

Susanna ([00:00](#)):

It's so great to be here with you, Beth. I'm really happy to see you and to get to share space.

Beth ([00:06](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. We were just saying, I met you in person at the Hawaii Yoga Festival many years ago at the invitation of Kimberly Dark, and I think Jessamyn Stanley was also on that panel, and it was really good to be in your space and be in your class and learn with you and from you.

Susanna ([00:25](#)):

Yeah. And since then, Beth, I think about you often. I think about the work that you do and just the scholarship that you bring and just so grateful for you and everything that you share in the world and the students and learners and colleagues and people you impact. You definitely have impacted me.

Beth ([00:44](#)):

Oh, thank you. I feel the same about you are the person, one of the people I look to and I'm like, how can I practice and embody yoga in a way that works for a better world or moves towards a better world? And given my social location as a white middle class US citizen, currently mostly able bodied, your guidance and challenges have been important in that work.

Susanna ([01:13](#)):

Yes.

Beth ([01:14](#)):

Yes. So you have a new book coming out and I'm really excited to, it's coming out at the end of April, 2025, though it's available for pre-order. Prior to that. Can you tell us a little bit about how you were thinking about your new book and what you wanted to do with it?

Susanna ([01:36](#)):

Yeah. I was a little worried after my first book, which you know how, or maybe you do or don't, folks listening know that I feel like books, they can sort of take your whole life to write. And my first one did, it really was a life's work. And then I gave up and I came back and finally wrote it and got it out. But basically about 20 years I feel like that book took and I'm like, maybe that's all I have in me. That's the only thing that I'm going to publish and that's okay. And then I did continually get, generally people love my first book, but the critique that I get if it's not a white supremacist kind of nonsense critique, which I'm not going to take so seriously, but the valid critique, and I think it's always good to look for those, is you didn't give me enough of the solution.

([02:27](#)):

You didn't give me enough of the how to practice in everyday life. You really broke down the problems. I understand the problems, you began the solution, but where's the rest? So I wanted the second book to be that and not just a repeat at all of the first book. And the first book was much more, a little bit like a manual, a little bit more objective. The second one is more personal. It's more of stories. It's more opening up with how do we actually do this thing of practicing yoga in our lives and in the world and in

our relationships. I wanted to also bring forward the work of a lot of, I think of them as when you think of your social justice hero or yoga leader hero, we think of these great figures kind of on the pedestal or the stage, the names that everyone knows. And I wanted in this book to bring forward the names that we don't know, the people who are the heroes today. Name them while they're alive, name them while we can continue to learn from them in real time, support their work. So make it a bit more tangible and accessible for all of us to become the leaders and heroes in our own world.

Beth ([03:51](#)):

That's an interesting explanation or exploration of your journey from your amazing embrace, yoga's roots, courageous ways to deepen your yoga practice, which everyone should get if they don't already have it, which was just I think a really important work about how to honor yoga without culturally appropriating and taking account of power and positionality in really practical ways. As I was reading your second book, I was like, oh, I wish I had had this in my 500 yoga teacher training. I wish I had. And now it's like, oh, this is just what I need to revisit, deepen my own practice again, because it takes you through so much of the yogic philosophy and tradition and weaves it with your personal stories. I felt like I was sitting over tea talking with you, and then you also really did this beautiful individual practice, collective work, societal work. It has questions to explore your reflection on the different elements of a yoga philosophy and practice. And then you also, I noticed moved from inner journey to how do we parent to relationships, to how do we be allies to how do we live this in a way that makes social impact.

Susanna ([05:20](#)):

I really wanted it to be that kind of like a manual, a spiritual guide to yoga. I think of it self-help, but self-help, not just for the self, but for relationships and for the world with yoga. So you could have it on your bedside or your book stand or wherever and pick it up and just flip to a section depending on what's alive for you right now, relational things, not so much the big systemic issues, but more like the one-to-one is very alive. So looking through how to be applying practices and principles in my relationships. And then in a couple months, I'm going to be traveling a lot for the book tour and I want to go and impact communities in as best as most powerful way as I can, bringing peace and power like Shanti and Shakti. And so then I'll go back, I put in there, I think there's like eight, I don't remember the exact number, I should know this, but basically tactics for social change.

