

## The Human Upgrade: Episode 1133

[00:00:00] **Dave:** You are listening to The Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey. We're going to talk about yoga nidra today with an experienced yoga teacher and author with 20 years of experience. Her name is Tracee Stanley. Tracee, welcome to the show.

[00:00:19] **Tracee:** Thank you so much, Dave, for having me. I'm happy to be here.

[00:00:23] **Dave:** You came to my attention because I've had a pretty deep yoga practice for a good number of years. I'm not super active in yoga right now, but I think it still benefits me. I learned a lot of my initial breath work stuff there, and I can still do yoga poses that most people can't because it's gets built into your body.

[00:00:43] And maybe I'll do more. I don't know. And I came across your Radiant Rest book, which is so important. A lot of biohacking isn't about pushing harder. You see all these bros frankly, like, you got to lift more. And actually, no. Whether you're a man or woman, quite often you're over training, you're pushing really hard and you're never recovering.

[00:01:09] And the body goes, push hard, recover, push hard, recover. And so when you write a book about recovery, it's harder to get people's attention because it's not as sexy to say, well, you need to chill, versus, let's go. What made you write a book about rest?

[00:01:26] **Tracee:** That's a great question. So much like you, I've also noticed that people don't want to slow down. And they want to do more, and they feel like in order to be productive, they have to do more, they have to be in the grind. They can't fall behind. So I started noticing all of these different messages that we get from our culture around keep it going or you're going to fall behind.

[00:01:52] And what I remembered was that when I was a film producer years ago, I was a Hollywood film producer, and I was making big action movies. And everyone would always ask me, how do you stay so rested? How do you stay so calm? How do you do so many things when everybody else has one or two different plates spinning?

[00:02:14] How are you spinning all of these different plates and doing it so well? And what I would've said back then was my secret weapon was yoga nidra. I actually was introduced to that practice in 2001, and I used it as a hack before I knew the word biohacking or hacking.

[00:02:36] **Dave:** It was an ancient hack, isn't it?

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[00:02:38] Tracee: It's the original hack. And so I just started doing short yoga nidras in my trailer at home. I was working 16, 18-hour days. And I've been practicing yoga nidra pretty much daily, at least three or four times a week at the minimum for the last 20 years. And so when I was asked to write this book, I was actually approached by Shambhala, the publisher, and they asked me to write the book.

[00:03:10] I thought, well, what is my offering that I have? Because there are a couple of books out there on yoga nidra, but not a lot of them, and I don't think any of them actually talk about this message that we get from the over culture, from mainstream culture, the messages around rest that we might have received from our parents, that we might have received from those mentors or people that we really look up to.

[00:03:37] And so I felt that it was really necessary, especially post pandemic, that this book needed to come out into the world. Because what I saw in my circles were people who were absolutely exhausted, people who were afraid to take a break and be intentional about rest, but they would say, oh no, but I sleep eight hours a night. It's like sleep is not rest. Sleep is a biological need. Intentional rest and practices like yoga nidra are something completely different.

[00:04:08] **Dave:** You went from the Radiant Rest idea to something that is your newest work. It's called The Luminous Self, where you're looking at these sacred practices from yoga, the rituals, and one of the secrets of the biohacking movement, the reason that I started it the way I did and introduced it to the world is that I know damned well that yoga works.

[00:04:32] And I've been to the Himalayas. I've been to Mount Kailash. I've been to the Andes and done training in different lineages around the world. When you have data from your Oura Ring that validates ancient practices when millions of people are using ghee in their coffee, oh my god, that's an ancient Ayurvedic practice.

[00:04:50] But now we're showing that it works. So the Western mind that has to believe it works before we could just look at the data or before we can just try it, it becomes more accessible. So I wanted to prove that things like yoga nidra would work because now we have enough people doing it and recording it and talking about it.

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[00:05:09] What I'd like you to do, because you come from the lineage of this, can you define yoga nidra for listeners and the way you're using those words and what it means to do that on a daily practice?

[00:05:22] **Tracee:** Yeah. So the word nidra actually means sleep. And we know that yoga means union. And this idea of yoga nidra is this practice of conscious sleep where the body goes into a state of deep relaxation or sleep but remains awake and aware. So we can think about this idea of the brainwave states, and we can think about that right now we're in probably this low to mid beta brainwave because we're in this relaxed conversation, people who are listening to this at home or maybe in low beta.

[00:06:02] But if I were to ask you to close your eyes and lie down and to start to become aware of the breath that's moving into the body right now and the breath that's moving out. We slowly bring our awareness inward and we're moving into this alpha brainwave state. Yoga nidra allows us to become even more relaxed, where we become attuned to this place that is the delta brainwave state. And when we're in the delta theta brainwaves, we start to move into this place of between waking and sleeping, the liminal space.

[00:06:44] And that's the place that we train ourselves to hover when we're practicing yoga nidra. So some people might be familiar with this idea of the hypnagogic state, which is that place just before you're about to fall asleep. And some of you can think back maybe to when you were in school and you were having a lecture and you were really tired and all of a sudden you were about to nod off.

[00:07:08] And there's that point where you're like, oh, it's so blissful. The sleep is calling me, but I'm still awake. And that's where we learn to hover in yoga nidra. There have been different research studies that were done, and the first ones were done in the early seventies. The two scientists that did their first research and clinical biofeedback, they brought in the yogis because they understood that they were able to hover in these places.

[00:07:41] And what they discovered was that they could actually be producing predominantly delta brainwaves, which basically means that you are asleep and that you have no awareness of your external surroundings, but yet they could recall with such accuracy the conversations that were happening between the technicians while they were in this state of sleep.

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[00:08:08] So yoga nidra is really this place that allows our body to fall asleep, to rest, and to heal. But it allows us to, in some ways, we can say, fall asleep to the ego and awaken to the soul, because when we're in that liminal space, we have so much connection to the unconscious, to the dream world. It's really a fascinating place to be. That's why I teach it.

[00:08:40] **Dave:** It's funny when we talk about this. My neuroscience company's called 40 Years of Zen, and the idea is you come in for five days and we build our own amplifiers, have our own software. It's pretty advanced, and we glue electrodes through head and we show you how to access these states.

[00:09:00] So it's a really intense five days of personal development, but at the end of it, you have brainwaves that look like someone who spent 20 or 40 years meditating daily because you learn how to access with awareness these states. And when you get really into the-- I hesitate to say the science behind yoga nidra or any meditation, there's already science behind it.

[00:09:26] The way science works is you observe something, you make a hypothesis, you test hypothesis, and if it works, you do it more. And so this practice is the result of thousands of years of science, whether or not you have electrodes that can measure it. That actually doesn't matter. It's just another proof point. So a lot of arrogant Western thought is like, well, that's not scientific. It's like, no, you're just acting like a douche bag

[00:09:55] But when you get into measuring it, you realize delta's a broad spectrum, and you can have high power delta brainwaves, but if they're not orderly or they're at the wrong spectrum of delta in the wrong part of the brain, it doesn't work. And maybe you spend 10 years in a cave and you finally get it, or you get some feedback and it's much faster.

[00:10:19] And then the combination of where in the brain with what's-- it's almost like which song are you playing with all the different brainwaves, and how do you become a better musician with your brain? And it's a beautiful thing. And I feel lucky to have meditated in caves, literally in the Himalayas, and also to have looked at my brainwaves for six months, which has me even more convinced that yoga nidra is a powerful practice, whether or not you ever hook something up to your head. And you're the example of someone's, I just do it, and it just works, and it's free.

