Episode 5 - Epiphany

**Intro Music:** Fluff this. Let's eat, drink and be merry.

**Mell:** Hi everyone, it's me Mell, and I know it's feast or famine here I'm coming up with a new episode so soon after the last one, but I had to share what happened. So, I touched upon if you listen to episode 4, I touched upon this thing that I had just cursorily come upon with blue zones. I guess I really am living in a bubble and had no idea that this was a big thing right now. And I had never heard of a guy named Dan Buechner I had just come across an article and I found it fascinating in conjunction with what I'm studying right now.

After I finished recording the last episode, or the fifth iteration of it, the dog jumped on my remote control and it turned on Netflix and what do I see? There is a banner for Live to 100 Secrets of the Blue Zones by Dan Buechner. Hello! What the heck? Of course, I turned it on immediately and had it going in the background.

It's a limited series, five episodes, and this Dan Buechner, he is from St. Paul, Minnesota. He's got a Guinness Book of World Records, a few of them, or a couple of them, for his cycling. He's biked over 15, 000 miles over a bunch of continents, did Russia. He did some expeditions following it. Darwin's route on the Galapagos and Marco Polo on the Silk Road.

So he's a real adventurer and expedition kind of guy. He was following different civilizations and looking at the indigenous people and whatnot. And I believe that that perhaps is what got him interested. Who knows? I don't know. Never met the guy. All I know is that my touching upon the Blue Zones and the health benefits.

Everybody say hi to Benny. He's yawning in the background. Anyhow, after that and doing my episode without really having a clue, which most of the time I never do, I see this documentary. And we start the first one, and the first one I believe was Sardinia. And it's inquiring about the longevity in the sea.

centenarians. They have the highest concentrate of centenarians in the world. And if you don't know what a centenarian, it's people living to a hundred plus. And he looks at their lifestyle, their foods they eat. What is it about these particular places that causes these people to live so long and live healthy lives?

It was facinating. I was watching and in Okinawa this woman was dancing with a bottle on her head and she's like 101. And he goes through and he analyzes everything. Even in the documentary, he does a test pilot to try and start a blue zone somewhere in Minnesota. My takeaway of it, first of all, is the beautiful lives these people leave and the simplicity of the lives these people lead. The sense of community and togetherness and not relying on conveniences so much, doing manual chores, doing, washing the dishes, gardening, taking walks with their friends and family. And the foods are simple. There's no processed anything. It's all natural things that they picked or things that they've grown themselves.

So one of the main key things is that it's a simpler way of being and that really struck me, which led me to going down a rabbit hole of finding that the United States has the largest epidemic right now of loneliness. We've got social media and all of this stuff, but we're horribly lonely people.

Apparently. It's the connection, the warmth of having somebody within proximity and the laughter and the joy that is filling these people's souls. And this one woman is sitting there and he's asking her, what do you think your secret is? And she said she never gets upset and she never gets angry. And it's like, man, I'm watching this whole thing.

I watched all of the episodes in one sitting, it was in the middle of the night, but I was watching these things and how far removed most of us are from the simplicity of what they're doing. Even me, isolation is a huge thing. Yeah. Loneliness is a huge thing. A semblance of community, but via text messenger, that's pretty much it.

It's hard, you know, it's a hard thing to bring it back down. But this is all back to a cycle that I've come to find I'm doing this full circle moment here. When I was little I used to play in the garden and make food with plants and stuff like that, do your mud pies when you were little, I did that.

Later on as I got older I studied herbalism and homopathic stuff. And I'm like a total techie. I've got an Echo in every room, got Google. I love my modern conveniences, but things are being forced to be re-evaluated. . You have to look back on how did humankind survive before all of this technology? Well, this technology is in its infancy as far as humankind is concerned. Who knows what the long term reprecussions will be.

And yeah, we've got medicines and all kinds of things, healthcare. But one of the things that was touched upon in the documentary is the preventative. THink on this a second. Every other commercial is about some kind of pharmaceutical that you ask your doctor if this is right for you. I'm sitting there going, it's not like I can go out and buy this.

Why are they advertising it on television? Most of us don't even remember when we go to see our doctor what to ask about. So, I'm curious as millions and billions of dollars that is being spent on that advertising, why isn't it being spent on preventative? Well, there's no market in that. There's no money in that.

Preventing something doesn't help them sell their pills. So I guess you could say that I'm turning into a conspiracy theorist. But my whole thing on this one is that the universe talks to you. God talks to you. Whoever you pray to, whatever your denomination, and I'm not talking about religion per se, I'm talking about spiritual.

Whatever speaks to your spirit, sometimes they yell at you. You've got to follow this path and sometimes you're like, but that's not where I wanted to go. And my sister is a pastor, my sister and brother in law, they're pastors of a church and they had their pastors speak this past Sunday, which was another lightning bolt from the universe because his talk was about where you thought you'd be may not be where you are because you need to be where you are.

Hello, this isn't where I thought I'd be. I was in New York doing my third book and here I am, how many years later, and this is not what my plan was, but maybe this is where I'm supposed to be. I know this is where I'm supposed to be. There's no doubt about it. As far as my purpose, and that was another thing in the blue zone is in Costa Rica and in Japan, they have a I forgot what the saying

we intterupt this program to deal with the dog.

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**Mell:** Sorry kids, you're going to hear some crunching in the background, but. This is so high tech. My studio is a corner in a room, and you're gonna hear him in the other room. I had to give him something to crunch on to get him to stop. This is real life, not a high budget production. Anyhow, the thing that struck me was in Japan and Costa Rica, they have a particular saying for life's purpose, waking up in the morning with a purpose.