([06:27](#)):

And we're all different kinds of change makers. We don't do change the same way as one another, and one of them is propaganda. So I'm going to do probably some kind of some illegal, who knows, wheat pasting activities around just like we post carousels. It's like, why don't I just take some of this stuff That's like getting people to think, do we really do all this work, balance our checkbooks and all of this? Is this why we're here? Are we here for something else, for something greater? Did our ancestors meditate all night through the night so we can manifest a self-driving car? Let's think about this. Let's think about purpose and ancestry and legacy, and are we living life the way that we want to live it? And so those are things I think about a lot. And then turning them into art projects that can be shared. That's one way I can contribute that's very different than showing up at a protest or calling my representatives. And just as important. And for folks listening and you too, Beth, it's like all of us have our ways of being leaders in this moment and in all the moments to come and to not put ourselves down or shame ourselves or think we're not doing enough, but to really turn into that passion and tune into what it's, and then share from there.

Beth ([07:51](#)):

I love that. And I was just yesterday talking to Kazu Haga, one of the other people from the season, and he was urging social movement leaders and protests to not just do standard protests, but to have song and grief, ritual and art making so that both the people protesting but also the passersby are invited in a different way and not saying one is better than the other, but that we need the repertoire.

Susanna ([08:24](#)):

Yeah, I love that.

Beth ([08:26](#)):

I do too. There feels like possibility in that. Yeah. I also want to uplift that your section, and I'm sorry, I have the book right in front of me, but I'm forgetting the name of the sections where you have people writing about their journeys.

Susanna ([08:45](#)):

Oh yes, the Ika Speak.

Beth ([08:48](#)):

Yes.

Susanna ([08:49](#)):

Ika is a practitioner, and I was lucky enough to interview 12 folks to share their wisdom through that book.

Beth ([08:57](#)):

That was really beautiful, opening different ways, hearing different voices. And it also reminded me of some of the courses I've taken from you or the yoga summits you've hosted and just how intentional you've been at not just calling on the same old well-known people from Yoga journal, but who tended to be white, who tended to be thin and upper class and all those kinds of standard things. Although there have been changes in recent years thanks to your work and others, but you really intentionally reached out to South Asian practitioners or people who didn't necessarily have the microphone and made sure to broaden that community, which I think has been, I just really want to thank you for that impact you've had.

Susanna ([09:41](#)):

Yeah, it's funny. I was looking at it, and it's mostly South Asian and black and also a variety of age ranges. I think some of the folks I interviewed are in their twenties and some are in their sixties and seventies. And so having that spread of just what does it mean to be a practitioner? What does it mean to be a sadika? And my main guiding principle was like, well, who's really embodying this practice in a unique way? And there's so many people, there could have been a hundred people I interviewed, but I wanted to be mindful of bringing in voices that don't as much get lifted up. And that's always, if I'm going to have a mic, I want to pass the mic, I want to share the mic. If I'm going to open a door where door is going to get open for me, I want to keep it open.

[\(10:34\)](#):

And if I can open as many as possible behind me, and then have the people who come through that door go way farther than I will or ever could because that's what this is about. We're all working together in a similar direction, even if we do it differently. And I think about this a lot, Beth, and I think I made it clear in the book how to deal with haters. You can get external critique, but at least for me, I can also have that internal critique of like, oh, I'm not good enough, or I'm not as good as the way this person does it. And that causes us to at least again, for me to shut down or to feel like, oh, I don't want to share this person's work that's so similar to mine. And I really learned through yoga practice to just share it because big picture we're like 10%, maybe 20% of what's out there in the yoga world.

[\(11:29\)](#):

And so even if every one of us was all working together, we'd still be a minority. But if we all work together, we will no longer be a minority. We'll start to shift these institutions and we're starting to see that yoga alliances, new values, they sound like things or you have been saying for decades, and that's great because we're having an impact. But having the awareness to notice when the contraction comes with the insecurity or the worry about external critique or the self-judgment and instead of contracting care for it, tend to it, and then expand and collaborate.

Beth [\(12:09\)](#):

That part was really helpful for me. I was like, oh, pay attention to this, Beth. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. What did you find really rewarding in writing this most recent book, and what did you find challenging?