[00:10:51] **Tracee:** It's free. That's the thing. It's free. And I really appreciate you calling back to the original spiritual traditions that have been doing these practices for millennia and the lineages

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of passing these practices on whether the science has caught up to it or not, which thanks to people like Dr. Richard Miller from iRest and the research that they've done at Walter Reed Hospital, we know that yoga nidra works.

[00:11:21] We know that. And at the same time, those of us who are our own yogis or yoginis in our own lab, which is basically our little rest nest that we set up in our own home, we also know it works. People who do yoga nidra for the first time, they always come back most of the time. I won't say always.

[00:11:43] Most of the time they come back or come out of the yoga nidra and say, what just happened to me? Where did I go? I went someplace that felt so peaceful and so relaxed that first of all, I realized that I thought I was rested, and I just realized that I have not been rested. I just realized and touched what real rest and peace feels like.

[00:12:09] **Dave:** The other night I had a couple of friends over for dinner, really cool guys. And one of them has a two-hour a day transcendental meditation practice. And so we were talking about some relatively esoteric meditation stuff and I said, well, breathe into your feet. He said, what do you mean? How long have you been meditating? What are you talking about?

[00:12:31] And he had never done a body scan meditation before. So I led him through it and I was actually planning to teach him how to breathe into his penis because that's an advanced tantric technique. And I was like, you need to learn how to do this because it's going to blow your partner away.

[00:12:44] But we ended up talking just the basics, like breathing into your heart and expanding the field. And because this has been such a deep part of my practice and the forgiveness state that is the one I teach at 40 Years of Zen, it's so based in loving, kindness, and the open-hearted things. I'm like, oh my gosh. We have all these people who are like, I'm meditating, but they don't know the different flavors of meditation. It's like, I'm eating, but I only eat Thai food.

[00:13:10] **Tracee:** Mm-hmm.

[00:13:10] **Dave:** There's a big universe out there. How common is yoga nidra as a technique compared to all the other stuff out there?

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[00:13:16] **Tracee:** Oh wow. Yoga nidra is really at the beginning stages of being understood and practiced. I can say in my own eco chamber, everyone is practicing intentional rest, deep relaxation, body scan, and yoga nidra because people who have been practicing yoga for maybe the last 5, 6, 7 years, they started to get dabs of yoga nidra.

[00:13:46] But what I really love is the fact that people who have been meditating for a long time and feel like meditation is the only place where it's at, the spine needs to be perpendicular to the floor in order to have some experience. Because we're thinking about this idea of, oh, we want Kundalini to rise. And so that's one of the reasons why people love meditation.

[00:14:11] What they don't realize sometimes is that yoga nidra amplifies your meditation practice and takes it to another level. Not only does it do that, but it actually helps you sleep because it teaches you how to go into that-- you start to recognize, oh, this is the sleeper's breath.

[00:14:33] I can access this place and I can allow myself to sleep. I can see this portal that leads to who knows where. And I find that portal so much easier when I practice yoga nidra every day than if I don't. And so it is at the beginning stages. There's a lot of talk about things like non-sleep deep rest, which is an acronym that someone created for what we are talking about, which is the original practice of yoga nidra.

[00:15:05] **Dave:** Someone rebranded yoga nidra? Wow. Who would've thought? It's not like different spiritual gurus haven't been borrowing concepts from each other all the time. And I get a little bit triggered when people talk about appropriation. I'm like, this is ancient wisdom appropriate for the whole planet.

[00:15:28] I don't care where you're from. Something from the ancient Himalayan practice that happened 10,000 years ago, let's just talk about it. And if you need to rebrand it for your people, okay, fine, whatever, but let's talk about it because it's important.

[00:15:43] **Tracee:** Yeah. I think the main thing is as long as you make the acknowledgement of where it comes from, which I see happening, even when people talk about non-sleep deep rest, they're talking about where it's coming from. And I think we have to acknowledge where things come from because I'm a geek.

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[00:16:00] I like to research, and I think if I learn a technique and someone tells me, oh, I learned it from this lineage in this place, I'm going to do a deep dive. And when I do a deep dive, I find out even more that was left out of what they were teaching, and then I get to get even more connected to the practice.

[00:16:23] **Dave:** One of the interviews-- there's 1200 on the show now, so I've talked to a lot of very wise people, was from a Harvard professor named Daniel P. Brown, who is one of the top experts in hypnosis in the world. But in his spare time, he translates 13th century Sanskrit cave meditation instructions. So of course I had to go buy all the books.

[00:16:43] I haven't read them all, but they're like cookbooks. Literally, step one, do this, do this. And they're very precise. I'm like, oh my God. How much ancient wisdom have we just ignored that's just sitting there in scrolls and all over the place or trying to rediscover it when we could just look to the ancient practices?

[00:17:02] And we also run into this really interesting thing, having like-- I'm very cross lined. I've studied with different people all over. And you realize, oh my gosh, like this traditional Chinese energy medicine thing from 5,000 years ago, it's almost identical to this thing that's from a shamanic practice from South America. And you just realize these are all part of the human instruction manual that we're missing.

[00:17:29] **Tracee:** Ah, so true. It's so true. Yeah, I definitely agree with that. And I almost feel like there's a frequency that came down at some point and it was just translated according to culture because I've seen the same thing. It's like so many of the traditions are so similar. And I do think that it's time for us to go back to the simplicity of these things.

[00:17:54] **Dave:** And you don't need tens of thousands of dollars to do yoga nidra. You don't need even 200-dollar consumer device. And I talk about all the biohacking things like that. What does work really, really well, though, is having a working metabolism. And I've measured the brainwaves of people, so have some MCT oil.

[00:18:15] **Tracee:** Mm-hmm.

[00:18:16] **Dave:** Because having a little bit of ketones and having worked with some of these gurus, when they do it, they're like, my shamanic powers, which I already realized they're

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clearer. I can tune in better. I can go deeper. So self care, which includes rest, your first book that came out before *The Luminous Self*, the new book. You're talking about that.

[00:18:38] So if you're rested and you're full powered and then you do yoga nidra, you're like, oh my God, I just went to a new place. Or maybe you actually do a kundalini practice, which is not yoga nidra, and you're like, I just had 75 whole body orgasms and I can barely talk. They're just not the same thing, and they're all good, right?

[00:18:57] **Tracee:** Yeah. I want to go back to something that you just said about all the devices and the things because what I tend to notice is that people are willing to pay the 200 or \$500 for the device, but they don't want to do the 11-minute practice. They feel like they don't have the time.

[00:19:16] **Dave:** Mm-Hmm.

[00:19:17] **Tracee:** We may have extra resources to spend on these other things, but time is a resource that people feel like, oh, I don't have time to lay down and rest. And the newest research has basically shown that all it takes is 11 minutes of a daily yoga nidra practice to make a difference, to shift how you sleep, to shift your memory, your recall, all of these different things that we want for productivity. It actually allows you to have more ease in life.

[00:19:49] So I do want to just say that if people can look at some of the things that they waste time doing and things that distract them, and if they can just for maybe even seven days as an experiment say, let me get rid of the distractions, one thing that distracts me every day, and let me replace that with yoga nidra on a daily basis for seven days, you will definitely see a huge shift in your life in seven days.

[00:20:18] **Dave:** Can I offer something that might be helpful for your followers and students that came across my awareness?

