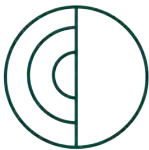


Episode 5 Transcript - Rooted Wisdom



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0:01:03.9 Aileen: Hi, there, I'm Aileen. Welcome to my kitchen. I just finished steeping a big steaming mug of salabat. Salabat is a fresh ginger tea. I blended mine with some honey and lemon. When I drink salabat, I remember my mother preparing this for me whenever I had a sore throat or was recovering from a cold or in chilly winter days. It can be left as is or sweetened, but the key is to have really good strong ginger. It's so delicious and simple and you can drink it any time. It's the soothing heat of this recipe that makes me think about healing, and that brings me to the topic that we're gonna learn about today: The legacy relationship between art and medicine. I've brought together two leaders who have deep embodied wisdom on this topic. Rowen White is a seed keeper and farmer who works to cultivate a culture of belonging in our food system. Geeta Maker-Clark is an activist physician and healer working to radically re-imagine what it means to be healthy. Settle in and enjoy the conversation.

[music]

0:02:11.5 Aileen: We're in for a conversation today. Geeta and Rowen, you both wear so many different hats in different settings, and today, we're here to talk about this conversation around weaving together this legacy of art and medicine. And this conversation between you two, I feel like it would just provide so much truth and so much firsthand witness to how this weaving happens and what it can look like. So before we jump into that, I want to center your minds with this question: So much of life, as you know, lives in the details, and rhythm, sights, sounds, and smells. How do the two of you start your day? Geeta, you wanna kick us off?

0:02:51.4 Geeta: Yeah, so for quite some years now, I've started my day with a smile. When my eyes open and I become conscious of my awakesness, I make my face into a smile to send a message to my cells that we're alive and that we're going to have this blank canvas of a good day in front of us. And then after that, I just say a very quick small prayer that's gratitude for being alive. It's really just a moment of grace and gratitude. Usually, after a cup of hot water, I'll go and pray for sometimes a few minutes or longer, if I have that, and get the day moving, usually, with getting set up to see patients or whatever the family's needs are.

0:03:37.6 Aileen: Rowen, how's your day begin?

0:03:39.0 Rowen: Well, I'm a dreamer, so I usually reach right for my journal to jot down the images or the feelings, the viscera of being in dream time. I'm really grateful for honing that practice over the years because I feel like even if it's a crazy dream or it's just a combination of interesting landscapes and humans, I always feel like there's things that bubble up later when I re-read them and think, "Oh, I was working through that," or, "This was coming through." So that's a big practice. And I think it sort of depends on whether it's a work day or rest day. We have our seed kiva here on the land, which is our seed bank and kind of a seed temple. So I oftentimes walk out there for a little quiet time away from family and kids. But sometimes, it's like grab my planner and make sure I got my top three things I need to do that day and just really get myself in line for being prepared for the day. If I have enough time, I love to do morning pages, which is just sort of like free write of just getting it all off so we can start the day in a good way. And I'm a morning person, so I'm usually the first up. And as a mom, yeah, just having that quiet time where I can just, I guess I always say, put my head on straight for the day.

0:04:52.8 Aileen: Something I'm noticing from both of you is coming to this place of mindfulness,

whether that's reaching for a journal or taking that time to settle in. And that brings me to this question: What memories come to mind for you when you hear nourishment? And how do you carry that forward?

0:05:08.8 Geeta: That's a beautiful question. I love that word, "nourishment" so much. It speaks to something so spiritual and so deeply comfortable and sort of this multi-layered, multi-dimensional sense of deep wellness that comes from that word, whether it's food or nourishing relationships. But when I think about memories around nourishment, I think back to times where I really have felt the most comforted and cared for. And I think so much of that has come from the love with which that nourishment was offered.

0:05:46.0 Geeta: After college, I had moved to India for several months to start a mobile health clinic, and I ended up being through a non-government organization that was based on a farm. And I ended up spending a lot of my time cooking for the farm workers and the staff of the non-profit. And that memory of feeding hundreds of people, really, lunch and dinner, and cooking entirely with the produce that we had harvested on the farm with many other women in the kitchen, just laughing, but also working very fast and hard to get pounds of rice cooked, and loads of squash and tomatoes and egg plants, and all these spices, and the okra, and everything sauteed together, and then go down the rows of just pouring food onto these banana leaves for everyone. I think about that visceral memory of serving others and serving people who are doing such good work, but also, the togetherness and love and laughter with which we created that food. That memory was the embodiment of what I still hold so near and dear about that feeling of nourishment, of just being loved, and cared for, and well-fed, and having it be fresh and of the earth.