Susanna [\(12:32\)](#):

I think maybe folks listening can relate that feeling of like, did I share too much? And how do I look? Am I making myself look bad right now? I'm sharing very vulnerably. So in the first book, I didn't really go into personal stories as much, but this one I did at first. I was like, wow, this feels tender. This feels kind of like, wow. I'm opening myself up in a very personal way. Like you said, we're having tea and we're just chatting and I'm sharing my heart and my soul, my life experiences. So that was hard at first. And I was lucky to have some great readers. My editor at Shambala, Beth Frankel, Linda Sparrowe, who is a wonderful author, she's written so many books and edited so many yoga teachers books. She and I worked really closely, and they both really pushed me to really own my power and to own my story and stories and not shy away from sharing those things, but also to not always downplay myself or downplay my achievements or my accomplishments.

[\(13:48\)](#):

So that was great. But challenging because many of us socialized as women, I do tend to kind of, what's the word, be extra humble at times. And I think for people who know me, you'd be like, what, Susanna, you don't seem very humble, which is cool. And that's because I'm working on it. I'm a big, and I say this with all love and humility of, I don't think I'm better than anyone else, but I am really creative. I have great ideas. I love to share them. I think about how to educate in very unique and creative ways and make complex ideas understandable and create social movements and change things. Right. That's awesome. And I'm so proud that I do that, and I'm not going to dumb that down or that's probably the right word, but play that down anymore or hide those superpowers. And I don't want anyone else hiding their superpowers either.

[\(15:00\)](#):

That's kind of what I think this moment is. And maybe this stage of life is, and this book is Let's shine in all the unique ways that we have. And if we don't know or we're early on in the journey, here's some examples. If we need to be reminded, and if we're going full power, I feel like I am kind of now at this moment. Great, let's do that. Let's celebrate each other and let's do it more. So yeah, I don't know if you can hear it in my voice, but it's still a little tender because I'm like, can I, I'm awesome. You're

Beth ([15:34](#)):

A badass, Susan.

Susanna ([15:39](#)):

Yeah, we're right. You're a badass. I'm a badass. We can own it. And I think people need us to own it and then also own when we mess up and own, when we succeed and all of those things, and just not do it in the back rooms and in the shadows, but do it out loud if we're willing to.

Beth ([16:00](#)):

Yeah, I think that I love that. And there's a way to do that. Sorry, I'm having technical problems over here. Okay. There's a way to do that that still embraces humbleness and humanity. It doesn't have to be arrogant to stand in your power. It might seem to some, because some groups have been denied that power historically, and it therefore is more work to claim it in some ways, but it's really important. And someone else claiming their power in this way, the way you and I are talking about it doesn't limit me claiming mine in a way that I think standard forms of power, hierarchical, oppressive forms of power are like, there's a limited piece of the pie, but in this form of power, you shining your light actually gives me permission to shine in mine and so on and so on. I think,

Susanna ([16:56](#)):

Yeah, I think that's the vision, is the power with model sharing power and then amplifying. And I always think of, I don't know where the quote came from, but Amnesty International is where I first saw it, that it's better to light a candle than moan the darkness or grief in the darkness. And so it's like we can all be these candles kind of lighting each other up and especially, and even when we're feeling hopeless or feeling like, oh, what do I have to share? It's okay. We can pass the torch over and over again. It's not like we do it just once or we receive it just once.

Beth ([17:33](#)):

I love that. So one of the things you say in the book, and you've said it in many other places as well, is that yoga is a way of being. It's not a way of fitting into a bikini or it's not just what we do on our mats, that it is a way of being. And in this book you say that yoga is its own conscious being. Can you say a little bit more about that?

Susanna ([17:56](#)):

Yeah. Sometimes I think people come to teachers like you or me, and they expect to get access to yoga through us, but it's really important, I think for all teachers to acknowledge that every person has direct access to yoga. They don't need a mediator. And in fact, a lot of what the revolution long time ago now, the BTI movements and the revolution of yoga historically was to take it out of the hands of the elite or

people who said you needed a mediator to get to the divine and say no. Part of what yoga is, right, it's original practice was connecting to the elements like the earth, water, fire, airspace guiding people into a direct relationship with the world themselves. And so teachers can be this conduit or a vessel or kind show the path, but not the direct way that people connect. And so I think that reminder that yoga is essentially, it's interconnection.

