initiative. So DPACE is short for democracy, politics, and conflict engagement. And in our goal with this project is to be bringing conflict literacy to people who are working on political and social change issues, the groups and organizations movements. And we talk about conflict literacy. It's about understanding our interdependence, and recognizing that there are tools for people to communicate across their differences that already exist. But I really appreciate that idea of just like, like the we're trying to figure out how to bring that culture back alive into this modern era. And, you know, I was talking to someone last night about, you know, like, whether or not we're going to be able to pull this one off, you know, like, politically. And I'm like, well, we already have the tools, we totally can get through this situation and figure out how to all work together across our differences. That's totally within our capacity. And whether or not we're going to actually do it is another question.

W

Wendy Wood 49:42

I think we really have to look at the motivation around it. Yeah. It's a grave concern to me, Duncan. It's funny you mentioned Scotland because I too am from Scottish roots, my ancestors on both sides of my family. came to the US before as not as colonizers, but as people who were brought to the US to work during the British rule initially, my ancestors fought against in the Revolutionary War against the crown, my ancestors fought in the Civil War, some for the north and some for the South. So there are deep roots there. And I'm curious if they are, I'm pretty sure they had already lost that ability, from our Scottish roots, cuz of colonization from, from the west, and that had broken that apart for them. And, you know, within Scotland today, I see those roots reforming their separation from what tore them apart initially. But I have grave concerns about the U.S. because we were brought in from so many different cultures and so many different ways of thinking, and intentional or not, or not, whatever the forces at play have been in the US. So often, it's to disintegrate those things that made people whole to begin with, whether it's, again, intentional, or if it's just by happenstance, I don't know. Mm hmm. It really deeply concerns me. And like you say, we have the tools and as conflict engagement practitioners, and peace builders like ourselves, we know it's there. It's part of the what continues to motivate me to get up every morning. And other than my family and my grandchildren, my beautiful garden, and my friends and my willingness to participate. But it drives me every day, Duncan, that we have the tools to do this, we can do this. And and it's not that

hard. We just have to be motivated and willing to do it and get to a place where we've, and I don't want to get by no means Shall we get to the place of South Sudan or Rwanda, or hundreds of other thousands of other places around the world. And we don't need to get there either. And I'm not willing to, to wait till it gets there to take action. I think that the time is now and we can rebuild our community, we can do it. And we have the tools and the skills to do it, and DPACE. And the work there. And these efforts that we've been putting so much time and commitment into DPACE is just one example of how we can take the foundations which are so filled with promise and hope and transformation, the foundations and social movements across all political spectrums, and help them do their work in a better way and work that doesn't harm themselves. So many social movements and political organizations eat their young as we know, and it's not helpful, those who thrive actually come together as a community with the same motivations and the same willingness and the same leadership and the same values and belief systems. And we can do that. And then we can understand, we have similar belief systems and values that we can agree to disagree, but we can also function.



Duncan Autrey 53:29

Yeah, and this makes me think about, you know, I appreciate them like that, like eating the young comment, or just just, you know, again, just like reflecting a friend was talking about how, like, she lives in Costa Rica, and has all these communities that are like, we're gonna like build a future community that everyone coming together and is like, Hey, is another community of the road and like, well, they're doing it wrong, you know? And it's like, Okay, wait a minute, you're trying to get the whole world involved, but you can't even get along with the people who are trying to do the exact same thing a little bit away. And so, yeah, so it becomes interesting that, you know, whether it's within the left or within the right, or within any movement, these divisions can happen. And they're often very principled, right? It's like, I really believe this. And because these people are very principled, and what they're trying to accomplish, they can have separations, they get it so that it's like, well, you're not doing it the way I think you should be doing it, even though they're trying to work on the same goal. So that's happening within movements. But then we also can see that if we can zoom out a little bit more, we can also look and say, Okay, what if everyone in the United States, what is the thing that's our uniting theme here? You know, across these political spectrums, people don't even think that they have belief systems in common, but in a certain way they do we say, Okay, can we all agree that we want everyone to be as happy as possible? Yeah. Can we agree that we want to be as positive as a force in those worlds as possible? Okay, yeah, we can agree to that. Do we want to like be sustainable for the next generations? Yeah. Okay, well, let's that's enough of an agreement that we can all agree on, you know? And so it's interesting when we think about, like, what are our common threads? And what are the things that we have in

common? And then what are the things that are separate from us, we have to be more comfortable with talking across these differences. You know, like, whether they're like, really micro differences that are really principled and important, or whether or not there are huge differences about strategy and culture and history. And, yeah, man, if there's any message, I could get out to the world, we have the tools to do this, everyone, like, we already are able to do this thing. If you're having a challenging conversation, like get a facilitator, get a mediator, like there's people out here who are ready to help and, and I just, like believe that, like, if we make it, you know, like as a civilization, you know, because it feels like it's that level, sometimes it's going to be because we recognize that painful conflict is a totally inadequate way of living in life. Like, we don't have to do that. Like, we can just do this so much better. And people just need to stop tolerating ineffective communication and division about values, because we don't have to do it that way.



