

Speaker 1 ([00:00:12](#)):

You are listening to the Journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman trainer, international clinician, and author who helps empower horse people from all over the world with the skills, knowledge, and mindsets needed to create trusting partnerships with their horses. Warwick offers a free seven day trial to his comprehensive online video library that includes hundreds of full length training videos and several home study courses@videos.warwickschiller.com.

Warwick Schiller ([00:00:44](#)):

Good day everyone. Welcome back to The Journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller, and in the past two, two and a half years of doing the podcast, I've had some amazing people on, and I've had some amazing conversations and I've had some amazing feedback. But the podcast with Emily Kata a couple of weeks ago, or a week or so ago has, it just blew me away, the podcast itself. But the amount of feedback that we've gotten from Emily's podcast has been just amazing. Not just the amount of it, but the content of it too, how much people really got what she was talking about. And during her podcast, she talked about Mystic Sufi poets and one of the mystic Sufi poets that she mentioned was an American lady named Shalan Harken. And Shalan is a young lady from Washington state in America, and she downloads Mystic Sufi poetry from out there. So funny story, as soon as I got off the podcast with Emily, I looked up Shalan Harken, and I saw one of her poems on a website and I put it on my Facebook page. I shared it. It was pretty powerful. And Shalan Harken comments on it. I dunno how she saw it, but she commented on it. So I got in touch with her and asked her would she like to be on the podcast? And so here we are. This week's special guest on the podcast is Mystic Sufi poet, Shalan Harken.

([00:02:40](#)):

Shalan Harken, welcome to the Journey on podcast.

Chelan Harkin ([00:02:43](#)):

Thank you so much. So good to be here with

Warwick Schiller ([00:02:45](#)):

You. Before we get going anywhere, which I think we're going to go a few places today, but I'm going to tell you how I found you. So my guest last week on the podcast was a lady from Sweden named Emily Kata. And Emily, she's an animal communicator. I basically told her if she was born 600 years ago, she'd been burned at the stake. But one of the things, she's an animal communicator, but she told me some amazing stories about places she's been. One of them was being in Jordan, working with the horses of one of the Jordanian princesses, one of the daughters of King Hussein. But she was telling me about, she got into Sufi mysticism while she was there and she was telling me about Sufi Mystic Poets. And then she told me, there's this American lady who is this mystic Sufi poet that you need to look up. And so I looked, and that happens to be you. And I looked you up and I was expecting, oh, this lady's going to be like 87 if she's a mystic poet. I looked you up and you're this 30 something year old Caucasian blonde girl from Oregon. Oregon, yeah,

Chelan Harkin ([00:04:04](#)):

Washington. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:05](#)):

Washington. Sorry. No,

Chelan Harkin ([00:04:07](#)):

It's all good.

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:08](#)):

And then to make it a bit crazier, I got on your website and looked around and I saw one of your poems like, that's amazing. So I posted it on Facebook and you commented on it, and I'm like, oh my goodness. Now I have a connection to this person where I could probably get her on the podcast. And so here we are. My question to you is, I didn't even tag you in that because I didn't even, I'm not sure Mystic Extremey poets even have Facebook. And so I didn't try to tag you. I didn't try to look you up. How did that pop up for you? How did you find me?

Chelan Harkin ([00:04:48](#)):

How did we connect somebody else who I guess was in contact with both of us tagged me? And so it popped up.

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:55](#)):

Oh, okay.

Chelan Harkin ([00:04:56](#)):

And I was so grateful to you because it got you at that poem so much attention.

Warwick Schiller ([00:05:02](#)):

Thank you. That's an amazing poem. If I hadn't known you had a Facebook page, I just would've went to yours and shared it from there, and then it would've all counted. And then there was another strange thing leading up to this is former podcast guest Kerry Lake messaged me about a week or so ago and said, you need to listen to a podcast called Buddha at the Gas Pump. And she said, because even the title sounds like the Night You met Black Jesus story. And if any of you are regular listeners, you would've heard that story. And I told Shalan about it before we started so I didn't have to repeat it again. And then, and Kerry also said, there's a podcast on there by Emily Cast who I then ended up having on the podcast. And now we've got both of you on the podcast.

([00:05:51](#)):

So yeah, long involved story. And so when we decided to do this, you sent me biography and I kind of want to get into the very first line of that maybe here in a minute. But anyway, the first line says, at age 21, in a time of mental and emotional anguish, Shalan Harken had a profound mystical experience in which she was shown in no uncertain terms. She needed to live a deeply transparent and authentic way that she opened her heart to her whole self, her joy, her trauma, her power, her tenderness. We'll get to that here in a minute, but you are a mystic Sufi poet. And I had, the only reason I know anything about Sufi is I had someone on the podcast a couple of years ago who does craniosacral work on horses. And I don't know if you know anything about craniosacral work,

Chelan Harkin ([00:06:42](#)):

Love cranio, saac,

Warwick Schiller ([00:06:43](#)):

You know anything about craniosacral work? Okay, so powerful. So what I didn't realize was in order to do craniosacral work, you have to be very, very in tune with your own body, very, very in tune. And in the story of her name's Shea Stewart, and the story of her telling me about how she came to get to where she could do craniosacral work, she grew up in Texas, rural Texas, cowboy Texas. But when she was 12 or 14, her mom took her to Sufi camp in Oregon for the school vacation. And so when she told me about that, I had to look up what the hell's Sufi and Sufi Sufi. Well, why don't you tell us, we're, we're going to talk about these three things. One is poet, one is Mystic and one is Sufi. You can tell us about the poet part

Chelan Harkin ([00:07:35](#)):

First. So I'm not connected with Sufism, actually. I am not. But my poetry, I've been very inspired by Sufi poets, primarily Hafe poetry, a Persian poet, an incredible poet. I'm familiar with his work rendered by Daniel Lidsky, poet, American poet who lives in Taos, who rented amazing renderings of his poetry and Rumi poetry. But I'm not really, I don't know too much about Cism is the truth. Yeah, I grew up in the BA

Warwick Schiller ([00:08:15](#)):

Behind. It's more that you were influenced by a Sufi poet.

Chelan Harkin ([00:08:19](#)):

Yeah. Deeply influenced. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:08:23](#)):

You were just, so we're going to get this out of the way. You just were about to say you grew up in the bridge of high faith, and I want to go there too. And I also want to get to Daniel Rodinsky too. So there's so much to talk about, but so what determines whether someone is a mystic poet?

Chelan Harkin ([00:08:45](#)):

Good question. Good question. Well, I'll share this maybe as a way of describing it. So the first time I encountered mystical poetry of ez, I was 17 and I was in a therapy session, and I just had what felt like a million impenetrable walls around my heart and had a wonderful therapist, but it just wasn't, things weren't unlocking for me. And I could talk about things, but nothing was really opening and shifting. And I didn't feel more connected with myself at all. And I just had so much pain and trauma and my body and had no sense of how to get into that stuff. And so therapy wasn't really doing much for me. And one day he had the inclination to read me this poem by hefe. And in that moment, just for the duration of that short poem, it felt, it was this astonishing experience of feeling like, albeit briefly, those walls came down around my heart.

([00:09:55](#)):

And what happened then was as though my consciousness, my awareness of who I am was able to make contact with this part of me that was alive and that was essentially okay and well, and had a taste, an imprint of my true spirit, I guess you could say. And it was so profound. And also in that moment, even though I didn't have the language to even name that, a mystical poetry, mystical poetry, and I hadn't had any exposure to that, it was this profound destiny moment as well. And I knew that whatever it was that poem was and did was absolutely what I was meant to do with my life. So having this effect, this unlocking effect that allows people somehow through the trickery of words to remember something inside of themselves and to affirm and even resonate with, I feel like mystical poetry in many ways is

kind of energy work that unlocks and opens and reconnects people a true, their true nature reality and alive beauty in them.

Warwick Schiller ([00:11:14](#)):

When you were talking about that right then, you said about your true self was able to make, I love that term, make contact with you. Do you want to talk a bit more about that? I mean, I love that term that your true self could make contact with you. Your true self was there all the time, and you weren't contactable

Chelan Harkin ([00:11:39](#)):

Beautifully said. Exactly. Yeah, yeah. Well, what I've experienced is that we have all of these patterns often from childhood where we've just developed ways to adapt to not perfectly functional environments. And we distort parts of ourselves and we enhance parts of ourselves and we hide, and we have all of these very intelligent ways of getting by. And then we have all of these associated patterns of, well, to a large degree, ways of protecting ourselves from re-experiencing pain. And I felt like my consciousness, my awareness of self was so trapped in these limited structures from the past of who I thought I had to be, be okay to be accepted, to get scraps of attention, and if you liked enough and all of those various things. And those limiting patterns eventually create suffering because bigger than them, we're more than them. We need to break out to reconnect with more of our wholeness and authenticity. Yeah, there's this, but we do have this bigger, this whole, this true, I don't know, I would call it intelligent light or animated light. This felt in essence inside of us all. We can feel it in each other, but then we have to find out how to get through some of these constraints that we can be trapped in to connect with more of that clarifying,

Warwick Schiller ([00:13:23](#)):

The interesting thing about those walls, those protections that we put up. It's almost like everybody in society has them. And I'd say for a lot of people, because I was that way for 50 years of my life, you don't even know that they are there and

([00:13:50](#)):

Unraveling them is the work. But the first thing is having the understanding that they're there. And you mentioned something in there about how they basically said they were there for a reason. And I've had a number of podcast guests, you won't know who they are, but I'll say 'em for the listeners. Like Jane Pike talked about it. Sarah sch talked about it to where these things were there for a perfectly good reason at the time. So you can't judge them poorly. I mean, that was a big breakthrough for me. Jane Pike was on the podcast and we're talking about my shutdown, and I'd always judge myself poorly because of the shutdown without even knowing I had it. And then once I realized what it was and where it came from, then I was mad at it because it was there. And Jane's like, no, no, no. At the time, that was your best friend. That was your protection. You don't need it anymore, but you don't want to look back on it and think, I shouldn't have had it. I should have had it. It was there for a reason at the time. And there's that Buddha at the Gas Pump podcast I was talking about before. I took some notes from there, and one of the lines you said in there was healing means to encounter your pain and move through it. One of those terms, if you're not in that fear of people, someone's saying, oh, in my healing journey, you're like, what are you talking about? As in Australia, we'd say, what a wink, what are you talking about?

([00:15:33](#)):

So it's not about you've got a disease, but healing means to encounter your pain and move through it. And what I'm talking about here is not understanding that you have pain in the first place. I think you can't have, for me, I got to where I was sick of feeling like I was feeling without even knowing. I was feeling like I was feeling sort of a thing. You know what I mean? There's so much here I want to talk about.

