We Outside Podcast Transcript
S2 E6: What Do We Owe One Another? With Dr. Teresa Lau

Dr. Teresa Lau: The fact of that is in many ways like what we share in common and building something new hopefully is something that we'll share in common. And to me, the only way to build the next thing in a way that is liberatory for all of us, dare I say all of us—

Ain B: Please say all of us.

Dr. Teresa Lau: - is to include spirit and to include all those differences, you know?

Montage: Welcome to We Outside. Welcome to We Outside. Welcome to We Outside. Welcome to We Outside.

[Episode Intro] **Ain B:** Today I'm joined by Dr. Teresa Lau, a chiropractic and somatic educator who has spent more than 20 years helping people return to the intelligence and power of their bodies. Dr. T begins with a question that feels especially alive right now. When the world feels this difficult, how do we remain in relationship with one another?

And how does the connection we experience through spirit, ourselves, and nature become part of how we live together? Dr. T's own shift from a long clinical practice into a more relational form of teaching opens a deeper exploration of how we move toward what is calling us without having the complete picture.

We dig into the different ways institutional breakdown is experienced, the limits of what any one person can hold, and why responsibility to one another may be part of freedom rather than a restriction upon it. We keep returning to one question: What do we owe one another? We do not solve it. We consider what it might be asking us to become.

I hope you enjoy.

Dr. Teresa Lau: My name is Dr. Teresa Lau, or Dr. T, and I use she and her pronouns. I am in Oakland on Ohlone Lisjan land, and my internal weather today is crackly. Crackly, popping, the electricity in the air before lightning, thunderstorm.

Ain B: And why are you feeling that way?

Dr. Teresa Lau: I'm feeling that way 'cause I am excited. I have spent time thinking on these questions and spirit, and it just feels like this is the medicine that I need,

that I feel like we need as a people right now, is to actually focus on the things that matter, that are real.

And spirit is one of those things.

Ain B: Lovely. Thank you. My name is Ain. I use she/they pronouns. I'm located on ancestral unceded land of the Muscogee people, which is Alabama. And my weather right now is, I feel like a big storm has just passed. I love storms. I've talked about my love of storms, so that to me feels like a sense of release and letting go, and also just really supreme delight because I've experienced some heavy winds and some heavy rain, and maybe even some lightning if I'm lucky.

And why do I feel that way? I feel like that because I'm excited to be in this conversation with you, excited to see what questions come up and what truths we stumble upon. And then, yeah, and then excited to go squeeze my elder pup who is not feeling so great today, and I'm just like, "Hey, old lady, don't get too old."

So I have cuddling in my future, and that feels good.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Nice.

Ain B: So, Dr. T, what's present for you about spirit in this moment? Where do you want to begin?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Well, Ain, I have really been in a spiritual journey myself for the last few years. It is so present, like every day, what it is that spirit has for me and how I am in relationship with spirit every day. So it's, it's that relating part that I'm focused on. Like, how do I create and engage in my life in a way where spirit is part of my creative process and part of how I see myself and hold myself?

Ain B: Yeah. You're naming a noticing that, oh yeah, spiritual path or journey in this time. Can you share more about that?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yeah, I mean, for me specifically, I made a big pivot in 2022. I shifted gears from being in solo practice as a holistic chiropractor for over 15 years at that point into wanting to engage with folks in a different way. You know, beyond providing wonderful service and watching folks come back into their own bodies with ease and power, I wanted to have more of a back-and-forth community-building kind of relationship with folks.

I wanted folks to take the power of being in connection with their bodies into their own hands. And so I've been in a significant exploration for myself of how it is that I want to build and live my life and my teachings and my offerings in a way that creates space for people to do that learning on their own, you know, with me, but also on their own.

Ain B: And can you share a bit about how spirit showed up in this pivot, before this pivot, or after?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yeah, I would say at the beginning of this process and this journey, I really didn't know how to think about spirit for myself. It was not practiced growing up in my home, my family. And so I think I made a lot of decisions out of this is the next thing that's supposed to happen in terms of, you know, go to college, graduate, those kinds of things.

And so the decisions that I made for myself were often kind of out of the regular path. Like I was following the path, but my mom would always say, "You keep choosing like kind of things that are a little off the beaten track. Like you're following the track, but you're doing it a little bit differently than how we're all supposed to do it."