(19:13):

It's that awareness of embodied interconnection of not separateness of self. And there's a lot of metaphors and the text, it's like the flame, just to go back to that again, that metaphor, that lights, is it the same flame? Is there one flame, right? Is there one light? And every time we light it, it has its unique flicker, but it's all the same fire or the waves, the waves and the ocean, but we're all the ocean even as we come up as a unique individual wave. And so yoga is the ocean, yoga is the divine light. And so it's almost hard to describe in words. It's more of a felt sense of like, oh yeah, it won't end right? I've never been born. I'm never going to die. I'm part of this whole experience of being that everything else is part of, and I don't even have direct relationship to it.

(20:13):

I am it. And that is yoga. And when we come from or move in our unique little wave cells from that place, how can we not practice ahimsa non harm and kindness and Satya and truthfulness in that experience of truthfulness, of a direct relationship with the divine? And we all have access to that. So that's kind of what I was trying to get at. And what I always hope to convey in every teacher training or whatever people take with me, you'll be able to teach Asana or teach a class, do it in an honoring way and invite meditation and all of those things. But how can you embody that feeling of interconnectedness more and more in your own life and then move from that place, which is naturally brings us to practice yoga ethics.

Beth (21:09):

That's really beautiful. And it's bringing me back to when I first started seriously practicing yoga every time prior to that I had gone to a yoga class. There was something, it touched deep in my soul and I knew it, but I didn't really know how to name it. And then there are some things, hard things in life, whatever. And something in me was like, you need to access that. And I started doing a practice regularly and then did a 200 hour teacher training, and I problems with guru aside in that particular style of yoga. What really became clear to me was that despite all these social messages telling me one thing or another, there was something in me that I was understanding and accessing and something in the wider universe that my practice was connecting me to that was just so clear and so embodied that it helped me show up in different ways off my mat. And there was just something really powerful about that that really led me to continue with the yoga practice. And the way you just described it was like, yeah, that's what it was.

Susanna (22:26):

And sometimes you, we kind of experience it in our own bodies or own mind, body, spirit. And for some of us, it might be a call to go deeper in our own faith. Yoga, it doesn't have to be a separate faith. It can take deeper into your own belief systems and values. It can also works for atheists too. You don't have to have a belief in any kind of God. It can just be in a relationship with power, with the energies of the universe. And I appreciate that a lot too, that it's always been part of many religions. It was an

earth-based kind of pre theistic practice, but then grew up alongside Jainism Buddhism, Hinduism, of course, number of other, many, many regional religions that were local to the Indu Valley and sars, Sweet River Valley. And that it's not just the purview of any one religion and nor do you have to be religious.

[\(23:27\)](#):

And so to practice it. And to me that is really important too because right now there is so much appropriation of yoga, not just as fitness, but as a part of Hindu nationalism and kind of right-wing Hindu movement that says to practice a yoga, you have to be Hindu. And so just name that it's not only the west that has appropriated yoga. The yoga you're describing your experience of it is something that I think people here don't always know. But that yoga was appropriated by Brahman patriarchy in the earlier thousands of years ago and taken out of the hands of everyday people and put into the elite. And it's not over. It's like any tool can be used to heal or harm. And so to me that that is helpful to know in the sense of not furthering those harmful things, but also knowing that there's not one enemy, there's not one person or one group that did this wrong. It's more like how can we, through getting that direct relationships to the divine and opening other people up to their own relationships as well, how can we move forward with more liberation rather than oppression or control?

Beth [\(24:49\)](#):

That's really helpful. Context and direction. And talking about the elements, one of the pieces that I enjoyed was when you were talking about the TFAs at the end or towards the end of the book, and I went and took your quiz, that is on your website that listeners read the book, you'll find out about the quiz. Why do you think understanding that the different approaches can help both our practice, our leadership, our impact?

Susanna [\(25:22\)](#):

Yeah, yeah. So what the quiz is, is some questions around how you lead a yoga leadership quiz and then connects you with other change makers in the elements. So there's five possible elements in the yogic system and Ayurvedic system. So earth, fire, water, air and space. And a space leader, someone who's a visionary, someone who's thinking about world changing, is going to lead very differently than an earth-based leader is going to lead very differently than a fire or water or air. And so I appreciate it knowing how I lead and also knowing that I may be leading. We all have all five elements. Everything in the world is made up of all five elements from the Ayurvedic and Vedic worldview. And so we all can kind of lean into one or the other. So that can be helpful. Maybe you're like, wow, I'm really airy and I want to be more grounded.