[00:20:27] **Tracee:** Please.

[00:20:29] **Dave:** This is my most recent book, and I call it the Laziness Principle, which it turns out no one wants to hear about laziness. It's repellent, almost like death, even though, look, acknowledge that your body wants to save energy, and that's a core motivation, even though in



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your mind you want to do the hard thing, but your body is telling you the couch is more attractive than whatever.

[00:20:49] But we also know the body responds really well to saving money, or time, or energy, which is why coupons feel so valuable. So if you're going to develop a seven-day yoga nidra practice, you could say, all right, I am going to save 45 minutes a day. with my yoga nidra practice. And the body's like, yes, 45 free minutes. Saving time. Isn't that great?

[00:21:12] And you go and you spend your 11 minutes, which it turns out a 30-minute practice of yoga nidra is about two hours of deep sleep. So you're basically, I don't have to do deep sleep even. You probably will. So you use the thing that marketers do with coupons to convince your ego that it wants to do yoga nidra. What do you think?

[00:21:32] **Tracee:** I think anything that we can do to convince ourselves to practice more self-care and more self-love in the form of intentional rest is perfect.

[00:21:43] **Dave:** I like that. Now, this is a very serious question about yoga nidra. Can you even be a yogi if you're not vegan?

[00:21:54] **Tracee:** That's such an interesting question. It's funny that you say that because when I first started doing yoga in 1995, I remember this was a thing, like, no, you have to be vegan. And then it was like, okay, I'm not only going to be vegan, I'm going to be raw vegan.

[00:22:15] **Dave:** I was raw vegan when I was a yoga guy. I totally was there. Yeah. Mine was 2001, though. I was a little behind. Okay.

[00:22:23] **Tracee:** And I think that that word yogi is actually very aspirational because when we think about the word yogi, it really refers to the sage. It really refers to the enlightened one. And so I think for those of us who are here on earth, we have so many karmas and things to work out that we just need to do our best.

[00:22:46] And I don't think that veganism is healthy for every person, and we all have a different makeup. So I would say the answer is no. But I also think that for a yogi, a yogi is the sage, and they're probably eating very little in a cave, and someone's just delivering a little bit of chai and something to sustain them.

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[00:23:11] **Dave:** Uber Eats. Yeah. They're operating in caves now. That's how it works. I'm reminded of a couple of things. I had a yoga teacher after I got back from a trip to the Himalayas. I spent about three months out there and went around Mount Kailash, meditated in ashrams, and it was really learning new skills.

[00:23:34] So I'd already done a lot of yoga, and I had been that raw vegan, but you can't be raw vegan when you're there because there's just no food. I attended a 10-day, mostly silent meditation, and there's a big science. Five rules, no killing, no lying, no cheating, no sex, and no drugs, I think were the rules.

[00:24:00] And I got to the next place down on this trip to Lhasa and I talked to the head llama and there's a giant yak skin on the prayer pole. I'm like, dude, you're such a hypocrite. If you've spent time in the Himalayas, they like to argue and debate. It's not disrespectful.

[00:24:20] And he's just laughs right in my face. He goes, one death feeds everyone. Oh my gosh. And I actually talk about deaths per calories on a vegan diet. And not only did it make me sick, I was killing more animals than I was aware of because I hadn't thought about it before.

[00:24:35] And if you're looking to reduce suffering of all beings, which is the core tenet of Buddhism, you really have to consider whether one respectfully raised and respectfully slaughtered cow, or whatever it is, produces far less deaths and less suffering. And I actually believe that to be the case.

[00:24:55] There's that, and there's my friend, Ken Graham, who was one of my first yoga teachers. And I had learned this about protein and all, and he was teaching seven classes a day mid-20s, and had decided to be vegan because that's what yoga teachers do. And he was starting to get the brain fog and the autoimmune and he was falling apart.

[00:25:16] And I just put my arm, I said, dude, we got to get you back. And I bought him small glutamine and got him to eat some beef. And a week later, he is like, my energy's returning. And I talked to him just a couple years ago, just randomly on Facebook or something, and he's like, Dave, I've been eating this way for 20 years.

[00:25:31] I can still teach seven classes a day. I have healthy kids. This is so amazing. And so my call for people who are meditators, especially very busy with work and meditating, or if

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you're a yoga teacher, rest, like your books say, and fuel yourself in a way that respects your energy, whatever it is. So thank you for the conversation about that.

[00:25:51] **Tracee:** Yeah, no, I totally agree with that. And I started eating fish a while ago for that exact reason.

[00:25:59] **Dave:** Yeah. And a lot of people start there and they end up wherever they are. And maybe it's just butter. A lot of vegetarians are eating butter and they're doing okay. So it doesn't have to be go out and eat a cow. It can be adjust and be questioning and respectful of your beliefs.

[00:26:15] **Tracee:** Mm-hmm. Thank you for that.

[00:26:17] **Dave:** You're so welcome. You say some other stuff that really is powerful in your book. And you talk about yoga as the practice of preparing to die gracefully. And I'm on record saying I want to live to at least 180 because I think I can. But the real reason behind that is I'd like to die at a time and by a method of my choosing, which in my understanding of the world, that's a good death. Tell what is a graceful death.

[00:26:51] **Tracee:** Yeah. Well, I think a graceful death is definitely one in which you have considered your last moments of life way before you learn that you are about to die. That you consider the fact that even though we like to think that we are eternal, that this body is not eternal, but that we go back into nature and perhaps there is a part of us that is eternal.

[00:27:25] And so it's one of the reasons why I put a couple of death practices in The Luminous Self, is because I noticed the reaction to people. I used to have this practice where I would write my own eulogy every birthday, and that eulogy would include all of the things that I left undone that I really wanted to do and that I had regrets around.

[00:27:52] And that would fuel me to be able to do those things in the coming year. And I remember telling a few people that this was my practice and they were horrified. Oh my God, if you write your eulogy, that seems like bad luck. And why would you want to do that? I was like, why would I not? What would happen if I learned tomorrow, God forbid, that this was my last day on Earth?

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[00:28:16] Why wouldn't I want to live now from however it would be that I would want to be living in that last minute of my life? And for me, when I think about the last minute of my life, and this was a practice that I was given from a teacher named Charlie Morley-- he's a former Buddhist monk-- is narrow everything down to the last second of your life. What would you do in that last second? And so when I did that practice, I was like, okay, I'm going to bring that forward. And last second, I want to love.

[00:28:53] **Dave:** Yeah. What would you do in that last second? You would love?

[00:28:55] **Tracee:** I would love. And so why wouldn't I not make my whole life about love? And the other column of things is what would you stop doing? If you learn today that you had one year left to live, what are the things that you would stop doing? Well, I would definitely stop looking at Instagram. I would probably stop bingeing on Netflix.

[00:29:21] **Dave:** Stop listening to podcasts. Oh, wait, no. Don't do that.

[00:29:24] **Tracee:** Maybe depending on the podcast, but there would be a lot of things that I would stop doing because I have limited time. And suddenly everything gets really clear about what is really important. And if I can devote myself to what's really important and who's really important, then my life in the here and now and the present starts to shift.

[00:29:45] **Dave:** That's really beautiful. And people will think about almost anything before they'll think of death. And I've seen books about death, and they never perform well. And it seems only really advanced spiritual people do it. And because of whatever spiritual stuff I've gone through and all, I don't have any fear.