And I guess for me, looking back, I say, or and I see that as, I guess the phrase is like spirit guiding me or moving through me. I just knew that I didn't want this, I wanted that. Mm-hmm. I couldn't quite explain it, and I didn't have a practice of being in relationship with that underlying want or desire.

And I would say this journey over the last few years has really been digging in, trying to do more and more reflection and getting to the source of like, what is it that I want and why do I keep wanting this that's sort of like not something anyone's done before? Why is it that I keep choosing the thing that isn't in the already done, this is how you do it, just follow the directions, and I keep wanting to create something different or want something different than what I've already got?

And, and it's that sort of creative, generative impulse that I'm finding isn't like a personality quirk of mine. It really is an expression of

Something wanting to come into form in the world. And I would say the last few years has just been sort of me trying to find my way to understanding how to work with that, how to be in relationship with that.

Ain B: This really resonates because I similarly have been sort of bopping around, doing a number of different things, trying to figure out how they fit together, and then ultimately when I look back, I'm like, "Oh, right, this is the exact road that has led me here to this moment and this work," but there's no way I could have charted my way here or seen it as sort of like a path laid out before me.

And then to what you're also sharing that a lot of the impetus or even sometimes the prodding or the... I, I've had a deep sense of restlessness my whole life where I get into a job or a relationship or something, and it's like, there's just something pushing me for more, and more not necessarily as like in the sense of abundance, but just more aligned with my heart or more resonant with me.

And a lot of my then being able to follow that is figuring out wh- well, who am I? What is aligning with me? What is being in resonance with my own heart and desires and those things that keep coming up and around and back and won't sort of let go?

Can you share a bit more about the struggle of it? 'Cause it sounds very beautiful, and it is very beautiful, and it's also quite a journey.

Dr. Teresa Lau: I mean, I'll say the last few years in this process, what is the most, has been the most challenging is trying to put a name or a conclusion on what's unfolding, because I want to take action. I want to do something about the desire, right? So I closed my office, my chiropractic office, my practice. I launched a, an online teaching program.

I, I make these decisions and I take these actions because I want to create and I want to respond to that impetus that you're talking about. And it's hard to do that without a full picture, you know? And it's also hard to do that because even as I'm creating something, I know that that's not the ending place or the stopping place.

And so it's really been challenging to grow, like, to learn new ways of approaching creating things in the world, taking action, making decisions in a way that doesn't have a ton of certainty with it or a sort of very clear destination. It's like, how do I move forward in a meaningful way without knowing exactly where I'm ending up or without knowing ex- exactly what all the parameters are?

And yeah, it's, it's challenging. It's making me have to grow how I am and what it is that I bring to the decisions. Like, I can't be so adamant with the direction that I'm going, even as I am committed to the course of action that I take, right? And that's a lit- it's a little crazy-making. Can be a little crazy-making.

Ain B: I feel that so much, right? Like, how to be determined and steadfast while also not gripping so tightly or having to be in control of every single way that this desire, this path is unfolding. And it is a tension— Yeah ... to stand in the midst and to hold both of those things because they feel sometimes so oppositional as two ways of being that you sort of have to resolve inside of the one being that you are.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yeah.

Ain B: How do you do that? Or how have you been doing that?

Dr. Teresa Lau: I mean, it's been a lot of composting, I think, of ways of being that I have had that have been successful. Like, I've run a practice for over 20 years now, taking care of folks and being a healthcare professional, being a business owner, being someone that creates offerings and opportunities for folks around healing, and I've done those things holding a certain kind of...

Holding a particular form of certainty and authority even. And that way of doing things, I've had to kind of not take apart, but just maybe, like, refine or clarify into

what is, what is at the heart of my ability to move forward with this kind of presence and authority, even while I can't give all the details of how this is gonna turn out or what the destination is, you know?

Sort of like, how do I take all the things that I've learned and developed and practiced and just do sort of like the essence of them? To get to the most potent part for what it is that I'm trying to do now, and let go of all the rest of it, and, ugh, letting go of all the rest of it is really hard to do.

It really makes me feel, ugh, incompetent, weak, unsure, you know— Hmm ... hesitating. And I guess just, it just takes practice to do it, 'cause I, I do feel like it's more accessible to me now after a couple dozen months of practice.