Wendy Wood 56:13

Yeah, it's taking the the larger view and bring it into focus, I think Mm hmm. And being able to have those conversations, it's not going to work unless we have an ability, a structure or a willingness to be in conversation with each other. It's just not. And you see that, you know, the South Sudanese pastors and the perpetrators and the victims of the genocide in Rwanda, they are able to dig deep into their nature, their own true self, and recognize what's required to heal as, as individuals and communities. We can do that. I mean, we're large, but we have to start somewhere. I think what's so important about social movements and political spaces, Duncan, and why DPACE has the ability to have such a profound effect is that these organizations, these groups, these movements, are in a position to have such a public presence, and to communicate things in a different way, that as they're able to transform their own conflict and build their own resilience, that message will resonate across differences. Yet when they're not able to do that, and conflict perpetuates internally, and, and between work and like organizations are different organizations, the message that is being sent remains the same. So if they have new tools, new insights to transforming these conflicts into meaningful actions that don't harm others, they'll quickly and figure out ways to have that information resonate across boundaries, I think.



Duncan Autrey 58:09

Yeah, I totally agree. I mean, as two people who have put, you know, an inordinate amount of hours into into working on that, and you know, I hope so. And I'll just say right now, for people who are listening that, first of all, there'll be links and resources for all this information at the Fractal Friends website. But the DPACE Initiative has a conflict literacy

framework, with all various kinds of resources that people can check out. And that's it DPACEinitiative.org. Well, what are the thoughts... Anything else about DPACE you want to share?

W

Wendy Wood 58:42

Sure, you mentioned the conflict literacy framework. And while I've been in the field of conflict resolution, mediation, dialogue, peace building, peacebuilding, trauma, informed peacebuilding for a long time. What became evident to me and others was that there was no one place, no one resource where people could go to find the breadth and depth of skills and tools that were available for all of us actually to resolve conflict. Oftentimes, people think of bringing outside people in to do nothing more than mediate, they don't really see conflict as much broader and complex kind of phenomenon that has many tools and opportunities and options for establishing and getting a handle on it. And so I really encourage any of the listeners here to look at that framework. While it's in the context of grassroots organizations, social movements, and communities working for social change. And there are some really wonderful tips and tools and ways of thinking about conflict. I think I have great value. And it really reminds me that this effort and planting these seeds of peacebuilding within the US is so critical. If this is all we do with the Democracy, Politics and Conflict Engagement Initiative, is to plant the seeds of peace building within the US. And that will be good, it's going to take time. And the sense of urgency for it is, is real, and profound. And figuring out the ways to navigate it are a little bit more are a little more tricky. And I hope that the listeners, once again will take an opportunity to take a deep dive into this work, because it's, it's really important and share it and think more deeply about it and see how valuable some of this work could be get a deeper understanding. So that they can be more response-able and be reach out into the world to see who can be helpful. we've, we've come to this place where we don't ask for help very often anymore. And I and look at what's happening right now with COVID Duncan, we're being asked to isolate, that's not something we do well, it's not something we will do well as human beings. And while many of us are doing it and doing it well, it's also a challenge for us to be able to kind of operate in ways that are really necessary right now. So we've got a lot of things to face right now. But



Duncan Autrey 1:01:39

there's something this was clarifying when you're talking about the the framework. And right just this reminder that people often have this very limited understanding of like, what conflict is or what conflict engagement or conflict resolution or conflict transformation might entail, right. And they often might just think that, okay, we have two people are fighting, and they can't figure it out, then we need a mediator. And that's true. Mediation