Chelan Harkin ([00:16:02](#)):

I

Warwick Schiller ([00:16:02](#)):

Know. So let's skip to the little biography thing you sent me at age 21 in a time of mental and emotional anguish. Now, this is 21, but you're going to see a therapist when you're 17. Can I ask you, what led you to therapy? What was it that you went, I need to solve this problem or feeling or lack of feeling, or

Chelan Harkin ([00:16:26](#)):

Good question. Yeah. Well, I think I came into the world for whatever reason with really an interesting sensitivity and connection with I guess what I would call the domain of light, a deeper level of the self of an essential, I don't know of parts of myself and of others of seeing of that and awareness of that and knowing that we were so much more, so much more than the ways we were playing out our relationships with each other. And I felt incredible dissonance. I felt very clear that we were here to connect with love deep and profound way, that we were vessels of love, that we were love and felt. Then really also very sensitive to the pain of our distance from our hearts and from each other. And so from a very, very young age, I was very kind of clued into that, but I didn't have language.

([00:17:40](#)):

I didn't have people in my life with whom I could help me activate that part of myself and understand that part of myself. And so it also kind of felt like it could be a big liability for me socially to just express the truth of ourselves and to be upfront about that. There's so much enabling, I think that we do to work around all of this stored pain in ourselves and in others, and it can be uncomfortable to say the least if someone is operating in a way that is kind of counter to that model of hiding from ourselves. Anyway, so I just basically concluded that the best way for me to operate was to just totally separate from myself and repress all of my gifts, my power, my perception, my sensitivity and attunement truth and my open heart really. And I felt like I could fit in if I did that.

([00:18:51](#)):

And because there was so much energy in me to express what I knew, I had to use so much of my life force to keep myself down. And it became anguish. But all of this was happening, like you said, kind of on these unconscious levels. It wasn't like I was consciously doing that. We play these things out. And so I just felt so estranged, so powerfully, painfully estranged from anything that felt true and alive inside of myself. So disconnected from others. I had an eating disorder from age 14 to 21, really developmental years just as a tool really to just try to obsess about something else so I could avoid the deeper stuff. And so basically across the board, I just felt like a fragmented kind of dissociated, disempowered mess was how I thought. But there were just so many gifts that I hadn't known how to harvest and bring forth. That's really what was going on there.

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:07](#)):

So tell me about at age 21, in the time of mental emotional anguish, you had this profound mystical experience. This was in Israel, wasn't it?

Chelan Harkin ([00:20:16](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, that's sort.

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:18](#)):

So tell me, how did you end up in Israel in the first place as a 21 year old? It was in a jail cell in Israel. So yeah, tell us how you ended up in a jail cell in Israel.

Chelan Harkin ([00:20:28](#)):

Yeah, yeah, I love that that's where things started to break open. So I grew up in the Baha faith, and that was beautiful and complicated, and I loved it and I was ashamed of it, and I didn't know how to, everything else, didn't know how to relate to it with a whole heart in a truthful way where I could just be honest about all the various pieces of my complex relationship with the Baha.

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:55](#)):

Can you give us the short rundown of the Baha faith?

Chelan Harkin ([00:20:58](#)):

Yeah, yeah, sure. So the premise is that that humanity is profoundly interconnected, that there's a oneness, an interconnected oneness, and that our maturity as a human species really has to do with recognizing that truly, not just conceptually, but having really a, I don't know, a profound opening of consciousness to the reality of that, to the degree that we're so impelled to serve and love and support each other to such a profound level. And that another teaching is that all of the major religions are come from the same divine source center. And the core intention of all of them is to help humanity grow and understand and develop both socially and spiritually as the gist.

Warwick Schiller ([00:22:04](#)):

It's really interesting. I look after hearing that you grew up in the Baha faith, I looked it up a little bit, and it's interesting with the, especially since say nine 11, what the media portrays about the Middle East and the Baha Faith started in the Middle East

Chelan Harkin ([00:22:24](#)):

In Iran,

Warwick Schiller ([00:22:24](#)):

And it basically says in Iran, and it says, every religion is worth considering, and they're all saying the same thing. And we all have this perception of religion in the Middle East is a certain way, and that's just the crap that the mainstream news feeds us. So anyway, tell us, how did you end up in, we're going to go to Israel when you're 21. What were you doing in Israel?

Chelan Harkin ([00:22:56](#)):

Yeah, so the Bahai Holy Land is also in Israel, joined the club with Israel, big sacred place. And so Bahala, who was the founder of the Baha Faith, was imprisoned for a ridiculous amount of time, like 40 years or something in various places. But one of them was in ACCA Israel. And so there's a pilgrimage that some BAHAs go on, and I went and it was such a crazy time, Warwick, a month before that I had brain surgery for an aneurysm in my head. It was just such an intense and dramatic time, this major cracking open on the physical level. And then I was well enough to go to Israel and I had this crazy scar from here to here.
I

Warwick Schiller ([00:23:47](#)):

Can we not skip over having the brain surgery for an aneurysm before we get to Israel. It sounds like that might be an important part of your journey, and I'm kind of getting this feeling that it didn't happen for no reason what was going there. Yeah,

Chelan Harkin ([00:24:08](#)):

Thanks. I know I do kind of gloss over it because it doesn't, who knows? But yeah, I had a huge aneurysm behind my left eye and had no symptoms or anything and had an M R I for a jaw issue. And the tech was kind enough to give this huge blob behind my eye attention, even though they were just looking at my jaw, went out of their way to send me an email and said, oh, it looks like your jaw is fine, but you should really explore this. It looks like you have an aneurysm.

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:47](#)):

Can I ask you, was there something that happened to cause your jaw to have some pain?

Chelan Harkin ([00:24:58](#)):

Maybe I played soccer and basketball in high school and had some joles or some things like that. That was the only conclusion, but it was this very strange, completely disconnected from the aneurysm thing, and I don't know, I don't know. It went away, actually went away completely as soon as I got that taken care of.

Warwick Schiller ([00:25:23](#)):

Okay. That's what I'm getting at here is, so I know a girl from Texas who trains horses, and she does a lot of work with Mustangs, so wild mustangs. And her dad, she's a horse girl, but her dad's not a horse guy. She's now married. But when she lived at home, she would have all these mustangs there, but she also had this old horse royal gelding. And when she would go away for things, her dad would look after the old horse. That's the only horse there that the dad can do anything with because he's not a horse guy and the rest of my mustangs. And so this old horse, he'd be in a stable at nighttime and dad would put him out in a pasture in the daytime and then bring him back in at nighttime. And she was telling me one time she was away and her dad called her.

([00:26:15](#)):

Oh, her mom called her and said, Hey, we're on the way to the hospital. Your father's just been kicked. He was turning your old horse out. And the horse actually, no, mom was driving. She was talking down on the phone. He says, I'm on the way to the hospital. Your horse kicked me. And he's an asshole. I dunno why he kicked me. And she goes, well, you must've done something stupid. He said, no, I did exactly the way you told me to do. I took him in there, I turned him around, faced the gate, I turned him loose. He turned to walk away from me. Then he backed up towards me on purpose and kicked me in

the, and I think I've broken my collarbone, that's what it feels like, kicked me in the upper chest sort of thing. And Katie's like, well, you must've done something stupid. And he's like, I didn't do anything stupid. But anyway, dad goes to the hospital and they do an x-ray of his collarbone and they go, yeah, you got a broken collar bone. And they said, oh, do you realize you have a spot on your lung,

Chelan Harkin ([00:27:05](#)):

Your lung cancer? Oh wow. Wow. That's very similar in the way,

Warwick Schiller ([00:27:12](#)):

And it's like you had this pain in your jaw. What we didn't want you to do was have an actual aneurysm to have a stroke to tell you there was an aneurysm. We had to tell you we had to do something else to bring your attention to. That's the way I look at it. I see the world.

Chelan Harkin ([00:27:30](#)):

Yeah, no, absolutely same. It is just such an amazing story. And I was pretty low key in terms of medical attention for things. It was kind of like, ah, let's just jostle it and it'll fix itself. So it's even strange though, that even drove me to have an M R I. This is very unusual. It's very weird. And so then they said, it's good thing we found this. You would've been dead before 30 if we hadn't for sure. And we have to operate tomorrow. And it was just so shocking. I had no medical history, and it was such a, it really was. It did play an important role, I think on many levels. It was such a shaking up of my life and I needed to drop out of college and they said, go home, shave your head, and come back. And it was just so dramatic and so shocking and so intense and and just a major cracking open experience is all I can say about that. And it also accelerated my, it amplified almost, it felt like the trauma that I already had that was just repressible and it just activated the whole mountain, which really then

Warwick Schiller ([00:28:50](#)):

Accelerated. Sorry. Do you think it amplified it or do you think it just allowed it to reveal itself a little bit?

Chelan Harkin ([00:28:59](#)):

Yeah, maybe that's what it was. It was the tipping point where I could no longer deny it. So that was a wild, really wild experience. And then a month after that, I had already had tickets to go to Israel, so I said, okay, I'm going to go and on this nine day pilgrimage thing, and I was with a group of Bahais from all over the world, and we just go around all these Bahai holy places. And the last day was at Baha's Prison Cell. And for some reason I, I'm it's prison, so that's kind of cool. But I was most excited about that, stop visiting that place. And at each place we would visit, there would always be this quiet time for prayer and meditation. And for some reason I had a really potent desire to be alone in this prison cell. But the group of people I was with, some of them would just pray for so long and really get into a deep place.

([00:29:56](#)):

And my mind was a little bit squirrel, so I didn't think I could last them out to really get that alone time that I hoped for. Yeah. So we went into this very small prison cell, not much bigger than the room. I'm in maybe twice the size of this and had this time to get quiet. And I've never had an experience like this before since, I dunno, it felt like it had closed my eyes for two seconds. I heard no commotion even though it was surrounded by people. And I opened my eyes and no one was in, I was alone and the door

was closed and I was alone in this prison cell. And our tour guide had just left. And it was very unusual on so many levels.

[\(00:30:43\)](#):

And at the time, really the foundation of all of this anguish that I shared in that bio that I was going through, it was really just feeling unable to connect with this authentic, true place in myself and then to express that to others and to have that deep point of connection. And that's what I longed for more than anything. And had a lot of religious baggage, good, bad, right, wrong fear of judgment kind of stuff that had grafted onto the Baha faith from a lot of people who had become BAHAs with old religious baggage that hadn't been worked through, got grafted on. And I don't know, just a lot of fear that I couldn't really fully be myself in any setting with God, with others, with myself. And anyway, so I kind of took stock of this prison cell like, holy shit, I'm alone and this is crazy.

