Dean: Lamara:

The Body Intelligence SummitTM  
What's Sacred & Sexy is Sustainable with Dean and Anne Ornish February 10, 2014

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Lamara:

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Hi. Welcome to the Body Intelligence Summit. This is a production of The Shift Network. I'm Lamara Heartwell, and I'm really excited to be diving into this next session with Dr. Dean Ornish and Anne Ornish. I'm really grateful you guys are here. Welcome, welcome.

Hi, it's so good to be here.

All right. Well, I'd like to take a minute to say a little bit more about Dean and Anne, and we will dive in from there on our lovely topic of "What's Sacred and Sexy is Sustainable."

Good alliteration anyway, don't you think?

It's good. Okay, so Dean Ornish, as many of you may know of his work, has got an incredible wealth of knowledge and research through his Preventative Medicine Research Institute of what he has pulled together about health and well-being and is an author of six bestselling books. He is the founder and president of the Preventative Medicine Research Institute and the clinical professor of medicine at UCSF.

And for over 36 years, Dr. Ornish has directed clinical research demonstrating for the first time that comprehensive lifestyle changes may begin to reverse even the most severe coronary heart disease without any drugs or surgery.

So it's a blessing to have you here today, Dean. I want to let listeners know, if you'd like to tune in to any of Dean's books, you can check that out at deanornish.com.

No, it's just ornish.com

Okay. So that's just ornish.com and I highly recommend, and there's some amazing books that he's put out there.

His lovely beloved Anne Ornish I would love to introduce you. Anne, you are such an amazing wonderful woman and a dear friend of mine. Anne is the Co-Founder

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Anne:

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and Creative Director of the Ornish Spectrum Program, and she's a Certified Integrated Health and Spirituality Practitioner.

Anne has executed and produced the pmri.org and ornishspectrum.com platforms to educate and support program participants and providers. Anne has also produced the Ornish Program at WebMD from 1998 to 2006. And you can see more about the program that Dean and Anne have put together at ornishspectrum.com.

Okay. Well, you two, I would love for you to share about this topic --

Well, Lamara, I'd like to just take a moment and say thank you so much for your wonderful introduction. And I would just want to let everyone know that it's, in particular, honor for me because my body intelligence really became activated over 25 years ago with you and those years that we spent on our own journeys and yet resonating with these same themes that I see you so beautifully sharing with the world today. So thank you.

Thanks, Anne. Yes, Anne and I had the great delight to go to college together in Boulder, Colorado back in the ‘90s. Oh, and I want to let people know before we dive in more that Anne is going to be sharing an experiential eating meditation later in this call, mindful eating with your delicious senses. I want to invite any of the listeners here to, at some point in this call, go ahead and grab a treat of some kind, like a piece of rich dark chocolate or a piece of succulent fruit and have it by you for a little later for Anne's guided eating meditation.

Okay, you two, well, I would love to hear what inspired you to title this session "What’s Sacred and Sexy is Sustainable"?

Well, let me start with that. I've been doing research in the area of showing what a powerful difference lifestyle changes can make for more than 37 years. We tend to think of advances in medicine as being something really high-tech and expensive.

What we've been able to show is that these very low-tech, low-cost, ancient interventions are so powerful in not only preventing us from getting sick but even reversing it. We were able to show for the first time that you could actually reverse heart disease, and then later early stage prostate cancer and, by extension, breast cancer, Type 2 diabetes. When you change your lifestyle, it changes your genes and turns on the good genes, turns off the bad genes.

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Our latest study, which we just published, showed that you can actually begin to reverse aging on a cellular level, lengthening the telomeres that actually control how long we live. This was the first study showing that any intervention, in this case, simply lifestyle changes: whole foods, plant-based diet, yoga and meditation, exercise, and perhaps most important, love and support.

And so, along the way, I kind of got this -- people say, "Oh, yeah, am I going to live long or is it just going to seem longer?" these false choices of "Is it fun for me or is it good for me?" And what we're trying to show here today is that you can have both. And that whether it's food or sex or anything -- and we'll talk about those and others -- that, why have any limitations if you don't have to and no one's watching?