[00:30:10] I'm curious and a little bit joyful, the same as having kids, like, whenever. The next time I die is like, oh yeah. It's like a reverse birth. Let's see what happens there. And in the limited experience I have with that kind of thing, I had a family member who's an atheist. My grandfather passed.

[00:30:31] Right before he passed, he said, I've been an atheist my whole life because I'm a scientist. And now that I'm on my deathbed, I've been really reconsidering all of the spiritual things and all the Christianity stuff. And the whole family's leaning in, he goes, and I'm more convinced than ever that it's bullshit.

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[00:30:54] And then he says, but because I'm a scientist, he goes, I've never done this before, this dying thing. And I'm thinking to myself, I think you have my friend, but I'm not going to say anything. And he then says, I'm going to leave a sign if I can after I die. So just look for one. I'll do what I can. And of course, a week later, and I'm not saying he did or didn't do this, no knows. His name was Larry. There's a big billboard that goes up in the town where he died. I had no idea. I just said, where's Larry?

[00:31:26] **Tracee:** Oh my goodness.

[00:31:27] **Dave:** And there's no logo. I was like, what kind of ad is this? Maybe it was coincidence. I don't really know. I guess I never will. But you can be curious about death or you can be terrified of it. Curiosity stops fear, and dying in fear and terror seems like a bad way to go, even if life's over. So love is a great thing, and maybe curious love is a great thing, right?

[00:31:50] **Tracee:** Yeah, absolutely. And we really have to come to terms with the fact that we are closer-- you and I right now are closer to dying than we were when we started this podcast.

[00:32:02] **Dave:** I don't agree. I'm aging backwards.

[00:32:05] **Tracee:** Well, you might be aging backwards, and I have to come to the Upgrade Labs so I can learn how to age backwards too.

[00:32:13] **Dave:** I'm so joking.

[00:32:15] **Tracee:** But we're closer to death. And the more that we look at that and know that to be true, we can think about what are the practices that prepare us to be able to release and let go gracefully and consciously. And yoga nidra is actually one of those practices. Yoga nidra is a practice of dissolution, and that is what happens when we die. We dissolve.

[00:32:46] **Dave:** How do we know that that's how it is? All the skeptics I've spoken to, including many of my family, saying, you can't know any of that, how do we know?

[00:32:55] **Tracee:** That's true. You can't know any of that. But what we do know is that the physical body does decay, and that's a form of dissolution.

[00:33:04] **Dave:** Fair point.

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[00:33:06] **Tracee:** Okay. So if nothing else, we dissolve back. If we were to leave your dead corpse on the ground, you would eventually turn to dust, and that's a dissolution. Now we can argue about what happens to consciousness because nobody knows. And we can also argue, do we choose a new body? Do we choose a new something? We can all argue about that, but the fact of the matter is that the material body, the physical body is going to dissolve.

[00:33:38] **Dave:** In fact, it doesn't even exist anyway. Because you eat something, it becomes part of you, you poop some other part of you out, and you're like, oh wait, I'm actually just more like an eddy in matter. Just a slow moving eddy that farts. So of course it dissolves because it didn't ever exist.

[00:33:55] **Tracee:** There you go.

[00:33:57] **Dave:** Have you ever taken acid?

[00:33:58] **Tracee:** I haven't, but people always think that I do when they read Radiant Rest. They're like, this is just what happened to me when I did my acid trip. I'm like, no, you can just meditate.

[00:34:07] **Dave:** You're not of the Ram Dass meditation school, no other psychedelics, no mushrooms.

[00:34:11] **Tracee:** No drugs.

[00:34:12] **Dave:** No medicines. Okay. Why not?

[00:34:16] **Tracee:** I think in the beginning, way back when, I used to know people who would go to Peru and they would sit with a shaman for a long time, long, long time.

[00:34:27] **Dave:** I did it in 1999. Yeah.

[00:34:29] **Tracee:** Right, around that time. And it seemed, because I think I was in the career that I was in at the time as a film producer, I was like, well, I need to stay in control of my mind. That was definitely the thing. And I think the deeper that I got into my yoga practice, the more I had these mystical experiences that I really felt like, I don't think I need to do this because some of the things that people are telling me are happening to them, I'm having these experiences in these deep meditative states and definitely in yoga nidra, and definitely in doing liminal

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dreaming practices. So I feel like I'm not called to do any of these things right now. It's not to say that I would never try plant medicine or I would never try acid, but at this moment, I feel like my experiences are so mystical that I want to know that this is all possible in this body without any extra help.

[00:35:37] **Dave:** I will say that the doing holotropic breathing with Stan Groff, which was meant to be a replacement for LSD, but it's out of ancient yogic practices, is where it evolved, that and some of the neurofeedback things that I do at 40 Years of Zen, I've had more spiritual experiences, seen more past lives on that than I have from any psychedelic, and I'm not opposed to psychedelic because I use them consciously.

[00:36:04] And your advice there, if you're not called, maybe don't do it, is really important, especially with the more dangerous ones like ayahuasca, where it's not like it's without risk. But there's also a lot of papers showing that Buddhist meditation or any meditation also has risks. People meditate, they go crazy, even in the very ancient literature. So how dangerous is yoga nidra versus LSD?

[00:36:33] **Tracee:** Wow. Well, that's a great question that I can't answer because I haven't done LSD, but what I can tell you is that traumas can arise when you're in a state of deep rest. So whether you're doing LSD or you're doing some yoga practice, the key for me is integration, is that if you have an experience and you have no way to integrate that experience, to understand that experience, then I think anything can become dangerous.

[00:37:07] So what I would say is go slow. A lot of us want to just go, okay, I am going to burn myself in this fire of time meditation right away. Instead, focus on a grounding yoga nidra practice where you can actually feel and remember yourself as the earth and that the land of your body is the earth and that your consciousness is the same as the consciousness of the earth. Start there. That's mind blowing enough. That will change your life when you realize that you're not separate from nature.

[00:37:44] **Dave:** It's a common misperception that people have. I have a friend who said, oh, I realize I'm more like some kind of tree from the rainforest because it has its own ecosystem. And I started laughing, and I'm like, really? You think that tree has its own ecosystem, do you? It's in

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the middle of a freaking jungle. And the fact that it has some of its own bugs, no, it's entirely interdependent on the world around it. And humans are the same way, even if we don't like that.

[00:38:14] **Tracee:** That's right.

[00:38:15] **Dave:** As a teacher of yoga nidra, how do you teach that interconnectedness as a part of the practice?

[00:38:24] **Tracee:** Yeah, I think the first thing that we realize when we are practicing yoga nidra, because we're doing it in a supine position, which makes it different than meditation, is that we're allowing the earth to hold us. And when the earth holds us and we tune into that frequency of the earth, we start to realize that there is part of us that is made up of the same substance that the earth is.

[00:38:53] When we start to see those little tiny stars of light that we place in the body and we see our whole inner body as a universe or as a constellation of stars, we remember the universe outside of us, and then we all of a sudden may feel like, oh, my body has dissolved and I am the universe. And so we have opportunities.

[00:39:17] And again, the rishis who were the sages from thousands of years ago, they were in nature having these realizations of different states of consciousness and then trying to replicate them with practices. So I imagine that at some point in a forest somewhere, there was a sage realizing that he was the universe.

[00:39:40] **Dave:** Because he was in a forest.

[00:39:42] **Tracee:** Because maybe he was under the dark night sky and he was gazing up at the stars and realized that he was made of starlight. And then thousands of years later, we get this information from research that says, oh, we're made of starlight.