[\(00:31:41\)](#):

And immediately it was as though every cell in my body was an amplifier. And there it had a vibration to it. It was like nothing that's ever happened to me. And it was as though I heard, but not with my ears, with every part of me. This message let us dance. And it was imbued with this authority, this totally loving authority that I just validated this message to me and what it meant. It was so poetic. Let us dance was relate to your life, relate to God with complete wholeheartedness, complete truthfulness. Let it be dynamic. Let it be real. Let it be messy. Let it be hard. It doesn't have to be polished and perfect. You're welcome. You belong on the deepest level of reality and existence. Be alive. Let life flow through you. And it was so prevented. It unlocked this incredible catharsis and just wave after wave of tears just started billowing through me. And then after that I felt just the most incredible bliss and peace and connectedness. And I knew without a doubt that I would one day have a book of poetry called Let Dance the Stumbling World with the Beloved, which I do now.

[\(00:33:10\)](#):

Yeah. So that's where things really, that's where it all began.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:33:16\)](#):

We'll get to, you got several books, we'll get to the books here in a minute. So when you said you had these tears come up, was it just tears? I'm kind of asking this because I think I'm heading in some strange place. Was there just tears or was there a deep pain that worked through your body that came out?

Chelan Harkin [\(00:33:43\)](#):

Yeah, it was more like that. Like a deep, deep blocks inside of myself. Deep old unconscious judgment started flowing and even almost like showing me their innocence as they were moving through. It was my first experience of that type of unlocking. And it was so amazing. And whatever happened to me, I don't claim to really understand, but whatever that was, that let us dance vibration as though it was a force that just helped me feel safe enough to be able to have an unlocking like that, to allow energy to move again and flow. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:34:30\)](#):

So your poems that you write now, I've heard that you download them, you don't think of them, they come through. You had that happened before that or that just started happening after that?

Chelan Harkin [\(00:34:48\)](#):

No, right after. So that was, I think the end of the trip. And then I went home the next day. I met a New York Times bestselling author or two days after that, right after that, who now is, anyway, it's just an interesting detail who's just helped me a lot lately with getting my books to publishing houses and things. It, it just felt like this divine setup in this bizarre, perfect way. And then I was after, how

Warwick Schiller ([00:35:19](#)):

Did you meet the New York Times bestselling author?

Chelan Harkin ([00:35:22](#)):

I went to a Tai Chi workshop, my college class I went back to, I started again and went back to college because I had to drop out for that month after and went to this amazing Tai Chi workshop and this guy, and it was lunchtime and we just piled into this minivan. I think it was my professor's minivan. He was there researching. He was writing a book called Man Seeks God. And there there was a lot of quirky spirituality in this town where I went to college and there was this major corner, and we hadn't been talking or anything. I was sitting right next to him and I slammed into him in this way that was so awkward, and it was so over the top. And we just started laughing and chatting, and I heard what he was doing, and he was in this area to learn about strange, unusual religion. And I said, oh my God, I have a strange, unusual religion. Let's talk. And I was so excited because, and I now had contact with this amazing person, this twice over New York Times bestselling author. We became great friends. Anyway, it was wild. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([00:36:37](#)):

You think that's like divine intervention?

Chelan Harkin ([00:36:40](#)):

Yeah. No, it's not even subtle anymore. There wasn't even anything subtle about it. It was so divine intervention. And then it was the day after that Warwick that I had this strange and irrepressible impulse to do an experiment on myself because I had this profound experience in Israel. And then I met this bestselling author. And in that experience, there was this amazing unlocking experience. And there was also this clarity that poetry was such a core thing for me, but I was still so layered and burdened with self-judgment and fear of expression and the paralysis of perfectionism. And so my expression felt really trapped. And so I had this impulse to do this experiment on myself, in which I just would allow myself to write a bad poem every day for 30 days. And I committed to sharing it no matter what. And I just thought, okay, maybe if I include this big fear of being bad, rather than repress it and stuff it and try to work around it and get all tight and contracted as I had been, maybe I just embrace it and we'll see what happens.

([00:37:58](#)):

And it gave myself that experiment, gave myself enough resilience to weather the rejection that I feared I would get from people. I hadn't shared my poetry really before. And so then on day two of that experiment, something just really a whole characteristically wildly different process happened and a poem just, yeah, it was as though a channel burst through verse through my being and all of this energy and my body aligned and carried inspiration with it. And it was like, what's going on? And I just had to write it, write this poem as fast as I could to try to make sure I got every word and there was almost no editing that was needed. And whereas before, I'd felt so self-conscious and insecure and terrified of how people might respond to my words, take me months to write a poem. This came through in three

minutes and I just had just complete confidence in it. It just felt aligned by a different force. It was the most amazing experience of my life. Should I read that poem?

Warwick Schiller ([00:39:10](#)):

Yes. What poem is it?

Chelan Harkin ([00:39:11](#)):

It's called Say Wow.

Warwick Schiller ([00:39:14](#)):

Oh, I love Say Wow. Yes, I've heard you.

Chelan Harkin ([00:39:16](#)):

Oh, thanks. I love how familiar you are. Thank you. It's my poetry. Thank you so much. This is like a first love poem because this is the first one that came through like this. It was awesome. So grateful for that experience. Alright, this is from this first book, susceptible to Light. Say, well, each day before our surroundings become flat with familiarity and the shapes of our lives click into place to dimensionless and average as Tetris cubes before hunger knocks from our bellies like a cantankerous old man and the duties of the day stack up like dishes and the architecture of our basic needs commissions, all thought to construct the four door sedan of safety before gravity clings to our skin like a cumbersome parasite. And the colored dust of dreams sweeps itself obscure in the vacuum of reason. Each morning before we wrestle the world and our heart into the shape of our brain, look around and say, wow, feed yourself fire. Scoop up the day entire, like a planet sized bouquet of marvel, sent by the universe directly into your arms and say, wow, break yourself down into the basic components of primitive awe and let the crescendo of each moment carbonate every capillary and say, wow, yes. Before our poems become calloused with revision, let them shriek off the page of spontaneity. And before our metaphors get too regular, let the suns stay a conflagration of homing pigeons that fights through fire each day to find us.

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:18](#)):

That is so cool. I actually listened, I dunno if listened to a podcast or something or read a book recently, but it was about how awe is. I forget what it was. It was like one of the things that you've got to have in life to be a complete human being. It's like you get back to that childlike state where everything is amazing. You don't have the blase, you're not in the four door sedan of, what was that? That was a great line. I love that line. The four

Chelan Harkin ([00:41:49](#)):

Door sedan of Thank you. The four-door sedan of safety.

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:53](#)):

Yes. Yeah. I just love that. Thank you so much. What's interesting is this is the first poem you downloaded, and I'm going to go with Mystic Sufi poet here. It has a video game reference in it.

Chelan Harkin ([00:42:08](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller (00:42:09):

Tetris. You know what I mean?

Chelan Harkin (00:42:12):

You're right. It does.

Warwick Schiller (00:42:14):

It's the old and the new. Have you ever read a book called The War of Art by Steven Pressfield?

Chelan Harkin (00:42:21):

No,

Warwick Schiller (00:42:22):

No. It's about the creative process as a writer.

(00:42:29):

And he talks about how you said, I'm going to write a shitty poem every day for 30 days. I'm going to publish. I don't care what anybody thinks. And it was on day two that you got this download. Stephen Pressfield talks about just showing up every day and just writing whether it's good or bad or whatever. Just show up and do the work and inspiration will come to you. And he talks to some famous writer, I forget who it was. So Steven Pressfield is the guy that wrote the screenplay for the Legend of Bag Events, which is an old movie that I think one of the earlier movies that Matt Damon or the internet at DiCaprio, one of those guys was in maybe Brad Pitt, I can't remember. Stephen Pressfield was talking this. Yeah, Stephen Pressfield was talking this famous author, and he said, I only write when I get divine intervention from God. Fortunately, God shows up at my typewriter at nine o'clock every morning. And he talks to James Mitchner. Someone asked James Mitch, I dunno if you've ever read any James Mitch. Years ago, James Richer wrote Centennial, which is he wrote these fat novels like the Blake Warren Peace type novels. And someone's asked James Mitchner, how do you write fat novels?

(00:43:49):

And he said, if you sit in front of your typewriter from nine o'clock in the morning till five o'clock in the afternoon, every day of the week for a year, you will write fat novels. It's just about showing up. And it's funny with you, you decided I'm going to just do this. I don't care about the outcome. I'm just going to do the thing. And divine intervention comes. It's like, you ever heard of the term karma yoga? Karma yoga is focusing on a task with no thought as to the outcome of that task. And it's a spiritual practice. And that's basically what he did. I'm going to do this. I'm going to do the work without judging the work without good, bad. Yes, no, right, wrong. I'm just going to do the work. And on day two, the universe downloads through you.

Chelan Harkin (00:44:36):

Yeah, no, it was really cool. And it was really cool to analyze that afterward and really think, why did that, what was it with that that did it? And my theory is that, well, and what did you say in the beginning? Oh, it's just that there's a reason that we have these blocks that we should try to be understanding with the things that, our ways of our strategies for getting by. And even though it's so easy to judge those, and I found that, yeah, just again, and again and again, when we include these things, when we come into a relationship with these parts of ourselves that we've once repressed, that

they go from locked down and contracted to open again, and there's this kind of reunion experience almost of these parts of self with the whole, and then it feeds the hole. And that's what I found again and again with poetry.

(00:45:31):

It's been quite amazing when I open my heart to whatever edge of suffering is in me and allow that to move again, it's just what has shown me is actually the energy in us carries information, guidance, and inspiration. So it's almost like that's been my process and my dedication is just trying, is just coming back to, instead of going to the desk, I just try to keep my heart open to whatever's stuck inside of me and let that back in. And then almost every time I do that, a poem, it comes right on the heels of that. It's wild.

Warwick Schiller (00:46:11):

What does it feel like? Do you have a somatic sensation? You have a sensation in your body? Do you buzz, you vibrate? Is there a noise in your ears? Is there a rushing in your head?

Chelan Harkin (00:46:22):

Yeah, go ahead. Question. Totally. It feels like all of a sudden in tune to the poetry station and there's just no question about it. Whatever that state is, it's the poetry station, and it is like it's a buzz and it's just the words are coming and it's so clear. And there's also this a little bit, there's an urgency. It's almost like my soul, I describe it as my soul has to pee. And if you don't listen to that, when you have to pee, it just feels uncomfortable. So there's this feeling of I have to let, whatever's coming through is meant to be captured. And then when it's done, when the poem has completed itself, it's very clear when it's done and then I go back to normal, settle down a little bit,

Warwick Schiller (00:47:12):

My soul has to pee that. Yeah, that's a great way of putting it. So it's like this uncomfortable feeling, and then you pee and you're like, ah, you getting relax.

Chelan Harkin (00:47:28):

Exactly. I am driven to do the thing that it's telling me I need to do.

Warwick Schiller (00:47:35):

Do they come in moments of meditation? Is there anything that, is there any scenario or situation that triggers them?