0:07:01.5 Rowen: Geeta, you said it so beautifully, which is that nourishment is so much more than just having a belly full. It's the whole holistic feeling of the way in which we care deeply for one another. And I come from a long line of women who come from big families who never can cook just a small little meal for two or three, but always cook for the masses. I grew up having my mom drag me around to all these community events where food was always this anchoring grounding point. There was always a meal. And then I raised my kids the same way, which is that them growing up in the indigenous food sovereignty movement. Whenever we'd go to a conference or a gathering where I feel like everybody is always saying, "I really just come here 'cause the food is so good." But why is the food so good? Obviously, it's the ingredients.

0:07:46.9 Rowen: But there's something there which, Geeta, you spoke to so beautifully, which is that part of the agreement that these traditional foods have with us as humans is that they bring us together. And all of the laughter and the storytelling that happens behind the scenes with all the women gossiping back in the kitchen, and the collective energy, that comes into the food, and that's a huge part of our value system in the native kitchen. We keep a good mind and we keep that good presence as we prepare our food. And so I just love knowing that in the same way that my mom ensured that we were in places where we ate really good food cooked by aunts and grandmas, that my kids, too, the food memories that they're gonna carry and bring into their adulthood and bring into their endeavors in their life are gonna be so profound because you always say it's written on the heart. Those flavors, the nourishment is written deep in there.

0:08:37.8 Aileen: So as you've been reflecting on family lineages and experiences that have shaped you, what are some of the most important lessons that you've learned from elders, from within your

cultural lines or ancestral connections that you feel are shaping and guiding your work today?

0:08:53.7 Rowen: You know, I've been walking this, what I call the seed path, the path with reclaiming and restoring relationships with ancestral foods for over 25 years now. And the elders who were generous and benevolent enough in the beginning of my journey to entrust me with seeds and knowledge and cultural memory, they always reminded me that the garden and the earth were growing us as humans, right? They were helping us to find our way home. We, as indigenous peoples, we live in a post-apocalyptic reality right now. We had everything completely upended and overturned because of colonization. And so these foods and seeds and that visceral memory, that blood memory that foods awaken and rehydrate is, what's gonna help us to not necessarily go backwards to what was, but to be able to see the future of what's possible for landscapes of nourishment for our people. And so our sovereignty and liberation as a people, as indigenous peoples was inherently and inextricably connected to the restoration and revitalization of our food.

0:09:55.6 Rowen: In addition to that, cultural restoration had to be an integral part of bringing back those traditional foodways. If we were to realize this dignified resurgence that our ancestors had prayed for, and that we, as living descendants, pray and hope for, is that we can't forget that there's this cultural element to the revitalization of our foods, and the language and stories, and all those rich cosmologies that remind us of who we are. Those traditional foods that our ancestors a long time ago came into agreement with, when we take them in to our bodies, they actually go into our bodies and inform us in ways that we can't think into. We can't decolonize or undo harm in a cerebral or an intellectual way. It's actually very much about how the body remembers how to be resilient, how to be vibrant, how to be living in a way that's culturally sane. And so those foods are our messengers and they go inside our bodies.

0:10:51.4 Rowen: And so I've seen it, I've seen elders and community members move through significant intergenerational trauma through the visceral multisensory experience of growing food, preparing food, cooking food, sharing that food. And I think my elders and people who've mentored me along the way just reminded me that in order to move in that direction, we can't compartmentalize and reduce our actions to being a seed keeper, a farmer, or a chef, that they have to be all holistically woven together as we move towards that vision of what the future of nourishment can be.

0:11:24.1 Geeta: It's so beautiful to hear your stories around your elders. My parents came from India to the states, and everyone else stayed behind. Our whole community and culture was having to be held dearly and carefully by this little small family that half of whom were born here in this country. My brother and I, and we're working hard to assimilate, really, into the culture of living in whiteness. So when I think about the depth and richness of what you're describing, I realized that so much of the wisdom that I was able to get from my family really came directly from my parents. And the fortitude and resilience that it really took for them to hold tightly and carefully, and with such tender preservation to make sure that we continued the rituals and the foods and the traditions that they had held so dear when there was really no one else around us to hold those things up. So when I think about what I learned from them, was that you need to make time to be together with your family and with your food.

