

Podcast_Chetsisk

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SPEAKERS

Chet Sisk, Omkari Williams



Chet Sisk 00:20

Hello, and welcome to Stepping Into Truth, the podcast where we talk about race, gender and social justice. This is another episode that I recorded during the COVID-19 pandemic. And it's the final episode of season two. Today's conversation feels like the perfect way to close out the current season, because I'm talking with someone whose job title I just love. And it's a title that all of us are thinking about. His title is futurist. Chet W. Sisk is one of the world's most in demand futurists. He's been talking about a shift that would change everything for the past 12 years. That moment is here. His work with companies like Visa, BlueCross/BlueShield, the city of Denver, and activist organizations around the world give some experience and insight on how to thrive and succeed in the new normal. His skill is making a big conversation small without dumbing it down. There are opportunities in the new normal, and Chet helps you and your organization identify them. So I'm really, really delighted to have Chet on the podcast.



Omkari Williams 01:33

So Chet, thank you so much for being with me today. I'm really looking forward to this conversation.



Chet Sisk 01:39

It is my pleasure to be here, and I am looking forward to it as well. It's, it's that time where there are a lot of questions that are being asked, and I it's a season for me, I can tell you that. So, it's great.



Chet Sisk 01:54

I am sure it is, and actually that's sort of the perfect way to start this which is one of the things that made me so want to talk to you was just your job title. And the idea of someone's job title being, "futurist" is so intriguing to me, especially now when we know what the past looks like. But wondering about the future in a very different way for most people is very present right now. So I'd love for you to start us off by telling us what it means to you to be a futurist.



Chet Sisk 02:30

Absolutely. Actually, futurism it's, it's kind of a boring job in the sense that, you know, most people think about a futurist, they figured that you can look into a crystal ball and tell them will I be happy? Will I be rich? Will I be pretty che sera sera? I am not that guy. I'm not the guy that looks in the crystal balls or reads Tarot. That's not a futurist. That's something else. A futurist, really is a trend analyst. So all we do is look at trends and analyze data over time, extended periods of time. Now me, I used to be a journalist, a television news and radio news journalist. And we used to follow news stories within the cycle. And then you know, usually 24 to 48 hours and then that that story is gone, because people's attention is just not that great. So people, it's usually gone. But a futurist is a person who follows a story way outside of the usual news cycle, years, just to see how those news stories will have an impact further down the road. So it's a different kind of gig, it's you have to have a lot of patience. But when you get a chance to present sometimes you go into overload because you're trying to do all this data dump on an audience. And you can't, you can't overwhelm them with data and facts and statistics, you got to break it down so that people can wrap their arms around it.



Chet Sisk 03:51

That's so cool, though. I mean, the idea of just looking far out into the future, rather than the really close in view that most of us take. I mean, well, you know, when someone says, imagine your life five years down the road, for most people that is almost impossible to do, it feels so very far away. And yet, in retrospect, five years goes by and we're like, oh, well, that was fast. What the heck happened here? So, yeah...



Chet Sisk 04:19

That is so true. Yeah, in a sense, what a true futurist job is to help the that that extra brain for most of us who work inside of really small timeframes, you know, a year, maybe six months, and but we're supposed to be the ones who sit back and say, "This is what it looks like five years from now, I know you don't have time to look at the data. But here's what we're seeing. So you might want to prepare yourself accordingly". So it's not, and I can appreciate the kind of world that most people live in. It really is quite short term. And it's becoming even more short term, so it's becoming even tougher for someone like me to get an audience, but at this particular time, I'm getting a lot of audiences and a lot of opportunities.



Chet Sisk 05:07

I would hope so because I actually think that one of the things that's happening right now is we are being presented with the realities of a short timeframe. And how that actually doesn't work out that well for us in a longer run. I mean, none of us is planning on being dead in six months. So looking further into the future can only be beneficial. I mean, obviously, we can't figure out exactly what's going to happen. But when people like you can look at trends, it gives us information and we can make better decisions going forward with that information.