works really well. Because, you know, it's great resource. But that mediation is just like one feature of like a much bigger thing, and that you're with like a super diverse team of conflict practitioners that we're working with, there's so many conflict is is exactly like this bigger theme that can come up in so many different ways. And there are ways to address it in all those different ways. So conflict could be like a certain person acts out, and they're having behavior you don't like and the whole group is trying to figure out what to do with it, or something traumatic happens to like a community, and they're just trying to figure out how to talk to each other about their experience. Or maybe it's two different groups that need to dialogue with each other. Or you could think about anyone who's working on political or social change in a certain way, is dealing with a greater conflict, because they're trying to change something. And in fact, even just understanding that any kind of change process is inherently a conflict process. Because it's just this conflict between the past and the future. Or one of the things I always struggle with is it like I talked about conflict so easily, because I recognize that it's just kind of this inherent natural thing that happens in our diversity of perspectives. And that we can have a positive experience with it or a negative experience with it. But you know, often people see it as this negative thing, but it's really worth remembering that if there's disagreement, then that just means you're sitting on an opportunity to really understand what people care about, you know, like to really there's always if there's a conflict, and that means that there's an opportunity for some amazing transformation that can work out for everyone.



Wendy Wood 1:03:45

Yes, I agree. And as conflict practitioners, we're really good at articulating it as human beings in general, and especially within the United States, we're great at avoiding it. Yeah. Just like we're great at avoiding getting an annual health care exam, or we're great at, uh, avoiding eating in ways that are more helpful. We're not great at prevention as a culture in the US So, so frequently, and you know, peacebuilding has a big prevention measure that is, is part of it. The US in particular is great at standing their own ground.



Duncan Autrey 1:04:28

Mm hmm.



Wendy Wood 1:04:29

And we know that that creates real challenges and barriers to resolving conflict. And we're not really good at figuring out how to do it, you know, we across we come across conflict, daily, really, and don't even realize it as such. And I remember having a

conversation with a leader in a large grassroots social and political organization a few years back Then this person said, You know, I, until I started managing this group of, of advocates for this particular cause. The biggest conflict I ever thought I had was an A minus at Harvard. And now, I've been in the middle of it all along. Yeah. And I've been creating it all along in ways that I had no idea. And so it's high time that we get a handle on this, that we think in terms of our friend, colleague guest and a guest has been here on Fractal Friends Ken Cloke, so dropping little peacebuilders by what are they called?



Duncan Autrey 1:05:40

parachutes.



Wendy Wood 1:05:41

parachutes, yes, yes. Dropping, you know, dropping peacebuilders in parachutes throughout the US. We used to think of it someplace else. But right now we're in need of a parachute effort to see, like we seed clouds or we seed fields, we need to seed it with conflict, transformation skills and opportunities and prevention mechanisms.



Duncan Autrey 1:06:05

Mm hmm. Yeah. This idea of like parachuting mediators into into places instead of bombs and such, was the foundation of Mediators Beyond Borders. And I love that you were actually there when he first was talking about that.



Wendy Wood 1:06:20

I laughed when I heard it the first time. And it made such sense. And it was during the Iraq war. Mm hmm. When Ken said, rather than dropping bombs, why don't we drop mediators? Yeah.



Duncan Autrey 1:06:33

I mean, it's like, it's almost seems like a joke. But honestly, if I was gonna, like, do like one big foreign policy fix, it would be like every time that we find ourselves into some sort of armed conflict, that we have twice as long as that armed conflict, like the peace building plan for afterwards, you know, maybe there's a bad, some person out there is like really acting out in a bad way, and they need to get stopped. Sure. But if you don't have the plan on how you're going to build the peace afterwards, like you need to come and drop in, not

only mediators, but trauma informed psychologists and teachers and educators like there's so much that we can do, and it actually would just, it's good security, it's good thinking to do that kind of thing.

W

Wendy Wood 1:07:15

It's funny, because your comment struck me when you said foreign policy. It's our own policy today.



Duncan Autrey 1:07:23

Totally, of course, Yeah.

W

Wendy Wood 1:07:25

To look someplace else as where the conflict exists. We're having armed conflict within our own country right now. And, and many people, myself and many people, just it's time for, for me, as a founder of this nation, to bring this home. Yeah. Because it's here now. And it makes such sense from a prevention and intervention, a sustainable solution perspective. We didn't get charged. Do this now.



Duncan Autrey 1:07:56

Yeah, no, I really appreciate that. Yeah, yeah. No, thanks for bringing that home. And, you know, the thing that one of my like, biggest core fears is that we don't really have any leadership that's thinking like this. I mean, set aside in presidential things, but just thinking about what it would be like to parachute these mediators into Congress, you know, and just think, Wow, we're not really able to make effective decisions right now, because we're not able to integrate our different perspectives. I have a question that I want to, I think is a good one here. I have a great question. So as a gardener, but also who's like, you know, playing with this metaphor of like seeds of peace, what lessons from gardening to you feel like you could bring into this planting, you know, sowing peace.