0:12:36.7 Geeta: So much of what Indian women and Indian aunties do is create experience around food as a place of comfort and as a place of love, but also as a way of healing. So much of the

medicine that's offered is offered through spice, through herbs, through food. Those memories that I have of trying to grow up in a culture that very much did not look at food that way, and also a medical system where I was being trained that did not value food in that deep healing sensibility, it just is poignant to think about the responsibility that's really put upon immigrants who come here to hold those things and to pass them on.

0:13:20.2 Rowen: Yeah. Just to add to that, Geeta, is that in a lot of ways, there's a similarity even with those of us who are indigenous to this very land because of the impacts of assimilation and acculturation that happened. And so for me, I'm grateful to those elders who, I think against all odds, recognize that there were seeds and stories and ceremonies that needed to go underground during a time of great cultural upheaval here. And my parents and grandparents and even great-grandparents struggled with keeping them alive even in our household. And so in some ways, as a young woman, coming back around to seeking out those elders and those people who kept the seeds of that cultural memory alive, when many of us, as indigenous peoples, couldn't do that because up until 1979, it was illegal to do a lot of those things. So I agree that I think there's the fortitude of those who, against all odds, like your parents keeping the seeds of those things alive when the forces of whiteness and assimilation are so strong. There's a violence there, you know?

0:14:27.3 Aileen: Thinking about even just the roles that both of you play as seed keeper and as physician, and a number of other community hats that you're wearing, what you're sharing about literal seeds that hold memory, as well as seeds of practice and memory; in the work that you're doing and that you're part of and you're seeing, what does it mean if we had a values-based food system?

0:14:48.5 Rowen: Even though we are all indigenous to Turtle Island, each community has its individual values and unique cultural expression. But there is an underlying sense of values that really crosses many of these different tribal communities. We talk a lot about what does it mean to push back against the exploitative and extractive, and how do we create an embodied movement that, in all actions, pledges that we will not invest in economic systems or political systems that actively harm what we love. Because we do really approach our community movement work in a way that says that we carry our communities in the same way that we carry our children, right? We are relatives of that land, we are descendants of that land. We're actually lineal descendants of the foods and seeds that we eat. They're actually embedded in these beautiful ways into our cosmologies and into our ceremonies. And in some ways, I think the most compelling English word that could encapsulate an understanding of it is this concept of kincentric, like K-I-N, kincentric foodways. So we've really been working in community to flesh that out and to really speak into what is a relational kincentric food system or landscape of nourishment look like.

0:16:01.6 Rowen: And I actually cringe when I hear the word "food system" because I think that it's so sterile. It feels so reductionist. And that's where I am inviting our community all the time to think about what are the ways in which we can speak about food that, at its heart, has a culture and belonging and has a culture of care. And so that's, I think, a big part of the value-based landscape of nourishment, where people understand who they are in the mycelial web of life. They understand that there's inherent responsibility to not only ensure that we, as humans, are fed and nourished and sheltered and clothed, but that we're in right relationship with all of our other relatives. I really think it's all about moving beyond this era of Anthropocene and moving into this more symbiotic relationality again. And I think a lot of the times, because we've been so colonized and deeply

conditioned by extracted capitalism and hierarchical leadership, that oftentimes, we default into solutions that are actually just a mash-up of harmful systems that don't actually help us in the long run.

0:17:04.0 Geeta: Yeah, yes. Ditto, Rowen. I think from where I sit, another somewhat archaic term of a healthcare system, which is another term that I also really buck up against because whenever we start talking about these intrinsic human primal aspects of our being, like our food and our health, and we try to fit that ethereal power into a system, we would start running into problems right at that moment. And it's not to say there shouldn't be strategy to be able to take care of the billions of people on the planet now 'cause we do.

0:17:49.8 Geeta: But to your question around a values-based system, I think the two terms almost don't belong in the same sentence, to have value in a system. I think that we need to have a whole different framework that can hold a devotion to land and farming and farmers and seeds and soil. And also understand the relationship that this plays into community-building and equity, and being in good relationship with one's own health. And in healthcare, I think the system itself has become so gangly that it's not even understood by the people who are working within it. We can't even figure out the system that we've created and how to make it work for the people it was created for. And so there needs to be a more fluid, and to use your term, Rowen, a mycelial sensibility. The minute we start systematizing, we just separate. And there was a time in all of our ancestral paths where these things were all combined and they worked quite beautifully. But power struggles and colonization often have fooled us into believing that these are all separate entities.