I find it fascinating that why not eat and do everything you want and have sex with everyone you can if you can afford it and no one's watching? And what I find interesting is that all religions have dietary restrictions, but they differ from each other. You find the same certain themes of altruism and compassion and God and love in all spiritual traditions, pretty much, but from a diet standpoint, in one religion, you can eat pork, in other ones you can't. You can eat anything after midnight during Ramadan but not before.

It's like, why are they all so different? Is God confused? And I think that what I'm coming to believe is that whatever the intrinsic benefit in choosing not to eat or to avoid certain foods, just the act of choosing not to eat or to do something that we otherwise might be able to do imbues it with real meaning. And it makes them sacred.

Now, "sacred" I know is one of those kind of hot words that -- when I was a teenager, I thought "sacred" meant "boring": something dry and old and moldy and dusty and definitely not fun. But now, from this perspective, to me, sacred is just another way of describing what's the most special. "Sacred" is the most special, and therefore it's the most meaningful, the most intimate, the most erotic, the most exciting and powerful and ecstatic and joyful and playful and the most fun.

And so, there's a spiritual teacher named Ramakrishna who, a hundred years ago, talked about choosing a guru: that you can dig a deep hole and reach the well spring or you can dig a lot of shallow holes and never really get anywhere. And so, what I'm interested in is that when people -- when it's a sense of meaning, when it's a sense of something so special, it makes it the most fun.

The '60s and '70s, many people believed it was liberating to have as many lovers as possible and that monogamy was boring and all that kind of stuff. It is fun, but

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it ultimately wasn't as fulfilling as when you fully commit to someone. It's like digging a deep well that Ramakrishna was talking about. It allows both people to feel complete trust. To me, in relationships, trust is everything because it allows us to feel safe. And we can only be intimate to the degree that we can make ourselves vulnerable; and we can only do that to the degree we feel safe, because when you're open, people can hurt you.

And so when you're totally naked and vulnerable to someone, as my true love and I are, physically, emotionally, and spiritual, we can experience profound levels of intimacy that are not only healing, but they're joyful and sexual and creative and intensely ecstatic. It's like when you have that sense of commitment, all degrees of freedom are available to you. You're not trying to get to a pre-conceived place or to replicate a prior experience, so you're just open to infinite possibilities. You're free to explore things that you've never even imagined, much less experienced.

So in the case of food, if you say, "I feel deprived because I can't eat this food," then you have this constant struggle of feeling deprived, and that's not really sustainable.

I've been working with Bill Clinton for many years, since 1993, on his diet, and we trained the White House chefs and Camp David and Air Force One chefs and so on to cook for him. And then when his bypass is clogged up, his doctor told him that is was all in his genes; that his diet in life had nothing to do with it. I wrote him an email, I said, "Actually, it has everything to do with it, not to blame but to empower." And we spoke and he decided he really wanted to go on plant- based diet about four and a half years ago, which he’s still has been doing.

But one of the main reasons that he chose to do that is that he wanted to live long enough. Chelsea was getting married. He wanted to walk her down the aisle. He wanted to live long enough to see his grandkids. And so, I’m choosing not to eat this food because what I gain is so much more than what I give up is sustainable.

If you say, "I’m feeling deprived because I can’t eat everything that I want," that’s not sustainable. If you say, "I want to live long enough so I can do things that are meaningful to me. I can dance at my child’s wedding and see my grandkids grow up," and so on, that’s sustainable.

Great art and great science and great music are all about seeing the world without preconceptions and allowing for something totally new to be created

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Anne:

that maybe never existed before. When you are in a totally trusting relationship, it allows us to be open to all possibilities and all degrees of freedom. It's interesting trying to replicate a prior experience to be imitated or to try to do something that's truly innovative.

And so the sense of being able to totally commit with each other the way my true love Anne and I have done enables us to -- and I'd like her to talk more about this -- if we have a date, to be open to all possibilities in ways that are just mind-blowing to me. So let me stop here and turn this over to Anne to pick it up to why the sacred is so sexy.

