Introduction and Farm Overview

Well welcome everyone to the Mycotoxins and Chronic Illness Summit. I'm doctor Christine Schaffner, and today my guest is Joel Salatin. Joel Salton and his family owned Polyphemus Farms in Virginia, Shenandoah Valley and multi-generational pastured livestock outlet that services several thousand families, numerous restaurants and food venues, and offers nationwide shipping for salad bar, beef, pig, pork and pastured poultry, eggs, turkeys, and broilers.

Author of 15 bucks, he is the editor of the Stockman Grass Farmer, the world's premier pastured livestock trade publication, speaks and consults on farming and food issues, and host councils and countless infotainment gatherings on the farm.

I hope you enjoy my conversation today. Which will. Saladin. Welcome everyone to the Michael Jackson and Chronic Illness Summit. I have the dear pleasure of introducing Charles Saladin, and we're going to be talking about healing the land one bite at a time.

Welcome, Joel. It's really an honor to get to interview you today. Thank you, Doctor Schaffner. It's a privilege and an honor to be with you. Well, I, you know, just so enjoyed my time last year, getting to visit your farm and be part of an amazing event.

And you inspired me on so many levels. And I came home and, you know, I live in an urban environment in Seattle, and my husband and my daughter, we, you know, made a garden and our little side yard and we grew some cans and basil is and what ifs and, you know, but it just was that, you know, really, insightful and empowering.

Like, we all can participate, right. And no matter if you're in rural America and you know, in the city, there's all sorts of ways for us to reconnect, right?

Reconnect to the land, reconnect to the soil. And I've just been so inspired by your movement. But I really this regenerative agriculture movement and coming back to my office, I felt like I can't, you know, we talk about food and nutrition, but this takes it on a whole nother level.

And so, I guess where to start is, you know, you know, what makes poly phase farms different than, you know, the conventional outfit out there? Yeah. So I think the, the foundation here is that we, we look at nature as template, at nature as, as teacher.

So, you know, when you look at when you look at nature, a you don't see ten, ten, ten chemical fertilizer, you don't see roundup, you don't see factory farming houses, you know, industrial, you don't even see tillage equipment.

And so when you boil it all down and you really look at nature as, as pattern, as template, it it's really, it's really elegantly simple.

Nature as the Template for Regenerative Farming

You know, we humans want to complicate everything, and and it's actually fairly, elegantly simple. For one thing, you know, every ecosystem has animals in it, and these animals move, you know, animals move.

That's such a simple phrase. But we live in a time when, you know, most animals now in industrial agriculture actually don't move. You know, they're locked up in a I mean, yeah, they move a foot, but but but they're not actually as I say, they can't gamble on the pasture.

You know, they, they're, they're, they're locked in. And so when animals move, if the animals are going to move,

then we have to have some sort of control, to, you know, to protect and guard them and keep them, where they need to be.

We need, some sort of a shelter and some sort of a portable feed source. So everything about them becomes mobile rather than stationary. So rather than stationary barns, we have mobile shelters instead of in stead of centralized, like, you know, water troughs.

We have, a water system that has access points all over the fields, and you can plug in a water trough here, there, over there, you know, so, so, so the mobility is, is a critical thing.

And then another thing that you notice when you look at, nature is that it's primarily perennials and not annuals. Now, to the folks that I don't want to, you know, talk over or leave anybody an annual an annual is like, squash, watermelons, wheat, barley.

It's a, it's something that has to be planted every year from seed. A perennial is a plant that that flourishes year after year after year from the same root base.

And so grasses, you know, clovers, a lot of a lot of, herb field herbs, like planting dandelion, you know, things like that are perennials and so, so nature because it.

Well, nature, is primarily focused on perennials, not annuals. And the energy flow is completely different in perennials. And annuals tend to extract soil energy and put it in a big fruit, a big, not a big, you know, you know, seed and perennials tend to put all their energy in the soil so that if, if a drought or a blizzard, a hurricane comes, the plant can regrow from, from its crown, and not from the seed store or, you know, a fruit store.

So. So, so we're we're into perennials, rather than annuals, which means the primary. Does that mean I don't like squash? No, we absolutely plant squash and tomatoes and, you know, and the annuals.

But but the the the foundation of the, of the system is, is grasses is these, these this prairie this, this multi multi species prairie. And then I've got, I've got just just two more here quickly.

One, one is that nature. What, what builds soil is carbon. Carbon nature runs on a carbon economy. Chemical fertilizer does not build soil. So soil is built in nature with obviously solar energy through photosynthesis, making biomass, which can either then then decompose on site or decompose through the gut or, or gizzard of an animal, and come out as, as, concentrate known as manure and urine.

