



DR. ROBYN BENSON + SELF CARE REVOLUTION PRESENTS  
**HEALTHY TRAVELER'S GLOBAL SUMMIT**  
SPEAKER TRANSCRIPT

**Dr. Robyn Benson:** Hello everyone, welcome to the Healthy Travelers' Global Summit. My name is Robyn Benson. I'm a Doctor of Oriental Medicine. The Founder of Santa Fe Soul Centre for Optimal Health and a world traveler who had been to over 70 countries, and I have to say in my 23 year career this is one of my most exciting ventures. I have to say is to put on this global summit and we're just thrilled with the speakers. My goodness, the content has been invaluable; we're just ready to help people travel on a much healthier way, and honestly, to do our part to change the culture of travel. So I'm joined with my fabulous cohost.

**Kevin Snow:** Kevin Snow. Some people call me the Desert Shaman and I am an Intuitive Counselor at Santa Fe Soul. And it's really been an amazing experience for the last many years that I've been there and really helping people that are travelling, they're travelling to Santa Fe's destination, and often when they get there, they have certain issues with the altitude, but it's really helpful to be able to hone in and get to the root cause of what's going on with them. And this summit has just an incredible opportunity for me, learning from all of these experts we've got an amazing expert today, and amazing world traveler as well. So he's going to share with us some of his hacks, some of his ways to travel and travel more effectively and can't wait to get started.

**Dr. Robyn Benson:** Well, Pedram is a dear friend of mine and I have to say when this inspiration for this whole summit came into play here, I immediately thought of Dr. Shojai and how he could share his message because he travels the world, he put out this amazing movie called Origins that just came out a couple of months ago and he has a lot to share with you. So, I'm going to tell you a bit more about Pedram. He is a man with many titles. He is the founder of well.org, the editor of BeMore! Magazine, the author of Rise and Shine, the producer and director of the movie "Vitality", and the executive producer and writer for the film Origins. In his spare time, he is also a Taoist priest, a Doctor of Oriental medicine, a Kung Fu world traveler, a fierce global green warrior, an avid backpacker, a devout alchemist, a Qi Gong master, and an old school Jedi bio-hacker working to preserve our natural world and wake us up to our full potential. Woo-hoo, welcome. [Crosstalk 00:02:31.13]

**Dr. Robyn Benson:** I love that one, that's one of my favorite bios to read I have to say.

Pedram Shojai: You know what's funny is they have some person trying to write my bio and it was just like blah, blah, blah, stale. So, I literally dictated just a bunch of random stuff that people had said and like slapped it together and was kind of being punchy about it and then they just used it as my bio because they thought it was great, and I'd go come on and they...

Dr. Robyn Benson: It's crazy

Pedram Shojai: Well it's just because...

Dr. Robyn Benson: It's good.

Pedram Shojai: I'm just trying to make fun of the incredibly obnoxious life that I have because I've been all over the world and making movies and writing books and studying English shamans and all those kinds of stuff. And to people who travel a lot it's like "oh yes, I get that." And to people who don't travel they think of you as some sort of alien because who the hell does all that. And it's just a different world when you get untethered and you are walking the earth trying to find answers and find yourself and get into trouble and get in to adventures. It's a different lifestyle and it's one that you can look at another person to know whether they have travelled. And when you have, and you have a common ground, you can talk about things that are so much more interesting than baseball. So, I'm happy to hang out with you guys and talk about whatever we want today.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Well, I love the topic, "Walking the earth with vitality."

Kevin Snow: Yes.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Let's just talk about your background a little bit Pedram, like, how did you get into medicine? How did you get into this whole idea of travelling the world and doing this film one on Vitality and the other one called Origins?