Thank you so much. That was just so beautiful.

On our webpage, home landing, you’ll see it says, "Love your life." And as you scroll down, it says, "Love yourself." And I think that the transformations that we’ve seen in the thousands of participants of our program over the years, it has to start with a sense of self-awareness. And with that self-awareness, a sense of loving and caring, being kind and compassionate for one’s self.

And when we come from that place of love, we imbue the choices that we make every day with that sense of love. And when we imbue that -- because we do have this lifestyle program that we recommend and it has these four equally weighted elements of what you eat, how much movements and activity you get on a regular basis, how you manage your stress, and how much love and support you have.

So in order for people to embark on this program, not just for the three months that we typically deliver the program, but for the rest of their lives, that needs to be imbued with love and meaning. And when we imbue the choices, instead of thinking, "Oh, lifestyle changes," we like to call them the lifestyle choices, because ultimately your doctor is not going to be there every time you decide what you want to eat or if you’re going to work out or not, take a walk, what have you. It has to come from yourself and a sense of a devotion to being the best version of yourself you can be by being kind, taking care of yourself, feeling the sense of as much vibrant in health as we possibly can while we’re here.

And so if we come, we get a glimmer of that as even in the first couple of days of people living the lifestyle that we recommend. And they get into this virtuous cycle because when you make these choices you start to feel better, and it makes it easier to continue making those choices.

When you think about what sexy is sustainable is really about meaning. And whether to devotion to your true love, your partner, your co-parent, your

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business partner, your friend, your family member of whatever sort, there’s a sense of love and connection and something that is the kernel of loving yourself, but that at the same time is so much bigger that ourselves. It’s just a part of the human condition that we have both of those things and that they feel in line, resonant with one other.

If I can just build on what Anne said so beautifully is this one last thing. Instead of having the same kind of shallow experience with many people, to have infinitely variable experiences with the same person. It's just not possible to have to go so deep I think with a number of different people. And yet I just find that when my true love and I have a date and our favorite expression has become "yet again like never before." There's always a sense of familiarity with the same people in more or less the same bodies.

But because we're approaching our lovemaking without trying to replicate something that's already happened but rather being open to an infinite array of possibilities with infinite degrees of freedom, which can only come when you feel safe enough to be that vulnerable with another person, what you gain is so much more than what you give up. It takes it out of the realm of the kind of moral majority. You're going to go to hell if you do things that are outside of a relationship which is silly or the sense of free love, that's where it's all going to be.

To me, it's much more about if it's pleasurable, it's sustainable; and you gain so much more pleasure, erotically and otherwise, in depths and in heights that neither one of us has ever even imagined possible much less experienced on a regular basis; that so much of the time it's the most amazing experience that either one of us has ever had and then it is a quantum leap even more so. You kind of go, "Whoa! Where did that come from? How is that possible?"

I think it goes back to that sense of commitment and the sacred intimacy that comes by saying, "I'm going to go deep with you and be open to whatever emerges from that because I have such a sense of trust in our relationship that I'm willing to make that leap."

Oh, thank you so much. I just would love to chime in on what you guys have shared so far because it's chock-full of all these fabulous aspects to body intelligence. I'm really grateful to both of you for sharing these deeper pieces that are tied to this topic of "What's Sacred and Sexy is Sustainable."

Lamara:

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Dean: Lamara:

Dean, as you're sharing at the beginning of this difference between sacrifice to be able to live in a way that really feeds your aliveness; that living that way and all of our conditioning around this deprivation mentality versus to see it as we're making choices that are actually feeding our aliveness and our well-being and our health and how that affects our pleasure body and how much pleasure we experience and to be in that place as we are making our choices, our food choices, and our choices of how we move in our bodies and the environment, the people we surround ourselves by and the places we are that all of that to -- and that piece of devotion to be in that place of devotion to not only our body temple of really honoring what most lights our bodies up but the intimacy piece that really struck me, of that piece of intimacy, and then you guys beautifully both went into that around intimacy with each other.