Ain B: Yeah, the practice will end in results even if the process of the practice is a little bit confronting.

I wonder, you know, I think this conversation is really ripe for this period of time when so many of us are struggling with what's so in the world, and also wondering what is ours to do, in particular in the face of so much uncertainty. It's like everywhere we turn, things are deeply uncertain. And for many of us, that's been the way.

It's been the whole time. But I think more and more folks are being exposed to sort of the underlying risks that are built into our society, but also because our society is so strong in the world, you know, also globally. So I just wonder what arises for you about this uncertain moment, and what does spirit have to do with that?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yeah, I really appreciate you saying or calling, articulating the difference between folks who are sort of experiencing all the breakage of systems and structures that have, this has just been the way it is, and now we're having a UFC fight on the White House lawn. Like, you know, there, there are things that just were unimaginable before, and now they are happening, and it creates a kind of uncertainty for, for folks who have been pretty comfortable, you know, moving along until now.

But I appreciate you calling out the difference between that uncertainty contrasted with the uncertainty for folks for whom the sort of status quo and all the systems are working the way they're supposed to has never actually been a good thing, right? Has always been a threat— Yeah ... to stability and security, and, and that difference is really important, I think, because I think the difference between those two experiences, I mean, there's myriad, but th- those two could, that contrast, I think keeping the difference alive and not sort of ascribing one experience to everyone, I think is part of how we keep spirit in the conversation of all that's breaking down.

Meaning, it's not breaking down the same for everyone. Even though it feels a certain way to me, I have to know that other people's experience of the breakdown is so different, and that coming through this to the future that we want is gonna require that all of these different experiences be part of what we do or what we contend with, you know, going forward.

Mostly because the breakdown is still the breakdown. Even, even the, even though our trajectories are different, and even though what has been true for each of us is different coming up to it, we were all still moving with a certain set of structures, right? And having our... Navigating our own way through them.

And those structures are just disintegrating. And the fact of that is, in many ways, like, what we share in common, and building something new, hopefully, is something that we'll share in common. And to me, the only way to build the next thing in a way that is liberatory for all of us, dare I say all of us—

Ain B: Please say all of us.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Is to include spirit and to include all those differences, you know? I think that's the place where I have really come to for myself as a person, and then that I'm learning about how to articulate in my work, is that we just cannot keep track of all the diversity, like mentally. And so we really need to give over to something else, you know, whether it's spirit or God or the universe or the intelligence that is beyond our human intelligence.

We just can't keep track of it all, and so, and yet we still need to contend with it all. And I think that is the place that I'm starting to understand what it is to ask for help, and what it is to look for guidance or information about what is mine to do. It's not just I can't do it all, like, from that sort of super person, you know, trying to do it all kind of thing.

It's like my, my brain is just literally not constructed in such a way that I can actually contend with all that there is. And so how do we create the future that we want knowing that? Like understanding those limitations, and how spirit is here to participate and bridge those gaps, you know? Mm. 'Cause I have some pieces, and you have some pieces, and what we create together has to make room for not just our differences, but also our limitations. You know?

Ain B: I feel so encouraged by this because this is a moment I think many of us are feeling discouraged because of the vastness of not only what we can't know, which is just impossible for our brains to process, but also sort of the vastness of the structural breakdown that's happening, right, across not just institutions, which many of us are like, "Thank you.

Please crumble and let's start anew," but also belief systems, you know, character, critical thinking, what's false, what's real, what's true, you know? But something you said, you know, like, "Oh, we never thought a UFC fight on the White House Lawn was possible," and it made me really think in, in hearing the rest of what you shared of like, well, what else don't we think is possible, right?

Like, on the plus side, you know, that we are in such a state of transition, and actually, as always, we are in choice about where that ends up. Even if we're not, um, in control of every single piece or every situation, that we can be in our personal but also our collective choice around, okay, so do we end up in a society that actually

creates liberation for all and that uses the resources that are here for everyone, since they are for everyone, they're on a planet that is ours collectively? You know, and then as you bring in this thread around diversity, I always just go back to the planet and how there's, you know, not just one kind of orange. There's, like, many kinds of oranges, and the world is better for it 'cause then I get to have my favorite kind of orange, and you get to have your favorite kind, and, and the oranges are not concerned with what the apples are doing, right?