W

Wendy Wood 1:08:49

I think back of the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh, Zen Buddhist practitioner and international peace builder, pretty much every time I garden, and he was really very instrumental in coining the term seeds of peace, I believe. And what continues to arise for me when I'm gardening is the care I need to take in allowing my garden to thrive.

Conditions change all the time. For an example, you know, I live where there is a rough summer part of the time in the Sierra foothills of California. And in the last several years, we've been inundated with smoke, while the condition of managing my garden and our garden during the summer has taken on certain methods and tools and nurturing the conditions change and as the conditions change, I have to change with it. Mm hmm. And my practices have to change with it. So that's been as of late one of the more profound thoughts that come to me as a gardener, and how that plays out in a lot of different ways. And I think I have to be patient with my garden, present for my garden, if I ignore it, it goes away, and it goes away quickly. I'm responsible for my garden. Mm hmm. When I plant seeds and nurture them to a certain point, if I fail to water them, I've done harm not just to the plant, but to my salsa, which needed to be made and added with tomatoes. Yeah, that's a great question. I appreciate you asking that back in. And it really is part of my practice and how I take that out into the world.



Duncan Autrey 1:10:41

yeah, no, thank you. And something that occurs to me also, as we've been having this theme of, when we're helping people or supporting people, we know that they have the solutions inside themselves. And that's true, like in any kind of facilitation or mediation process, you know, like, we're just, you know, like, you guys know, the answers to your own problems, we're just giving you a container and to do it in or, you know, like going to Rwanda and teaching them these, like tapping methods, but just recognizing that they have their own somatic healing processes, like already built into them. A garden also has that, right, you have no idea how to make the tomato plant grow tomatoes, all you can do is provide the conditions for it, and it does it on its own, it has its own built in capacity to do those tomatoes. And there's a certain way of like, having faith and letting go of just like, you know what you do your own thing. And I'm just going to give you a nice little space to do it in, you know, you try to force a plant into like bud or something like that, like you're not, you're not going to be able to do it. No,



Wendy Wood 1:11:45

I'm not going to be able to force a plant to bud I can nurture it, though. I feed it in a certain way, like parenting in so many ways, which I've done a lot of, and grandparenting. But, you know, the potential's there, I just need to give him the conditions and the sustenance and the space and all of these things that we know are right, in order for it to happen.



Duncan Autrey 1:12:11

Hmm.



Wendy Wood 1:12:12

And it doesn't take much for me to destroy it.



Duncan Autrey 1:12:15

Yeah,



Wendy Wood 1:12:15

That's the tender part of our humanity and my garden.



Duncan Autrey 1:12:20

Yeah. And I just think like, yeah, if you don't like the way someone's acting in the world, you know, with the approach of like, I'm going to try to get them to sort of fit into like, a certain way that I want them to be is like one thing, but what would it be like to approach another human like, you would approach that tomato plant and say, Look, I'm just going to give you the safe conditions to be able to be you I trust that you have like that solution, that healing, that compassion, the humanity inside of you. And, you know, whether that's a group or a person, you know, I think that that's like, really important to, like, we're not going to be able to, you know, or When I think about forcing the bud like, I definitely have had the experience of like, Oh, my God, that flowers, like somehow not getting out of its thing, and you try to remove the casing you know, it's like, Nope, that's gone, and the flowers a goner now,



Wendy Wood 1:13:06

it really makes me think Duncan have this concept of compassion. Right? Yeah, I haven't really thought about compassion in my garden, necessarily. But when we think about the fact that and often it as conflict practitioners of peace builders, that you have within it within yourself the ability to do this work. Yes, and, and there are also conditions and causes that bring people to the table to begin with. And we cannot ignore those. It's the idea that, I need to understand my role in the garden and my role as a practitioner of peace practitioner. And it's also really important that I understand the how the way in

which they're coming into this space, and what has brought them here what their experiences life experiences, have been that, that bring them to this place and help them understand that so that together we can act, and compassion is nothing without action. So



Duncan Autrey 1:14:07

yeah,



Wendy Wood 1:14:08

together, we can act, they can act.