[00:39:59] **Dave:** Have you experienced that where you're meditating and you dissolve into the universe?

[00:40:04] **Tracee:** Many times. The first time I didn't know what the heck happened to me. I was like, what just happened?



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[00:40:12] **Dave:** My first time when I started going there, I couldn't see or sense my arms and legs. They just went away, and I'm like, this is weird. I'm sitting here. I have no limbs. And I didn't freak out because I had electrodes on my head, like, I know where I am, and then I'm like, I've got no body. And then same thing. Suddenly you're distributed across everything. But it didn't feel scary. It just felt wondrous.

[00:40:35] **Tracee:** Yeah. And people who are listening might have had this experience in Shavasana, where suddenly the teacher's telling you, okay, start to move your limbs or your fingers, and you realize, wait a second, I can't tell where my body ends and where the floor begins. I feel expansive. That feeling of spaciousness and expansiveness, that's a miracle because that's really who we are. We get to experience the wholeness and the fullness of who we are in these practices.

[00:41:09] **Dave:** It's transformational. And if you're listening to this and you're saying, what are they talking about? Just love the universe? That's not the goal of meditation, and neither is levitation or whatever the heck else you think it might be. And I guess a better way of phrasing this would be how many yoga competitions have you won, Tracee?

[00:41:36] **Tracee:** Zero. Yoga is not a competition. Yoga is a meeting of yourself. It really is. It's a practice of meeting yourself over and over and over again. And that's one of the most beautiful things that we can do. And then when we meet ourselves, we also realize how much we have to care for this body.

[00:42:01] Because we fall in love with life. We want to devote ourselves to life. And when we do that, we want to take care of this body, and we want to help other people take care of their bodies, their creative selves, their spiritual selves, their physical selves. It becomes way more expansive.

[00:42:19] **Dave:** I like that a lot. Do you have a teacher now, or are you your own guru? How does that work?

[00:42:29] **Tracee:** Right now, nature is my teacher.

[00:42:32] **Dave:** What does that mean? You've gone to the forest and sit there and birds--

[00:42:37] **Tracee:** Pretty much. I recently left Los Angeles. I moved to Northern New Mexico.

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[00:42:42] **Dave:** Oh my gosh. Which part? This is where I'm from.

[00:42:45] **Tracee:** Just north of Santa Fe.

[00:42:47] **Dave:** Oh, wow. Okay. Yeah, that's my old stomping grounds. My family's actually from Espanola, part of my family.

[00:42:55] **Tracee:** Oh. I'm very close to Espanola.

[00:42:58] **Dave:** Eat a sopapilla made in tallow for me, if you can find one.

[00:43:02] **Tracee:** Oh wow. Yes, I definitely will. So you know how special this land is.

[00:43:09] **Dave:** I was going to ask you if you moved there because of the energetics.

[00:43:12] **Tracee:** Well, to be honest, I originally moved here because of a dream. There was a lucid dream that came through that showed me where I was supposed to be for this next season of my life.

[00:43:24] **Dave:** It's a very unique part of the world, and there is no place with skies like that, that's for sure.

[00:43:29] I.

[00:43:30] **Tracee:** Absolutely not. So I get to be close to nature and learn to be in a reciprocal relationship with nature and allow nature to teach me and to hold me. And that right now is this season. I've had many teachers, some who I still call teacher, and it's a combination. But right now I feel like I'm really being held by nature.

[00:43:58] **Dave:** Are you incorporating any indigenous northern new Mexican practices now that you're there? Because the practice on the land there is different than it would be in Tibet. Although the construction's the same, the food's the same, the jewelry is the same. It's shocking that between Navajo and Tibet, I feel like I'm back where I grew up. The practices are different, though. So are you incorporating local stuff?

[00:44:23] **Tracee:** I'm not. I feel like those practices are special for the indigenous culture here. I definitely feel like yoga is my first language. I have been studying ecotherapy and eco-psychology and spiritual ecology, and those are definitely based on many of the indigenous traditions. And so I'm also connecting to some of the traditions from Africa that come from the

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Dagara tribe in West Africa because that's closer to my lineage and where my people come from. And again, going back to what we said earlier, they're so similar.

[00:45:05] **Dave:** It raises an interesting question, and I'll ask you this as a spiritual teacher. I truly don't know the answer to it. I feel like all of us have our lineage from our genetics, our people, wherever they're from, and then we have our past life experience. And then from what I've studied more on the shamanic side of things, the land has its own intelligence that informs the people who are in that area for a while and you form unconscious connections with it.

[00:45:37] So there's regional things appropriate for where on earth you are that are spiritual practices. And then like you said, you have things from your people, and then you also have things, well, okay, maybe I was a meditation teacher in India 17 lives ago and it keeps popping into my meditations and now I know yoga. Which of those do you listen to? How do you mix them?

[00:46:01] **Tracee:** That's interesting because for me, what I noticed, there was one time I was in a meditation and the teacher could see the image of your guru. And who popped in was my father who had passed.

[00:46:20] **Dave:** Interesting.

[00:46:21] **Tracee:** And when I saw that, I thought, oh, this is interesting. I'm calling in a lineage of gurus from my spiritual lineage, but I have a whole slew of gurus from my ancestral lineage. And I need to connect with my ancestors and know who they are in a way that I don't think we're really taught so much in Western culture. And I think that part of what creates a suffering in our culture is not knowing who we are, feeling like we don't belong, feeling separated.

[00:47:00] And what I noticed for myself is that connecting to my ancestors and maybe not being able to specifically pinpoint exact places, but knowing the general region where they came from and beginning to incorporate their foods into my diet and burning incense that they would've burned, and reading about things, it totally started to shift something inside of me that began to feel more whole and more connected to everything else.

[00:47:36] So to answer your question, I don't feel like I get downloads of, oh, I was here in Tibet, or I was here in India. I think I'm using and holding onto the yoga that, like I said, is my

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first language of a spiritual kind, and then in connecting with the earth, I'm learning a different kind of spirituality. And in connecting with my ancestors, that's a remembrance that's coming alive in me in a much different way.

[00:48:08] **Dave:** That's beautiful. So you're continuing to evolve.

[00:48:12] **Tracee:** Yes,

[00:48:13] **Dave:** Do you have kids?

[00:48:14] **Tracee:** I have two step kids.

[00:48:15] **Dave:** Nice.

[00:48:16] **Tracee:** Yeah.

[00:48:17] **Dave:** How do you think parenting has affected your spiritual life?

[00:48:22] **Tracee:** Oh, wow. What a challenge.

[00:48:25] **Dave:** I know, right? Try to meditate with the little kid in the house.

[00:48:29] **Tracee:** I really feel like children, because I've been in the lives of my step kids for over 15 years, so when they were seven and 10 basically, and now they're in their 20s, is that they are a reflection. They will reflect back to you what it is that you're really doing. Even though you might like to think that you're a certain way, they like to question, and they'll mimic things, and you'll start to see, oh, wait. And also what I started to notice is my parents were strict disciplinarians, overly strict, overly protective.

[00:49:12] **Dave:** And I grew up in the US?

[00:49:13] **Tracee:** And I grew up in the US. My dad was from Bermuda. My mom was from New York. And what I noticed is when I first came into their lives, it was like almost like a unconscious thing of how much discipline I wanted to bring in. And I was like, wait a second. I actually know that that form of discipline didn't work and was unhealthy. And so I've got to be able to break that, what we would call in yoga, a samskara, or we could say in English, an imprint that's unconscious because I am creating a legacy.