Okay. And so both of those are decomposition whether it's, it's pine needles and leaves and grass that fall over and gradually decompose or whether it goes through digestive process.

In either case, it's biomass that decomposes. That's how soil is built. And so so we we we have a, a big chipper that we can chip, you know, you know, crooked trees, disease trees, basically weed the woodlot and take that, that, you know, C grade, you know, woody material and convert it to chips.

That can be then composted. And that drives the fertility program in the fields. So we have a fundamentally integrated system between forest and open land versus a segregated system from where the forest never sees the open and the open never sees the forest.

That, by the way, creates both a fungal and bacterial microbial community in the soil. Grasses tend to go toward bacterial forest, tend to go toward fungal.

But the most fertile soils have both fungus and bacteria. And so the, the, the integration of the two, creates a more fertile soil, a more, biodiverse, soil.

And then the fourth, the fourth thing on the template is that, that, that, that food sheds or, or the, you know, the eco system tends to be a relatively regional eco system without a lot going out real far and a lot going in. Now.

We've always had global trade, especially in, you know, salt and spices and things, you know, specialty items like that. But but we've never had, we've never shipped, you know, watermelons a long distance or squash, you know, the watery things.

Those have all been very, very close. And then if you're going to take a trip, you can take, for example, dehydrated beef or pemmican or, you know, some, some sort of high protein.

That's what you can afford to, to, to send, out of the cheese. You know, you you don't you don't ship milk, you ship cheese.

Microbiome Diversity and Pasture-Based Nutrition

And so, so natural food systems and ecosystems thrive on on regional, regional stability, with their own diversity preservation, and seasonal fluctuations, you know, within that kind of regional, ecosystems, food shed.

And so we began we began actually selling to neighbors, you know, we didn't say, oh, wow, we need to export to, you know, to Thailand or Bangladesh. So first, let's take care of our neighbors so that we so that we we can tweak this cycle within the, you know, within the, the regional shed.

And so those are kind of four ideas that we looked at and started developing, these, these pasture based, mobile, carbon centric, people centric, localized type of of system.

I love this. And thank you for going through this. And as you know, we had this conversation. You know, I, I really want people to hear and we'll dive into, you know, why regenerative agriculture is so much healthier for themselves and the planet.

And then I, I love this mirroring of nature, because that's what very much we do in our work, as clinicians who are on this summit, and we see that a big part of why people are sick.

So that is sick, so sick today is that there is really this disruption and the ecosystem of their body, all of these microbiomes that we've been learning about over the years. You know, not only are God, our skin, our lungs, our brain even has a microbiome.

You know, we're we're in, you know, we're definitely in the low diversity of like, overgrowth of opportunistic. You know, pathogens, like it's a mess, you know, and that's what's creating disease.

And so, you know, it's very much mirrored, you know, in nature of what's happening, you know, in a conventional farm. Right. Low diversity, right. Sterile environments. You can do that.

And, and, and, and a kind of a simplify and a simplified biome as opposed to a, a complex, a fight. That's not a word. But, you know, I like, you know, like, biome and, you know, in, in the work with the microbiome, most of the most of the, the sicknesses or the disease that we're starting to, to tag to microbiome deficiencies are, are tagged to some something that's missing, you know, a sphere of, of enzymes, of fear, of back sphere of bacteria, you know, a family tree, if you will, of, of microbes, microbes that are missing.

Okay. And that and that, That becomes the issue. And so, you know, it's fascinating to me that, well, for example, the the aborigines of Australia are said to have commonly, you know, in a year consumed almost 2500 different kinds of, of food.

You know, Native Americans here, consume something like almost a thousand, different kinds of food. And in fact, if you get, Dolley Madison, you know, James Madison's wife, Dolley Madison, she made a cookbook.

She was a real, you know, gregarious hostess. And, and then, Martha Washington, George Washington's wife. If you go to Mount Vernon and get their cookbooks, you look at those cookbooks today and 80% of the of the ingredients, we don't even know what they are, you know, quinces and quinces and currants and and and all this,

you know, what in the world is that?

And so you begin realizing that that we, as we have industrialized our food system, we have dropped off this diversity to where the average American now really only eats about, you know, 15 or 20 different different things.

And we don't eat that, you know, 506 hundred and 700, type of, of diversity. And so, so, you know, our, our, our bodies are simply not getting the kind of microbial, diversity that comes in on a, on a highly diversified diet.

On that note, let me just say that, at our farm, since we have concentrated on on perennials in the pasture and we, we move the cows every day to a new spot.