But first, the intimacy with yourself because that to me is a really important part of body intelligence that does translate to this delicious, wonderful, sensational experience of being alive in a body that --

That's right.

-- the willingness to turn our attention in towards ourselves, our learned behavior is to have our attention out, out, out. We're like just taking in all this information outside of ourselves and to actually turn our attention in and say, "Hello, beautiful body, beautiful self. I want to know you, to feel you, to make love with you," and to be intimate with every nook and cranny of ourselves internally and then the benefits that come from that, the immediate feedback that our body gives us. It's like ourselves are just singing the words "Thank you. Thank you for listening to me".

Exactly.

And from there how beautifully you guys just spoke about then how that translates to intimacy with each other and that eyes are really seeing the deeper that we plunge in with our own self that the benefits that we can reap from that not only in our own health and well-being, by listening and making choices from that place, that we also reap the benefits of deep connection with the people that we most love.

Yes. I feel like the body intelligence, the BQ is sort of at the cross-section of -- Lamara, we had fun talking about from the IQ to the EQ to the BQ and perhaps much of what Dean is also sharing is a PQ, a passion intelligence and how we have devotion, integrity, meaning and sustainability through that central access

Dean: Lamara:

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Anne:

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Dean:

of intelligence. It really does intersect with the body that's why I think in the martial arts they call it the dantian. That's where it sits in the body. It's like the true north of the dimensions that comprise our existence and our consciousness and how it animates.

Yeah. Just to build on something, Lamara, that you and Anne both said, which if it’s pleasurable, it’s sustainable; and if it’s meaningful, it’s sustainable. There's no point in giving up something that you enjoy unless you get something back that's better, whether it's food or sex or any of the other primal needs. What we're finding is that when we consciously choose to not do something that we otherwise could do, it makes it sacred and tends to be most special and all possibilities then become available.

Now, you mentioned intimacy. I think most people often associate our work with diet. Diet is important but it is not nearly as important as a sense of love and intimacy because that's really what healing is. Even the word "healing" comes from the root "to make whole" and yoga, to yoke, to unite, to bring together.

I wrote a book about this back in 1998 called Love and Survival that reviewed what were then were hundreds and now thousands of studies showing that people who are lonely and depressed and isolated are 3 to 10 times more likely to get sick and die prematurely than those who have a sense of love and intimacy and connection and community.

I don’t know anything in medicine, including diet or exercise or even smoking, that has that powerful and profound in effect on our health and our well-being. But to emphasize, it’s not just about living longer; it's about loving better. It's not just the old joke "Am I going to live longer or is it just going to seem longer if I eat and live more healthily?" This kind of takes it out of that realm.

I've been reading a number of articles recently in The New York Times and elsewhere that are you going to have the security of growing old with somebody, but you’re kind of boring and you kind of lose the spark and the passion or are you going to go out and be with a lot of different people but not really get to that deep level and not really have that sense of security and intimacy?

What I'm finding is that when we really truly commit to somebody from that place of "I'm doing this to make our relationship sacred" -- sacred in the sense of the most sexy, the most special, the most erotic and the most spiritual and the most fun -- then because we're not trying to recreate something that we’ve done before, as I've mentioned before, it’s continually new. Our capacity to experience pleasure keeps going up energetically so we can contain that much more energy and that much more prana and that much more to play with. So we

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Anne:

come into this as equals, not that we're the same, but equal in the sense from a power structure.

I've never been with somebody like Anne, my true love, before who is such a powerful woman so I don’t have to hold back and modulate the most -- I'm a pretty intense person as you can probably tell, and so is she. We don’t have to modulate or hold back the intensity for fear of blowing the other person away, but rather they can meet us in any of these different places. She can meet me anywhere; I can meet her anywhere. So that just continually expands and keeps making new and fresh and erotic and interesting way more than being with a lot of other people could ever do.