Chelan Harkin (00:47:46):

Yeah. Yep, yep. It's not moments of meditation, but my practice is just really bringing my awareness into contact with whatever feels like a block to what I would say is just the energy of life flowing through me and moving me and guiding me and directing me. So wherever I feel a block to that, I bring my attention there. And just maybe this could be called a type of meditation, really. And I stay with that energy there with love and acceptance and curiosity really. And then it just opens right up. And then usually when it does that, it's like the floodgates open. And I have one of those deep cries similar to what happened in that prison cell. And then it's just this energetic rush. And I feel after we're just so resourced, I feel so clear. I feel more odd connection. And it's almost like whatever the issue was, it's when I let that move, I now have kind of wisdom about how to relate to that better in my life. But then also a poem comes right after that. It's awesome. So it's like somatic poetry. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:49:01](#)):

So you kind of have the breakthrough first when you said wherever the block is. But when you said that both your hands went to your heart, is it always like a blockage of the heart? Is it in there? Is it ever a gut feeling? Is it a heart feeling?

Chelan Harkin ([00:49:17](#)):

Good question. Yeah. No, it's all over the place. It's all over the place. But I think there's something about, I don't know, there's something about the heart, like a willingness to, because let me know if I'm getting too esoteric or I dunno. But when there's a willingness in the heart to surrender to whatever it is that is in this block, which like you said, there's always some we don't know. We don't know what's there. It can be an unconscious kind of thing, understanding that. And so it always feels kind of like this. And also these blocks, these energies that create these automatic operating patterns in our lives, these unconsciously held beliefs about ourselves and all this stored stuff, it's familiar, but when we stay with those with love, they move again and they release a lot of the familiar ways of operating that can be scary. So I think there is something in the heart about just commitment and willingness and trust to see what might come as we open these parts of ourselves up and let parts of ourselves go, but, but these sorts of different pains, gut, wherever they can be found all over the place.

Warwick Schiller ([00:50:43](#)):

So you have that and then the poem comes out. Does it come to you as a voice or when you write the poem, are you aware of the word before you write it? Or is it like a conversation when you're talking to somebody and you're not actually thinking of the next sentence you're going to say, like I'm saying right now, you're just saying the sentence, you're having a conversation. Does it come out like that or are you aware of it before it hits the paper? Or does it just come out of your hand and you dunno what your hand's doing?

Chelan Harkin ([00:51:21](#)):

Yeah, it pour, it just pours. But there's a sense, it's strange. I don't know how there's a sense of it being just right. Sometimes I play around with it, I make the poem and then I change a word or something and it is off. Then it the arrangement and it's, it's so cool. I don't know, there's just this interesting trust in the precise arrangement, but it does, it just pours, it pours out. It's not much of a rational. There's almost no rational analytical process involved. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:52:04](#)):

A minute ago in the middle of that, I didn't want to interrupt you, but you said, I hope I'm not getting too esoteric. You can't get too esoteric on this podcast. Sorry. I love it.

Chelan Harkin ([00:52:13](#)):

Perfect.

Warwick Schiller ([00:52:13](#)):

Yourself. Go for it. We've been there before. What it sounds like what you are talking about is actually just letting go, letting it come through. And it doesn't matter what you do, go help people with their horses. No, exactly. And probably the biggest problem people encounter with their, it's a part of the biggest problem people encounter with their horses is not being able to let go of the outcome. And it's

like you can let go of the outcome is when the magic happens. It's like when you can let go of what this poem's supposed to be and just allow it to become. And I've spent most of, I've had some amazing things happen to me in my life, in a place in life now. I'd never even, I kind of say I never really imagined I'd be, but then on the other hand, I probably dreamt about it all my life, but it's about letting go and going with the flow. And I this, I wouldn't say it's an existential crisis, but I've spent, I've got to this amazing place in my life by just letting go and going with the flow sort of thing.

(00:53:30):

And I can't complain. But I also am fully aware, and this is some of the internal dialogue I have myself, but I'm also fully aware of the fact that I've got to this place by always taking the easy way out. If something got too hard, I didn't go there. I didn't push through things. And I think there's a part you, there's a of you that grows from the things you push yourself through. And I think we talked before we came on here about I'm ready for my next crisis. And I think the stuff that's going to come up in that is either the guilt and shame about not pushing through all those things, or I'm actually going to push through this next thing, whatever it is. And I'm not used to pushing through things, and that's going to be very, very painful. I'm not quite sure. But anyway, getting back to your poem, letting go of the outcome and just allowing things to happen is it seems like that's where they come from.

Chelan Harkin (00:54:45):

And not filtering and embracing the possibility of just writing a totally stupid, bad poem that something that was so much more than this binary of good, bad emerged. And that is just so interesting. So interesting.

Warwick Schiller (00:55:06):

Have you ever heard of Brene Brown?

Chelan Harkin (00:55:08):

I love Brene Brown. She's my favorite. I call her my favorite mystic actually, because she talks about the way of the heart. She really explains the process of how and validates it through research, which is so cool about how essential vulnerability is. And I would say that's really what mysticism is, is the willingness to come back deeper and deeper and deeper levels of vulnerability with ourselves, with life, with all, yeah,

Warwick Schiller (00:55:41):

You were talking about you're writing this bad poem and she talks about shitty first drafts and you've got to write your shitty first draft before you can refine it. But I think a big part of the shitty first draft is actually just giving up control. I'm just saying, I'm just going to do it. I don't care if it's shitty, I'm just going to do it.

Chelan Harkin (00:56:02):

And embracing the struggle too, writing that can help me just writing from the energy of whatever's really real in the life. If it's grief, if it's shame, including that rather than thinking, oh no, I shouldn't be talking about that. And then that, granted, that works with the style of my craft, whereas it might not with anybody's, but it can help unlock that energy.

Speaker 1 (00:56:32):

Warwick is happy to announce his first book, the Principles of Training, understanding the Relationship between You and Your Horse, and Why Effective Training Works is now available after a lifetime of working with horses. Warwick has categorized every horse training method into 12 foundational principles. Understanding the intricacies of these principles will allow you to make the most educated horse training decisions on your horsemanship journey and is a must read for any horse owner. Get your copy today on Amazon or get a personalized copy signed by Warwick on his website, warwick-schiller.com.

Warwick Schiller ([00:57:07](#)):

Well, that's one of the reasons you're on the podcast right now is because I am having you on here because I think chatting, talking about conversing about these things that you were bringing up right now are not on the edge of my comfort zone, but they're on the edge of, they're on the edge, the periphery of the comfort zone of the people who I think are listening. And it's like, no, I've got to have her come on here because I need to be comfortable with the fact that some people listening to this might feel like we are both full of shit instead of bringing them what I think they want to hear. It's like I'm kind of giving up control about

Chelan Harkin ([00:57:59](#)):

That's brave

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:00](#)):

Of you care if you don't. I think that's a part of it. Yeah.

Chelan Harkin ([00:58:05](#)):

Thanks for taking that risk with me. I appreciate it. It's fun to show up. There's something really enlivening, I have to say, and just showing up and telling it like it is. And with each passing podcast, it gets more and more and more like that, more and more prone to the possibility of just swaths of people rejecting what I'm saying. But I feel so much more at ease and empowered just telling it like it is. And I think we all want to do that about this parts of us that seem strange or seem outside of the norm. It's been really fun to play.

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:43](#)):

And what you'll find, you wouldn't know this, but what you find is just like Brene Brown talks about vulnerability. You don't get judgment back. You get, yeah, me too, or I like that, or I, I'm sure I'm going to get so much positive feedback about It's true. This chat with you, even though before recording it, I'm thinking, oh, we're getting a little bit out there like poetry, downloadable music,

Chelan Harkin ([00:59:10](#)):

Poetry

Warwick Schiller ([00:59:12](#)):

We're getting. But there's a common theme running through what you are talking about and some other guests I've had on the podcast. And it's to do with when you're on your path, the universe will provide you with the things you need. And your story about Daniel,

Chelan Harkin ([00:59:35](#)):

Oh my God,

Warwick Schiller ([00:59:37](#)):

Is I want people to hear that. So tell us who is Daniel, and then tell us from the start how he's influenced what you are currently doing.

Chelan Harkin ([00:59:46](#)):

Awesome. Thank you so much for asking. This is the most exciting story for me to tell. It's wild. So Daniel Walinski is this poet whose work I heard when I was 17, the man who did all the Hafez renderings. And after I was exposed to him, I just got his books and just devoured them whole essentially, and just absorbed them and was so inspired by, can I

Warwick Schiller ([01:00:13](#)):

Interrupt for a second? Can you please define what you mean by renderings? He is, so he kind of translates, ha's poetry, but he doesn't translate it. He doesn't speak Farsi and was written in Farsi was translated. So Daniel Walinski translate the English into a better version of fees. Is that how it goes?

Chelan Harkin ([01:00:39](#)):

Kind of, yeah. Well, there's some controversy, understandable controversy about this whole situation because I don't know, Daniel wasn't pushing for this at all, but on those books, it does say translations by Daniel and they're not. But basically, Daniel Leins had a spiritual teacher who did understand the original text and then saw the ways they were translated into English hafe text. And they were very technically translated, technically very well, but according to his teacher didn't carry the original spirit. And this man was dissatisfied. And Daniel was this amazing poet, and Daniel had had some kind of profound vision or something like that with Hafe that had activated him as a poet. He had never written any poetry anyway. And so he just, I guess took that and ran, okay,

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:40](#)):

Let's not gloss over that. Let's go back. So Daniel Walinski is not a poet.

Chelan Harkin ([01:01:46](#)):

Well, he wasn't had

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:49](#)):

Some at this point in time. He's not a poet. And then he has some sort of

Chelan Harkin ([01:01:54](#)):

Something or other

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:55](#)):

Fastest like you had. Yeah. And so what happens after that? Now he is a poet. Is he downloading poetry? You do the story.

Chelan Harkin ([01:02:05](#)):

I would like to know more details. He and I are buddies now and we'll get into that. But yeah, it seems like it really just flowed for him in a very similar way and that it felt very inspired by, and so he wanted to honor Hafez, but his books say Hafez poetry, and his intention was to be like, didn't feel like it came from me. But then a lot of people in Iran were really insulted thinking that a white man co-opted their famous favorite golden poet. So I understand. I understand where they're coming from, but his poetry, Daniel's poetry is inspired by a fence. It's just astonishing. It's so beautiful.

Warwick Schiller ([01:02:49](#)):

And you were aware of this, his poetry before your first download ever happened?

Chelan Harkin ([01:02:56](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:02:57](#)):

Okay, good. Just setting the scene here. Okay,

Chelan Harkin ([01:02:59](#)):

Cool. Cool,

Warwick Schiller ([01:03:00](#)):

Cool. So tell us, how do you end up coming in contact with this guy whose poetry that you think is absolutely amazing?