[music]

0:19:11.5 Mark: Peace, y'all. I'm Mark Winston Griffith, an alumnus of the Castanea Fellowship Program. As the Executive Director of the Brooklyn Movement Center, I was looking for a community of peers who also saw a world where food truly became a source of health, equity and well-being for all. Castanea brought those very leaders together and invested in us to make it happen. Since then, I've collaborated with a cadre of Castanea fellows on a national initiative to hold philanthropy accountable, and have tapped into game-changing support for my food systems work here in Central Brooklyn. So I'm looking forward to what's ahead in my professional, as well as my personal journey, along with following impact I know my friends from the program will continue to make. Learn how Castanea can support your journey. Visit castaneafellowship.org. That's C-A-S-T-A-N-E-A-F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P.org.

[music]

0:20:09.9 Aileen: You've both spoken to this illusion of separateness. From your vantage points, how do you see the possibility of bridging stronger relationships between different roles so we could have a more just food system or food kinship network? How do you see those collaborations being made more possible?

0:20:28.4 Rowen: We're at a point in time in the movement, especially for many black indigenous bodies of culture, we're moving out of the immensity of the trauma and moving into a place where we're resourced to be able to think about what does it mean to not just be in survival mode ourselves, and to begin to do that bridging work and that connectivity work. I think we're also at a

time in history where we're actually experiencing a leadership crisis. And the reason why I say that in this particular instance is because I think that we need a more facilitative type of leadership that can actually take a step back and begin to weave those pathways and to begin to restore that mycelial network that once existed, but again, because of the impacts of colonization in all of the ways in which it shows up and deadens those pathways and gets us into a more reductionist point of view, is that when we have brilliant leaders that are hosts, as opposed to heroes, and can host and facilitate intercultural conversations, interdisciplinary spaces where we begin to practice strengthening that connective tissue between the arts and horticulture, or spirituality and devotional reverent practice.

0:21:44.4 Rowen: And as Geeta was speaking about, these were all deeply, deeply interwoven aspects of intact culture and cultural sanity. And I get really excited because I love thinking in all the ways in which we can facilitate unexpected conversations between people in that spectrum of seed keepers talking with chefs, and farmers talking with doctors, and engineers talking with medicine people. There's all these ways in which we can strengthen that connective tissue, but it does require us to cultivate leadership where it's more about strengthening the skills to be able to host conversations where we see the common ground alongside one another. We live in a time where a culture of divisiveness and separation and difference has been supporting this very extractive and exploitative system, and so I get really excited.

0:22:36.8 Rowen: One growing edge of my work is to work with emerging leaders and teach them how to hold space and nurture them for seeing what is on the horizon and how we can cultivate that more holistic way of living again. I think the biggest epidemic of our time is pathological individualism. It's just so many people thinking that we're all doing it ourselves. And I think in the United States, especially, it's so deeply entrenched in American culture. And so I think all of us here in the circle here are working in radical ways to restore that connective tissue of interdependence, and that there's a whole breadth and range of different humans getting together who may not have otherwise had the chance to be able to circle up and help teach one another.

0:23:22.8 Geeta: Yeah, I'm so with you on that. That reflection of that pathological individuality, how it shows up in the physical body is really profound. I think that our mental health has suffered so deeply around this idea that we are supposed to be thriving through our own individual efforts, which is a true impossibility. We are herd animals. It's truly impossible for us to succeed completely on our own, and yet, it's a strong value in our country and in all of our systems that we've created, that your health and your education and your income and your way of being in the world should be something you achieve through your own effort. That sets us up for divisiveness and separation because we know there's not equitable resources for all of us to even be able to achieve those things individually or even in community, at times. I see people who are really physically sick. I think this interdisciplinary work, this cross-pollination that all of us here have experienced in our work is so rich. It's so uplifting and empowering in a way that staying within our own communities, whether professional or even just within our own cultural communities cannot quite provide until we step out and start doing that cross-pollination work.

0:24:45.5 Geeta: And yesterday, I was teaching my Food is Power class, and I was able to come in with my medical students and go to the south side of Chicago and teach with and beside middle schoolers around how to think about food as medicine and food as power. And reminding them that they are experts of their food, that they are our food experts, and they are teaching us and we are

teaching them. For me, it's just very, very powerful to see medical students and middle schoolers together in an interaction that does not involve a child being sick and coming to the doctor, or a medical student going out into the community to provide free care. They are working truly together and seeing each other as people working towards the same thing, and in this case, this is just creating a meal together. And also chatting about, "Okay, how did you get on the path to become a doctor? How did you get to medical school?"