If I could just build on that by saying that whether it’s your devotion to your partner or devotion to the lifestyle that we recommend, that by approaching it and living it every day with a sense of love and devotion, then we continue to riff on it, to continue to have it be like never step in the same river twice. You'll never make the same salad twice. You'll never make the same sandwich twice.

If you bring that kind of love and creativity to it, if you pilot your life as the artist of your life, if you were able to slow down life just a moment to have more awareness and beauty that you walk in and that you bring to every choice and every encounter that you have, that's what's sustainable, that's what the sexiest, that's what gives people that perpetual spring in their step and that song in their heart.

Oh, I'm loving the passion that both of you bring. It's so beautiful and particularly this part of your program, the section on love and connection. It's such a powerful piece to share for any listeners who don't know that Dean and Anne have these four aspects to their Ornish Program that is exercise and then nutrition, and then there is stress management, and then there is love and connection.

I think it would be fascinating to have you share a little more about how body intelligence, why is it valuable to make this shift from the head-driven way that we're largely modeled to be in this culture at this time to be more body-centered and more in our bodies, whether that's from the stress component. I know you've got a ton of research on that, Dean. I think it would be interesting to hear you guys share why is it so valuable and at this time of being alive in this culture, why is it so important that we make this shift?

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Lamara:

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Dean:

Well, because I think our health and our well-being and ultimately our survival are at stake. I think that there's been a radical shift in our culture in the last 50 years with a breakdown of the social networks that used to give people a sense of connection and community and many people don't have that. They don't have a job they feel secure. They don't have an extended family or even a nuclear family that they see regularly. They don't have a church or synagogue they go to regularly. They don't have a neighborhood with several generations of people living together.

We all know that these things affect the quality of our lives, that they actually affect our survival to a much larger degree than any other aspect in medicine. But even beyond that, I think that we're all -- you know the internet which was really supposed to bring us together is really turning much more into a superficial hook-up culture where people don't really have the sense of depth and intimacy that is so juicy and rich. Most people, Facebook friends are not the most intimate of life experiences. I think there's a real hunger and depth for people who are looking for something much more juicy and meaningful and ultimately erotic and rich.

And through a process of personal exploration as well as some of the research that we're doing, this is what we're coming to. Do you want to add anything to that?

We talk a lot about in our program, when we're in the love and support and when people come together during usually the 12 weeks for residential retreat, we have them come around in a circle and one of the core concepts is to share your feelings instead of your thoughts. And that's because our thoughts can be judged as right or wrong. They can be judged. Feelings can't be right or wrong. They're just our feelings.

There's so much more space and freedom how to navigate when you're piloting your emotional body which I feel like is very much so in the vessel of the body. So if the body is intelligent, it's sort of like a stacking of a Russian dolls in a sense that if you're in harmony with your body's intelligence, then you're that much more likely to have to be steering, gate keeping the thoughts, toning the feeling body and taking care of the physical body, the garden itself.

I feel like that’s something that is experienced in each of the four elements of the lifestyle that we recommend.

Let me just say, I mean, I married this goddess and so I feel like the luckiest guy on the planet. I may very well be, actually. And you know that, Lamara.

Anne:

Dean:

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Lamara:

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Dean:

I do.

But what's even more lucky is that she's such an amazing soul and that I can be met in all these ways that are most meaningful, that sense of unconditional love and trust and that degree of love and trust becomes self-fulfilling. We create what we most love and we create what we most fear.

Our son, Lucas, when he was three, one day I was talking to him about the power of trust and commitment and love and he thought about it. He said, "Daddy, even if you lied to me a thousand times, I would still believe you," which is such an amazing degree of unconditional love and trust which becomes self- fulfilling in a good way. Knowing how much he trusts me motivates me to be completely worthy of that trust and the same is true with my true love Anne. So when I act in impeccable ways, it allows me to respect and to love myself that much more which means in turn gives me that much more love to give her.

The work that we're doing together which is so meaningful for both of us and why we're so passionate about is really about transformation. Medicare is now covering our program after 16 years of review. If I'd gone to Medicare and I said, "We want to teach people how to learn how to open their hearts and quiet down their mind and body to experience more inner peace and joy and connect deeply in a heart level in the most erotic and powerful and intimate and transformative ways," they'd say, "You're out of here, buddy."