So you have this mosaic and what it does, it recreates the, the diversified prairie of yesteryear. I mean, most archeologists now say that the Native American prairie an acre would have more than 100 species of plants in it.

Imagine that. Oh, so, so one of the things that I enjoy doing with visitors is go out in the field and, and just take, you know, three feet by three feet and say, what can I find?

And typically, you know, I can find 20. And if I go a little bit farther up to 30 or 40 or even 50, the different species of plants, you know, in an acre, it's not as diversified as the native prairie.

But we're getting there, we're getting there. We're getting more every year. The latent seed bank is there. And what I want to just point out is that when our animals, when our animals are on that, that diversified pasture, they're eating some plantain, some some yarrow, some chicory, some, you know, clover, white clover, else like clover.

And, and so the animals are getting this incredibly, incredibly diversified diet, not just corn and soybeans. They're getting this incredibly diversified diet, which then carries that microbial diversity into our microbiome so that we can vicariously get more diversity.

I'm convinced of this. I'm convinced that to the average person telling them you need to diversify your diet by about, you know, 80 different types of plants.

That's intimidating. Whoa. You know, I don't even know that. Okay. But one of the quickest ways that you can diversify your your intake is getting pasture based meat and poultry and eggs, where a a very diversified sward, sward of, of vegetation has come into that animal and that animal's been able to metabolize all that diversity and that then carries through, onto your plate.

And that is one of the quickest ways to significantly diversify your diet. So you get a little bit of dandelion, you get a little bit of lamb's quarters and chicory and south thistle and milkweed and fescue and orchard grass and Timothy and clover.

You know, I can just go on and on. But but you get a little bit of that and, and to me that that's a very, it's a very hopeful, notion that if we, that if we move to a, a, a diversified pasture based, you know, even animal that we, we benefit from all that dietary diversity that comes from the pasture.

I love that and so well said. And how's your, you know, the, you know, what we call this is regenerative agriculture, right? So we we kind of ruin our health, ruined the planet.

But, I mean, it's amazing. Mother nature, right, can regenerate. And I think that is really the message that I, you know, that gives me hope, right? You know, I have a three and a half year old, so I'm always looking for that, you know, optimistic, hopeful message of how to change the trajectory.

Organic Labels, Transparency, and Food Sourcing

And, you know, I, I think that, this regenerative in pasture piece, especially to restore our microbiome and the point I think I want to bring in Joel, is that many people who are blessed are like, oh, I, you know, have we have like a it's

a pretty cool group.

People are probably pretty educated. They're eating organic. You know, they thinking they're doing all the right things. But there's a difference. Right.

And so how can people make sure that they're making the choices that are going to be more aligned with your farm versus like, green washed organic choice that doesn't have all of this benefit?

Yeah. Well, 111 of the the what, I don't know, bummer. Because of the whole organic certification system is that it's kind of been co-opted now by the industry.

And so you can now get organic, you know, hydroponics, aquaponics. You know, soil. Soil is fruit. Soil is, vegetables. You know, and you're basically getting water and not nutrition.

And, and so, you know, the organic certification and most of the, you know, the eggs, organic certified eggs are in factory farms. Chicken. All organic chicken is organic, big factory farms.

And so how do you know? Well, one way, I'm a big believer in cultivating the skill of of web sleuthing. Okay, now, look, I'm not a I'm a caveman, okay?

I mean, I don't even I don't even have a, I don't even have a smartphone. Okay, but but when people ask me this question, well, they often ask me, well, what do you think about this brand?

I say, well, let's look them up on the web, and you look them up on the web and, and if if they, if you look for meat, our farmers and the farmers are, for example, standing in front of a factory, houses.

That'll tell you something. If the. Well, for example, there's one large, large, you know, distributor that, that touts themselves as being an au naturel in their the homesteader food system, blah, blah, blah.

You go to their, home page, look for, you know, for their, their providers. And the background picture of the home page is five Tyson chicken houses. So, so all I'm suggesting is, you know, you have to be, you know, discerning and, and and some, some simple web sleuthing, you know, do do they allow visitors, you know, that's a big one.

You don't have to go visit. But do they allow visitors? On our farm, we have a 24 seven, 365 open door policy. Anyone can come from anywhere in the world at any time to see anything, anywhere, unannounced.

Now, I'm not saying it has to be that good with me. I would say that's a gold standard. If you want a gold standard, that's certainly one for transparency.

But, I've heard I've heard people say, if you go to a farmer's market and you buy from a farmer three weeks in a row and he hasn't invited you to come visit his farm, there's probably something wrong with that with that outfit.