Chet Sisk 05:44

That's exactly right. And our job is not necessarily to be 100% accurate, because I always say trends are decisions that people make. And so that means people can change their minds and they often do, but but our real strength is in giving the big picture.



Omkari Williams 06:00

Yeah!



Chet Sisk 06:01

Yeah. So I want people to understand that a futurist isn't the person that says this is what's going to happen. point for point. A futurist is the point person that says, "This is what we see. And you'll have to make a decision based around this data".



Omkari Williams 06:14

Cool.



Chet Sisk 06:15

So, yeah, it's different. A, you know, you have to define that stuff earlier. Otherwise, people say, "Hey, didn't you predict?" I'm not a predictor, I'm just the, I make suggestions.



Chet Sisk 06:26

Yeah. So you put your crystal ball away in and are instead just using data? Oh, well, what are you going to do? So, as we're having this conversation, we are in the middle of a global pandemic. And something you wrote, really struck me, and that is you wrote about the black swan. And you wrote about COVID-19 as a Black Swan event. And I would love for you to define what a Black Swan event is, and then talk about how we can use it to our advantage.



Chet Sisk 07:00

Absolutely and let me just say that I'll put Black Swan with an asterix by it. Now for those who may not remember there was a book that was out years ago called the Black Swan and, and the author did a really good job of making sure that we understood that Black Swans are like if you see a group of swans and they're all on the lake, they're usually white swans. And then every once in a while, something out of the blue occurs, a black swan will rise in the middle of all of those white swans. Now, the key is that you weren't expecting that black swan because your mind was always geared to swans being white, right?



Omkari Williams 07:38

Mm hmm.



Chet Sisk 07:39

So, it is an unexpected event. So in a sense, that's exactly what COVID-19 is. And I say in a sense, only because of the fact that there were predictions that something like this would occur for years. It's just when it occurred, I think just caught us all off guard and definitely caught our federal government off guard even more so. And so they are events that not only are unexpected, but they also change the landscape. They change everything. They're not just the one offs, they actually affect our lives as we know them, such as the

Internet. The Internet was not planned, it was not something that somebody said, Oh, I'm going to go out and build the internet. It doesn't happen like that. It was something that was created from something else and became the internet, but it has changed our lives. So that's what Black Swan events are, something unexpected that really can change society, can change our personal lives, and change our futures. And so the COVID-19 event, as I mentioned before, there were a lot of predictions around something like this occurring mostly because of the fact that we had SARS and H1N1 before so we knew that that potential existed. It was just a matter of when and where.



Chet Sisk 09:03

Yeah. And that's something that I think, you know, we know that there have been plans for pandemics. So obviously people were thinking ahead. And yet it's always a surprise when it actually happens. I think that's one of the interesting things about humans is just the way we plan for something. And yet when it happens, we're still kind of surprised.



Chet Sisk 09:24

still scratching our heads Like what happened?



Omkari Williams 09:27

I actually think that's kind of charming about us, but you know, okay,



Chet Sisk 09:30

Yeah, there is a childlike charm about it all.



Omkari Williams 09:34

There is!



Chet Sisk 09:35

Yeah, and I think that that means that we're not set, you know.



Omkari Williams 09:40

Yes.



Chet Sisk 09:41

You know, locked in, the element of surprise is always a powerful one. It could stem creativity and innovation and all of those things. So it's a good thing.



Chet Sisk 09:52

Yeah, I agree. I like it. I like it. So something else that you've written about that I found interesting is you talk about caretaking leadership versus visionary leadership, and how these perspectives are on the opposite ends of the spectrum. And to me, it's really fascinating to think about how different the results of thinking in each of these ways are. And I had truthfully never really thought about it before. So if you want to give me a little more education on that, I would be thrilled.