Duncan Autrey 1:14:11

I'm loving this metaphor so much like, because another thing that makes me think about it, like, you know, what are the conditions where they're coming from, or how they're getting there. I mean, there's a huge barrier to doing effective conflict transformation work, is getting people to actually engage in it, you know, like, it's the number one challenge that we have is like, getting people to like, want to actually trust that they can talk to people who they disagree with and you think about, like, what are the conditions you want to bring? So you're thinking like, how do I make this soil here be the right soil for this to come and to want to be here, and remembering now there's a much older episodes with one of my friends, Abdul Mujeeb Khan, and he's telling me about this like excerpt from I think it's a piece from the Quran. If not, it's just like a piece of Islamic, You know, poetry, it's about like, you have to prepare the right soil for the thing to be able to grow in. And he was talking about, like, if you give me this a great cactus and I make this like wonderful, hummus filled, rich soil compost, you know, and I put the cactus in there, it's not actually going to like it. It wants to be in like a super drainable sandy soil. And so you think about, like, if we're trying to make change, like, it's not just like, what kind of... When you're talking about, like dancing and cooking, you know, and saying, what is going to be the changing environment, not just the one you want to grow in and change? But what is the other person want to be growing and changing? And like, what's going to be the conditions that's going to make them feel comfortable and at home? And anyways, it's a really rich metaphor. Yeah.



Wendy Wood 1:15:53

This conversation brings me back to the research that Thais and I did several years ago

that brought us to this, to write this book, Do No Harm. And the thinking around this, because we had both worked in war torn areas, both foreign and domestic, worked in really difficult situations. And, and I never put it in this perspective, but what w... of the garden, but it's helpful. And we're both big gardeners, by the way, which I think is funny. Mm hmm. What we were noticing is, and it came forward in our question, why is it that we can take two people with the exact same qualifications, same education, same certifications, same motivations, it seems and put them in, let's say, a village in Rwanda? Mm hmm. Come do the work? And how is it that that one person can navigate in a way that builds on that nurtures all the reasons for a continued relationship, a meaningful relationship with the people we're in? And the other person doesn't? The other person creates potentially irreparable harm? I mean, with the same motivations, the same quality? What, what is that? And we saw a time of time and again, and so we asked this question, what are the qualities of exemplars in the field who are able to enter into these spaces and not harm others? And that's, and we began doing as social scientists, you know, some critical narrative inquiry into this question. And these qualities emerged, and these question was asked to people across cultures across race, across spiritual and religious beliefs, both within the US and outside of the US, and with different sort of practices, educators, peacebuilders, environment, environmental activists, just a range of folks, nuns, religious Catholic religious women. And what continue to emerge was these same qualities, these qualities of authenticity, wise speech, the deep listening, and being present, being mindful, compassion rose to the top, we need to understand ourselves so we can understand others in order to act. And that that love and joy was filtered throughout their work, that they needed to be responsible and take responsibilities and that they needed to remain balanced and undisturbed and were balanced and undisturbed. And this practice of equanimity, what happens to me happens to you, it rose consistently across these cultures, and across these practices and belief systems, it was just beautiful. And it really comes back to the you know, the soil that we're trying to nurture this and it's that presence, the presence of the soil. CX v actus will not grow and loamy soils, they don't find a place there. And so how do we create this presence, as practitioners that will allow for people to be able to not just heal, but to thrive? Mm hmm. And create different prevention mechanisms and sustainability mechanisms and resolve their conflicts. There's something within ourselves that we need to nurture. And I do believe it's these qualities. And there are more I'm sure that will come up and will emerge as we continue thinking about this and talking to more people.



Duncan Autrey 1:19:35

Yeah. I haven't recognized that those are sections of your book, and what's the name of the book that you're going to be putting out soon?



Wendy Wood 1:19:42

Well, we're going to kind of reorganize the blending of these two books, but right now, I think we're going to continue with this do no harm theme because that's the essence of where we've done all this but my guess is, it's going to be Do No Harm: A Guide for Perilous Times. Hopefully it will be out by the end of October.



Duncan Autrey 1:20:00

That sounds great. Wendy, a question I ask all the guests on the show is, you know, given your life experience, Wendy would gardener meditator peacebuilder? What would you invite people to pay attention to, as they try to make a better life for themselves and the rest of the world?