And so, so, you know, transparency is a big deal. You know how open are they for visitation for, you know, actual, eyes, you know, eyes on the ground and, and then another, another one is just endorsements from people like you, or people like me, you know, Sally Fallon, you know, Western.

They probably spent a, you know, Tom Cowan. I mean, when, when these, Joe McCall or whatever, you know, but when these when these kind of gurus of our movement.

Zach Bush. Okay, when these guys, when these guys and gals, when they, you know, they're in the system, they're they're, they're hearing the scuttlebutt, right?

I mean, you know, they're they're they're in this and, and so, you know, look at what the look at what the what the gurus and the Integrity Authentic Food system are saying, you know, what do they buy?

You know, who do they get from? And, those are, you know, those are valuable things. And so one of the, I'll just say this, one of the neat things now that's happened in the last ten years is the, the efficiency in logistics of distribution so that our, our I mean, our farms are perfect example.

We were we were culturally local for many, many years and and then suddenly we started losing market to, you know, to door to door delivery outfits. And people didn't want to drive out here to get stuff and things.

And so, so we finally, you know, two and a half years ago, we launched, a shipping program, a delivery. And, you know, it's not our biggest thing, but it's steadily growing, and and it gives somebody in New York, then a Manhattan apartment, you can get you can get food that we pack right here at the farm sent directly to you.

No middlemen, except for UPS. Yeah. You know, directly to you. And so the the opportunity for both acquiring, acquiring, integrity food and the ability of rural farmers far away from metropolitan centers to access, has fundamentally changed in the last ten years as the, as distribution logistics has become more and more, streamlined so that we don't have the cost, you know, the cost prejudice that we did, you know, even ten years ago, between between that option and the, the bricks and mortar option.

So it's it's helped. It's helped both of us. There are a lot of things that are dysfunctional in the world, but but the, the, the efficiency of logistics has really, really created new opportunities both for the farmer and the buyer, the, the urban, buyer to be able to, to hook up with people that they couldn't have would have been more difficult to hook up with in the past.

Yeah. No, there's silver lining right of the technology in the. That's right, that's right. It's the silver lining. Yeah. I'm bringing yeah I'm bringing your food to you know again more communities that are not down the street.

You know, I, I think that's that's definitely more, you know, like thinking about all the other things that we're shipping around the world, like, you know, regenerative foods or, you know, please ship them off, you know, so we need them, right.

So, you know, and I know this is a point that you talk about and, you know, people are listening. You know, there's always the conversation rate of, okay, is this food more expensive?

Can I afford this? Should I have to only buy these things organic or regenerative?

Food Affordability, Hidden Costs, and Nutrient Density

Do I have to, you know, succumb to the, you know, the foods that are, you know, more affordable and, you know, I, I'd really love your, yeah, your education about access from an affordability standpoint of these this this type of farming in this food.

Yeah. So of course, price has always been an issue for us. And, because, you know, we're not making a dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico the size of Rhode Island and asking society to pay for it, you know, so, so, so we don't have the we're not making mersa and C diff from, you know, from sub therapeutic superbugs from, from feeding sub therapeutic antibiotics.

So, so you know, there's a lot of cost in the system that, that the supermarket does not capture in the conventional, thing, but to go straight to the point, realize that, that the satiation, the satiation of, of authentic food, is, is much more it's much more concentrated than in, bad food.

The Bio Nutrient Food Association just did a, a test with our with, some of it with a, spectrophotometer, spectrometer. It's, you know, this, you know what Abby has on NCIS?

You know, she can, you know, it's in there. Yeah. Yeah. Right. Right, right. Matt. Mass spec, you know. Yeah, they they just did this with carrots, for example.

And they found that the difference nutritionally that they measured, I think 150, 150, measurable, whatever enzymes, vitamins, minerals and, and they found that in order to, to get the same nutrition that was in the best carrot, you would have to eat something like 20 of the of the poorest wants to get the same nutrition that it was in the, the first one.

And so there's that much difference, you know in foods. And so, you know, we certainly see that in ours when we do food fairs, you know, we will, will, you know, cook a pound of ground beef, for example, and show the difference in the the amount of grease that comes off of the store bought one versus two hours, you know, the bacon doesn't shrivel up as much.

You, you actually get more because the, the hormone, the hormone iron offers that the industry is using actually makes the, the muscles, artificially swell and take on water.

So the animal gains weight faster. You buy more pounds of material, but it's the extra pounds are water. They're not they're not nutrition. And so the the density, we we, we had a chef perform a, a density function on our pork, for example.

He got, he got a, I don't know, I guess it was one of our, hams and, and got one from Smithfield and did a displacement test in, in bus pans of water.