Chet Sisk 10:28

Absolutely. First, let me just be clear about caretaking leadership, which is, there are a lot of people that will come in front of us and they'll say, "You know, I'm here for change". But not really, what they're really talking about is kind of changing around the edges, that they'll do a little of this and a little of that, but they basically want to maintain the status quo. Now you might hear me in this particular conversation with you that you might hear me lean into the whole idea that I think status quo is troubled. And I think that those who advocate for it, this is not their time. And you actually really do need visionary leadership in a time of change, status quo is, is just asking for problems. So there are those who are part of that, that status quo that's stationary kind of, let's do the best we can with what we got. But there is a time when you need someone to say, what's on the other side of this? How do we get there? What are the tools that are available? What are the creative ideas, what's the innovation necessary for this? And times of great change of great distress, actually, they don't necessarily have to be times of change. It could be a great distress, like if you're living in our society, and you have climate crisis knocking at your door, you have income inequality, that's worse than it was in the 1930s. When you have systemic racism and ongoing racism and all of these problems, all those things. And I say this, and I have a new book coming out called, You In the New Norm. And what I mentioned in it is that is that when you see a number of things that are happening, not just here in the States, but around the world, that are happening, that are distressing, it's not necessarily like the end of the world, as people would say. It's an evolutionary step. All of these things are saying you have to do something else. And this is that evolutionary step. Stationary leaders are not the people to make that step. Visionary leaders are able

to put all of that data together and are able to say, this is the next move we're going to have to make in order to navigate this, not just to thrive in it, but to succeed in this next step. And everybody can't see that, especially the stationary status quo, folks. They just can't and even more so sometimes. They are financially encouraged not to see it.



Omkari Williams 13:01

Yeah.



Chet Sisk 13:02

Money that wants to keep things going in their illusionary state. So..



Omkari Williams 13:07

I was just about to go there. I was just about to say, so maybe they don't want to see these things. And I think that actually one of the things I've been noticing in this time of so much upheaval, is there are those people who you see protesting in Statehouses or on the street or wherever. And I keep feeling like, don't they understand that, yes, this is really challenging for everyone? And for some people far more than for others. But to just sort of dismiss what you're being told by scientists is not smart. You know, if people are struggling economically, which I completely understand, maybe the answer isn't to get mad at scientists. Maybe the answer is to get mad at your political leaders who are not making the accommodations that are necessary in this time. You know, instead of bailing out Boeing, how about you put money in the pockets of everyday people so that they don't feel this enormous financial pressure and they can do the things that scientists are saying we need to do to manage this crisis?



Chet Sisk 14:27

Yeah, well, yeah. Here's the thing, though. When you bring up this conversation, you're called a progressive or liberal or you can't even say democrats anymore. I don't even know what the story with the democrats are. But you're, they look at it through a political lens. Really what we're talking about is there are some real basics, assumptions that we used to be able to make about humanity. That we should do everything we can for more people. We should not lie and steal and be you know, a corrupt human being. We should look out for each other. Those were some basic tenets of an agreement, what I call a social agreement that we kind of had in the back of our heads. And so when you talk about maybe we should make that money go from Boeing to more people, people get

upset about that. And the only thing that you can think is they have given up on those basic social tenets, the ones that we used to agree to that it is better to take care of more people than less.



Omkari Williams 15:31

Right.



Chet Sisk 15:31

And so we're now in this space where we've normalized the idea that only the few can, should do well, and then the rest of us are just the unwashed masses scrambling for a piece of meat and holding up our bowl and saying, Please sir, may I have more? I mean, that's where we are. And that's stunning to me.



Chet Sisk 15:54

It's, it's so disheartening to me, but something that actually does give me some hope in the circumstance is that I think one of the things that's likely to come out of this whole experience is that we are going to get reconnected to our local communities, that hyper localization is going to become a more common thing as people have to rely more on the people immediately around them. You know,



Chet Sisk 16:26

Yeah, you're absolutely correct. Absolutely.



Chet Sisk 16:29


And I think that that offers us many possibilities for making change in ways that would not have happened otherwise.



