



## Humaning: the shit we need to talk about with Steff Gallante

Episode 64: Surviving the polycrisis: a new landscape for self-care

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Steff Gallante 0:00

Hey friends, welcome to season three of humaning, the shit we need to talk about. Wow, season three, and we finally made it back together again. For those of you who have been around the show for a while, and if you're new to the show, welcome. I'm so glad you're here. Please know however your heart is, I'm holding you here in my space with a ton of love because y'all it is, I don't need to tell you, but I'm gonna say it anyway. It's a whole experience out in the world right now. You might be having one singular, very saturated emotion at this time, or maybe your experience is a mash up of a bunch of emotions. So many truths can exist at the same time, opposing emotions can exist at the same time. However it is, you are experiencing life in the world right now. I get it. It's been a while. For those of you who've been around the show, it's been a while since we've connected in the ether. The last episode of season two aired on November 26 2024 and it's been what, like, two and a half months since then, and I feel as though I've lived a whole lifetime since then. And gosh, we rolled right after that, right into the rest of the holidays and winter break, which was a really, really wonderful time with my kids and my husband. And of course, there were some hard moments peppered in, but it was really nice. And then, because, like, it was a lot of a lot of time together, once everybody went back to school the first week of January, I felt like I had the hugest hangover. And I mean, there's so many variables to this. It was the post first year after my dad passed the holidays, winter break, having fun with everybody, but also I didn't get a lot of time by myself. And that's how I recharge, how I kind of down regulate, if you will, not necessarily have to, like, re regulate, but just like, down regulate from, like, being tuned in and in true fashion for me now that I'm in my 40s and hangovers happen. I mean, like, it's long, even emotional

and mental hangovers, it was long. I felt like I was finally emerging, emerging, emerging, emerging from it in time for the freaking US presidential inauguration and then my whole house getting sick. So here I am finally connecting with you in the messiest of messy times, just in time, if we are allowed, allowing ourselves glimmers of hope, glimmers of joy. It's my birthday month, which I freaking love normally, and I'm feeling so grateful for it this year, because I don't know we all need as much joy as we can. Black History Month is giving us joy, celebrating it, no matter what the fucking calendars say it's been my 40 I'll be 43 in a couple of weeks, and my 42nd year has been incredibly challenging, and I don't know friends, Joy is needed, And I know that that can feel hard when identities you hold your life, people who you love, are being targeted, and it can feel as though we don't have enough space or Energy for joy. But friends, remember the balancer to joy, to despair, to even hopelessness at times, to fear, to uncertainty, is allowing ourselves moments of joy, allowing ourselves respite from all of that, allowing ourselves rest, because the reality is we are three weeks into a new presidency, and it really has felt like three years since January, 20, and so in recent days, I found myself being so grateful for like, for instance, the parts of the Grammys that were so awesome, so many black and female artists winning, celebrating one another, as well as. You know, and two artists calling out for equity in health care for trans folks, for the LGBTQ community, everybody whose identities are being targeted right now, for FEMA artists and so much more. And then the huge bomb that was the Super Bowl from start to finish. Freaking amazing. And Kendrick Lamar brilliant Super Bowl halftime show. I'm just so happy for the city of Philadelphia for the Eagles win. I love Philly. I went to school there. I just love that city so much. And so I'm hoping that at this point of the new year, if you know the Gregorian calendar, New Year, you know, is at all resonant for you, I hope that you're on the other side of the incessant and pushy New year, new you get the goals going messaging. And I want to make sure that I'm very clear here. I'm not saying don't make goals. There's no judgment or shade. If you've already set goals for the year and have begun working towards them, that's great. My issue is with society's pushy messaging that sustains Go, go, go, culture, and the fact that that messaging literally overrides what winter is asking us to do, and basically barrels us towards overwhelming burnout by the end of the year, if not sooner, as I'm sure, especially if you've been following this show, if you've been following my work, and it's not even mine, but just you know, out there in the world, the alternate view to go, go, you know, winter has such a wonderful, almost sacred, that's the word just that just popped up In my mind, sacred invitation for us, and the reminder of this invitation is always a good one. I find even for myself, the dormancy and stillness of winter calls us to withdraw energy from the outside world and redirect it within us so that we can do a whole bunch of regenerative things, things like rest, reflect, rejuvenate and imagine a way forward in a slow and expansive way. It's an opportunity to breathe fully and deeply, to lean into the spaciousness of the atmosphere and simply just be. And I know that all these words, or most of these