Chelan Harkin ([01:03:07](#)):

Good question. So it's 2020. Fast forward to 2020, and I've been writing poetry in this way for 12 years and had a gigantic collection that was all just kept to myself for the most part. I would post one on Facebook now and my mom and her two friends would like it. And that was basically my audience. And it was so precious to me. This experience was so precious to me. It really felt like my cord of connection with the beyond, and it was so intimate and sacred and I still had a lot of, so I really trusted this poetic process, but I still had a lot of just fear with other people and hadn't had enough breakthroughs person to person where I could really feel like this deep part of me could be shared and received. And so I was just still really afraid of sharing that widely.

([01:04:07](#)):

And so then it was 2020, what the hell was that? That was the crazy experience. And I just had my second child and I was in this time of just really actually feeling quite deeply disconnected again from this oasis of authenticity and truth inside of myself, myself. And it would've been the driest spell creatively. I hadn't written anything in two years. I felt uninspired and disconnected and felt this profound amount of tension of desperately needing something to change. And again, not knowing what the heck that was going to look like or be like. And anyway, one day, I mean, there were a few things that happened that aren't really that important I don't think. But it became abundantly clear in November of 2020 that I could no longer deny this profound soul need to publish a book. And I said that to a friend, and I could barely even say it aloud.

([01:05:14](#)):

It was so terrifying the exposure that was going to come from that. And it felt like my whole world kind of quaked. There was some part of me that understood how momentous that was to recognize, but it was clear to me that if I didn't bring this forth, I mean I would just make myself ill. It was so important. It was so essential for where I needed to go. And so after waiting 12 years to move forward with this, three weeks later, my book was ready to publish. It just activated. And I just prioritized that and decided it was like this wild commitment to move through this mountain of fears and insecurities that I had about putting my book, my words forward. I was afraid it would, I would just be humiliated. I was afraid that people in more spiritual, religious communities would think my work was heretical and irreverent and disrespectful, and I was afraid everyone else in my life would think it was. I used the word God too much and be really uncomfortable with that. And I thought people would think I was childish or narcissistic for prioritizing this part of me. All these things. Oh my God. I thought people would read my words and think they were pure gibberish. I mean, the whole works and

Warwick Schiller ([01:06:39](#)):

All those stories you tell yourself about everything. Yeah.

Chelan Harkin ([01:06:42](#)):

Oh my God. So it was the most crazy movement through the fire of just being dedicated to bringing the sport, bringing the forward no matter what. But I had no marketing support. I had no contacts in the publishing world. I didn't know anyone really who had published a book and I was to self-publish mine. But I really was clear about I wanted this to go far and wide in the name of love, truth, and humility and liberation of People's true Light and essence, very similar to that nudge I'd gotten at 21 to do this experiment of writing a bad poem every day. This time, it was the same kind of nudge that I couldn't avoid. It was this need to experiment again, do a prayer experiment with praying to some of my favorite dead poets and authors and asking for their help and seeing if that would do anything. So there were three on my A team. I called them. I got really kind of silly with it. So Hafe Dead poet. Ha, Khalil Giran, the author of the book, the classic beautiful book, the Prophet, if you're familiar with that.

Warwick Schiller ([01:07:54](#)):

Yes, yes. Amazing. Yes. Yeah. I think we actually shared a poem by him on one of the podcasts. It might have been Christian Dixon's View, guys listening, but yes,

Chelan Harkin ([01:08:05](#)):

Very cool. And then this other author, and I just decided, I committed, I put my kids to bed at night. I waited until dark so my neighbors wouldn't think I was too crazy. And I made myself a delicious cup of hot chocolate. I wanted it to feel good and be fun, and I would put on some beautiful earrings. I made a little fun ritual out of it. And I would just walk around my neighborhood in the dark rain or shine and just experiment with asking for exactly what I wanted from my favorite dead poet, from my dead poet society, essentially.

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:36](#)):

But you put on your nice earrings first to walk around in the dark. Yes.

Chelan Harkin ([01:08:40](#)):

And get me ready.

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:42](#)):

Yeah. You dressed up for the dead poets. Okay, good. It

Chelan Harkin ([01:08:45](#)):

Made me feel, it prepared me somehow. And at first it was kind of awkward. I didn't know this thing kind of thing worked at all, but I felt it was worth a shot. And it was like, Hey, this is a little awkward. I don't dunno if I'm talking to myself. I dunno. I dunno. But yeah, but I became more and more emboldened and each day I would just really get in touch with how much I wanted this deeply. And then I think it was like two days after this prayer experiment had begun that I wrote this poem, maybe I'll read it for you. It's called The Worst Thing We Ever Did, and I was so afraid. This was a few days before I published my book. I was so afraid to share this one because there was this authority that I was claiming it was this powerful poem, and I didn't know I had the right, I didn't know if I had the right to say things like this. And I almost didn't share it. And I did. And then it went crazy viral. So that happened. Should I read that?

Warwick Schiller ([01:09:51](#)):

Please, please do. I love this poem.

Chelan Harkin ([01:09:53](#)):

Okay, cool. Thank you. And then, yeah, this story is just wild. Okay. The worst thing we ever did, the worst thing we ever did was put God in the sky out of reach, pulling the divinity from the leaf, sifting out the holy from our bones, insisting God isn't bursting dazzle through everything we've made. A hard commitment to see is ordinary stripping the sacred from everywhere. To put in a cloud man elsewhere, prying, closeness from your heart. The worst thing we ever did was take the dance and the song out of prayer made it sit up straight and cross its legs, removed it of rejoicing, wiped clean, its hips way. Its questions, its ecstatic yowl, its tears. The worst thing we ever did is pretend God isn't the easiest thing in this universe available to every soul in every breath. So

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:05](#)):

Something that pops up a lot on the podcast with different guests, and it's quite an interest of mine, is shamanism and indigenous wisdom and the way we used to live. And that poem kind of gets to that where before we get disconnected from the world around us.

Chelan Harkin ([01:11:32](#)):

Yeah. Cool. Thank you. Gosh, thank

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:38](#)):

You so much. Sorry. So we're still on Daniel Gadinsky. Sorry.

Chelan Harkin ([01:11:42](#)):

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. So this poem, I was also asking them for inspiration too. Inspiration and marketing support. And I asked them very specifically, I said, just tap all the people in this world who can help me connect with those folks and everyone in the spirit world too. Let's just get this whole party started. So then this poem came through, and that was insane. My mom and her two friends or whatever became overnight, like 30,000, 50,000 plus. And I all of a sudden have this gigantic

international audience. And then two weeks into this experiment, I get an email in my inbox from Daniel Lipinski himself.

[\(01:12:27\)](#):

And it turns out, so I had these three people in my A team. Daniel Walinski did the renderings for Hafez poetry, and he also wrote the foreword for the extended edition of Khalil Chabra's book, the Prophet. And Daniel said to me, this is really weird that I'm reaching out to you. I don't do that very often. I'm a reclusive poet in Taos, but I just felt a strange nudge. I saw your book and I just wanted to say congratulations. So I wrote back to him this crazy unfiltered, what the bleep, so unprofessional, just ridiculous. And I told him this whole story. He wrote back to me in his second email and said, Shalan shivers, I think Hafez nudged me in your direction. And I've been wanting to co-author a book of poetry waiting for the right person. I just feel like you're probably, that person let's a book together, most insane moment of my life. And then he wrote the foreword for my first book, and then he introduced me to some publishing houses in his incredible poetic with an incredible poetic endorsement. And I'll share this, I haven't shared this publicly yet, but I'm writing a modern take of the prophet from a female voice perspective called the Prophetess. And I sent that to one of these publishing houses and they're reviewing it with serious consideration. So it's just nuts beyond nuts the way this is all played out. So that's the story of Daniel and my prayer experiment's gone. Right?

Warwick Schiller [\(01:14:08\)](#):

Yeah. Thanks for sharing that. I love sharing. Have people share stories like that with the viewers? Oh, the listeners, sorry. Because that's real. Have you ever read Big Magic by Elizabeth Gilbert?

Chelan Harkin [\(01:14:21\)](#):

Yeah, I love her. I love Elizabeth Gilbert. Yeah,

Warwick Schiller [\(01:14:27\)](#):

That sort of thing. You are meant to be doing this. You can't force what you are doing to happen and have it work well. You know what I mean? Obviously you are living your divine purpose sort of thing. I'm a big believer in we all have a purpose, and if you can figure out what your purpose is, you will be given gifts you never even considered. If you can get aligned with what your purpose is

Chelan Harkin [\(01:15:05\)](#):

As though the cosmos is your number one fan, when you start to listen to these things and move toward them, and then just doors open and resources and surprising doors and gifts that are better than the ones that we've concocted ourselves. It's just wild.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:15:22\)](#):

It was interesting. So I talk at the start how I came across you from my previous podcast guest. And so I had listened to her podcast on the border at the gas pump, and then I found yours on there. So I'm listening to it. So we've just bought a new place. It's about two and a half hours south of here, and we're in the process of moving down there. And what we are wanting to do there is have coconut, like a retreat center. Oh, cool. The horses will be a part of it, but there'll be all sorts of retreat type stuff going on there. And it came about, you're on this podcast now. So last year in San Antonio, we had a podcast summit where we had 22 of the first guests from the guests from the first year of the podcast all come

and present over three days to the room of 250 people. And the energy there was, I can't even explain it, but everybody was on the same wavelength. So

Chelan Harkin ([01:16:38](#)):

Cool.

Warwick Schiller ([01:16:40](#)):

Everybody was on the same wavelength, all the presenters run the same wavelength. What we had the presenters do was come up with, it was kind of like a TED Talk, but we can't call 'em Ted Talks because Ted is copyrighted. So we called 'em talks, teach, inspire, connect, and we had 22 people who, none of them, most of them don't know each other, didn't collaborate ahead of time. But when they came to that thing and presented, if you think about the gist of what they trying to say in their 20 minute talk was that last poem you read out, the worst thing we ever did, it was basically that poem could cover every single one of them. So when I was listening to the podcast you did with wood at the gas pump, he said in that thing, there's kind of an exponential reinforcement effect when groups of coherent people get together.

([01:17:34](#)):

I mean, I love that line so much. I wrote it down, there's a kind of exponential reinforcement effect when groups of coherent people get together. And that's what happened at the podcast summit. And after that we're like, no, we need to change course just a little bit in what we're doing. And I want to have more of those type of experience, help people have more of those type of experiences. Anyway, so we bought this place. So I'm driving down there the other day listening to your podcast. And the first hour or so is a two-lane narrow winding road. And while I'm listening to your podcast, I come around a corner and there's very few places you can pull off. Very few places. I come around a corner and coming in the other direction is a big rig, and he's in his lane and halfway down the side of the big rig passing him where they shouldn't be passing him is a car. And I come around the corner and there's a car in my lane right in front of me while I'm listening to your podcast. And I hit the brakes and he hits the brakes, but we're not stopping in time. And out of nowhere beside my passenger side door appears a little pullout. And so that guy goes to his left, my right, and I go between that truck and this guy, God.