So he he filled him right up to the brim. And then he put these two, identically weighted, hunks of pork in there and ours displaced away less water. In other words, 10 pounds of our pork was was several, cubic inches less in volume than the than the, the the Smithfield pork, meaning that it was more dense.

And so when you buy, when you buy a pound of this, you're not getting fluff, you're actually getting, satiation. So, you know, that's that's one thing.

The second thing I would say with anybody says something about price and say, okay, great, quickly, let's go to your house. And here's what we're not going to see.

We're not going to see lottery tickets, alcohol. Cigarets. Hey, take out you know, we're not going to see designer jeans. We're not going to see flat screen TVs.

We're not, you know, you can go down this this line, right? The fact is that many, many people, who complain about the price are, are spending money on something else.

The the best indicator of this was you probably, you're probably familiar with the the famous documentary Food Inc and, Food Inc. Wonderful documentary.

I mean, it was it was culturally, cataclysm in the culture, but but they, they came off on this same narrative, remember that family that stopped at Burger King and got that, you know, great big burger and, big soft drink and big fries.

And they said, well, we can't afford vegetables, you know, and they just meant that I'm looking at that, you know, when it came out, I'm looking at that saying, wait a minute, for the money they spent on that, on that fast food meal of of junk, they could have bought 2 pounds of our ground beef and cooked it and had there'd be more nutrition in half a pound of our ground meat than in that entire, you know, $10 meal.

And so a lot of this is simply rearranging our, our food dollar, our food buying, buying unprocessed, using your kitchen to prepare preserve package. You know, food and buying in bulk, not buying processed.

And so you know, the look doc chapter the biggest the biggest lie that people tell themselves is I can change my life and I can change the world, but I don't have to change, right?

Right. I mean, that's the biggest fraud, right? That, the fact is, if you want a different situation for you and you want

a different situation for your granddaughter, you have to make some changes.

You have to start being intentional about some of the things you do. Now, I'm not a cultist. I'm the 8020 rule. You know, you get 80% right and you can fudge on the on the 20% when you're, you know, when your niece has a birthday party and they want to serve, you know, ice cream, enjoy it, be it be a, you know, don't be a party pooper.

And yeah that that's the 20% when but but but but but you in order in order for that 20% to work you've got to be getting about 80%. Right. The 8020 rule.

And I to me that, that that's doable. That's something that you don't have to be an ogre in society. You can still you know, go out with your friends.

But but most of the time, you're actually, you're actually, you know, looking through your plate at the landscape that plate is creating and, and that, that make, that makes you start being intentional and making some different decisions.

Yeah. No, I, I am, I'm totally, aligned with you again, Jill. And, you know, and I see this in health. Right. So I'm in, you know, I'm in Archer path.

And most of what I do is not supported by insurance. And, you know, we, choose to be cash pay because if we, you know, to help people, if we were under that scrutiny, we would never be able to help anyone.

Cows, Climate, and Soil Regeneration

Right. And so, you know, we're in this like middle of, you know, paradigm shift. But I, you know, but you know, anyone that we see, like, if we don't have our health, you can have all the money in the world.

But if you do not have your health, you really don't have your connection to your soul's purpose in your life or in your days or not joyful. You know it.

It's it's, you know, horrific. And that's why we're trying to help as many people who don't have their health. And so I, I agree, I think that people need just like with all these hidden costs of not making these choices that we, you know, see.

And so I, I think that, you know, prioritization. Right. And to embrace and, you know, and this is fun too. I mean, when you like go to a farm like yours and eat the food that you eat like that you produce, I mean, like, why go back?

You know, you will never go back, you know, so, so no, I, I think it's, I think people are getting there and understanding that there are so many hidden costs and the cheaper food, you know, and definitely, you know, prevention is, you know, we can't see prevention, right?

So it's never glamorous, but I know that we prevent a lot of health, conditions, choosing, you know, these, these foods. And so, you know, one thing that my eyes keep opening to and I'm like, my eyes are getting, more aware and and I'm still, like, baffled by it all, but, you know, this conversation about, cows and livestock and, you know, really, cows in particular are really destroying the planet are horrific for our health.

And, you know, in some way better option to have like and beyond burger with like, you know, fake meat and you know, dyed blood and you know I mean it's incredible like that.

We, you know, present these options, you know, so so I guess what is your take our cows really destroying the planet? Great. Great question. And so, I'll, I'll answer it this way that if you're if you're data, if your data points are flawed, then probably your, your conclusion from the experiment will be flawed.

And so the problem is that that conspiracy and what the health and all these, these, you know, plant based animal

livestock hating, hating, kind of, outfits do is they, they go to the dysfunctional system to collect their data.