words that I just said is in direct opposition to what we are experiencing out in the world, what we are witnessing out in the world. And I get that there is a huge divide and disconnect. There is a clashing of what we are seeing and what winter and nature are calling us to do. I get that the cool and also hard thing is, is that we get to choose our way forward, and because it's a choice, it means it's going to have to take us some work right, work that maybe we are feeling under resourced to do. And that's okay, because how winter is designed is to help us recoup some of that energy, some of that brain space. And so the continued invitation that nature gives us is to stay grounded and uplifted in our wisdom and knowing in the winter and always, to be deeply nourished and resourced mentally, emotionally, physically and energetically in the winter, specifically to feel warm and steady from the inside out, and to have always mindful awareness of early signs of imbalance, so that we can tend to ourselves before becoming completely dysregulated. The winter, in a nutshell, is a time of gathering inspiration, sustenance, New Visions, new ideas and necessary rest before the Reaping of spring, summer and fall, because that's what we do in those months, we reap, we sow and we reap. And so the question I have for you, my friends, what if now that we are in full on Poly crisis mode, what if now we finally, like, finally live our lives the way we want to and need to, for the sake of our well being and the revolution of finally letting the systems crumble, as well as for the sake of the collective What if we finally did it? I'll be honest with the new US administration that we're going to have for the next four years. Or I mean, who knows what can happen?

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I really think that this is the focus that needs to be the foundation of our lives moving forward. And I don't just mean just for the four years, I mean like for the foreseeable future. And so I share all of this, this reminder of winter's invitation to us with the hope that, if you haven't yet set an intention for this year, or if you've been waffling about it, as I have, like I just, I don't know, I feel as though this year has hit me like a ton of bricks. Like I just, I feel like I can't get my act together, but my act is together as best as it can be right now. It just looks different, really. And so what I as I was preparing for this episode, and I'll be honest with you, it took me weeks to like, prepare for this, to write the outline, to, like, get my thoughts together, because I kept waffling and nothing felt quite right, and things have been changing so rapidly, but I kept coming back to this, this invitation from winter. And so if I'm being brutally honest, finally living our lives the way we want to and need to with the practice nature calls us to in the winter, I really feel that they will deeply benefit us, not only for the remaining weeks of the season and give us a sound foundation for spring in the days beyond, but truly also will be essential to our survival and ability to show up to what we want and need to for these next four years and the fallout after that. As I said, like I feel like I've been truly underwater Since 2025 began, but I'm slowly working on figuring out how