Pedram Shojai: Yes. I got into medicine through the backdoor, I was actually pre-med at UCLA and was going to be a western medical doctor and just was really disenchanted with the mess that I ran into at the hospital there. And it was just like this isn't, there's no life here, this just doesn't feel right. I don't want this. If I have to look down the barrel of this as my future, I'm out. I'm talking about a quick prescription for Xanax. You know what I mean? It's just like, there's no health in this sick-care model. And so, I started to, I was doing Tai Chi, I was doing martial arts, I started to study with the Taoist abbot in traditional Kung Fu and was like "Wow this is great." And I've travelled like my father grew up in, my father went to school in Europe so he'd sent me every other summer to Europe to stay with my aunt and get into some trouble and giving you a rail pass and do the young kid thing.

So the travel bug had already bit. But then I became a monk under this Taoist Abbot and really started studying diligently. Buddhism, Taoism, Kung Fu, Taichi, Qi Gong, basically anything I get my hands on. And I was studying in Los Angeles, California and every time because I was at UCLA. And every time I got a break and when I was in acupuncture school, every time I got break take a quarter off here and there and just go travel the world and he'd give me a letter of intro to a monastery or something and I'd just show up over there and start sweeping their floors or what the hell they ask me to do. And I just, I got to see stuff that it sounds like a fairy tale in a lot ways but it was just my life. And the only thing that slowed me down in the last year has been having a baby which grounds you considerably. And we're getting to the point where he's old enough to travel and I'm taking him on his first international trip to Cuba of all places. So, we're going to have some fun.

Kevin Snow: That's awesome. I noticed that in the movie *Origins*, right, seeing you walking with vitality around in Africa. And just some questions about logistics of that, what kind of shots do you have to get? What kind of, how was the preparation for a journey like that?

Pedram Shojai: Yes that's a great question. It's a challenging place to make a movie because we arranged with this village to be able to park up in the middle of nowhere and have solar panels and all these arrays. We worked with a company that did training to teach us how to walk because if you're going to be walking with lions you better know what you're doing. And so, there's this whole element of like training with rifles and ballistics and all kinds of stuff that you don't want to be doing when you're out there because I'm not there to shoot an elephant, but they won't even let you be out there unless you know how to handle yourself because people die all the time, it's not a joke. And so, we got there, we got all the arrangements and we trained at how to walk the earth and all that. And the operant word is walk because my crew is going crazy because it's out in the bush, there's only two things that run, predators and prey, and we wanted to be neither. And so, like all these guys that were joggers were like "Please I'm going crazy. I've been there six weeks. I just need to go for a run." And you go for a run, an animal start chasing you around there.

And so, it was just as really interesting hot, crazy place to park up for six weeks to make a movie and just get into the immersion experience. They said you want to just film random people doing this? I said, "Oh hell no I went into the entire course. I did all the training, I learned all the bird call, we've learned to ID the plants and the animal tracks, the whole thing." I said "This is crazy, I'm out here, I want this, let's go." And so, it was a phenomenal experience, we're actually going to be taking groups back in

the next year or two. And we're just in a limited free screening of our movie before it like went to distribution and that place is booked for God knows how long because everyone is like 750,00 views of the movie during the free screening, and that place just is I think booked for the next three years. So, it's like I want that, I want that. And anyone who sees the movie is like, "I want to go there, Where was that?"

Dr. Robyn Benson: Do you want to share with our global audience here, Pedram, some of the insights from the movie? Like, for people who have not seen it, like really, what did you really learn? Why did you call it "Origins"? Well, just give us a little bit more of a background.