Chelan Harkin ([01:18:58](#)):

And it's one of those moments

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:00](#)):

Like, whoa. And then I think about the probability of it being in exactly that spot where you can pull off and it's kind of like, okay, that didn't just happen for no reason. That was the universe saying, Hey, shit's serious. Pay attention. Why was listening to your podcast? I just wanted to mention that because talking about, I'm so glad we're talking about the universe and getting signs and I dunno, dunno, if you get more signs or as you become more aware, you're just more aware of the signs that were there in the first place.

Chelan Harkin ([01:19:46](#)):

That's an interesting question.

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:48](#)):

You know what I mean? Do more opportunities start showing up? Or you are just aware enough to notice those opportunities where you weren't before? I dunno.

Chelan Harkin ([01:20:01](#)):

But

Warwick Schiller ([01:20:01](#)):

You are certainly getting opportunities.

Chelan Harkin ([01:20:07](#)):

And I also want to say that it can, I don't know. I think there's this idea that, and maybe some people do feel this way, that they're just completely in tune and in touch with the universe after things like this happen. And it's just ease. And for me, there's still even after, I mean this is a pretty wild story, but it's amazing actually how hardheaded I've realized I could be because still I think, oh guys, it's never going to happen again. Or there could be this scarcity that the forces of the universe have left the building. Now I'm on my own to just scrape it by. And so I find it, these experiences for me, they're reference points to keep experimenting for sure. But there's also this continual humility of the human struggle of forgetting or not being completely certain and having to go through these risks and tests again, resource courage to keep experimenting like this. And I think that's important to name it. I don't know. It's not like, I don't know. There's some people who I don't know, I certainly don't feel arrived in any kind of certitude, but I'm just more engaged and more curious I guess, and engaged and continuing to try in this dynamic interplay with life.

Warwick Schiller ([01:21:32](#)):

I think curiosity is a very important aspect of what we bring to the world. I think with curiosity comes a sense of openness and a lack of judgment. And I think the curiosity causes you to drop judgment. And also there's an openness to curiosity that I think just like you were in the jail cell and you opened up to whatever, and here it comes. Tell me about, so you're also, you're a hypnotherapist, is that right?

Chelan Harkin ([01:22:17](#)):

I worked as a hypnotherapist for 10 years before susceptible to light went into the world, and then I was able to completely shift gears into writing full time, which is really what I'm wanting to do. But that was such a cool period of time really learning about that practice and the subconscious mind. And that was a profound turning point for me when I first experienced hypnotherapy. That was also quite life changing really. That was also at age 21. It was a big year. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:54](#)):

Okay. Okay. So the hypnotherapy came before the aneurysm before thing in the jail cell or after

Chelan Harkin ([01:23:04](#)):

It came after the summer after, yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:23:09](#)):

So if you hadn't looked into hypnotherapy before, how did you get to a point where, oh, I might try hypnotherapy? Did it just pop up on, right?

Chelan Harkin ([01:23:20](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:23:21](#)):

Were you thinking about it one day and then it popped up on your Facebook feed because that's how it works?

Chelan Harkin ([01:23:26](#)):

Good question. Well, it's funny. I hadn't really no exposure, or maybe I was just closed to the exposure that I might've had, but I didn't really have much exposure, I guess, to alternative kinds of therapy that people who I trusted had used and had results. It wasn't really part of my awareness. And I did have a boyfriend in high school whose mom was a hypnotherapist, but she would invite me over for dinner and we'd have dinner, and I always just thought she was so wacky and she would always try to suggest that I try hypnotherapy with her, which I probably really could have used. And I was like, no.

([01:24:10](#)):

My inside was like, oh, that's so weird. My outside was like, oh, huh, maybe someday. But I thought it was so strange. But then at age 21, 1 of the blessings, we'll call it, of being in such a place of wreckage is I just became open to anything. I expanded to be willing to try more new things and break out of my old models of narrow ideas. So one day I'd had this poetic opening, I'd had this profound experience in Israel, but I still just had so much freaking, so much baggage, so much trauma, and I still didn't know what to do with that. And it almost hurt more that I'd had these breakthrough moments. It almost was like it threw those that into contrast and it was like it all flared up all the more. And so these moments when poems would come were the only moments in my life of relief really.

([01:25:10](#)):

The rest was acute, really acute suffering. And anyway, in a moment of just abysmal despair, I called someone who was really the closest thing to a confidant in my life, even though I couldn't open up very much. And she told me about a mutual friend of ours who'd been doing this model of hypnotherapy, and this woman had a lot of really heavy stuff in her life. And my friend said that she noticed a new lightness of being in her that was hard to describe, and that was all I needed to hear. I was like, okay, I want some of that. And I got this phone number and called, and this hypnotherapist was this cowboy actually in Montana and I was in Washington and it was over the phone and he was like 80 or something and had been doing this just in his retirement. And he said he could do a session with me in an hour.

([01:26:05](#)):

And so I thought, okay, I'm going to try this wacky thing. And he said, what are some things you'd like to work on? And I was like, well, is it okay if I give you a list of the many, many things that I got? And I thought maybe this model would work for the other 8 billion people on this planet or whatever. But certainly I'm a hopeless case. That was really where I was coming from. And really just in this first session, it was very similar in a way actually to that hafe poem when it had been read to me, this unlocking effect. And what happened was my whole system felt so profoundly safe and secure that it was as though my consciousness, my awareness, was able to really go beyond its pain cages and really explore more of a depth of self. Yeah. Anyway, there was just a profound, profound experience of this completely unadulterated essence that had always been healthy and happy and whole and inherently unshakably worthy of love and acceptance. And it was so abundant with joy. I mean, that's just what it was. And it was so profound, and I experienced that as my true identity. And so after really just that first session, all of those other identity holds, all of those other things, I played out and thought ways I

needed to protect some idea of who I was or all of that, all the whole stressful performance of that just began to fall away, like dead leaves almost. It was so wild.

(01:27:49):

And anyway, it was huge before and after type of moment in my life.

Warwick Schiller (01:28:00):

It's so odd that on this podcast you had a cowboy for a hypnotherapist,

Chelan Harkin (01:28:07):

Cowboy hypnotherapist in Montana. I

Warwick Schiller (01:28:09):

Know. What was really interesting is while you were talking about that I had this big wave of something go over me.

Chelan Harkin (01:28:15):

Oh, interesting.

Warwick Schiller (01:28:17):

Cool. Was really interesting. It was almost, I started thinking, I know someone who's a hypnotherapist, maybe I could her have a crack at me when I did that. I had this wave of someone over me that was I'm, I can't tell if it was a good feeling or a bad feeling. It wasn't like a feeling of impending doom. I'll tell you what, it wasn't like the feeling I get when I think about this healing journey and what I think's going to happen next and how difficult it's going to be. It wasn't that. So thinking about it out loud now, right now, I'd have to class it as it was a good feeling. So I might want to look into that. I should get to your questions that you chose. As my regular listeners would know, I send my guest 20 questions that I mostly borrowed from Tim Ferriss's Tribe of Mentors book with a bit of editing, and I have people choose some questions. And you've chosen quite a few, which is actually going to be good. What's the first one? What's the most worthwhile thing you've put your time into something that you have done that's changed the course of your life?

Chelan Harkin (01:29:38):

Good question. You chose

Warwick Schiller (01:29:41):

It.

Chelan Harkin (01:29:42):

I know, right? Yeah. You'd think I might've been more prepared. Well, I think interestingly, after this experience of really connecting with this, what I don't know could call my truest self or whatever, there's also this idea that these types of experiences that we defy suffering if we've had an experience of true reality or something. And in my experience, it was quite the contrary. It just empowered me then to be able to encounter and connect with all of these areas, all of these old areas of suffering that before that I had just resisted and avoided and denied. And so then it just became this, oh my God, ethic

shadow, a journey of going into the shadows and the unconscious. I was like just this diver. And it was this harvesting process of just self understanding and these jewels each time bringing parts of me home. It was like this just wild journey of soul retrieval almost.

[\(01:30:47\)](#):

And so I would say that really that journey, which has been really dedicated to for a long time now, has yielded poetry. And just so much is kind of an unusual way, but it's given me a lot of insight. That means a lot to me, so much to me. And it's given me a lot of compassion and humility too, and let go of a lot of judgment for other people because these things that I would've judged in 'em are familiar now in me. I've connected with them. There's no denying that they're part of me and that they're okay at a heart. They're just doing their best. And so there's just been a transformational journey of compassion.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:31:38\)](#):

If we get back to our friend Brene Brown, she said, you always judge in the place that you, how does she say that? You're always judge in the place, basically. Always judge people that have the same problem you have, basically.

Chelan Harkin [\(01:31:51\)](#):

Totally.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:31:52\)](#):

It's true. Very poorly explained it, but that's what she says. Okay. Speaking of unusual, what's an unusual habit you have or something out of the ordinary that you really love, apart from all the crazy stuff you've told us, putting on your earrings in the dark, walk around the block to download dead poets?

Chelan Harkin [\(01:32:11\)](#):

God, lemme read that question again.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:32:16\)](#):

What is an unusual habit you have or something out of the ordinary that you really love? And I do want to reiterate that you chose these questions, so I'm not putting you on the spot. I know

Chelan Harkin [\(01:32:26\)](#):

You're not. You're really not. Okay. Well, I like to, oh, this isn't that exciting, maybe, but I like to go on walks and have my headphones in connected to my phone and have the recording thing going and just walk in the woods and just talk to myself and record what comes through and then listen to it afterward. And it's kind of stream of consciousness. And then so often there are just rich nuggets of clarity or inspiration or something like that. So I do that. So

Warwick Schiller [\(01:33:13\)](#):

When you listen to it back, is it like listening to somebody else like, huh, I didn't know that, or

Chelan Harkin [\(01:33:20\)](#):

It's surprising sometimes. Really. Yeah. Yeah. It's cool. Sometimes it is affirming. Oh, shalan, you've got some things to say. Cool. That's nice. A lot

Warwick Schiller ([01:33:32](#)):

Of cool stuff when walking

Chelan Harkin ([01:33:33](#)):

Here. Walking is good. I dunno. It moves. It moves things right, left. I don't know. I don't know. It's helpful. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:33:46](#)):

I wonder, do you know what M D M R is? E MDR R is?

Chelan Harkin ([01:33:51](#)):

I do, yes.