to make these winter practices more so pillars of my regular self care. Because I think, honestly, like as an American society in the west especially, I can only speak to American society, because this is the only place I've ever lived. I feel like it's long overdue. I feel like the invitation winter calls us to are practices that we really need in the foundation of our life, all seasons, and that we can really dive into them into the winter, but they really do support us if we are doing them throughout the year. And so friends, I know that this sounds Doom and gloomy, but what do we have to lose with all the shit that's going on out there in the world, what do we have to lose by answering this call from nature? Now I know that energy is pretty scarce these days, and so if this is leaving you feeling complete full right now, go ahead and press pause. You can put a period on this episode and take this for whatever it's worth for you, and go ahead about your day if you have the capacity. Though, I'd really like to offer some thoughts on each of the invitations of winter, to just give you a little bit more guidance and things to consider in terms of ways that you can maybe implement one or two of these. But always remember, anytime I'm offering multiple practices, the key for sustainability sake, for your own sanity sake, is to choose one practice, one thing to focus on for a few weeks or months, to get it integrated into your life before adding another practice or shifting your focus, otherwise overwhelm and throwing it out the window is Pretty guaranteed, especially especially when we are ridiculously busy and extremely under resourced. So first I want to make sure that I am very clear that while winter and I while we're encouraging you to withdraw some of your energy from the outside world. I am not saying to isolate yourself or isolate yourself more so than not. And as a person who loves to isolate that's me. I know it's it's not always best to do this, and the flip side is practices like resting, reflecting and rejuvenating should sometimes be done alone. We need to learn to be alone with ourselves more so finding easeful ways to do this every so often will be important. I invite you to really allow yourself to imagine a way forward in a slow. So an expansive way saying, fuck it to the urge to have your goals exactly set or super fleshed out at this time. Because the reality is that January goal setting deadline is arbitrary, and if we take our cue from nature, we've got lots of time before the, you know, new birth season of spring starts, and the reality is too friends. We can set goals. We can adjust goals at any time. Life is not linear, and we really need to allow space for letting things unfold or reveal themselves to us, rather than trying to control or force the entire way forward, and also because of what we are experiencing now, those of us in the US is because it's unlike anything we've experienced before. We are going to have to really allow for spaciousness here, not just to imagine a way life that a way of life that truly honors what we want, but then actually take steps towards that in a meaningful and sustainable way. So I ask you, how can you build time or practices into your days to allow for slow and expansive imagination, time for me, imagination, downloading messages from the universe, from ancestors, etc, often come to me in the shower or on my walks as I'm looking at clouds in nature, when it's like the leisurely lock walk,

usually not like the angry walk, or when I'm on my yoga mat, breathing or messing around in various asanas. So when I actually allow myself to slow down a little bit, when I'm racing around or angrily doing stuff, the downloads, you know, the door to the downloads gets closed off. The door to imagination gets closed off. So I hope that you'll find ways to breathe fully and deeply and lean into the spaciousness of the winter atmosphere and simply just be sometimes. And I'll be honest, doing this really requires slowing our role more often and not filling all the holes in our schedule or constantly multitasking. And I know, I know you know this, and also it is hard to put into practice, but I'm going to tell you when I started breathing more intentionally, when I started taking a break from my computer and just connecting to my breath, or when I noticed I was feeling anxious or angry and I'd pause just to slow my breath down, what a difference it made. So how can you begin to let there be times or holes in your schedule where you can just be maybe, instead of scheduling back to back meetings, you schedule a five or 10 or 15 minute buffer if you can, what if, if it's A zoom call or like something online, and you're there first. Instead of doing work while you're waiting for the other person to arrive, you take a moment to be quiet or to do something for yourself, even in just 30 minutes, 30 seconds to a minute. What if it's when you're if you pick up people from somewhere you're waiting in line, what if it's when you're waiting for a different appointment to start? So these are just ideas. There's so many ways I started to do this in terms of scheduling myself. And I would, instead of scheduling things back to back, I would create space and not fill it with work. When I was home, I would make sure that I didn't fill it with laundry and stuff around the house, because the key is,

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when you start to create blank space in your schedule, and you really do it, more space and and time, more often will open? Will open itself to you. The reality is, we have more that we are responsible for than we can really realistically tend to in a day. So the key here is to choose how you spend the blank space, doing nothing for a moment, doing something that you really want to the key is that it's nourishing. Remember, keep it small. Start with a minute or five. I know this sounds hard to. Believe based on how busy you are and how many directions you're pulled in. But honestly, it's true. It's like a law of nature or something, that when we start to do this, more time and more opportunities to do this open themselves up. Now, when it comes to the invitation nature is giving us to stay grounded and uplifted in our wisdom and knowing friend remember your body and your being are so smart and so tuned in, but because of the busy nature of our life, because of the way we have to bypass ourselves, sadly, gaslight ourselves in order to just kind of get through the days. Sometimes we have, tuned out. We're not really tuning in. Sometimes it's staticky. If y'all remember the days of static over the airwaves, we have to leave overriding ourselves, bypassing ourselves, and gaslighting ourselves behind, because