Chet Sisk 16:39

Yes, yes. I couldn't agree with you more. I mean, you're you're speaking gospel here. Because there has to be, we have to go somewhere. And since we're realizing the challenges that exist, and I'm being kind here, the challenges that exist in our federal government, it not being able to distribute masks or tests or being able to oversee trillions of dollars, there's no oversight. And it just seems extremely problematic that we are going


to have to find some vehicle and the best vehicle. And I really lean heavily on this in the new book is the whole aspect of community, of being able to organize networked communities that are able to trade and get advice to each other and be able to work with each other, even in the face of failing, unfortunately, a bloated federal system. So yeah, you're going to have to find ways of doing that. And you're absolutely right, that communities are there. They're available. We have social media vehicles, we have these kinds of vehicles, zoom and such that allows us to be able to connect easier and quicker. So yes, that's the way and let me make sure that I emphasize this networked communities are the way because you don't want the communities to devolve into fiefdoms. You want them to be able to connect with other communities, not just around the country, but around the world in order to share resources, ideas, tools, whatever you need. And I do see that based around where the trends are going, that I see that as a as a distinct future for most of us.

 Chet Sisk 18:26

That leads me to something that I came across when I was doing my research for this conversation. And I'm not sure I'm pronouncing this properly. Is it Ubuntu?

 Chet Sisk 18:37

Ubuntu, yes.

 Chet Sisk 18:38

Yes. So Ubuntu socioeconomic construct. And I was fascinated when I read about that and went out and got it well had a book sent home, did not go anywhere. And started have started doing some reading about that. And I think that that is something I'd love for you to speak about because I think it really connects with what we were just talking about.

 Chet Sisk 19:01

Absolutely. So there is a prevailing concept that exists out there in the world, primarily in western thought, and that is, "Some get most don't". That's, that's simplifying it. But it really is kind of a truth, some get most don't. That's why you have 1% having more overall wealth than the bottom 80 to 90%, whatever those numbers are. There's a there's a prevailing belief that some get, but most don't. So you, I always say that once that becomes a belief, you start to create the policies, the laws, the infrastructure, and allocate resources in order to make that belief system come true, right. So Ubuntu says there's enough for everyone, that we share these resources because all of us are connected. So

now imagine that being the prevailing thought, the philosophy of the land right? When you start thinking Ubuntu, it's a Southern African philosophy. And if you boil it down, it comes down to everyone and everything is connected. So all of us have value and meaning. So now you start creating laws that reflect that. So then you start to think about climate crisis, right? So now you're not thinking about the whole aspect of exploiting resources for your own gain, if you believe some get most don't. But you start seeing it from the perspective of Ubuntu and you start saying, well, the environment is just as valuable as I am. So how do I treat it that way? How do I treat another human being the same way that I do? It's a it's a reflection of the old, you know, do unto others golden rule as it were, but in southern Africa, they developed it into a kind of a philosophical construct that basically guided societies for hundreds of thousands of years, until of course, there was a kind of a Western approach that came to southern Africa kind of changed that up. But that was, so it wasn't even a religion. It wasn't a religion, you didn't have to join a club. It was just the way that you thought about how things worked. So that, to me is the belief that is necessary, that's agile enough, that's robust enough to be able to take us through change. If we embrace that as a concept that all of us are connected and all of us have value and meaning and all things, then we'll be able to tap the kinds of resources, other people's other ideas, other concepts in order to navigate dramatic change. Now, understand we're going to go through dramatic change, not just this year, but for the next few years. And the command and control some get most don't model is not strong enough. It's not effective enough. In fact, the only way that you can make that model work is through the barrel of a gun. And we don't want to see that so what we need is something that is right for the time and Ubuntu has the philosophical construct and the flexibility and the agility to be able to deal with the kinds of changes that we're going to see.



Chet Sisk 22:13

Yeah, I, I have to say that the more I've read about it, the more inspired I am by it. And it was used as part of the way that South Africa dealt with reconciliation after apartheid. And like anything else, it's it doesn't solve all problems, but it gives us a construct to live into. That is a healthier construct, I believe, then the one that we've sort of, kind of fallen into just without really thinking it through very well. And without thinking about the broader implications. So yeah, it's it's fascinating and I will put the word in the episode notes for this. So that people have an opportunity to go out and do some research on their own.