They're not coming here. They don't come here. And and so I like to say it would be it would be equivalent to, let's say you and I, we lived on Pluto.

And we look down, we look down at the Earth, that planet way down there. Hey you know, I wonder, I wonder what they do for education down. I wonder whether school systems like.

And so we jump on our flying saucer and we, you know, we tool it down to the, to earth. And we happened to land in the schoolyard that has the, the worst, school superintendent for the region, the worst, the worst principal, the worst school we go visit, the worst teacher in the worst classroom, and we spend two days, we write our report, we go back and they say that Pluto. They say, well, what did you find?

What did you find? What would we say? We'd say, my goodness, they'd be better if they didn't even have any education this year. And and that and that's where we are right now in this Cal thing, is, you know what?

When they when they start off the damage and the terrible and the overgrazing and all, I'm saying. Amen, preacher. You know, that's great. Yeah. But then when they say the answer is get rid of all the cows and say, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait wait wait wait.

Women can the the tool that can harm can also heal. You know, and so and so, so here, for example, on our farm in 60 years, we've gone. I'll just give you one, one little point.

We've gone from 1% organic matter to over 8% organic matter. Now, organic matter is is sequestered. It it's not exactly sequestered carbon but but it's a it's a kissing cousin.

It's it's a it's a it's a Coke. It's a coconspirator. You know, a comrade of, of carbon. Okay. So organic matter. So we've gone from 1% to 8% organic matter if, if, if we if we took all the agricultural land in the US and moved it.

Only one percentage point in organic matter, just one, not seven like we've done, but one, we would draw down all the atmospheric carbon to pre 1960 levels.

Wow. That's all it would take. And so I mean you know you can measure the gigatons and all this stuff of that. But you know this whole, this whole carbon issue is is is missing the soil component that, that carbon is supposed to be in the soil.

And so, you know, yes. Have have we, have we overgrazed and a certified and planted corn and made deserts and destroyed aquifers? Yes, yes yes, yes, yes.

But realize that 500 years ago North America produced more nutrition than it does today. Now it was it wasn't all eaten by people. You know, there were 200 million beavers that ate more vegetables than all the all the humans in North America today.

There were 2 million wolves that needed 20 pounds of meat a day. You know, so, so, so it wasn't all being eaten by people, but but the the abundance was there.

And so to me, that always gives me pause. Any any time somebody heads down this direction, I was like, wait, wait, wait a minute. Let's not let's not demonize the animal.

Let's instead point the finger at the management of the animal and say, if we can get back to the templates of nature, we can bring back the abundance, we can bring back the atmosphere, we can bring back the ecological balance that was here.

You know, prior to us messing it up. And, and so the answer, the answer is, that the that these hands, if you will, these hands who have hurt can also heal.

And and that's where we need to be and I love it I mean I, I think yeah, I mean when, I mean, you've taught me and as we have had throughout this conversation and saying, you know, the cows and the livestock need to be part of the healing equation.

You know, we need to completely transform, you know, how we're doing things and they can help us recover the soil. Right? So it's just only going to if we take them out of the equation completely, then we're only going to be in more dire straits, you know.

And so I guess I mean, you I mean, you're so, you know, in this world and you're so knowledgeable and you have all of this experience. I mean, you must it's kind of probably how I dream of, like, the new hospital and what that would look like.

And, you know, like, you know, it's like, yes, you know, it's like, you know, it's like, how do you like, see, I mean, like, can you I mean, there there are people like, you're there's a tipping point, but you know, what do you think?

You know, how do you think we how do you think we're it's possible to get this, you know, let's just start with North America. America. Because it doesn't look like we're in, you know, put our heads like, how do we start transitioning these, you know, conventional farms and regenerative I yeah I would like to start with with Swope.

Swope my my little village here, you know, can we just start there? You you are so right and yes, we can you and I and our and our specialty, you know, we can build this this Paradise, right?

This we can build this, this fantasy Paradise in our it. You can see it. I can see it. It seems so simple, so obvious to us. And yet we have this, this the system, that, that.

Look, if if people if what we did became the new normal. It would completely invert the power, position, prestige and profits of the entire food and farming system in the world.

That's a big ship to turn around. It's a big shift to turn around. So, so so what? You for me?

Local Food Freedom and Decentralized Production

What I've come down to is I'm responsible for what I can touch, what I can influence, I can't. I'll get us ulcers if I get frustrated about the the slowness or the, recalcitrance or, you know, whatever you want to call, you know.

Yeah, you name it, you know, the sheer, you know, negligence, refusal to see what's obvious. You you, you whatever. It pulls you down, you're stressed.