Warwick Schiller ([01:33:53](#)):

I wonder if it's got something to do with that where you are talking through things as you're walking, because E M D R has you go from your right brain to your left brain, to your right brain, to your left brain, to your right brain, your left brain while they're talking you through something. And I'm wondering if that bilateral stimulation while talking has something to do with unlocking that.

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:14](#)):

I think it does. I think it does. Have you done E M D R? Warwick?

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:18](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:20](#)):

Cool.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:21](#)):

Yes. You're doing self-guided E MDR R.

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:23](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:27](#)):

Good stuff. Okay. What accomplishment are you most proud of

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:31](#)):

Publishing? Publishing this book and testing my limiting assumptions and doing this experiment that they might not be truths and seeing what would come from that, by far, the bravest thing I've done.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:50](#)):

So you have several books that you've published it?

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:54](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:34:55](#)):

What's that one called?

Chelan Harkin ([01:34:56](#)):

This is called Susceptible to Light.

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:00](#)):

Was that the first one?

Chelan Harkin ([01:35:02](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:03](#)):

Yeah. Okay. And then the other one is called, what is it, two or three?

Chelan Harkin ([01:35:08](#)):

Yeah. The next one of my Fearful Assumptions was it was going to be a one shot thing, and I wasn't going to have any more inspiration after I wrote this book. Then this one came seven months after that one. This was called Let Us Dance, the Stumble in World with The Beloved. And then my third book of poetry, a solo book, it's called Wild Grace, and it's a publishing house in New York. Found it, which has been fun and exciting because these two are both. So that's been really nice. And then the upcoming, the Prophetess, we have yet to be seen, but it's in the hands right now of a big, big publishing house, and that would just be a dream come true. So good juju to that, if you would. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:35:59](#)):

That's cool. Okay. What have you changed in the past five years that's helped shaped who you have become?

Chelan Harkin ([01:36:07](#)):

Oh, did I choose these? Oh my God, what have I changed? Oh, I've become really, really dedicated imperfectly, but I come back to this when I don't take care of this. I really try to be accountable and responsible for all of my anger and resentment and judgments and try to see where that's coming from in myself and try to work through that in myself before engaging with the other or the others who anger is so powerful. It's so much urgency in it for me. I have really vented a lot of anger at people that I love. And so yeah, really trying to just sit with the burn and see where it leads and see what it reveals. And it's been incredibly rich and generative and helpful.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:24](#)):

Yeah, that's like next level stuff. My wife, everybody knows, my wife has historically suffered from anxiety, and for the longest time, she was always working on finding techniques to make the anxiety go away. And then she'd got to the point to where people helped her with, what you have to do is you have

to sit with it. Instead of it being a bad thing, it's information and it's something to sit and it's something to be curious about and inquire where is this coming from? And I think when you do that, then it lessens because you work through the reason it's there rather than, it's not like you're putting a bandaid on it and saying, I've got to get it to go away. I don't want it almost, I'm not sure. It's hard to welcome it, but it's there. It's part of you, and it's not something to remove yourself from. It's something to work through.

Chelan Harkin ([01:38:25](#)):

Yes. Yeah, totally.

Warwick Schiller ([01:38:29](#)):

Once again, it comes back to that curiosity thing we talked about. Okay, where do you go or what do you do to relieve stress or recharge your batteries? And I'm guessing it's got something to do with walking.

Chelan Harkin ([01:38:40](#)):

Oh, that is one thing. And also, I still do call on hypnotherapy sessions, and they're reliable just every time. It's such a reset of perspective because I still very much can get stuck in these holes of feeling like a worthless loser, and so I'm disconnected and those sorts of things. So when I'm in a pit like that, I have some good tools that I know I can call on, and that's a reliable one.

Warwick Schiller ([01:39:12](#)):

So the next question, this is one of the ones that came straight from Tim Ferriss's Travel of Mentors book is what is one common myth about your profession that you wish to debunk? And in Tim's book, it then said in parentheses, as many of us have, as many of you have professions that are not normal, maybe first thing you've got to do is identify what your profession is. And so are you professional, mystic or professional, poet or professional? Mystic, poet,

Chelan Harkin ([01:39:42](#)):

Professional, mystic poet. Okay. And I love this question. This is such a good question. It's fun. I have one of my dearest friends in the world, she's from New Zealand, and she's a mystic poet as well. And we met through Buddha the gas pump connection, and she and I are going to start a podcast soon talking a lot about this because when some people hear Mystic Poet, they think that there's a split between those mystical experiences and the human struggles and the madness of being a parent and all of the things, all of the vulnerable, hard, complicated things. And there's just, what she and I have both found is that actually there's just more embrace of those, and there's more ability to be open about those without as much shame and to have more mobility as a whole being the mystic and the mess, the human, the endearing human mess.

([01:40:44](#)):

And so that's a misconception I think that I love to talk about and call out. And because it's dehumanizing, I think that's one of this idea, this ideology that people in these roles act only in this way, can be one of the pitfalls of some spiritual teachers who then feel that they can't be humble or can't be struggling and can't be vulnerable, and then do all kinds of weird things behind the scenes. Or I have a poem about that, or comedians who are depressed because they feel they need to uphold this image or all of these various ways that we would cut parts of ourselves off. And so I would say the mystical journey actually is in the path to open to all of it, the bad and the bad poetry and the genius poetry, and

to get laughter and tenderness and humility from those embarrassing bad parts and embrace those and also share wisdom and light.

Warwick Schiller ([01:41:52](#)):

Thank you for sharing that. My next question is not one of your questions. It's a question from me, and it's actually a request for you to read another of your poems.

Chelan Harkin ([01:42:00](#)):

Oh, cool. Yes, happily.

Warwick Schiller ([01:42:02](#)):

This is the one I shared that you commented on, and the poem is called I No Longer Pray. Can you read that one for us? Lovely.

Chelan Harkin ([01:42:13](#)):

Thank you so much. Thank you. Yeah. I no longer pray. I no longer pray now. I drink dark chocolate and let the moon sing to me. I no longer pray. I let my ancestors dance through my hips at the slightest provocation. I no longer pray. I go to the river and howl my ancient pain into the current. I no longer pray, I ache, I desire, I say yes to my longing. I no longer pray as I was taught, but as the stars crawl onto my lap, like soft animals at nighttime, and God tucks my hair behind my ears with the gentle fingers of her wind and a new intimacy is uncovered in everything, perhaps it's that I'm finally learning how to pray.

Warwick Schiller ([01:43:20](#)):

That is so good.

Chelan Harkin ([01:43:22](#)):

Oh, thank you so much. That

Warwick Schiller ([01:43:23](#)):

Is so good. There's so much in that. Thank you.

Chelan Harkin ([01:43:27](#)):

Thank you so much. Yeah, that was a big,

Warwick Schiller ([01:43:31](#)):

That one and the worst thing we ever did, kind of really, like I said, I've got this quite an interesting shamanism and indigenous wisdom, and I grew up going to a Catholic school. So in that other poem, the worst thing we ever did about having to crush your legs still and crush your legs, that's what I, Catholic Steel was to sit still and crush my legs. Totally.

Chelan Harkin ([01:44:02](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:44:04](#)):

Thank you for sharing.

Chelan Harkin ([01:44:07](#)):

Thank you.

Warwick Schiller ([01:44:09](#)):

And even we talked about working through shutdown, and

([01:44:14](#)):

I'm at the start of that journey, but I'm a lot further along than I was a few years ago, and I've never had rhythm. And something that's starting to happen is I am starting to crack the show a bit to, I've got a little bit of rhythm. And so the line, I let my ancestors dance through my hips at the slightest provocation. I'm not at the slightest provocation part yet, but the thing about ancestors and I let them dance through my hips. I had a lovely lady from North Dakota on the podcast last year, the year before maybe Jessica White plume. So she's a Lakota sue, and so she grew up on the reservation and then left the reservation, got a PhD in psychology, and came back and she's helping people on the reservation. But I was talking to her about cultural appropriation, and I'm not trying to appropriate someone's culture, but I'm really interested in that because, and she said, well, if you go far enough back, your ancestors were indigenous from somewhere. I'm mostly English and Irish, and if you go far enough back before civilization, they were those ancestors there. And I just love when you put that ancestors line

Chelan Harkin ([01:45:40](#)):

In there. Thank you.

Warwick Schiller ([01:45:43](#)):

Such a, it's such a good

Chelan Harkin ([01:45:46](#)):

Deal to redefine, be in a process of redefining the God of our past or some of the practices of our past that no longer feel like they suit serve our love, our heart, our light, our development. That can be a big interesting journey. So I try to, in my poetry, kind of create a path for a way to do that that doesn't throw it all out, and that can redefine rather than just completely dismantle. But it's been a big journey. It's been a big journey

Warwick Schiller ([01:46:26](#)):

Redefine rather than completely dismantled. Spoken like a poet right there.

Chelan Harkin ([01:46:31](#)):

Thanks.

Warwick Schiller ([01:46:34](#)):

So next question, what's the luckiest thing that ever happened to you?

Chelan Harkin ([01:46:38](#)):

The luckiest thing that's ever happened to me, I think, again, gosh, I'm just saying the same thing, but it had to be just the way that things went with this book. I mean, it was just so beyond wild. And Daniel Lewinsky coming into the scene and his introductions to all of these places and just doors opening like mad. I felt like I was on a magic carpet ride. I really did. Or another reference to a video game. Have you played the Mario game where you get the star power and you can just do anything. You could just, there are no obstacles anyway. You just become magic. That's how it felt. It was this bizarre time just that was, I would say, yeah, hands down. Hands down the luckiest period of time.

Warwick Schiller ([01:47:33](#)):

Do we have a sign that hangs in our house that says, luck is believing. You are lucky.

Chelan Harkin ([01:47:38](#)):

Oh, cool.

Warwick Schiller ([01:47:40](#)):

And it's kind of like you were open to all that stuff. Yeah. Yeah. Very cool. Okay. The question that I always love asking people, I'm glad you chose this one. What is your relationship like with fear?

Chelan Harkin ([01:48:00](#)):

Such a good question. I find, yeah, I have a lot of fear. I really have a lot of fear in me, and it comes up about all kinds kinds of things. Just being with people. I feel some fear sharing my truth. I feel some fear still. And I think it may be similarly to what you shared about your wife just coming into a place a bit more like, okay, I have this thing. How do I relate to it? Rather than, how do I try to not have it anymore? That's been a big thing for me. How do I work with it, I guess, and how do I talk about it so it's not an obstacle? Because it can actually be such a connection point. This question is so rich because so many can relate to it. There are so many things that we think we have to hide from each other that actually are such entry points into heartfelt bonding and beauty and rich belonging.