Chet Sisk 23:03

Right. And let me just say that the book that I'm writing right now, You In the New Normal,

really is talking about this period of time that we're in to ask the questions about what is it that we believe? Because if we believe in some get most don't, well we see the results of that. What's happening right now, not only here in the States, but around the world, we are living the results of a some get most don't philosophical construct that has been written into our arts as a as a golden rule. And it is not a golden rule. It's just something that we've agreed on with over the past couple of centuries. So if it's that transient, then it can be changed. And so what I do is introduce that concept of Ubuntu simply because of the fact that it gives us another option other than the one that has led us to the brink of climate crisis, that's led us to the brink of social disruption like we've never seen before. But those are usual signs that perhaps that particular philosophical construct of some get most don't, doesn't work very well. The de facto evidence is all around us. So that means, nothing personal, but it's time to probably think about another philosophical construct that's better. And that not just philosophy, I mean, in the things that we do, the companies that we create, the businesses that we construct, the communities that we put together, we are now in a time where we should be rethinking all of those things and asking the question, is this best? Are there better ways forward? That's, that's all this is. That's the time that we're in right now. We get a chance to ask the question, put all the stuff on the table and ask what is best for this particular period of time?

C

Chet Sisk 24:49

I couldn't agree more. Yeah. I mean, I think that's the only sort of, "good" thing that can come out of this whole experience is if we actually look at our systems. We look at our structures, we look at what is working, what isn't working, and just start thinking about how do we want to do it differently because it is going to be different on the other side, I don't care what anybody says, things are not going to look the same on the other side of this experience whenever the other side is and that might not be for a really long time. So if that is the truth, and I believe it is, then we can be intentional about what we're doing rather than just go along with whatever someone else wants us to do or someone else's impulse to try and get back to a normal that no longer really exists.

C

Chet Sisk 25:43

Yes, and that's why you have people like me, is that you know, I have to tell you this story there's a friend of mine told me this story he was with someone else. I was invited to a party was a little celebration and and I was coming in the door and my friend was standing with the the other guy, and the guy looked at him and he said, "Oh man is that Chet Sisk coming in the door?". And the guy says, "Yeah, that's him". He's like, "Oh, man, I don't even want to talk to that guy. I'm just here to get my party on. And I really don't want to hear him". And he said, "Why not?". He says, "Oh, this guy's always talking about

change, and, you know, climate crisis and all this stuff". So you know, people like me, we can get socially shunned, because a lot of people don't necessarily want to deal with the kinds of changes, change has been associated on a regular with loss. So even if you only have two crumbs, you figure that someone will take that one crumb that's lost to you. And it's always someone taking something from you. But really what COVID-19 is saying is that there's a lot to gain from the kind of change that that was forced upon us, because we didn't want to go. So we were dragged kicking and screaming into this level of change. And some of us are starting to find some of the gifts that this particular change brings. So people like me are the ones who go around and say, here are some of the gifts, you might not be able to see it right now. And you might be fearful. And people are going to tell you all kinds of terrible things about change about transformation. But the reality is that there are so many things to gain. And so people call me an optimist, but I'm a realist. I recognize that if we see and look on the other side and see the possibilities, we can start, like you mentioned, live from intention about what that next phase will look like, as opposed to letting it haphazardly happen to us. And that's what we've been doing for a while. So, yeah, I call I'm the bearer of good news.



Chet Sisk 27:48

Okay, well, we'll go with that. And at the same time, I'm going to just say that a friend of mine is fond of saying that most people won't change until their backs are up against the wall so hard they're getting a rash. Yeah. So...



Chet Sisk 28:04

That is the truth. And you know, it. Look, my job is not to force people to change. It's only to make sure that when they are at the place where the rash is so severe that they have to do something, that there will be the devices and the tools and the information they need, they'll be able to come back and say, "Hey, I remember that guy. Chet was talking about this some time ago. Let me look him up". So that's my job is because you can't force people to change, then it becomes I don't know what that is. But it's,



Omkari Williams 28:33

it doesn't work.