Like, everyone's just trying to reach for the sun, grow as big as they can grow, produce whatever fruit they're gonna produce, and, like, start the cycle again. And so I'm appreciating this noticing about what is, what potential there is for us in this moment, and then also this layering in that there is, um, external support, however we wanna name it, to help us, uh, to, hmm, actually be in choice around how we want to come out of this, uh, this transitional time.

You know, you spoke earlier about interpersonal relationships and sort of the question that's there because, you know, as we're having this conversation around what is all that's up for the collective, I would love if you would share a little bit of your thinking around, um, yeah, h- maybe what do we owe one another inside of this time, but for all time, right?

We're here on a planet, a shared planet, so we do we are in relationship whether we want to be or not.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yeah, we are in relationship whether we want to be or not. I think that is the thing that I keep coming back to when I'm letting go of ways I've operated in the past and trying to learn something new is just over and over again, recognizing how I charge ahead with something that I want and don't take into account that I'm tied to other people or other things and that there's impact on, on those pieces.

And that interconnectedness is, I'm, for myself, I'm just continuing to turn toward that over and over again. That's the place that I am wondering about for us. You know, when you talk about what do we owe each other, I'm like, "Yeah, we really do owe each other things." And that feels so, it feels so antithetical to, you know, our culture and our sort of the tagline of the society that we live in.

It's like, you know, someone, someone said, I, I don't recall who exactly said it to me, but it was something along the lines of our responsibilities are what give us our freedoms, or that, that idea of, like, freedom is not freedom from responsibility to others or freedom from obligation. That feels like something we need to contend with and learn.

And for myself, as someone who doesn't have kids, I really am, like, I, I have to consciously choose to think about the ways that I am obligated to others, 'cause in, you know, the way our society is set up, like, I don't... Without the children, it's like my family members are self-sufficient, and so I don't have that either as far as, like, dependence on me in a financial or physical sense.

And so then it's like, well, wh- when I realized I wasn't gonna have kids, I was like, "Oh, well, what are the things that I want to mother, that I want to choose to pour my time and attention into?" And those things were, you know, community and friendships and my practice and my, uh, practice members and things like that.

But when you say, you know, "What do we owe each other?" It's like, yeah, it's, that, that's the sort of choiceful, creative perspective of what do I want. And then there's, like, what am I obligated to? Mm-hmm. Like, what are the things that are my obligations? And the way our society is currently set up, I feel like I need to make that choice for myself in a very explicit way.

Like, this is a place that I choose obligation. In my culture growing up as a Chinese American person, like obligation was very loud and very clear for me culturally in terms of my family. But as my family has aged and gotten older, it's like we're sort of navigating what our obligations are to each other. So yeah, I, I think it's a fantastic question. I think it is the question.

Ain B: Yeah, you know, I think a lot about how much I love the planet, and the people are harder for me to love, admittedly, in part because just, you know, I'm just like, "Y'all, we're choosing this, and we don't have to choose this." And, and, and we is doing a lot of work here. N- not all of us are choosing this, but there's a loud, rambunctious few who are, and here we are stuck in the car with them, heading towards the abyss.

And so humans are a little bit harder for me to love with the depth that I can, like, look out at the gorgeous trees in my front lawn and the sunset and just any sky, honestly. I'm just always like, "Look at that cloud." And my aunt is like, "Okay, calm down." "It's a cloud." We had this conversation yesterday. But, you know, I just find that there's something about deep love that inspires me to want to be a contribution.

So my deep love for the planet, even though I struggle with the humans, inspires me to be as much of a contribution for, to, with the humans as sort of like a thank you gift to the planet and to just this experience, right? Like, we are just alive, and whatever that is, you know, that big mystery, and then we just die, and then we go wherever.

You know, it's like, it's quite a moment in time we've been gifted, and it's all uncertain when we really stop and think about it. We don't know anything in the grand scheme of things, and so, you know, I appreciate what you're naming around exploring in that question, and sort of, you know, spirit has led me to recognize that if I claim to love this planet, then I have to love everything on it, right?

That includes the humans. That also includes the spiders that I also do not care for, right? So now I try not to kill the spiders in the house. I try to invite them out of my house, you know? And so just the ways that I'm asked to adapt myself and some of the ways that I show up to be in service to that deep love.