That's no good. And so, so I think one of the most whatever liberating things is to just let that go and and just concentrate on. Well, as Stephen Covey said in Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, he said, stay within your sphere of influence.

And so, yeah, he drew these concentric circles. He said, he said this, this close one is, is things that are in your sphere of influence. And then you have this stuff that's beyond your control.

And, and what most people do is spend all their lives railing and demonstrating and, and and carrying on about this. It's outside their control, beyond their control.

And, and they, they fail to actually leverage what's within their control. His point is that if you put your attention on what is within your control, your actual sphere of influence increases.

If you put all your attention on what's out there beyond your control, your sphere of influence actually shrinks. That. And and I think, I'm a prime example of that.

You know, I, I don't I don't get all political. I don't, you know, I just, I want to be faithful to the earthworms out here. I

want to be faithful to the cows and the tomatoes.

And I find that if I can, that that is within my influence. And if I put all my attention there, it it's it's a burning bush. It's a burning bush that the world wants to come and see me.

And, you know, my dad used to say, you know, to us, every bush is a burning bush. You know, Moses, Moses in the burning bush. And so, so that's kind of where I am and, and, true, you know, man, I want to go back to the Impossible Burger.

Beyond burger, Impossible meat, just for a moment and to realize when we talk about when we talk about food freedom, you know, food security, food freedom.

Anyone who's into this, this, you know, non fake fake meat stuff. I just like to ask them, do you really think it's a more food security system if if the material that you're eating can't be grown in your backyard or made in your kitchen, that you are now dependent on, obligated to a laboratory and a bunch of, of of technicians creating a substance that, that, that you're going to have to buy animals, you know, an egg laid in your backyard.

You don't have to ask permission for it. You don't have to know anything. The chicken knows all she needs to know to be a successful egg layer. Okay. You don't have to know anything except you know how to keep the chicken happy, and she will give you eggs.

One of the most, you know, complete foods that there is. And and you can do that right in your, you know, in your own yard proximate to you. There is tremendous food security and freedom in being able to grow food.

Proximate to where you live, whether it's the backyard or the farm or down the road or whatever, there's tremendous security in, in, in us in, in democratizing, democratizing the food production system rather than centralizing it in big fancy laboratories with, with, with sophisticated, you know, apparatus technicians, to run it so that we can so that we're all dependent on, on Soylent Green.

Yeah. I don't like talk about like the furthest thing from nature as our blueprint. You know, it's like, you know how, how can we everything that is the gold standard you know, so I, I know I, I, I, I so appreciate you saying that and I want, you know we get in this busy life right.

We get busy, we look for convenience, we make choices, you know, but I, I think there's this movement, that you really have been at the root and heart of inspiring is like, you know, I, you know, we look, at reconnecting, right?

Reconnecting with the land, looking at, you know, the natural rhythms and the natural cycles. And I often say, Joel, when I'm, you know, treating what I see in the office, you know, that I feel like our bodies are a microcosm of the macrocosm and needs to be more that we understand that.

Right? You know? Yes. You know, we see this David and Goliath thing, but we also see this ripple effect, right, that we can have within our families, our communities, our villages.

And I think that's the way out. I think that you're you're right on. And, I might, bring kind of a new concept that I'm sure you're well aware of, but I think you probably heard me at our time talk about, Roland McCready and math.

And he's really into studying, like, how the heart affects the body, and then the he does all of these studies around, how our intention and our heart can affect, Mother Earth.

And he measures magnetic fields of the Earth. When people are praying or in intention. And so it brings that kind of I kind of see this weaving of these ideas of like, the more intentional we are with our food, with the land, with Mother Earth, you know, the Earth responds, right?

And we respond and you know, and we're not gonna be gonna know what the how the story ends. But but that's that, that's good. You know, maybe that's good enough, you know, and, that's where the healing happens, I think,

in my opinion.

Yeah. I think you're right that the fact is that all of all of life, is pulsating with, with, with adaptation and response. So, you know, in our, as you know, this in our bodies, there are how many quadrillion, quadrillion decisions being made in our bodies in every second, you know, within, within all the microbes, when the cells and, and and this is all, you know, voluntary trading of information and, and and spontaneous responses to, you know, I've got some molybdenum.

Do you have some polysaccharide? You know, I mean, it literally is this kind of, exchange biological cafe, if you will, you know, and, and, and and it's that way in our cells and our bodies and in the larger, you know, the larger, the larger world.

I mean, plants, we know plants respond to, you know, violin music. I can I can tell you being among animals, it makes all the difference in the world.