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[00:49:55] I am creating a lineage within my own family now that I don't want to continue. And so I think that when we are parents, we get to make choices about what information, what lessons, what practices do we want to give to our children in a more conscious way. This is where meditation is really important, is that practices like meditation, yoga nidra, help us to take that pause, to stop ourselves, and to notice when we're doing something that's not in alignment with who we know we want to be.

[00:50:34] If we're not meditating, if we're not practicing yoga nidra and other things, it's really easy just to keep on going and not realize until it's too late. So for me, parenting has been another version of a spiritual practice, being, how can you be loving when you're angry as heck?

[00:50:55] **Dave:** It absolutely can be. I realized when I started doing personal development work, I was about 30, and I really hadn't done much in the way I've structured work because when I did my first holotropic breathing and some other stuff, I found that I was thinking, I'm free of all the programming from my parents, and would like to think that.

[00:51:20] And so I had this long checklist. It was multiple pages of behaviors, little things, parental habits, and it's like, okay, if this happened in your house, go down and check everything yes. Okay. Then if you do that, check yes. And then I go through, I'm like, oh good. I only do some of these things. I'm free of it.

[00:51:38] And then they're like, oh, that other column, check that box if you do the exact opposite. And I was like, God damn it, I'm doing everything my parents did or the polar opposite of everything they did, which means I'm not free of any of it. And I was pretty annoyed actually.

[00:51:52] But that's the meditation and parenting to be like, okay, you're still passing down the imprint in the West, as described, of your parents, and they got it from their parents, who got it from their parents, who probably got it from World War II, who probably got it from World War I, who probably got it from God knows what.

[00:52:08] We've been not so kind to each other for thousands of years. So stuff happens. But to be free of that stuff, meditation helps for parents. And do you think yoga nidra is the best meditation before you have kids, while you have kids when they're young? What's a good way to work on that stuff?

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[00:52:28] **Tracee:** That's such a good question. I would say you want to start yoga nidra before you have children.

[00:52:34] **Dave:** I agree with you.

[00:52:35] **Tracee:** Because then you have a way to incorporate that into the moment you have the baby and you suddenly feel like you don't have any time. Then you can start to teach the kids practices of yoga nidra. And sometimes you might feel like it's all falling on deaf ears. And I had this experience with one of the kids when he was a teenager. I was teaching them yoga nidra and meditation. I was like, oh, it's not going to stick.

[00:53:03] And one day I get this panic phone call, basically him telling me that his best friend just broke up with his first girlfriend and that he needed me immediately to come to my office to teach him yoga nidra and meditation so he would feel better. And I thought, oh, okay. Somehow this has sunk in, that yoga nidra and meditation are helpful to bring ease and release stress and to make someone feel better. And that's a gift.

[00:53:36] **Dave:** Hmm. It is. That's what it's for. But there's other things. There's healing. Have you seen things like the power of eight healing and the healing states that are a part of some advanced practices? How does yoga nidra relate to healing another person or healing yourself?

[00:53:58] **Tracee:** Hmm. So let's talk about the benefits for our sleep-deprived world first of all, just practical. This is proven research. Yoga nidra helps you to reduce the time it takes to fall asleep. It improves your sleep quality, your overall sleep duration. It helps you to increase the time of deep sleep, helps with insomnia.

[00:54:26] At the same time, yoga nidra, and I think I mentioned this before, helps you to connect to what's unconscious. So in that place where you might have a memory that's been suppressed, and this is where we need the support of a good therapist or a good mentor, we can become aware of those patterns that you were just talking about.

[00:54:52] Like, oh, here are the patterns that are unhelpful that I have brought forward from my previous lineage. What can I do to shift it? And you can start to work with that in the form of what's called the sankalpa or a heart's desire within yoga nidra practice. Because when you're in

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this place of deep relaxation, it's actually a good place to start to reprogram the mind and start to shift those neural pathways.

[00:55:24] So what I would also say is, because you're in this state of theta, maybe delta, those states are very healing. That is a place where the physical body and the emotional body can start to heal. So yoga nidra is an extremely powerful practice, and I think we're just at the tip of the iceberg of what is possible with yoga nidra. The military is now bringing in yoga nidra for the soldiers. Maybe I'm not supposed to say that, but that's what's happening.

[00:56:05] **Dave:** Military, at least high-level military operators have been using yogic practices for restoration for a very longtime.

[00:56:13] **Tracee:** Mm-hmm.

[00:56:13] **Dave:** I know Navy Seals and Special Forces guys. There's a lot of biohackers in that group, and they're doing all of the things that are old and new that increase performance. And I think breath work and meditation is something that absolutely is known. Doug Brackmann interestingly, teaches meditation via long distance sniper rifles.

[00:56:41] **Tracee:** Wow.

[00:56:42] **Dave:** And he told me this story, and he said, Dave, my favorite thing to do is to pair up yoga moms with Navy Seals to go to the range. And he said the Navy Seals will be on perfect target on their first shot. And the thing's a mile away. It's crazy stuff, 50 caliber, really heavy duty rifles.

[00:57:01] And he said they'll get the first shot, and the yoga mom will sit down, and they'll do their yoga breath, and they'll get the first shot, and then the second shot. He said, oftentimes, the operators, they'll choke a little bit probably because there's a woman watching him, but probably just because the performance anxiety.

[00:57:16] He said, but the people who do yoga on a regular practice, especially women, you said, they'll put it in time, after time because they have more neurological, more nervous system control. And the trick to making a shot like that is to be relaxed, not to be tense.

[00:57:32] **Tracee:** Mm.

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[00:57:33] **Dave:** I find that to just be a beautiful story. Yes, you can shoot things a mile away while meditating, which is more of a warrior perspective, but it works.

[00:57:43] **Tracee:** Yeah, that reminds me of when people get into really bad car accidents and they're completely calm and relaxed. And then what happens is the EMT will ask, you must practice yoga. Because most of the time people are freaking out and they actually can tell when someone has been practicing yoga for a long time because their state of being is so different.

[00:58:08] **Dave:** I was talking with Hal Elrod this morning. He was over here at the studio. He's the guy from the Miracle Morning, and I just noticed an abnormally large number of my friends have either been struck by lightning, electrocuted, or died in comeback. So did any of those things happen to you that put you on this path?

[00:58:30] **Tracee:** Not yet. Although, I am very careful because we have these crazy storms during the monsoon in New Mexico.

[00:58:37] **Dave:** Oh, in Northern New Mexico, you don't go outside at certain times.

[00:58:39] **Tracee:** You don't go outside. So I'm very conscious of not going outside. And I'm hoping that I don't need to experience that, but it's real. And that definitely does set people on a path because we go back to this idea of dying.

[00:58:54] **Dave:** Yeah.

[00:58:55] **Tracee:** That's going to set you on some spiritual path I think. At least I do know a number of people who've had NDEs and they radically shifted their lives.

[00:59:07] **Dave:** It's common in shamanic initiation. And guys, just for the record, it happens to them before I become friends with them. So I'm not the cause of that.

[00:59:14] **Tracee:** Right.

[00:59:14] **Dave:** To be. Do you ever, now that you're in Northern New Mexico, just get the urge to get a sword and stand outside and say there can be only one?

[00:59:25] **Tracee:** No.