the reality is the revolution that we're embarking on to let the systems crumble requires this of us. So let's listen and trust ourselves. Listen to and trust ourselves more. Let's have a mindful awareness of early signs of imbalance so that we can tend to ourselves before becoming completely dysregulated. And y'all know the signs when it starts. So think about this. I want you to really think about this question, what if you tended to yourself earlier, rather than waiting for the dysregulation to happen? Because the truth is, re regulating requires a lot of time and energy. In short, it's really taxing. So in an effort to conserve energy for the long haul and choose how we spend it wisely. Let's be in an active state of tending to ourselves. What might this look like for you in one small way today, and the last thought, allowing ourselves to be deeply nourished and resourced, mentally, emotionally, physically and energetically, friends, this is the time for real. True, real, true, deep soul care. This is the time for real, true, deep soul care. And by soul care, I mean self care that reaches into your soul, deeply, for instance, with foods, drinks and experiences that are safe for you and make you say, Mmm, make your toes curl, make you do a dance. However, it is that you experience pleasure and bliss, care that fills you, nourishes you, soothes you, that allows you to be at ease, whether that's of your own doing or in your communities, time spent alone or doing things of your choice that bring you joy. This is the time for joy so we can show up to the hard stuff in a more balanced way. Y'all this winter season is a time of gathering inspiration, sustenance, New Visions, new ideas, and necessary rest before the Reaping of spring, summer and fall and beyond every single year for the next four years, and when we make it to the other side, we will reap the equity, safety and goodness as humans that we deserve. Okay, how does this feel? Where do you think you're going to start? How can you take one step in the direction you want to go for how you want to feel? And another way to think about this is when it comes to the practice you want to focus on, what is the smallest thing you can do so that you can be more likely to do it on your busiest or least energetic days. Remember, we got to let go of that American way of big and better. Big and faster is better small so that you could do it on your busiest and least energetic days. And friends, one last thought, I want to leave you with a question that I'm really letting be my guiding light every day of this year. What do I want more of this could be for you, yourself, for those closest to you, for your community, for the world, whomever and in whatever situation or circumstance. I'm happy to report that one way I've started answering this question or putting this into practice is in the holidays I said no to some things, and even in the days since that has been in my ongoing practice of creating and upholding boundaries so that I can say yes to what I want more of more. Easily. And I have to tell you, it's been amazing. I've also, I have to be honest, I've I've never really struggled with saying no. That's always been like. I've never been I don't know why, but I've never felt compelled to like, please people with a yes. And so I have to say, for me, it's easier for me to say no than I realized that it is for others, because our circumstances are all different, right? And so I encourage you, you

know, when, if you're considering boundaries, you know, just do it incrementally. Do it, do it in a way that is small, so that you don't dysregulate yourself as you're doing it, but I'm asking you, could you keep me accountable to this this year? Because I really do want to honor what I want more of and allow myself to open to it and have it all right, friends, for more guidance on tending to your well being this season, I encourage you to hop on my email list. I send out a newsletter at least twice a month that has just so much goodness in it. Definitely check out the disruptors guide to self care. It's a free offer on my website and that has small tips on making self care less stressful and more sustainable. And if you're loving the show, please leave a rating or a review on your streaming platform, and please, please, please share it with your people. I can't tell you how crucial these steps are in continuing to get the show out into the world. Thank you for being here with me and until the next time. Remember you are an incredible human. Be gentle to yourself every step of the way from here until the next time we meet. So that way, when you're out in the world, you're letting yourself human more usefully. Take care of yourselves, friends and be well.

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