0:25:40.8 Geeta: It's in those conversations, it is in those brilliant sparkling moments of actual face-to-face community connection and interchange that we can realize that the hierarchies built around us to make certain people feel more powerful than others are, you know, they're creations, they're imaginary. I just feel so moved when I see these students of different ages and different spaces working together because I don't know what impact they're having on each other, but I know that they are. And working with youth, I think, is one of the most powerful things that we can do to start creating a different vision of what's possible because they can see it.

0:26:24.8 Aileen: Knowing that both of you are so involved with cultivating leadership, mentorship spaces, holding space, I wanted to ask you: How do you encourage young folks who might be emerging into their political consciousness right now? You know, as Rowen, as you had shared, this is just such an exceptional time that we're in as a society, as humanity. And Geeta, you were sharing about just this depth that can happen when you bring people together in a room. What have been some things that you've wanted to impart or encourage the young folks who are navigating where to go to next, if they want to have a connection to food work?

0:26:58.9 Rowen: Yeah, it's a great question. You know, when I came into this work, I was 17, and the movement that is now in 2021, in the late '90s, was not what it was. There was a lot of elders who were shocked that somebody like myself was interested in pursuing this as my life's work. But in the last 20, 25 years, we've seen a significant culture shift, and I think that is because many of the foresighted elders and leaders of the movement recognized that we cannot build a movement that doesn't have all of the generations involved, that this is inherently important that we bridge the generations. I'm raising teens now, and I'm learning a lot from a practice of being a parent of teenagers in recognizing what incredible leaders that we have right amidst us.

0:27:49.6 Rowen: Somebody said to me recently, which I was profoundly impacted, was: If you're over 40 and you don't have a mentor who's under 25, that you're missing out on a significant cultural shifts that can happen because these young people are coming in, wired, in a way that can create significant culture change on the horizon. Even though we do have elders and mentors who are 60 plus, we can't forget that we have to look to those young ones because they have this radical imagination that we can tap into as we dream into the future. And there's also an aspect of young people and teenagers, which they are naturally bucking up against the system. And if we can make the movement seductive, in a way, to teenagers to really push that resistance and move towards liberation, I think we can harness that radical energy and that imagination. And that's what I've been really loving, seeing in our indigenous food sovereignty movement, is the young people coming in with a fire, having inherited an extremely broken system and society, and we give them the tools to be able to transform that rage and sadness and grief and anger into a more beautiful and abundant and nourishing future. And we say, "You have a place here. In fact, you have a really significant role in this movement," and we empower it and amplify and uplift them in that way.

0:29:12.1 Geeta: I'm absolutely with you on that. I feel so blessed to work with college students and medical students who I feel are growing into a future that they can see, but just by way of me being where I am in my life, I can't at this moment. It's astounding, really, to realize the power that our youth have to make significant change much faster than we have been able to or that our elders have been able to. And so I do think it's quite a blessing, but I also feel like I'm taking careful care of cocoons that are filled with imaginal cells that have turned to goo, and are in between the caterpillar and the butterfly. They're just in that metamorphic goo of brilliance and wisdom, and also, that we can see beyond what comes next after that step, and that we can shepherd and steward our youth into their own brilliance without holding over them a constricted and restricted view of what's possible. But as a minority voice in the system, in terms of talking about bringing food and nutrition to the topmost tier of what's important in health, to convey that this is a necessary part of their education if they're going to take care of people and people's health, there are ways in which I think each of us have something that light us up that we're so passionate about, and that's where we can transmit our light.

0:30:44.8 Rowen: Yeah, I agree, Geeta. It's interesting 'cause the Gen Z generation, even my kids are showing me this amazing Black Forager on TikTok who teaches...

0:30:53.7 Geeta: Oh, my God! Yes!

0:30:56.5 Rowen: Teaches about how...

0:30:56.7 Geeta: I just saw her, too!

0:30:58.9 Rowen: She's so amazing!

0:31:00.4 Aileen: She's cool.

0:31:00.6 Rowen: And I always think about something going viral. We actually talked about it in our household, that something going fungal like mycelial, like how can we these... How can we change the metaphor, especially after COVID-19?

0:31:12.2 Aileen: Yeah.

0:31:12.7 Geeta: Yeah, right?

0:31:13.9 Aileen: Oh, yes.

0:31:14.1 Rowen: Maybe we can learn how to do that metaphor, right? [chuckle]

0:31:15.7 Aileen: Yeah.