[00:59:26] **Dave:** See, I knew you would get that because you did superhero action movie kind of things. Guys, that's a reference to Highlander, and if you haven't seen it, it's an awesome



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movie. Highlander won. The rest of them were garbage, but one was awesome. The TV series was cool, so there you go.

[00:59:39] **Tracee:** Christopher Lambert, if you don't know.

[00:59:41] **Dave:** Yeah, an absolute, absolute. And it was about immortality too. There you go. It's a pleasure to be able to chat with you because you've had this very successful career as a movie producer and you've developed this, I think people will be able to hear just from the way you communicate, the tone of your voice, if they see the video on YouTube, for sure.

[01:00:02] You've got a presence, a spiritual teacher kind of presence. You also have the yoga teacher ability when you want to make a point to slow your voice and do the things that I was hearing you do, so that it goes in deeply, which is also a skill. I was like, she's good. I see what she's doing right now.

[01:00:21] **Tracee:** I love that.

[01:00:26] **Dave:** Now, you've written in the Luminous Mind that there's some root causes of suffering. In fact, you talk about there being a root cause of suffering. What is it?

[01:00:42] **Tracee:** Hmm. So in yogic philosophy, it is known as avidia, and avidia is known as misperception or ignorance. And it is said that Avidia has four feet.

[01:00:55] **Dave:** Is this Nvidia or-- because it seems like--

[01:00:59] Avidia.

[01:01:00] **Dave:** I think they've named it that way for a reason, because it's about misperceiving things, and they make graphics cards. So interesting. Anyway, keep--

[01:01:07] **Tracee:** Oh, that's funny. I don't know that company.

[01:01:09] **Dave:** I know, yeah.

[01:01:10] **Tracee:** So vidia means knowledge. And usually when you put an A in front of something in Sanskrit, not always, it means away from or not. So away from knowledge is opposite of knowledge. And we can think about this as having four feet. And the four feet are attachment, aversion, fear of death, and basically greed.

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[01:01:39] And so if we think about all the things that make us suffer in the world, they pretty much can be nailed down to all five of those things. And so for us to be able to be aware, we need to be able to think about questions like, what are the things that I want to make sure never happen to me?

[01:02:04] **Dave:** That's aversion.

[01:02:06] **Tracee:** Right. What are the things that I absolutely hate? Still aversion. What do I want to make sure I don't lose? Or who do I want to make sure I don't lose? Attachment. And then we already spent some time talking about the fear of death. And so if I think about situations that may not seem like they're connected to death, but let's say I'm at my office and I see this new person who just got hired has come into the office two hours earlier than I have, and they stay two hours later, if anybody goes to the office anymore, it's basically like, I'm afraid for my job. I'm afraid that I might get replaced. If you really start to boil that down, that boils down to a fear of death.

[01:03:00] **Dave:** Mm-hmm.

[01:03:00] **Tracee:** A fear of losing, a fear of dying. And so if you can start to notice how your behavior is actually connected to these four feet of ignorance, then you can start to see, where am I caught? We're all caught. I'm caught. You are caught, I'm sure. We're going to be caught probably until the day we decide to release that last breath.

[01:03:30] But we can free ourselves little by little. And spiritual practice is really about freedom from suffering. And then when we understand our own suffering, I think we open up our own heart of compassion to see others suffering and to understand more about humanity because we've seen it in ourself. That's what I feel. It's like I've noticed that me doing these practices and doing the self-inquiry that's required helps me to see the suffering in another person and to have compassion.

[01:04:08] **Dave:** Can you explain the difference between compassion and empathy and equanimity?

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[01:04:16] **Tracee:** Hmm. So I will say that for me, my definition of compassion is that I see myself in you, and I know that we are connected. And in that compassion, I also know that I'm not free until you're free.

[01:04:36] **Dave:** Mm. It's a very Buddhist.

[01:04:39] **Tracee:** Yeah. And in that compassion, part of my being here on this earth right now is to help alleviate some kind of suffering. Not because I want to alleviate my own suffering, but because I can also feel your suffering, which I then think moves a little bit into empathy. But what I think the difference between empathy and compassion is that empathy doesn't require me necessarily to do something about it, for there to be an action.

[01:05:11] I can pass someone on the street who's suffering, but what happens? People will have empathy for someone they see on the street who's suffering and they keep driving by. They don't actually do anything. That's my own definition.

[01:05:27] And then I think the equanimity is really the balance of being able to hold the both and, to being able to hold, yes, they're suffering in the world, but I also have to experience joy. I also have to reclaim joy for myself. Yes, there's the hard work that I need to do to get where I want to get, but I also have to hold rest, and I have to be able to devote myself to self-care at the same time.

[01:05:58] **Dave:** That's a lovely way to explain it. I'd love for you to critique the way I think about it, so we'll share notes on these states.

[01:06:08] **Tracee:** Yeah.

[01:06:09] **Dave:** And I think of it as empathy is you can feel another person's pain or maybe joy, but you're feeling other people's things, which is great because if you can't feel them, it's hard to develop compassion. And I look at compassion as automatically wishing others well.

[01:06:29] **Tracee:** Mm. I love that, automatic.

[01:06:31] **Dave:** So it happens before you can judge them or anything else. Like, oh, I genuinely want that to happen. And then they might cut you off in traffic or whatever, but you've already wished them well and even though they cut you off in traffic, you still wish well. So

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empathy is step one, compassion, step two, but then equanimity is like you get to choose your state.

[01:06:49] So even if someone cuts you off in traffic and a volcano erupts, I'm still going to experience happiness and joy right now, which is the highest thing. That's the thing I'm working on. No matter whatever happens in one domain of business or in relationships or another, you can be happy or you can not be happy and to make that a chooseable state.

[01:07:11] **Tracee:** I love everything that you just said. I'm going to add one refinement to the compassion piece--

[01:07:17] **Dave:** Let me hear that.

[01:07:19] **Tracee:** Because you're making me think, is that compassion, you use this word automatic, so we have this automatic care for someone else's wellbeing. And I think maybe a deeper level of compassion is despite the fact of our differences, despite the fact that I judge you, because we all have judgment, I still wish for your wellbeing.

[01:07:45] **Dave:** Oh, that's neat because I'm looking at automatic means it happens before you can think. And you're saying it happens before you can think and even after you think it's still present, which is a great refinement. I like that. Thank you.

[01:07:57] **Tracee:** Yeah. Thank you. That was fun.

[01:08:01] **Dave:** Do you do channeling?

[01:08:03] **Tracee:** That's such an interesting question that has been up for the last week. I believe that being able to be connected is a form of channeling. Whether we decide, we want to call it channeling, it's just the label. But I think being connected and being able to deeply listen, we could say is channeling. I don't consider myself a channeler. I consider myself a deep listener. And then being able to act on what I hear, for sure.

[01:08:41] **Dave:** There's an inner knowingness that you develop when you get enough awareness of the ego where you realize, wow, I used to just have to think about that a lot. And now I realize I already knew it. I just needed to know how to not think about it. And so suddenly decision making can be much faster.

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[01:08:59] **Tracee:** Yes.

[01:08:59] **Dave:** And it feels like channeling is, well, let me just verbalize that inner knowingness. And I'm friends with people like Lisa Williams, who's taught 40,000 people out a channel. It's a skill. You can do it. Yoga nidra is a skill. Anyone can do it. Some people might be more profound or deeper than others, but these are things humans can do, which I always find really, really interesting.