And earlier, you were, you were talking a bit and used the phrase bridging, and I just find that such a useful phrase in this time and moment for the obvious sort of red/

blue reasons, but even deeper than that, you know, for how to, in your words, translate the richness and hold that in high esteem along with the day-to-day, which, as we all know, can sometimes be a slog.

You know, I'm like, "Ugh, these dishes again. I'm washing dishes again?" You know, so would you say more about how that shows up for you?

Dr. Teresa Lau: It feels like my place of practice right now is how to bring that inspiration of I'm the same every time I look out the window. It's like, "Oh my gosh, the sunset is gorgeous. We just have to stop and look at it."

Ain B: Please.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yes. Every single time. Oh, the cactus has another flower. It's a m- Yes ... it's a freaking miracle. Yes. Let's just look at it. Let's take two more pictures to add to the 12 other pictures that I already took earlier.

Ain B: Yeah.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Um, I feel like those are practices of appreciation, right? And the bridging part to me is, like, where, where do I go when I leave that place of gratitude? Where am I going? I think for a while it was like, oh, this is, you know, regular life or the things I need to do to kind of keep my- the operations of my life going, so to speak.

And somehow none of that includes gratitude or that awe and reverence. I do have the argument that, you know, if I'm in awe and reverence all day long, then I probably wouldn't do very much and maybe that is how we're meant to live. Maybe the structures are not set up yet where that can happen. And I, I think as far as the, um, the abundance piece, the thing that I, that I have with my work in the world is the miracle of, like you said, being alive.

Like, just what is this? We're, we're alive and we're conscious and we're, we're doing things. That's the conversation I have, you know, every day with my clients, but also with myself of like, what is this body? It is a miracle.

The energy and information that is alive here in our bodies is also just below the surface. And it's also like just at any time we could be with it. And most of the time we're absolutely not with it. And how to really build a practice of not necessarily being in that sort of awe and inspiration 24-7 because nothing is constant in nature.

Everything has cycles and we must, you know, close our eyes and we must exhale and the sun must go down and all of those things. And so we must leave that place. But can we leave that place and not forget completely?

Ain B: Beautifully put. I wonder what's holding the essence of that space and place, and as you're naming, bringing it with us, not living in it, and then just wandering

around our houses like ghosts, you know, in a state of bliss, which, you know, could be fun. But bringing that into the day-to-day, what might open up for us if that kernel of gratitude, appreciation, wonder, you know, looking for opportunities to be documenting those things, you know?

If those types of practices that are cultivated in the moments that we feel this deep reverence was allowed to more deeply permeate the day-to-day, and as you named, like, not have such stark distinctions between, "Okay, now I'm in the day-to-day, I'm putting gratitude totally, you know, over there in that box until later."

What do you think? I mean, I, I know we're in this question. Or what is a better question?

Dr. Teresa Lau: I mean, as I hear you talk about it that way, what it makes me think of is like, I can be on one frequency or one wavelength. Or I can be on another. And it's true that I can't necessarily be on both at the same time. And so to me, that's another aspect of spirit maybe that I am, have been exploring for a little while now, which is: can I be fully in one frequency or another and still have a part of me know that there are both of those, right?

So I'm not trying to soften the hard experiences with on gratitude. I just might not have access to on gratitude when I'm in a particular state. And that is very real and true to what's happening for me. But for me, spirit is so much like the way that I might experience the challenge and the hopelessness of a moment when I also somewhere know that there is another state that I also have access to.

It's just a different kind of experience of that hopelessness.

Ain B: I'm hearing the invitation to be inhabiting all of the ranges that we have access to. And that is a way of bringing, bringing that kernel of a thing through, right? Where we can be in whatever the state is that might n- be the non-coveted state, let's just call it. But remembering that it's not always, and that there will be a return and a shift and a change to many other states.

And so yeah, I appreciate that. How do we... Someone said once, I was in a conversation about anger, and, you know, in, in our society, we ha- well, there's a lot of anger that is being suppressed and coming out sideways. I think that's a large part of this moment as well. And then there's anger that's just allowed to roam free and be chaotic and fatal, and that's also a problem.