[\(26:21\)](#):

What does that look like? Or sometimes I feel like especially in changemaking and yoga, it's like an air in the fire gets the glory because fire is like we show up, we're doing things in a vibrant way. Air is intellectual using words. These are things that I am, so I have where I lead with, I have that characteristic. And then the more grounded or thoughtful or perhaps slower or more visionary, folks don't get as much of the playtime and the credit, and yet their work is just as valuable. And so knowing how elementally we naturally create change and how we want to practice and teach can be so helpful. I feel like it's just that. So that leads us to be able to understand ourselves better and our friends better, and being in community. So I often personally, because I also am an practitioner, I'll assess in a group of friends what elements are more dominant for people, and it helps me relate to them.

(27:36):

Some of my best friends, one of my best friends is more of an earth-based leader and so much slower and much more kind of exacting and precise than I am. I'm like A, let's move quickly. Let's light things up, let's change. And that could lead to a lot of frustration between the two of us. But it actually is so good because I've learned to check my ideas by them so they can be like, how are you actually going to do that? Or Have you thought through what's going to happen here? Or they'll come to me with, Hey, I really want to change this in my life, but I don't actually know how to do that. Can you support me? So it allows us to be able to show up better for each other. I feel like in ourselves, what did you get? Air? Yeah,

Beth (28:23):

Air, yeah. When you were talking, I'm like, yep, I'm the person who gets the idea and runs with it before I even finish the thought. And that has sometimes been really amazing and sometimes really not. Yeah, great. But also knowing like, yep, I'm way up here and I could really use a grounding practice or that kind of stuff. That kind of insight has been helpful in my yoga practice and in the different, I teach feminist leadership also and helping people understand what their leadership styles are, how they work or don't work well with other styles, what approaches people are coming from can just help, I think dialogue across difference in a way that deepens relationship instead of fractures it. And are you air and fire, you said? Yeah.

Susanna (29:27):

Yeah. Predominantly fire and then air.

Beth (29:30):

Yeah. I also loved this phrase in the book where you talk about how our yogic practice can help us become agents of spiritual possibility. I loved that phrase. Yeah. Can you talk a little bit about why that phrase and what that means for

Susanna (29:48):

Yeah, a lot of that, I just want to say I've heard that phrase in changemaking circles for the last few decades. So I didn't post it. And adrienne maree brown, who wrote many books, but emergent strategy and pleasure activism often, and I think she's a black femme leader and building on the work of Audre Lorde and other black, often queer feminist leaders, they talk a lot about making, and Tony Cade Bambara actually said, making the revolution irresistible. So being an agent of spiritual possibility is living into, we are all living in the imagination of someone thought up, social security, someone thought up, privatized healthcare. All of these things are someone's imagination. And yes, we in some way are free to create our own worlds. And of course, we're also bound within these structures that someone imagined up and then put into structure and made real. And so when we're an agent of spiritual possibility, we're moving from that realm of what we're bound with, what we're kind of trapped into the realm of what is possible.

(31:19):

And from the perspective of interconnected, like ocean, not wave big mind. Anything is possible. And I think this is tricky because it can sound a little spiritual bypassing, but it actually is very powerful. So there are powers that we can get from a deep practice of yoga, from practice of the full expanse of yoga

and utilizing those powers for the vision of a more equitable world or a more just world. It's unstoppable. And if more and more of us were living that way, this is that next era of what we're going to be moving into, right? We're seeing someone wrote about this, the extinction cry of the patriarchy. It's really loud and really brutal, and it's so sad and hard because we are moving into this next way, and it's not going to be this way forever, but not everyone is going to go with us. Not everyone is going to make it to the other side, and yet that other side is what we can live into and we can steward that move towards it as agents of spiritual possibility. And so I think that's what that phrase calls in for me, is like, right, let's not forget the bigger plane, the universal plane, and how powerful it allows us to be.

Beth ([32:55](#)):

Yeah, I think that's why my being resonated. You put such beautiful words to my being just kind of activated at that phrase like, oh, possibility. Yes, there's ways to co-create a better world, and there's ways that our yoga practice can be an important part of that process. And one of the things I love about your work is that they're so seamlessly interrelated, the way that your practice and your social justice work merge in ways that, at least when we first met, I didn't feel like there was a lot of it in the US yoga space, at least the kind that was getting popularized. And it was just so important. And now as I follow your social media, you're like right on social issues as they're happening, and how yoga practice gives us ways of approaching and interrupting it. So that leads to this question. How do you think yoga can support us to meet these current intense challenges?