[01:09:23] I'm not a particular channeler, but I have friends who do it, and they sometimes just know stuff. And I used to think all this was such BS, and then years ago when I was creating the 40 Years of Zen program, I sat with a woman who trained in Tibet and she trained with the aboriginals, and she would just snap into these channeling states and speak some language she didn't know and then come back. And said, what do you do for a living?

[01:09:52] And she's like, oh, I work for a major tech company. And I said, really? What do you do? She said, oh, R&D. I said, so are you a physicist or something? She said, oh, no. She said, I don't have any training in that stuff. When the advanced R&D material science team gets stuck, they ask me and then I channel what to do, and then they try it and it works. I'm like, oh my God.

[01:10:11] **Tracee:** And that's a theta state. Yeah. That's a theta state. That's being able to put yourself in a theta state in that place of inner knowing where you connect to the collective unconscious.

[01:10:23] **Dave:** Like the Akashic records maybe?

[01:10:25] **Tracee:** Yeah, you could say the Akashic records. Absolutely. There's information in the subtle realms all around us.

[01:10:34] **Dave:** And when you develop many different meditation practices, but particularly the one that helps you surf that line between sleep and awake, that's where that stuff is. And it's funny how many inventors have the pad next to the badge that they wake up with the invention right there. I believe they're filtering that out of a much greater field.

[01:10:57] **Tracee:** Oh yeah.

[01:10:57] **Dave:** I don't know for sure, but it feels like that's a good way to explain it.

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[01:11:00] **Tracee:** Well, both Einstein and Salvador Dali used the metal plate with the little metal balls on them, and they would go to sleep, and the minute that the arms started to go into that place of falling asleep, it would wake them up and they would start writing. So it's how I wrote Radiant Rest. I wrote that from yoga nidra.

[01:11:21] **Dave:** Did you really? I think Ben Franklin did that too, if I remember right.

[01:11:24] **Tracee:** Yeah. And Ben Franklin.

[01:11:25] **Dave:** Wow.

[01:11:26] **Tracee:** Yeah.

[01:11:27] **Dave:** In fact, I wrote about this many years ago, and I tried it about five times in an armchair. I was like, okay, that's cool. But I think at the time I had toxic mold and I never got into it.

[01:11:38] **Tracee:** Oh, that's not good.

[01:11:38] **Dave:** But that's a way to potentially access some of these similar states, right?

[01:11:44] **Tracee:** Correct. Yeah, yeah. When I decided I was writing the book, I thought about circuit training and I remembered back in the day when I used to do circuit training and I was like, I need to create a creative space that's like circuit training where I have a yoga nidra nest, I have my desk, I have my hang drum, and I basically go from one place to another and circuit train essentially, and rest and write and then be able to go to sleep and come back and chant a little bit.

[01:12:15] And so that was how I wrote the entire book. And it was like a channeling coming through, if you want to use the word channeling. But it was also knowing and a remembering of information and also a way being able to see, and I think this is where the gamma comes in, is being able to see the interconnectedness of things that come from different parts of the brain and how to put them together in a great way.

[01:12:43] **Dave:** It's awesome to hear how you write books. I've written eight so far, and I actually use technology where I'm running a small current between my ears that lets me dial up the state that I want.

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[01:12:57] **Tracee:** Ooh, I love that. Where do I get that device?

[01:12:59] **Dave:** It's called a cerebral electrical stimulation, or CES, and there's a few companies who make them out there. The one I use is the clinical grade system from 40 Years of Zen, which is more of a doctor's office kind of thing. And normally people use it in alpha state for anxiety, but I have it set so I can go into very, very deep delta, and I can layer in gamma if I want to.

[01:13:25] And it's not the same as meditation, but sometimes, for me, I would do it in the middle of the night because that's when the best, we'll call it, channeling or knowing-- it's just like the signal's cleaner. And sometimes I'll write stuff. And I know it to be true because I see the system of biology. I'm a systems guy. I can see it.

[01:13:45] And then the study comes out, two or five years later that validates it. I'm like, guys, you don't need a study. You just try it. It works. And if you feel better that there's a study, great. If not, trying a different sleep technique is unlikely to kill you, so it's safe.

[01:14:02] **Tracee:** I love that. I love that. Sometimes I'll lay on my BioMat with the bio acoustic mat underneath it, and I'll just be like, okay, I'm going to self-guide myself just for 15 minutes. And I'll always have the pad there because something will come through. Like a whole book proposal came through just last week. So it's real if you're a creative person.

[01:14:28] **Dave:** In fact, I'm going in another couple of weeks up to Seattle for 40 Years of Zen. I'm going to spend a week there, and I'll be recording lots of good stuff because the ideas just come really, really fast. And sometimes it's hard to capture them all. And it's funny how we're all capable of this, but sometimes we just don't tap into it because we have the internal squelch or the internal firewalls.

[01:14:53] The idea comes and immediately we say, that can't be right, and then you just throw it away. And I've learned it as part of my inner awareness practice. Anytime I have that initial knowingness thing, you can feel, whether it's an egoic, I'm mad at that person, whatever, or if it's a fear response. There's a subtle difference of character.

[01:15:13] And when you want that, you don't want that, oh, okay. And if you just listen and you just accept, it saves you a ton of time and you make better decisions. The risk, though, is that you

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could be acting out of trauma if you haven't learned the feeling between a trauma response and intuition, because they feel almost the same.

[01:15:32] **Tracee:** I'm so glad that you said that. Yes. Yeah.

[01:15:36] **Dave:** Do you use any other tech, Tibetan Bells, special glasses, binaural beats, I don't know, alien death rays? What is in your tech stack?

[01:15:49] **Tracee:** Let's see. Well, I have my Oura Ring.

[01:15:51] **Dave:** Okay, cool.

[01:15:52] **Tracee:** My Sunlighten infrared spa is getting assembled.

[01:15:58] **Dave:** You sound like a biohacker. Oh my God.

[01:16:01] **Tracee:** I've got my sauna space, which is the red light. Incandescent red lights basically happen after sundown. What else do I have? I think that's about it. Red light, BioMat, sauna, those are the things that I need. And then I think the rest I can really receive from nature.

[01:16:26] **Dave:** Love it. And you've certainly got plenty of sunlight there in New Mexico, so that helps as well. I imagine you have all sorts of other really cool practices. I know some of them are in the new book, which is something that I think people listening will benefit. And guys, I thought about asking Tracee to run us through like a breath awareness practice or something, but that's all there on her website, and so I don't want to repeat that when it's just there for you. So go to [traceestanley.com](http://traceestanley.com), that's T-R-A-C-E-Estanley.com to get those practices and things like that. Or download *The Luminous Self*, which is our newest book. This is some esoteric stuff. It's got some mystery school teachings.

[01:17:15] It's ancient wisdom and ancient knowledge. It is there for all of us. It is in the realm of biohacking. You change the environment around you and inside of yourself when you develop a better ability to sense the environment around you, which happens with yoga nidra. Then you learn to better sense the environment inside of you and you start realizing how you respond to the world around you and realize, oh, that lighting does take me out of the sun.



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[01:17:43] Oh, when I eat that weird processed food, it takes me out of the present state that I now know how to do. That's why this is important. So [tracestanley.com](http://tracestanley.com). The book is The Luminous Self and is absolutely a part of the world of biohacking.

[01:17:59] **Tracee:** Thank you. Thank you so much. It's been an honor to be with you.

[01:18:02] **Dave:** Likewise.