But this person was naming that if we don't know how to access our own anger and also be able to express it, then we're actually not inhabiting the fullness of ourselves, right? 'Cause that is a part of who we are.

Dr. Teresa Lau: That's absolutely right. And I think for me, when I hear you, um, share that story, I think that just takes learning and practice, and I, I for sure am, like,

in that study of how to actually feel and inhabit my anger and be able to express it in a way that doesn't harm myself or anyone else.

It's really a, a development piece, I think. Yeah. You know, like a, like a growing up and a maturation. Like the plants around us go through their cycles of maturation. I, I guess coming back to your question about like what do we owe each other, I, I feel like the question feels like, uh, like it stumps me if I stay at the level of development and maturation that we are at now.

And if I have this sense of like there's learning to do and practicing to do, and actually becoming more mature, developed versions of ourselves as humans, then, then I'm like, "Oh yeah, what do we owe each other?" That's like, that's a big lesson that we need to— Yeah ... figure out and learn, you know, that we do owe each other.

But not from this place of like zero-sum, or transaction, or that, that kind of... It's like on that level, yeah, it's hard. We have created all these structures and societal norms and things like that to kind of navigate the fact that we don't actually know what it is to owe each other what we owe each other.

We don't know how to do that in a way that's life-affirming.

Ain B: Yeah, you know, that question just came through me, so I hadn't given it a ton of thought. But I am always thinking about when will we evolve? And, you know, as you're naming maturation, like that, that is the same question, right? When will we recognize the patterns and stop falling for them or using them against others who don't see the patterns yet?

You know, when will we inhabit our own curiosity, not just about the world and what others are doing that are im- impinging on our, whatever, beliefs or truths, but when we get curious about ourselves and who we actually are, and then interrogate our relationships with the world and our beliefs and, and others?

And, you know, I'm convinced we can do it because I think humans are miracles. We have so much pure potential. And when will we evolve? And I think that question, and I'm giving it to spirit because, uh, like I said, it just came out in my talking, but I think that question is actually, as you're naming a little bit or what I'm hearing in what you're saying, a little bit of question from the future, right?

Because right now, oh my God, I mean, we're not as a collective able to have that conversation. But if we are— if we evolve and mature, then that is the basis of the conversation. Like, that is the place to begin.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Hmm. That is really powerful, Ain. Just your framing of the question coming from the future. It's like, yeah, great. This is a question, an important question. What do we owe each other? And we do not have the capacity to answer that question right now, right? Uh, that is so powerful. That is so powerful. Because I think just like we were saying earlier about if I know that there are more states than

when I'm in this state of hopelessness and, and fear, knowing that there's another state gives me a, a chance to be in the hopelessness in a different way than if I thought this was just how it was forever.

I feel like that, yeah, I say it's so powerful because I feel like, great, what an, what an important question to have. What do we owe each other? And not try to answer it, but live what I'm living right now, knowing that that's an important question. It's like a fundamental question for where we're going. I don't know.

I feel like that could really invite a different way to experience what's happening right now.

Ain B: Thank you for naming that. I'm, I'm hearing more of the, that we get to embody it and practice it and wonder it through the practice of our lives, distinct from sitting down and thinking about it and answering it, you know?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Arguing about it or debating about it or trying to think we can create some political structure around the question. Yeah.

Ain B: Yeah, that part. Would love to avoid that, right? And killing the question in it as opposed to letting it live in us as an opportunity to transform, you know? I think that's also what I'm hearing from what you're naming is I wrote down shape-shifting, right? How do we, in the different frequencies, acknowledging the different levels that are available to us, and that in the daytime we're going between them, and that that is a form of shape-shifting, that if we recognized it as such, then gives us power.

Then it's not, to your point, oh, I'm helpless and sad, and now here's a hill I'm gonna slide down into some type of personal abyss. But is a moment in time, and I can allow it. I should allow it, you know? Maybe even revel in it for a while because I haven't been here in a while, right? And then when it shifts, be also as present to whatever it's shifting to with the awareness that, right, the hopelessness that I was just in, oh, I can appreciate and feel gratitude for not being there.

Like, the, at each changing of the frequency, if you will, there's an opportunity to be in what is the knowing, the personal knowing, and then what is the thing to celebrate, the thing to learn.