But we can show them the PET scans and the angiograms and the radionuclide ventriculograms and all the data that we show that we can actually reverse even severe heart disease and diabetes and other conditions. We can change their genes, we can begin to reverse aging, we can reverse early stage of prostate cancer; and they're finding that it's not only medically effective, it's cost- effective.

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield cut their overall healthcare cost by 50% in the first year. Their heaviest users felt that they spent more than $25,000 on the previous year. They cut their cost by four-fold, by 400% in the first year. It's a Trojan horse. It’s what we call a conspiracy of love because it enables us to create financially sustainable social structures and are really a new paradigm of healthcare rather than sick care that enables people to use the experience of suffering, whether it’s physical heart disease or emotional or spiritual heart disease or often all three.

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Lamara:

To use that experience of suffering is a doorway or is a catalyst for transforming their lives for the better because change is hard. But if you're hurting badly enough, it's like, "Wow, that stuff is so weird but let me try this weird stuff because it's been proven to work scientifically and Medicare and other insurance companies are now paying for it."

They often transform so much that, as Anne was saying before, it's like they all say, "Gosh, in retrospect, having a heart attack was the best thing that ever happened to me" because that was their doorway into transforming their lives in the way that you're doing with this amazing conference that you're holding.

Thanks, Dean. I'm so appreciating what you're just bringing in here. Even though it's not a selling point for medical insurance companies, there are tons of listeners that are getting to hear this. From someone like yourself who has many, many, many years of research behind it, it's really profound to have you share on this call that, hey, guys, exercise and nutrition is certainly important and valuable and so is stress management and being able to relax ourselves and quiet our minds and our bodies to our breath.

I'm really hearing both of you pledge that the number one piece in the health component in your experience is about love and connection and intimacy. It's just so palpable in what both of you are sharing together. This piece of starting with self-love and that it really begins there to love yourself and to come into that intimate communion with yourself and then to be able to really direct that with a beloved or with a close loved one. It's so beautiful to hear both of you share your inspiration about it.

Can I get an "amen"?

It’s very hard to get people to change their lifestyle unless you deal with these issues. The heart pumps blood to itself first before it pumps blood into the rest of the body. Is that selfish or unselfish? Well, it’s both because if it doesn’t, then you’re not going to be alive.

It’s like on the airplane when they show you the flight demo and how to buckle a seatbelt, like you didn’t know how to do it. But they'll say if the cabin loses pressure and the oxygen mask comes on, you put it on yourself first and then you put it on your kid because if you put in on your kid then you might pass out and the kid won't know what to do. Is that selfish or unselfish?

Anne: Dean:

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Lamara:

What we’re trying to show people is that this ancient spiritual truth of love and compassion and altruism and so on are really the most selfish things that you can do because that's what frees us from our suffering. It doesn't condone what someone else's done or excuse it, but it frees you from that suffering. And that's the part of the work that I'm the most passionate about and feel as the most meaningful, and why we love doing this work because it enables people to have those experiences.

I mean the biggest category of drugs for the last 20 or 30 years has been anti- depressants. There are a lot of depressed people out there. That's how I got interested in doing this work. And telling somebody who's depressed and lonely and isolated that they're going to live longer, they just change their diet or quit smoking or exercise then work very well. So we have to not only focus on the behaviors and get people information, but we have to work at the deeper levels which invariably involving things like love and intimacy.

I love it. It totally have driven it home that the listeners can take with them, the practice of really dedicating yourself to a life of love and you build that muscle, to be building the muscle of love in your own system and it's not something that you have to even reach out for or go out and get. It's the make-up of who we are. Our nature is that vibration of love that courses through our blood and our bones and our veins, and it's all around us.

I mean that's a really important piece to share is that it's not something that you have to -- like we've been taught, to reach outside and grasp, grasp, grasp, that actually it's abundant. It lives in the air that we breathe. That literally is who we are.