0:31:16.7 Geeta: Right.

0:31:16.8 Rowen: But yeah, it's culture work. It's deep culture work for us to be able to find humor and find the joy and pleasure in all these different ways. And so I think they have their finger on the pulse of some tools that blend old and new to be able to help us raise the consciousness around the

importance of our connectivity and relationship to the earth and to plants and to food and to medicine and all of these things.

0:31:41.8 Geeta: Yes.

0:31:42.6 Rowen: Yeah, it's really inspiring, deeply inspiring.

0:31:45.8 Geeta: It is. It's so fun. That's the one thing that I'm like, "Wow!" I feel like I'm so serious compared to some of the way that young people are presenting the same work in these really enlivened, beautiful, fun and super short snippets that are easily digestible and totally seductive and engaging to people," and I think that's brilliant. I think we are of a sort of swath of a generation that felt like you had to go really deep and really long for really extensive periods of time to be able to create expertise. And they're showing us something different. And there's a part of me that wants to say, "No, that isn't how you build expertise in TikToks." You know, they're too short and they're too produced. But I'm watching through my teens and through my medical students how much new information they're able to take in that way, and then decide where they wanna go deep. And that is brilliant to me. That's the key to learning.

0:32:44.9 Rowen: It's totally leaning.

0:32:46.4 Geeta: Yeah.

0:32:47.1 Rowen: Yeah, and it's actually generating the capacity for us to change narrative; the role of narrative, and the role of story, and the role of being able to create a platform where everyday voices can be uplifted. We can see ourselves in that young woman who's finding food right outside of her doorstep and learning about the plants that are right in her midst. And young people can identify and see themselves in her. It's amazing. So what are the ways in which we are creating pleasure practices in our work that really, again, bring in that multisensory joy into our work? And I'm continually inspired and amazed by the young folks' ability to do that.

0:33:28.8 Geeta: Power to the youth.

[chuckle]

0:33:30.8 Aileen: This is so incredibly juicy. And we're coming to the end of this conversation, but I just want to ask any advice or encouragement from the both of you on one simple thing that you think anyone can do that can make a huge difference in their own homes or on local communities.

0:33:47.8 Rowen: I've apprenticed myself to seeds, and I see that they are these intimate immensities. They're so small, but they're so amazing and magnificent, and create ripples beyond their little bodies. And what I like to invite folks who are listening is to remember that each and every one of us descend from people, maybe even just a generation or two removed from people who had a deep storied relationship with plants and land and the Earth. We have the capacity, through joyful pleasure practices, of reconnecting with seeds that perhaps were ancestral to our people, that can help rehydrate and re-enliven and restore a sense of connection and identity to the nourishment that passes in our body. And my body of work called Seed Seva, which is getting people to apprentice themselves to the life cycles all around us, we always begin with people just

choosing one food that perhaps was a food that fed their ancestors, which is actually what got me onto this path of being a seed keeper myself, was asking myself that question and, what responsibility do I have to be one link in the stewardship chain? And so connecting with an ancestral food is a really deep and powerful way of bringing it into something real and visceral in your own life.

0:35:05.8 Rowen: Also, another aspect of that is connecting to the indigenous peoples upon whose land that you reside. Many of us are very aware in the social justice movement of land acknowledgements. But take it one step further and begin to build relationships with those peoples in the way in which you can leverage resources, perhaps passing the mic, and centering and amplifying their thought leadership. Take land acknowledgements, indigenous land acknowledgements that step further and begin to build those reciprocal relationships with the people whose land you reside upon.

0:35:39.8 Geeta: That's powerful, Rowen. You know, a lot of my work really revolves around the idea of what medicine really is, what it really means to us as humans, and what it's meant to us over generations and over epochs of time. And that word, "medicine" includes so much that we can access every day and in every way. There's food that is medicine, and there are plants that we know are strong medicine. All plants have medicinal qualities that can be discovered by any individual. If you ask some questions or just take some time to look back into your own family story, finding what those medicines are and what they have meant to you and your culture over time is one way to easily and quickly and affordably access medicine that is all around us. I ask people to take back that word, "medicine", and to really find the medicines in your own life that hold great potential for healing for you. In my life, personally, I really feel like love is the strongest medicine that holds me up every day. And it is possible for us to be loving every day. It is possible for us to show love through random acts of love and kindness to the people you love and people you don't know. And using your influence and your talent, whatever it may be, to help people around you; this transformational daily practice can change communities and ultimately change the world.

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