Susanna ([34:08](#)):

Yeah, I mean, at very least for me, it's like what's grounding me. It's so easy to get overwhelmed with all, and that's the intention of this administration is flooding the zone, overwhelming us, making us not know what to focus on because there's so much that's devastating. And yoga, especially the eight limbs, it's like a prya practice. What are we going to focus on? So choosing your focus, but also starting the day, for me, it's often needing to begin and end the day with some sort of practice in the middle of the day. I can engage more in the world and get the news and all of those things. But having a foundational practice, it doesn't have to be awesome. It could be meditation, it could be walking, it could be movement, it could be gazing at a candle, it could be connecting with a pet, or there's no one right way to practice.

([35:05](#)):

But I think it really makes us more grounded and able to engage. And then we probably don't have time to go way deep into this, but I have a lot of free information out there on it. Yoga ethics make us powerful. If you practice a hea non harm, if you practice satia truthfulness, but also listening deeply to the truth of the moment and then speaking your truth or allowing or creating space for the truth that needs to be spoken to come forward, that's transformative. And there are powers that come as we continue to practice, and they're described in the yoga citra. There are boons that that amplify our power more than just then you would even imagine, which to me is right in these times, let's tap into a spiritual source. I think about Martin Luther King or the movement in India, like Gandhi and other nonviolent activists there that we're trying to overthrow unjust rule.

([36:17](#)):

They would practice, they would come into some form of practice, whether it was prayer or yoga, asana or whatever it might be, meditation. They would purify, they would plan and organize, and then they

would act, right? So all of these things, each step can be really held and underpinned by different aspects, different facets of yoga. So from the reflection part, from the negotiation part, grounding, I find I get really nervous when I'm speaking to authority or calling my representatives. So doing a grounding, maybe chanting practice to open up my voice. And then anything that clears away. So the purification and then in the action, there's been so many moments, what on the street in protests or physically, when my body is overwhelmed, maybe there's tear gas or there's military or police presence, and I have to stay calm because in that moment, if I don't stay calm, it's going to change what the dynamic is and maybe not for the better.

[\(37:27\)](#):

So in those moments, because of the countless hours of sitting and being and tolerating discomfort, when I'm in that heightened moment, I can rely on myself and my practice. So for those of us who are going more direct action, being prepared, maybe having those conversations with people that you're with, and for those of us that are like, okay, I'm going to call my representatives, or I'm going to organize with people, there's so many ways that yoga can actually be of service for supporting us, and I feel like it kind of makes us braver and makes us more capable. That's how I experience it. Do you have any thoughts about it? I mean, I'm sure you think about it a lot.

Beth [\(38:18\)](#):

Well, along the lines of what you just said, one of the things my yoga practice helps me do is show up the way I want to show up. So make sure I'm to the degree that is available to me at any given moment as skillful as possible, as aligned with what I care about is possible as connected to the humanity of other people instead of it's easy to fall into us and 'em hopefully imagining that better world. So outside of not just trying to succeed in current structures, but creating different ones that are more liberatory, yoga helps me be more aligned with that. And then the yamas and the niyamas as a way of living, just all of that I think is really important. And one of the lessons early on that you and others helped me learn was just how much the practice is about what you do off your mat, not just what you do on your mat. It's not yoga for everyone, but for me, yoga was the path to understanding all of that. Yeah, yeah. Powerful. Are there other things that you'd like to say about the book, parts of it that we haven't touched on yet that you want to call to the surface?

Susanna [\(39:42\)](#):

I think the only piece that I wanted to talk about, because I'm really proud of this, is it is the one around relationships. And let me see if I can find it. It's the part where we're talking about how to find a teacher that we trust that there has been abuse and not ignoring abuse in lineages, and how to go about that exploration without, or hopefully experiencing less harm ourselves. Because many of us and folks listening, we're the new leaders, we're the new teachers. And so it's on us to have relationships with colleagues and remain accountable to one another and of course to our students. But I think that for me is a big piece of the solution as a leader to not fall into the abusive dynamics because it's like you're saying, it's not just us, them, it's easy to say, oh, it'll never be me.