And that's an important factor in Buettner's whole thing of what makes up the formula for living a long, healthy and happy life. And yeah, I have my routines there in the morning. You can set your clock to what I have to do. But is that a passionate purpose? Is that a key to things? Having a passion for your purpose?

I don't know. Does that include family obligations and those issues? My purpose is bringing things back to that simple way of being in our modern society. Convenience is wonderful, but there's nothing, and as I'm watching this, I highly recommend it. Go watch it on Netflix. There's just something about it that really spoke to me. In today's modern society, with all the conveniences that we have, we're actually doing ourselves a humongous disservice.

Health wise, emotionally, spiritually. All of it. We're doing ourselves a disservice by disconnecting from nature. Even the time change. The time change, everybody's complaining about how it being darker earlier is messing with us. It's the cycle of our world. It's the universe. Astronomically, equinoxes, the solstices, the seasons, all of that we used to be seriously in touch with.

That's how people planted. And here's another kicker is all of this was done way before the advent of technology. And here we are going back to it with wine, for instance, in biodynamics, biodynamic wine is grapes that are grown on a vineyard that incorporates a farm that has everything sustaining each other, crops, chickens for fertilizer. It's just. A whole process that people have been doing for a millennia. And we're finally getting back to those things because it's what's good for the Earth. It's what's good for ourselves. It's what's good for your soul. It's what's good for the things we drink and the things that we eat. Because that's the way it was intended. That's the way our ecosystem was meant to be. Not the destruction of our natural resources for computer chips.

Just got a flash. They sound like an episode of Criminal Minds. Whoa, I gotta get a grip.

I'm not becoming a conspiracy theorist. I'm just trying to find my footing again in a world that's changed a bit and actually this whole process is getting me back to who my soul really was and somewhere made a left at Albuquerque and here I'm coming back the long way to what I really believe my purpose is. Has been all along and maybe I'm wrong. It may be a phase, but I really don't think so. I really think that this is coming full circle and it's my journey to share this with you guys, and I hope that maybe it'll give you a little bit of grounding, a little bit of rooting back into what sustains us soulfully and physically and mentally.

This little episode is not a big deal. It's just something that was kind of an affirmation that I felt I needed to share. I do highly recommend you watch the Netflix show, Life to 100, Secrets of the Blue Zones. And I'm not saying I want to live to 100. God, please, I don't know if I could handle that.

But living a life that's healthy, feeling better every day, not taking 20 minutes just to get out of bed because your bones are creaking or so stiff. If you can't straighten out your leg. Those are the things that I really don't want to have to pop pills for. I don't want my breakfast to be Advil. I'm trying to find a way that I can be healthier and feel better and feel the joy of the beautiful gift of life on a daily basis.

And that's my journey and I'm trying to share it with people so that maybe it can become infectious and then we share that with somebody else and it brings joy and kindness and spread a little love. It's very simple. Eat, drink and be merry and share it. Share it with your community. Create a community somehow.

Right, we've got to do some technological things. We've got family that lives on the other side of the country. But man, remember when we couldn't even pick up the phone and call because toll rates were too high? And now we can video chat. We can have them on our TV screen and chat whenever we want to.

The only thing separating us is time zones. We have so many amenities at our disposal, but we're getting further and further removed from what really matters. Why can't we incorporate all of that and create a new way of being that is in harmony with the way the planet wanted us to be in the first place?

I think it can be done. That's my whole goal, and it's my goal to do that while enjoying food and wine and your company. I also want to explore all of the facets and components that go behind all of that. The grapes, the oils that we use to cook, all of the things that make up our pantry. I want to explore various cultures and regions and bring them across borders and make them a part of every day, which in today's fancy schmancy society is called fusion.

Our whole perspective should be global fusion. We all are members of the human race. I think that we should start acting like it. And I think we all have to start by doing it ourselves. Right now I am super duper into Indian food. And I know that I mentioned in my last episode, Tempranillo.

Last night I had a wonderful Spanish Tempranillo that I enjoyed immensely with some masala lentils and it was delicious. I have to do a ton of recipe input. I am so behind I've got a stack. I'm not even joking. It's a three feet high stack of recipes that I have yet to upload. And that all requires time.

And time is very valuable to me. So I look forward to our next episode, which I think I'm going to get into. I've got this really super cool olive oil I'm about to try. I think that I'm going to do a little research on olive oil and what the difference is for anybody that doesn't know. Oils are very important.

Olive oil has a very low smoke point, so it's tricky. So we're going to talk a little bit about that maybe in the next episode or the episode after that. But for now, I am going to leave you with this thought. Purple sweet potato. How's that for a thought? In Costa Rica, they live off of purple sweet potatoes and a bunch of other things and it is so good.

If you ever have the opportunity to pick up a purple sweet potato, give it a try, but expect sweetness. It's a little sweeter than a regular sweet potato. That can be a little tricky for some people who aren't very fond of expecting something savory and getting something sweet. I would love to make a purple sweet potato pie. Oh my gosh, it would be gorgeous. The one thing about purple sweet potatoes is they stain almost worse than beets. Bah what a mess. Tried purple sweet potatoes last night for the first time and it was super fun. I am looking forward to exploring that further. If you get a chance to grab yourself a purple sweet potato and a bottle of Tempranillo, please by all means do so because it's yummy.

That's it for now. I will talk at you soon. In the meantime, eat, drink, and be merry. Sláinte!