I'm so glad you brought that up, Lamara, because I studied for 40 some odd years with an ecumenical spiritual teacher named Swami Satchidananda, and we talk once a week by phone for an average for decades. And people would say what are you, a Hindu?" He'd say, "No, I'm an undo." By that, he meant that these spiritual practices don't bring you health. They don't bring you peace. They don't bring you a sense of joy; that our nature is to be peaceful and joyful and healthy and happy.

Not being mindful of that, we often -- and one of the supreme, maybe the supreme irony of life, we end up running after all these things that we think are going to make us happy; if only I had more money or more power or more beauty or whatever it is, then I'd be happy. And then it would tell you again that you're not happy, and then someone else gets it and then you're really stressed. And even if you get it, it's only good for a little while and it's never enough.

Dean:

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Lamara:

Anne: Dean:

Anne:

So these spiritual practices don't bring you a sense of peace and joy and health. They quiet down our minds and bodies enough to experience what's already there. Now that may sound like semantics, but it's all the difference in the world because it's incredibly empowering. If I'm feeling anxious or depressed, instead of saying, "How come I'm not getting what I think I need?" it's more like, "What am I doing that's deserving what I could already have if I just stopped doing that?"

Yes, it's so healing to our scarcity consciousness model and to really stop into that place of trusting in the abundance that's all around us.

Anne, I think this is a great time to have you share your delicious eating meditation. Would you like to step on in and share that with our listeners?

I would love to.

Can I just say one thing about the meditation? It's such a perfect microcosm of what we're talking about in terms of this is what brings more pleasure. More pleasure with fewer calories in this case, but it's a microcosm of the general approach. It's pleasurable. It's sustainable.

That's right. Again, just like any choice that we make, what job, what partner, which friends, which lifestyle choices, all of these, if they are imbued with self- awareness for our highest, then we're that much more likely to experience the heights of joy, of pleasure; and that's what's most sustainable. That's what's most inspiring, aspirational, and ultimately transformative.

So let's practice that muscle through a succulent piece of food, whatever you find in front of you, and shall we begin.

Eating with your delicious senses. Let's take a moment to slow down and practice the art of mindful eating. I like to practice with a treat like a piece of rich, dark chocolate or a piece of succulent fruit. And yet you can enjoy this meditation with any food, beverage; really any of life's experiences, from brushing your teeth to walking from point A to B. Everything becomes more heightened and vibrant when we're fully present with all of our senses, awake, alert, and open to receive.

So now before taking a bite, simply observe it. What is its shape, its color, its anticipated flavor? Even if you think that you've tasted something that resembles this, imagine as though it's the first time, like a new journey of

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Anne: Dean:

Lamara: Dean: Anne: Lamara: Dean:

discovery and touch it. How does it feel? What is its texture? What is its temperature, its weight, its feeling?

Smell it. Sense the wafting of flavors entering your nose, whistling and awakening your inner sensibilities. Simply lick it. How does it taste on your tongue as your sense of taste becomes enlivened with moist flavors now rippling out, leaving a desire for more?

Now go ahead and place it into your mouth, simply resting it on your tongue but not chewing just yet. Notice that you simply roll it around the different areas of your tongue the confluence of sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami tastes on your palate as saliva excretes from the corners of your mouth to distribute as much flavor as possible. Enjoy this circulating of flavors in and all around your mouth.

Okay. Now fully explore the sensations of your teeth sinking into the food as you slowly begin to chew; feeling the change in texture with each bite; trying to chew until you no longer can, until only liquid flavors are left. Then swallow, maintaining this inspired curiosity and rapture. Close your eyes and savor here. Let it linger, remembering what it looked like, how it felt in your hands, how it smelled, the textures, the tastes; and finally, now nourishing your entire being.

How's everybody doing?

As you can imagine, you can apply that same awareness and focal point to lovemaking as you can to food or anything else. When you give it your full attention like that, it's so much more pleasurable because you're really paying attention to all of the sensations.