Dr. Teresa Lau: This maturity, maturing evolution piece I think is, it feels so central to all that I care about and all that I've been doing. But it's funny how it, if it's not articulated with some regularity, it really just drops away from my awareness of, of what it is that's going on, you know? I, I just appreciate the time that's been, like the range of time that's been invoked here in this conversation together.

It has really just given me so much more space to breathe into this current. So yeah, I think having that other perspective is so helpful. 'Cause like I... It doesn't take me out of where I am, but it gives me a very different kinda context for it, and that gives, that gives everything. That gives us everything.

Ain B: I love that the range of time, I think it points to time travel. Mm. Right? Which is a thing I think about constantly. And I don't necessarily wanna time travel. I mean, I would love to live in the future, but I don't wanna go backwards. But as a way to be in accompaniment with ourselves, right? As we started this conversation, and you're naming, okay, yeah, it's been these, well, now, you know, four to six years, let's say, of you being on this particular part of the spiritual path and spiritual journey, and what has transpired since then, the struggles, and the questions, and the progress, and the, you know, two steps forward, five steps back that happens as well on these paths.

But then that we can also then project ourselves into the future to say, what is, what is required of me in this moment is always, not just for now, it's a practice of devotion to the future, and of wanting to be of a deeper service that's for what lies beyond sort of the scope of what the, what your life can hold, your brain can hold you know, your minds.

You know, you named community. And so I just would love as we begin to close, as you think about this, as we're just ruminating on this piece around evolution and community, I would love to hear what comes up with the joining of those words, concepts, beliefs, core essences of who you are.

Dr. Teresa Lau: I think for, just as I was saying, like e- evolution, transformation, growing is such a, like a core part of what I'm ever up to. Community is also something that has been part of my inception, childhood, all, all of that. You know, my family grew... When I grew up in my family, our family was always engaged in community making, whether it was sort of our blood relatives or beyond that.

As an immigrant family, my grandparents were, um, always supporting and sponsoring some- somebody in their house, in their basement. I thought I had dozens of uncles and cousins growing up because they were always helping someone with a place to live and a, a family really to participate and be part of— Mm-hmm.

as they entered a brand-new country and tried to make a life for themselves. And so it was not part of my cognitive understanding of the world until I was an adult, but as I am moving into this next phase of, of adulthood, I am really understanding that these, this, this idea of sharing what you've got and supporting other people in their pursuit of what it is that they're, that they're wanting, that's just always been part of how I, how I be and how I think about the world and how we move in it, so.

I think my desire around evolution and transformation and ma- maturity for, for our society and for human beings is really to be more at ease with each other in community. Mm-hmm. It's like being able to actually mature and evolve is, is gonna give us so many more ways to be in the community that we're in, you know?

To support ourselves and each other. So to me, they go all... They go hand in hand, they go together, and that's why I'm always trying to figure out how to bring something that I've learned or something that I am holding in a practice to more

people. Mm-hmm. I'm like, "Tell me what you think. Um, try this. See how it is for you." It's my automatic move to offer.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Well, I have to say I feel like that, what you just articulated, Ain, about how we, uh, can allow people to show up exactly as how they are, I feel like that is such a huge part of New Seneca Village and what you offer. Mm-hmm. Like, that's, that feels like the, a very key part of the, um, the heart of it. Like, that folks can really show up as they are.

You build that into the things you say, but it really feels like at the heart of the, like, the vibration of the village.

Ain B: Mm-hmm. Thank you for that reflection. And turns out it's easy to love people when you let them be who they are, right? Like, that friction that I talk about externally, like, I don't feel that in the village because, in part because of what you're naming, right? It's just like, yeah, be you, do you. And then, you know, love just is the natural next thing.

Yeah. Thank you, Dr. T, and thank you for being such a big part of bringing all of that vibration into reality. Mm-hmm. I really appreciate you, and I appreciate you being in this conversation.

[SACRED SHOUTOUT] **Dr. Teresa Lau:** Over a period of years now, I would say the, the shout-out I wanna give, um, is my mom and my relationship with my mom. She is gonna be 79 this year, and still doing so many important things in her life. And the thing that's bringing me a lot of awe and inspiration in our relationship is how we are learning, yet again, maybe for the fifth time, how to be in a relationship with each other as we are now.