Pedram Shojai: Yes. The essence of where we kind of left off on my first movie which was called Vitality was lifestyle is really the secret sauce, right, the Holy Grail of health. And so, all these people are talking about saving money on diabetes with new drugs, it's like; well, vegetables are the original solution you should probably look at. And so, we just started really talking about what that meant and why the health care system was broken. And so, for Origins I decided look, why don't we just go back to where our ancestors started and look at what food looked like, what stress looked like, what life was like. And then, kind of extrapolate from there and look at modern life and see what the differences are and maybe be able to highlight where some of those differences are potentially causing some of our problems. And it was very, very interesting because I have a lot of the kind of biggest names in the health and wellness space in the movie as interviews. And the smoking gun is right there in front of all of us, and the problem is, it's so there that it's everywhere. And so we start to miss. It's like when the original kind of research was happening where things were starting to slowly point to smoking and tobacco causing cancer. one of The famous quotes from one of the head researchers was Cigarettes are just as likely to cause cancer as nylon stockings because those became popular at the same time too and how do we know one started it not the other?

And so, they had a hard time pinning cigarettes to cancer because everybody was smoking. And so, now when you start looking at all the lifestyle diseases that we have including a rise of cancer, autism, and electromagnetic collision, all these types of thing, you start looking around and you realize that it's all the junk that we've added into our environment that's really the only difference between life a thousand years ago and now. And so, you start really looking at what's gone into the food, what's gone into the air, what's going into our water, what additives we're going, what pesticides are going into our soil and you go, "Holy crap." Really, the difference between what put us at the top of the food chain, and what is

making us obese and sick and just completely unwell is all of this kind of reckless better living through chemistry science or pseudoscience if you will being just spume into our environment and there's no safeguards and people just assume that things are fun because some laboratory said it was fun and now the gig is us up and we're realizing that the closer we get back to natural systems and ingesting only natural things and participating in natural environments, our health has to improve. And so, it was a really interesting journey about mans' discovery of fire then taking the metaphor of fire and applying it to technology and really looking at where we've burned our hands. And look, we're on technology right now and those technologies. I at runwell.org, we make movies, and trust me, cameras take batteries, but at what point is that technology detriment to our health and our environment? And at what point is it helping us?

So it really opened up a lot of big questions in a struck a chord with the audience because it's where we're at, you know what I mean? We have some big decisions to make but kind of the core of that is who are you as a global citizen and how are you spending your money, and where you spend your money is effectively where you vote and the people who you give your money to have the power so if you don't like the way the world works, then stop giving those people your money. And so it ends on a very conscious capital note and I don't spoil the whole movie. But like I said, it struck a chord and it did really well, and it's just about to actually come out into the mainstream. So, it's a movie I'm proud of, and it took four years, so, oh my god. The human baby takes nine months, this thing took four years.

Dr. Robyn Benson: I know the feeling.

Kevin Snow: Actually I don't, it's the closest I can say I've come, but...

Dr. Robyn Benson: I know the feeling, a couple times over. And birthing a book let me tell you, I know you were writing a book but my goodness, getting my healthy travelers book out has been like a three-year process, oh my goodness, yes. I'm very excited, it's finally happening, and it's so great to be celebrating the launch of it with all of these amazing voices like yours. So, my goodness. So, we have a lot to talk about. So, you travel a ton. And lot of people worry about parasites and all kinds of bugs, there are a lot of them out there, can you speak a little bit to that and what people can do to protect themselves?

Pedram Shojai: Yes. I'd like to qualify what I'm about to say by kind of admitting that I was the guy at the side of the road at Indian bus stops just be like "Oh, what's that?" And just eating all kinds of crap. I mean, I spent about six months just walking through India and pretty much sampling all types of food. And

I only got sick half a time, I mean, I barely got sick. I got really sick in Peru once because I was eating river trout and I just ordered trout, I didn't realize that it came from a river not the ocean being a California guy, and I looked behind me at the river, they pulled that up out and I was like "Oh no." But the question is if I would have seen it, I wouldn't have gotten sick. But so, yes. I mean, I've been there, done that. I've been through lots of parts of Asia and been a bit of a cowboy on what I've eaten. And fortunately I never got any parasites. But I have been an advocate of fermented foods for a very long time. I have been constantly giving myself at least a couple of spoons full of raw unpasteurized fermented something. I'm a big advocate of probiotics; I'm a big advocate of high dose vitamins. And giving the body the resilience it needs so that your vitality fights things off.