Wendy Wood 1:20:17

It's a great question. Thanks, Duncan. I a few things, and maybe not in any particular order. looping back to this concept of compassion, I'd ask that we, as human beings start to pay attention to who we are, and what drives us what experiences we've had, that cause us to act the way that we do, while at the same time trying to understand the same thing and other people. Mm hmm. It's one thing I think that's really big in my thinking, and I also think establishing a sort of a mantra A), of doing no harm is essential, that we find ways to become more present and to communicate in a better way to listen more deeply and, and listen in ways that we can change our mind to use our words wisely. to really take into account if we're being kind or not. Is it true is it kind is it helpful, that old adage, to find ways to create happiness and to understand that what my actions are affecting you, and your actions are affecting me, and to step up and take responsibility for not just our own actions, but for the actions of others, we need to redefine the way that we engage with each other. And I think the last thing is we need to take seriously the value of community and to help rebuild our communities. Whatever they look like, and be willing to take the risk to do that. It's time to plant seeds of compassion, Duncan, not just peace, but compassion. Yeah. And willingness to change our minds without regret.





Duncan Autrey 1:22:15


Yeah, that's really, I really appreciate that. And I think I mean, I just this moment of like, taking the risk of creating community. And the risk is that you might, like, be moved by other people and their experiences and you know, you might grow or change in that experience.


 Wendy Wood 1:22:35
Yeah, very much so.


 Duncan Autrey 1:22:38
When do people want to find you in this world? How would they do that?

 Wendy Wood 1:22:43
This best way is to go into our website, I think that's a great mechanism to do that. TheKarunacenter.org. They could reach me there. You can reach me through Fractal Friends. Mm hmm.

 Duncan Autrey 1:22:56
Yeah. And, of course, the DPACE Initiative and DPACEinitiative.org. And you can send us an email at dpace@mediatorsbeyondborders.org.

 Wendy Wood 1:23:06
I just want to let everybody know that. I've had this continue thought about creating a do no harm campaign. And I decided to do it. I have no idea how to do it. But I'm going to do it. And this dude, it's like drink milk. Remember those old days? Mm hmm. Well, everybody went, Oh, yeah. Okay, I'll drink milk. I am hoping to find a way to bring this do no harm concept and a quick soundbite a quick visual to get this moving, where we can just pay attention to what's required to do that. And so I'm gonna have that up pretty soon on the Karuna Center website and encourage everybody to, to make that effort and you know how to help?

 Duncan Autrey 1:23:49
exactly I was about to say, okay, Fractal Friends out there.

 Wendy Wood 1:23:52
Go through Fractal Friends to to help us do that. We're in this together, and we need to drop these seeds. Like, like rain clouds.



Duncan Autrey 1:24:03

Yeah. I love that. Yeah. So all you find friends out there. If you are meme creators, or know how to get something to go spread around the world, we want to spread compassion and do no harm. So help us out. All right. Well, thank you so much, Wendy. This has been a lovely conversation.



Wendy Wood 1:24:21

Thank you, Duncan. I really have enjoyed every moment of this. And the thinking that's emerged from it as well. It's really helpful.



Duncan Autrey 1:24:28

Mm hmm. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you,



Wendy Wood 1:24:31

I'm bowing in gratitude to you and to all of your listeners.



Duncan Autrey 1:24:35

accepted. Thank you. Thank you so much for listening to this episode of Fractal Friends with windy wood. You can find more content links and resources about this episode, as well as other episodes at Fractalfriends.us. And while you're there, please consider making a donation to Fractal Friends. You can find buttons for that on the website. You can find out more More about Wendy wood at thekarunacenter.org. That's The Karuna k a r u n a center dot ORG. And you can learn more about the DPACE Initiative at DPACEinitiative.org if you liked this episode, please take a moment to share it with someone. Text it to a friend you could put on Facebook you can send an email to a bunch of people who are trying to do my part to amplify these voices. I would love to have your support and spreading the word. And as usual, I'm going to close this out with a song. The song I want to share with you is the Tibetan Buddhist chant om mani padme hum. This sacred mantra is ancient and it is used in Tibetan Buddhism as a path to liberation. Mani Padme means jewel of the lotus, Om and hum are sacred sounds. But when the six syllables are broken down, they contain a complete teaching within them. Om opens the mantra with an invitation of generosity. It's about the unification of imperfect human bodies and pure spirit. "Mani" speaks to the practice of ethics, "ma," and of tolerance and patience, "Ni." "Padme" is about the wisdom that arises from perseverance, "pad" and

concentration "me" and "hum" closes the mantra by celebrating the perfection that comes from the practice of wisdom. Thank you so much for listening to Fractal Friends. And remember, we all have a role to play in the whole Have a great day.



1:26:47

om mani padme hum



1:26:47

om mani padme hum



Duncan Autrey 1:26:47

om mani padme hum om mani padme hum om mani padme hum om mani padme hum



1:26:47

om mani padme hum



1:26:47

om mani padme hum



Duncan Autrey 1:26:47

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