At her age, and me at my age, we are in the process of renegotiating again, and each time is sweeter. Each time is sweeter. Yeah. Beautiful.

Ain B: Yeah, yeah. Yes. I love this, uh, evolutionary practice you're in with your mom.

Dr. Teresa Lau: It's, it's a great one that I always mention the one that happened when I turned 40, um, over a decade ago now, where I was, came to the realization that everything she said about me was accurate, just not nice the way she said it.

Ain B: Yeah. Yes.

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yes.

Ain B: We love the older generation. Yes. And yes. Um, okay, thank you. My sacred shout-out is for eyesight. I am so blessed and just feel really connected to the ability to see right now. I have a grandma who has since passed in her late 90s, but she was legally blind for probably 30 years— Mm ... if not more.

And as I've turned 40, my eyesight has shifted and continues to shift. And so I just have... And even when I was young, you know, when people would say, "Well, what's the sense that you wouldn't wanna lose?" It was always eyesight because I love to read. And so that still remains, but it, now I also, it's like I just love to see the gorgeous nature, see the sunsets, see, you know, there's a three-legged deer that comes around my house.

Like, I lo- you know, it's just such a, I receive so much joy through the sense of sight, and I just am feeling really grateful for it and delighted by it. And there's almost something every day to be delighted by. I mean, I have some flowers here that have been probably here for maybe three weeks. There's no water left in them.

They're stunning. I'm like, that I just get to look at them and be like, "Yes, flowers. Okay, I'll give you some more water." But, you know, like, it's just, what a gift. So I'm just feeling really grateful for the sense of sight. So thank you.

[COLLECTIVE PRACTICE] **Ain B:** Okay, collective practice. What is one practice, affirmation, or question that you want to invite our listeners into?

Dr. Teresa Lau: I was mentioning before about how there's so much abundance in life, and energy, and information available in our bodies, and that is my, my practice. Touch your body. Touch your body. Mm-hmm. It doesn't have to be, uh, for a long time, but I will offer two things to consider as you do it. Number one is to choose an intention before you put your hands on your body.

Um, it makes such a huge difference. If you are touching your body with like, "Oh, this hurts, I don't like it," you're gonna get one set of information about that part, and that body part is gonna receive one set of information from your touch. And if you can have an intention of, "I'm so curious what's happening here.

I just wanna know everything there is to know about it," it's a wholly different experience to touch, and it's a wholly different experience for that part of your body to receive touch. Um, and there's no messing this up, 'cause if you find yourself going, "Ah, I don't like this," and you touch it and then you remember, you can always take your hand away, change your intention or question, and come on back.

Ain B: Thank you, Dr. T. Such a masterful healer, so I appreciate this really juicy invitation for all of us. So thank you.

[GUEST BIO] **Dr. Teresa Lau:** I am Dr. Teresa Lau. I'm a chiropractor and somatic educator with over 20 years of clinical experience. I'm called Dr. T by my clients, and I've seen thousands of lives transformed by the lightest touch. I am committed to more of us skillfully inhabiting our bodies and learning relational approaches to healing ourselves and our community.

I live in Oakland on Ohlone land with my partner, and I hail from the East Coast, the DMV, where my family has been for three generations.

Ain B: Thank you, Dr. T. Can you tell people where they can connect with you?

Dr. Teresa Lau: Yes, they can connect with me, um, in the East Bay and in San Francisco. I do house calls at pop-up clinics right now, and I'm also offering online classes and talks and things, and everything's on my website, vibrantbodywellness.com, or on Instagram, also vibrantbody-wellness.

Ain B: Thank you.

[Static Outro]

You've been listening to We Outside. I'm creator and host, Ain B. This show grows from questions at the heart of my work. What nourishes and sustains the people carrying change? How do spirit, nature, community, and restorative strategy deepen the ways we lead, live, vision, and create what comes next?

These questions also guide the offerings at my org, New Seneca Village, where we design restorative residencies and generative learning spaces for leaders and healers to step out of the urgency and to reconnect with the intangibles that expand their capacity to call in a collective future worth having.

Keep the conversation going with us on Instagram or LinkedIn. Tell us what sparked something for you, what questions you're carrying, and what you want to hear more or less of. We Outside is edited by Podglomerate. Learn more at newsenecavillage.org/weoutside.