[\(40:49\)](#):

I'm not abusive. But we all make mistakes and it's very easy to misuse power when it's in our hands. And so to me, the antidote to that, and I write a lot about that, is relationships and is having the sga, the community to check things out with. And then for people listening who are newer, who are like, no, no,

I'm not a teacher. I just love yoga and I want to practice it, or I'm curious about it and I want to practice it. There's actually things you can do as you begin your exploration to make sure for yourself that you're feeling good and that you have autonomy. Hopefully if the teacher is saying they're trauma informed, they're honoring your own experience and trying to tell you what to do or adjust you in ways that you don't consent to, all the way to bringing people you trust with you to a yoga workshop or to a class or to retreats.

(41:45):

So you can check in with your friend, Hey, does this feel like a good place that would support me and support my growth? I want to do this more. So there's some really helpful things in there that I'm hopeful we'll be able to actually use to change yoga culture from many institutions. Yoga has been beleaguered with a lot of abuse and a lot of harm. And so the only way to change that is to talk about it and to make sure that people on all the sides, teachers are aware and responsible, and then students are holding us to a standard and know how to care for ourselves too.

Beth (42:29):

That part was really important, and it's something I wish I had read prior to some of the guru challenges that I've experienced, but really throughout the book, you just are so adept at making very complex traditions and theories understandable and applicable to everyday life. And you do it in a lot of different ways. But I feel like this book, it opens a lot for a lot of different people at multiple stages of yoga. I could have imagined very early in my yoga journey this being really helpful, and I'll be getting the hard copy and highlighting it when it comes out at this stage in my yoga journey as well. Yeah.

Susanna (43:15):

Thank you,

Beth (43:15):

Beth. Of course. So what is your hope for this book?

Susanna (43:21):

Well, I always like to do things big. So I really would love to start a yoga practice revolution where we're really seeing more and more people practicing yoga for personal and social change, and where people always normal to have conversations about yoga ethics, where it's normal to have in the studio, breath work, workshops, workshops, sorry, breathwork, move to pranayama. So the actual roots of yoga, like meditation, Deana practices where we're a lot more connected to the heart of what yoga is, but also practicing it in everyday life. So I envision circles like sangha where people get together and if a group in a particular place is reading it or practicing with it, it's like, okay, let's have a yoga circle. So it's not necessarily just a class or an us in a class, but it's more of in relationship and then maybe even yoga, organizing and taking it into our communities and making change in our different communities. So that's my vision is I hope it's a stepping off or jumping off place for people to then move into their world and kind of like a roadmap to how to organize in your own life and in the world of yoga.

Beth (44:55):

I love that. And thinking about what I know of your work over the years, I think you have built that foundation and you do parts of that every time you release something, at least from my perspective. And I am so appreciative of it. And you're going on tour?

Susanna ([45:11](#)):

Yeah, I'll be traveling all around. I'm going right now, plan is east coast and west coast. I'm just hitting the coasts, so I don't have any plans for anywhere else, but I want to see how I do, because also for folks who don't know, I am in my forties. I have a kiddo. I don't know. Well, let's see how this goes before I plan too many other, so I want to kind of just feel how it is. I think I'm going to really love being with people and community. And so if you're able to and you want to come, it's like La Santa Cruz, sf, Portland, Seattle on the west coast, and then on the East coast, Maine and Rhode Island and Boston and New York and dc. And then I know you would be super into me coming. I think I'm going to have, I don't know, what do you call that? Region of the country,

Beth ([46:09](#)):

Midwest. So come to the Twin Cities. You are invited, but I also understand energy and time. Yeah.

Susanna ([46:16](#)):

So hopefully going to come, but We'll, I,

Beth ([46:18](#)):

Yeah, I understand. Well, there's some social justice yogic people here that would be so excited to connect with you. So the invitation is there, and I honor your time and energy, and we'll connect with you in other ways if that doesn't work out. Yeah. Well, thank you so much for taking your time to talk with me, Suzanne. It's so good to be in space with you again.

Susanna ([46:44](#)):

It's so great to be here with you and just sending lots of joy to everyone listening and to you, Beth, just so much appreciation for you doing this.

Beth ([46:53](#)):

Thank you. Thank you. And for your book, so helpful in the world.