([01:49:07](#)):

And so more and more, I try to just talk about it, let it be, introduce it. Even sometimes in a talk that I'm giving my honored guest fear is here and just try to bring it in. And then I find that it has way less power over me. It doesn't drive my behaviors as much as just, it's another energy that gets put into the mix. But then I also, I'll say this too, I've also really been becoming more sensitive to motivations that are fear-based and motivations that are really kind of desire based, where I really joyfully, genuinely want to do something. And if it feels, I think I should do it really for no other reason than that, easier to just do it than to honor what I really want or don't want, or whatever it is. I've been listening to that more and trying to either not do those things as much that feel fear-based or try to work through those fears to see what's under them and why that's happening. But anyway, as I've been more listening to this path of not being inhibited by fear, but also not being motivated by that as the driving force, because sometimes we are motivated by fear. We can chase things to try to avoid a deeper pain or something like that. I've been in a process of trying to let go of more of my choices of being motivated in that way, if that makes sense.

Warwick Schiller ([01:50:51](#)):

Total sense. We have a Patreon group, and the Patreon group actually, if we get it out there ahead of time, far enough to let them know what guests we're having on, we have them where they can ask guests the question. So this question,

Chelan Harkin ([01:51:09](#)):

Oh, cool, how fun. Yay.

Warwick Schiller ([01:51:12](#)):

From Mark Gillies, and she says, I'm curious, I mean, you've covered this already because the questions about who your influences are, but she says, I'm curious who her influencers might be when I read that poem. So I think I must have shared, I no longer pray. I think that's what it was. So I'm curious who her influencers might be. When I read that poem, I thought of Wendell Berry's, the Contrarians of the Mad Farmer. I like this description of him and his work. Wendell Berry envisions a moral agriculture that transforms the farmer from the enemy of wilderness to its most devoted guardian. It sounds like the movement. And then she says, sounds like the movement you've been called to lead, which is what this podcast is, is. And so I think we've kind of covered who your influences are, but I wanted to read that out. I love that.

Chelan Harkin ([01:52:08](#)):

Thank you.

Warwick Schiller ([01:52:10](#)):

So I didn't even read that before we came on here, but just before we came on here, I was on Facebook and someone popped up on Facebook who is really into regenerative agriculture and a connection to the land. And I messaged that person and asked them would they like to be on the podcast before this podcast started? And that one, Wendell Berry envisions a moral agriculture that transforms the farmer from the enemy of wilderness to its most imported guardian. Have you ever heard of Wendell Berry?

Chelan Harkin ([01:52:45](#)):

I have, but I'm not very familiar with.

Warwick Schiller ([01:52:48](#)):

Okay. So yeah, the contrarian of the Mad Farmer. So do you have any other influences apart from the ones you've mentioned?

Chelan Harkin ([01:52:58](#)):

Well, I would say Khalil Gibran is a powerful influence for me as well. These dead poets, poetry and Khalil Jabon. I think his writing is so beautiful, so, oh, it just does something to me. I feel really inspired by him. And I'd also say Brene Brown is an inspiration just in how to live and how to open and just affirms the vulnerable way and the richness and the meaning that's there. And yeah, she's helped me so much to navigate the vulnerability hangover that term without having been empowered with that term. I don't think I would've gotten out of the gates with this process, that process of expanding and sharing ourselves, and we can have this burst. And then after that, after we've been more exposed and what we shared, just wanting to die, essentially curl up into fetal position, never be seen again, just like a reaction to exposure and to just know how normal that is. And thank God I was prepared for that because it's

been such a huge part of my process. So yeah, Brene's, Brene Brown's work has been really fundamental.

Warwick Schiller ([01:54:26](#)):

She is very influential for me heading down this path, really. I had someone tell me about her at a horse expo a number of years ago, and regular listeners would know this story, but I came home and got some of her books, and I was out on the tractor or something, or other than my earphones. I'm listening to her and I'm thinking, this woman's been in my head. And then five minutes later I'm like, wow, she's been in my wife's head too, and that's a totally different head than my head. But then she said, you cannot selectively suppress emotions, and if you suppress the lower ones, you automatically suppress the higher ones. And that hit me like a ton of bricks. I knew the lower emotions were suppressed, but I'd never actually considered could I experience more joy or happiness or any of those upper emotions. And that's kind of what led me down this rabbit hole that had been down for about seven years now. So it was just almost that line in that book. It was almost like an unveiling of what's possible or making you aware that something other than shut down and being in your head was possible. When you've always been that way, you don't know. You don't think of anything else being possible, or you just think, this is how I am, is how it's

Chelan Harkin ([01:55:45](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah. And isn't that wild? That's such a revolutionary statement that we can't selectively numb because we do. We numb and then we perform. I mean, my experience has been and numbing, and then there's the facade of joy and performative joy almost, because that's how we're told we're supposed to be, but there's not a really deep nourishing inner experience of it. Just that lockdown place. And then

Warwick Schiller ([01:56:17](#)):

Joy was all in. Joy was all in my head.

Chelan Harkin ([01:56:21](#)):

Totally, totally. And that's a long path,

Warwick Schiller ([01:56:26](#)):

Isn't it? And if you experience everything in your head, you don't know that it's possible to experience these energetic emotions in your body. Yeah,

Chelan Harkin ([01:56:39](#)):

Exactly. Yeah. And to actually begin to really feel love, the tone of love in our being as almost energy a tone rather than just a Yeah, because done a lot of performative love too. Whereas on the inside, I didn't know what was going on, but I was trying to be loving in the way I thought I should be, and I felt so, I felt so malnourished in that way. But it's a journey through the, I think it doesn't, Brene Brown have a book called Into the Wilderness or something? Into

Warwick Schiller ([01:57:20](#)):

The wilderness? Yes. It's really

Chelan Harkin ([01:57:21](#)):

Is. Oh God, it's going into the wilderness when we do start to make that plunge. And I have so much compassion now for why people seriously check out too a lot once you start getting into it.

Warwick Schiller ([01:57:38](#)):

Yeah. It's just two of those poems that you read, though I no longer pray. And the worst thing, both of those to me, not just hint at, but they do hint at getting out of your head and back into your body. Both of those kind of start pushing your thoughts in that direction. And both of them almost have a, let's say like a religious undertone to where it's almost like organized religion as it has kind of brainwashed you to think about things a certain way, whereas it's almost like saying Nature is God,

Chelan Harkin ([01:58:34](#)):

Or what I'm trying to say is that there's a deeper experience God than ideology, and there's incredible satisfaction and guidance and intimacy to be found in that. But in my experience, it has involved the vulnerable and empowering experience of really going into all that I had stored in my body and opening that up and connecting with this flow, flow of life again, bit by bit.

Warwick Schiller ([01:59:13](#)):

Yeah. Well, your poems are doing the thing, because the ones that you read out here, I felt them

Chelan Harkin ([01:59:23](#)):

Excellent.

Warwick Schiller ([01:59:24](#)):

I had had somatic experiences while you're reading them, so they're doing their job. If they can do the job on me, they can do the job on anybody. So tell me, how can people find your books?

Chelan Harkin ([01:59:42](#)):

Thank you so much for asking. So they're on Amazon, you can get 'em there, or you can buy them from my local bookstore. It's called W Bookstore, W A U C O M A Glaucoma Bookstore. It's this bookstore owned by this wonderful woman. She and I became friends. We were in this breastfeeding support group when we had our first kids and didn't know what we were doing. And she's a wonderful personage, and I signed those books, so if you want sign copy, you can get those there. And I love to stay connected with people too, so you can find me on Facebook. And I'm a pretty avid poster, and it's a pretty active, very, very beautiful space, and I'm so grateful for the connections that I have there. So I'd love to stay in touch with anyone interested.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:38](#)):

And Facebook is just Shalan Harken

Chelan Harkin ([02:00:42](#)):

Shalan Harken, yeah. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:44](#)):

Perfect. You know what, something you said right then just got me back to what I'm really interested in these days. You as a mother had to go to a breastfeeding support group. The way we evolved, we evolved in groups of people that it took the village to raise a child, and you wouldn't have had to go to a support group. You would've had that support. This is going back to this indigenous wisdom, indigenous ways of living the way we have. You ever read Sapiens by whatever that guy's name is?

Chelan Harkin ([02:01:18](#)):

Oh, but I've heard such good things about it,

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:22](#)):

And it's all about how we evolved, the way we evolved, and why Neanderthals had bigger brains than we did.

Chelan Harkin ([02:01:32](#)):

Oh, wow. Interesting.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:34](#)):

And all sorts of amazing things. Something else that was really interesting in it is we to see evolution of man. You see that the diagram, there's one here and then there's one there and there's one there and ends up this man, and it makes you think that this one turned into this one, which turned into this one, which turned to this one. But there are four species of humans alive at the same time.

Chelan Harkin ([02:02:03](#)):

Whoa, I didn't know that. Four.

Warwick Schiller ([02:02:06](#)):

Yes. Four. And they extracted, they found some remains somewhere. Anyway, they extracted the D N A, but they did some studies in, I think it was in 2010 that were quite controversial because it said Eurasian people from Europe had Neanderthal, d n A, and then there's another, like the Australian Aborigines, there was a, oh, I forget what their name was, homo. I forget what they were, but Australian aboriginals. And there were certain other groups had no Neal d n a, but they had this other D n A in it. Yeah. It's just fascinating. It's all about how we evolve to be the way we are and think about how much has changed in the last 10,000 years since agriculture and since we went from hunter gatherers. But just in the industrial revolution, let's go the last 500 years, how much has changed, or in the last 200 years, how much has changed for us and how much we no longer live the way we were supposed to live and why we have this mental health crisis because we are Oh,

Chelan Harkin ([02:03:24](#)):

Seriously isolated. We're not isolated

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:26](#)):

The way we're supposed to operate

Chelan Harkin ([02:03:27](#)):

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Isolated. Yes. Not at all. It's so painful. It's so painful how separated and isolated and disconnected we are. I feel that every day.

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:37](#)):

Yeah. So it's all interesting. You had to go to a breastfeeding support group.

Chelan Harkin ([02:03:42](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([02:03:43](#)):

You shouldn't have to go to, yeah,

Chelan Harkin ([02:03:46](#)):

Totally. I know as a mom, I think you gets hit in the face with that when you become a mom. It's just the deep need and desire and longing for community to gather around your kids, for them to be held in a circle of such love and community support and the lack of that can become so clear.

Warwick Schiller ([02:04:12](#)):

Yeah. And all of that is the subject for another podcast. But yeah, thank you so much for joining me today. It was just an absolute

Chelan Harkin ([02:04:20](#)):

Pleasure to thank you. So likewise. Likewise. Deep pleasure. Thank you so much.

Warwick Schiller ([02:04:27](#)):

And you guys at home, thanks so much for listening, and we'll catch you on the next episode of The Journey on podcast.

Speaker 1 ([02:04:35](#)):

Thanks for being a part of the journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick has over 850 full length training videos on his online video library@videos.warwickschiller.com. Be sure to follow Warwick on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to see his latest training advice and insights.