If you walk into a flock or a herd and you're upset about something versus that, you're you're calm about something. The animals, you know, everything response to this, just like your spouse responds to you.

Intentional Living, Participation, and Closing Remarks

They you know, your spouse knows when you're in a, you know, a funky mood and your children do. Okay. And I think that that we don't just, as Westerners, you know, Greco-Roman, Western reductionist, individualized, compartmentalized, disconnected, you know, as we don't appreciate the holism and the connectedness of kind of eastern thought, at least I don't, you know, I, I've worked at it.

Okay. But but come to appreciate that, that, you know, the the tree, the tree does respond to, you know, the kind of energy that we're the tree response to the, to the wind, you know, the.

Yeah. And it's not just chemical. It's it's actually, you know, there's a there's a sentient understanding there within the structure, you know, the, the acacia trees in the Serengeti, you know, when the giraffes come eating all them, the acacia trees emit a pheromone that goes on the wind, to make the the upwind leaves more bitter.

You know, people always wondered, why do the giraffes always, always graze upwind? They all go upwind. Well, why? It's because they're trying to. They're trying to beat beat the bitter leaves because the pheromones don't go on the upwind very well.

They go downwind. And so this is a this is a defensive mechanism by the tree to make their leaves less palatable to the giraffes. It's a defensive mechanism.

And so the giraffes are grazing into the wind to try to beat these pheromones that are telling hey look out, look out. You're you know, you're getting ready to get in. Oh, wow.

Well, I mean, if that if that isn't if that isn't sentience and understanding and responding, you know, I don't know what is. And I think we just sell we just sell our, our womb are this ecological womb.

We sell it short in that level of, of of response. Oh it's so beautiful. Like we're so interconnected. Right enough. And we just need to step out of the way and observe and follow, you know, follow what's been given. Right.

And the, the guidance is there and I, I see that with your work and I, I try to see that with the work that I do like facilitating people's health. And just like, how do we get out of the way and get the things out of the way?

So nature does want, you know, this intelligent force, you know, that we're all a part of, you know, knows how to, move us towards health and healing.

And so, so, Joel, I, I could talk to you all day long. And you've inspired me on more ways than you could imagine,

and I. I would love for you to, you know, as we just wrap the interview, like, is there anything else on your heart or your mind that you want to share, with, the community that's listening?

Thank you. I would say the only thing that I would like to share with everybody is, you know, this whole idea of of actual, viscerally embracing intentionality can be pretty intimidating.

Those are all big words and all that. And I would just encourage everybody that we participate whether we want to or not. I've never I've never seen a frog.

I've never walked around the pond and seen a frog, look up at me and say, you know what? I'm not going to participate today. I'm just going to I'm going to take the day off.

And you know what? We can't take the day off. You know, we we are eating, we are thinking, we are doing and and we as much as you might want to just take the day off and chill out and not do anything, we, we are willing or unwilling participants.

And so my encouragement is to just appreciate what people say, what floats your boat, what floats my boat is I can walk out that back door every day and and and, and immerse myself in the privilege and honor and responsibility of being hands and feet that can nurture a benevolent womb.

Umbilical. Yeah. And and, you know, I, I, I it's it's a privilege. It's not it's not a chore. It's not a oh, man. You know, I got it. No, no, it's a privilege.

And so I would just encourage everybody that that whatever, you know, your part, your, your food dollar, the the way you interact, the way you, you know, what you do, what you spend your money on, what you recreate, on how you do things.

All of these are part of your and my, participation checklist. You know, that we go through in a day. And so my question is, at the end of the week, looking back, 8020 rule 8020.

This is not a cult. Okay. Back in 8020 have as a result, have I healed or hurt in the last week? And that's good enough. So why still no thank you. I'm going to.

I'm going to teach my daughter that, So. Well, now, thank you so much for your wisdom that you're sharing with us today and day on the summit. And can you just share, you know, any links for people to find out more about you, more about these farms?

They want to order your food. How can they connect with you? Sure. So we're poly phase polypharmacy. It's the farm of many phases. So, poly phase farm, we have a, you know, website.

It has everything from, you know, where to order things to my, my travel speaking engagements, where I'll be if you want to come in and and, hear me yak somewhere.

Gatherings we're having here at the farm like you were, a part of last year. We. And we're not having you back. Not because we don't love you, but because we're trying to bring new, you know, a rotation of new, fresh faces.

But, you know, we do farm tours anyway, the website has it all. And, we're glad for you to to, see what you find there. Thank you. We'll have that in the notes. And thank you.

So much, for being part of the summit and all the incredible work you do. So thank you, thank you, thank you.