Are we still on?  
Oh, hi there. I had just muted for the meditation.  
We thought you were in Nirvana or something.  
I was hoping that was the case.  
I did. It felt so good.  
Your meditation is so effective, Anne. I keep telling you, you got to be careful.

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Lamara:

Floating off into oblivion. Thank you, Anne. I really appreciate you inviting us to this completely different relationship with food and opening all of our senses that way which is such an important part of opening our body intelligence is really connecting with our senses in the moment.

That was another lovely piece that I got from both of you on this call here today is making love to the moment that not only the practice of really being present and being with ourselves as we move through the day but to also come with this attitude of making love with life and making love with whatever it is that's happening, moment to moment throughout the day. It's such a rich piece. Thank you both for bringing that in.

And then it's sustainable because it’s pleasurable. You can force yourselves to do anything for a little while, but it’s hard to sustain it. But if you can literally connect the dots between what you do and how you feel, it’s like, "Oh, when I do this, I feel good. When I do that, I don’t feel so good. When I do this, I feel really good so let me do more of this and less of that." And then it comes out of your own experience, not because some doctor or some guru or some authority told you, but you literally connect the dots to see what you do and how you feel, and then the whole world becomes your teacher then.

Yes. The listening practice, to really listen to yourself. Thank you for that encouragement for everybody to listen to your own beautiful body and that of which lights you up the most because it’s different for all of us.

It’s true. Let me just say one last thing which is that to me one of the most powerful benefits of any kind of meditative or spiritual practice is that when you are quieting down your mind whatever path and method you use to get there, what I find really helpful is at the end of the meditation or yoga class or whatever happens to be, I ask myself with my own inner wisdom a very simple question. What am I not paying attention to that I need to? What am I not really hearing that I need to understand? Or sometimes I'll even ask a specific question and listen.

All spiritual practices and traditions talk about the still small voice within the God within the guru, within whatever name you give to that. It speaks very clearly but very quietly. It gets drowned out by the chatter of everyday life and our fears and anxieties and so on. I just find that it’s such a powerful source of wisdom. It’s the voice that wakes you up at 3:00 in the morning that says, "Hey, listen up. Pay attention." We can access it more intentionally and consciously in these approaches. I just found that to be incredibly helpful.

Dean:

Lamara:

Dean:

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Lamara:

People think science, people do this incremental things and eureka, but it’s more I have these insights and then kind of like how reverse engineer can I design an experiment to see if this is true? It's just such a powerful source of wisdom that all of us carry with us, but we don’t always pay attention to it.

Thank you, Dean.

I want to let all the listeners know again that if you'd like to check out any of Dean's books, you can log on to ornish.com for that. For the Ornish Spectrum Program that Dean and Anne have created, again you can check that out at ornishspectrum.com.

I'm really grateful to have both of you share such an inspiring, passionate, juicy talk here today. I also want to let people know that if you want to get the recordings for this later as well as some other awesome bonuses that we have put in there, we got some books and magazines that you can download that are specifically oriented around waking up your body's natural wisdom, you can check out our Body Intelligence Mastery Kit at bodyintelligencesummit.com/upgrade, and for a little while here we'll be offering that at a really low price.

So I highly recommend the Mastery Kit and being able to hear this lovely talk once again that both of you shared. Thank you.

Anne, do you have any last words?

Yeah, I was going to ask. My guru is my wife Anne, and I wanted to ask her to have the last word if there's anything you wanted to add.

Yes, please, Anne.

Yes, true love is our religion because that's what we found to be the most meaningful and the most transformative on a daily level. So, as you said, Lamara, making love to life in every moment and in every way is the way. It is the way for that yet again like never experienced to be perpetual and to continue to inspire us, to honor our own highest, and therefore the highest in others.

Namaste to you, Lamara, for bringing all of this love and light to the world. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of it today.

[0:50:22]

Dean:

Lamara: Anne:

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Lamara:

Dean:

Thank you. So glad to have this time with both of you. And thank you to all the listeners for joining us. There will be more coming up in the next hour.

Okay, bye for now. Lots of love.  
End of Audio

[0:51:37]  
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