Chet Sisk 28:35

No, it doesn't work. But it has to happen organically. But when people are ready to

change, you will have tools and ideas and something set in place so that they know what to do as opposed to just, you know, falling down in the night with nothing there.



Omkari Williams 28:53

Right.



Chet Sisk 28:54

So that's, that's really a job of a futurist.



Chet Sisk 28:57

Well, yeah, it's it's so funny that, you know, we humans tend to like to think of ourselves, most of us, I believe, think of ourselves as fairly flexible. And get the evidence really stands in stark contrast to that. And I think part of our discomfort in this time is that we are being pushed out of our comfort zones and we're being confronted with so not only so much change, but such a profound kind of change and so much loss. And someone I know who, he's Italian, he lives in Italy, so he was in lockdown for a long time under very, very harsh circumstances. He said that death was all around. And that was hard enough to come to grips with but the really challenging thing for him was that he didn't see a road forward once the circumstance got better.



Chet Sisk 29:57

Yup.



Omkari Williams 29:58

And I think that that's where we are really are struggling, is what is the road forward going to look like? And we don't know. But we actually get to make that road. If we do this right, we get to create the road.



Chet Sisk 30:14

Yes. Now this goes back to what you were talking about earlier about the difference between the stationary leader or the status quo leader and the visionary leader. It's the visionary leader and leaders and visionaries period are the ones that can best describe the potential of the road forward. And he's right that unfortunately, I think that we've lost

our gift of being visionary, that we have been in the industrial model where we're just plugged in and you know, you go and you put your nine to five in and then you go home and watch Netflix while you eat your burrito, has kind of taken away that visionary edge that we need. And so my personal feeling, I could be wrong on this, but as I as I look around And scan the environment, I do see a kind of a gap in visionary leadership. People can't envision anymore. Their best vision is about how to make more money. And that's not vision. That's just goal setting. Okay? If you want to make more money, I understand that that's a good, that's a good thing. But that's a goal. visionary leadership means that you're talking about, what does the next world look like the one that we're entering right now kicking and screaming? What does that look like? What do we want it to look like? What is it that we can intend? And then to gather the tools, and the equipment, the resources that are necessary in order to make that intention more true. So it takes a little bit I mean, it really does. You'd be surprised when you start to talk to people about their vision forward or their, you know, their five year vision or something. They have five year goals, but it takes a little bit to talk about vision. I shouldn't say it like this. But visionary leadership is not necessarily the job of the guy who's trying to take care of his family, and just pay his bills and get the stuff done because he's got enough on his plate.



Omkari Williams 32:13

Mm hmm.



Chet Sisk 32:14

Those people and she, you know, she's working two jobs, and she's got those babies back home. She's got enough on her plate. But the people who are supposedly in these positions of leadership, who are supposed to be looking out as a representative of those people, those are the ones who are supposed to be providing visionary leadership and make that vision so compelling, that people are willing to do whatever it takes in order to make that vision possible. So their job is to support a vision that's articulated by the leaders. But the leaders have to have vision if they don't have vision. There's nothing there.



Chet Sisk 32:49

You said something you wrote something a couple of years ago about mythmaking. afrofuturism and Black Panther. And I think that that's exactly sort of what you just said is about. And the reason that Black Panther struck such a chord for people was that it was visionary in so many respects. And so, I mean, I think that the power of myth and myth

making as it connects to creating a healthy future is so profound. I mean, I love story, story to me is so important. Because we, that we have our stories of the past, and we have our stories of the future, which people sometimes call dreams, but they really are, "What do we want to see"? And I think that that is something that if we could reconnect to that power, we would be in a much better place for visioning the future and understanding that it's not just about oh, I want to have a boat in five years. Yeah, we would see that as maybe an outcome of something else, but something that's larger and more meaningful. So,



Chet Sisk 34:07

yes, that article that I wrote about the Black Panther and about the whole aspect of the myth and how it captures the imagination and gives us an opportunity to rethink who we are. That was my most read article I ever wrote. It was just it viral then did all kinds of things, mostly because I felt very strongly about how the movie basically captured and put in front of millions of people, a vision of something that did not exist before.



Omkari Williams 34:37

Yes.



Chet Sisk 34:38

So that's the key to the what mythmaking really is. I was a fan of Joseph Campbell for a long time up until I started realizing that he said some terrible things about Africa. And then a guy by the name of Ford, he wrote a book called, Hero With the African Face. And he said, the essence of all myth making came from Africa. So to dismiss Africa as the myth making sources is like saying the ocean is not where water is. So that doesn't make any sense. But myth making in its essence, storytelling, all of those things help us to expand our capacity. It helps us to redefine who we are in the world. It helps us to redefine the world. It helps us to make our associations with what we might call the divine or, or something bigger. And even more so it helps us to be able to imagine possibilities when all we have is like drudgery. You know, you go to work, you eat, you come home, you watch Netflix and you go to bed. Mythmaking allows us to expand above and beyond that, and fuels our real world tools. So, if there's anything that needs to happen, it is how we can make mythmaking and storytelling a regular part of our imaginative process our innovation process, our creativity process. And you can't do that when you take arts kids out of the school or you take arts away and then you limit it to all kinds of things. You have to bring those things back and help people to draw up there that resource, that tool

that that is absolutely necessary. I will say a society is dead, if it does not have mythmaking storytelling, creative people who help us to imagine beyond the day to day



Chet Sisk 36:30

Yeah, I I really couldn't agree more with that. I was fortunate enough to spend time in Africa a few years back and I was in Swaziland at this point. And there were these two little boys that were probably nine years old, and they were up in the mountains, and they were there with their cows. And I was walking by and they were just playing as they kept an eye on their cows. But you could see because they didn't have access to video games. or things like that, how much they were using their imagination and just the way they were playing until they saw me. And then of course, they got all shy and you know, but it was so lovely. And I thought, this is so great. And I actually think that for American children for a lot of American children, right now, this is an opportunity for them. They are being thrown back on their own resources, often in a way that hasn't happened since they were preschool.



Chet Sisk 37:29

Yep.



Omkari Williams 37:30

And they're getting to just use their imaginations, hopefully and do things that they otherwise wouldn't have the time to do in our very structured world. And it's it's just, it's lovely that piece I mean, I feel for their parents. Yes, I do. Being home with small children is, you know, 24/7 is not my idea of a good time. It's very hard.



Chet Sisk 37:59

Yeah, it's very hard.



Omkari Williams 37:59

But you know, there is this piece that you get to see where their imaginations just spark and they do these really cool things. And I look at some of the things some of my friends kids are doing. And I think that's amazing. That's, amazing.



Chet Sisk 38:15

So the guy who's co authoring my book with me, Dr. Mohammed behind you, he and I spent a great deal of time talking about curiosity, because we started realizing that curiosity, really is an extension of imagination that when you get outside of that, which, you know, that's where the real action is. I think there was there was an old phrase, no, it was a question that was given to Will Rogers some years ago. And they, they used to ask him, they said, you know, he would say some pretty provocative things all the time. And they would say, you know, "Will, why do you always go out on a limb?", and he said, "Well, that's where the fruit is". And that becomes our key too is that in order for us to get that fruit, we have to get out there. And we think getting out there is getting, you know that other car or material possessions, which I'm not against that I think that those things can be good. And when in context, Oh, absolutely I encourage you to, to live your best life. But living your best life is not based around the material gains that you get. That's what we're discovering through this COVID pandemic is that we're starting to realize and not everybody, but there are people realizing the value of relationships, that not even thinking about them before that a lot of people have gone gone back and recovered them. Zoomed people up and say listen, I got time on my hands. I wanted to reconnect.



Omkari Williams 39:45

Yeah, yeah.



39:47

All of these things that that were not a part of our regular drudgery are now available to us. So this is a great time to do some imagination.



Chet Sisk 39:57

Yep. And we can only imagine things In the future, so then, we move into your territory in a in a really lovely way. Our time is coming to an end. And I would love it if we could end this conversation. If you have suggestions for the listeners on things that they can do to just expand.