Now, certain parasites are just they'll get in there and they'll beat you up. And there's very strong anti-viral herbs, there's. My whole thing is protect yourself, if you lose that, there's herbs to take. I think [Kwan Yang Su Wan 00:15:19.10] or cactus extract has been a life saver for me. Worm wood is really good, lots of botanicals and even essential oils I've taken on travels with me. And every once in a while, Cipro. Even sometimes you just take a bullet, and I've probably taken Cipro three times in my life and I've travelled to dozens and dozens of countries. And like I said, I kind of have been a reckless idiot if you ask some of my friends. I love the food, and I love kind of the experiment of tasting home cooked meals in places where people are really proud of their culinary traditions. And one of the things that I think is incredibly important is to ask them what they eat with those foods as digestives and as things that help support the stomach. I have run out of medicine, I was doing a lot of barefoot medicine in Nepal back in 2001, and I ran out of all the herbs, all the tinctures, all the drugs, all the needles, all my bandage. I mean, I pretty much ran out of everything because I took care of a couple of kids in one village and every time I show up in the next village, someone had already beat me there saying there's a doctor coming. And so, you don't turn people away.

So I just got to the point where I was like, at first it was like, hey, sorry, I'm out of stuff, I'm useless without my stuff. And they weren't taking bath as an answer so I just basically said go get the old man and bring him over here and ask them and say, "Hey, what do you guys use for stomach aches? What do you guys use for dysentery? What are the natural remedies here that you guys use?" And okay, great. Now, send that kid to get me some and just started using the local plants and herbs and things. And the funny thing was their guy had known how to do it and they thought that they were some sort of marvel of modern medicine that was

in sweep in and save them. And I'm sitting there and saying, "Look, you know what, there's none of the Cipro to save your village at this point and you don't need it. So let's clean up your water supply." And so, I'd call in for some of my .org friends to come in and start doing well water and kind of malaria nets and all the kinds of stuff that they needed. But what do you guys have? And that really got me and taught me a lot about botanical medicine around the planet. It really saved my ass a few times. So that's kind of a long answer to a pointed question, but if you're curious, figure out what they have and chances are, you can find a solution 50 feet away from where you're standing.

Kevin Snow: That's great. Is there a specific dysentery or flora, any kind of digestive problem in your own road is? Now, you've mentioned a few of them already but some of the very specific ones that you've used?

Pedram Shojai: Yes. I think my, like, Swiss army knife for dysentery has been [Kwan Bian Su Wan 00:18:22.04] which is a Chinese concentration of [Captus Language 00:18:26.00] which is a very bitter herb, and you take that as a concentration and it just, men, I swear about it, it worked very well for me and I don't travel without it and now my wife doesn't travel without it. But my wife uses it differently, like, if she gets indigestion, or she gets bloating or she eats ice cream, she takes it which is a complete not a contraindication, it's just its not off label use of it, like, she believes in it so much just now it's a placebo for her. When it actually hits the fan, [Captus 00:18:57.11] is a wonderful, wonderful plant that really helps with dysentery. And let me be clear about something though, you know dysentery is coming usually hours before you are in trouble depending on the strain. And so, one of the best ways in getting ahead of a disease is intercepting it before you got too much replication before you have too much of a hit. So, don't wait till symptoms show up. If your stomach is feeling funny, that's a pretty good time to start taking that stuff.

Kevin Snow: Okay.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Do you want to speak a little bit more to preparing your immune system for travel?

Pedram Shojai: Yes.

Dr. Robyn Benson: You can recommend for your patients.

Pedram Shojai: Well, being a Qi Gong guy, I think that Qi Gong has been instrumental in the boosting of the immune system of all my patients. And I'll tell you this, I've seen thousands of patients over the years and now I'm kind of making movies and writing books and doing less of the actual doctor

thing. But there was a rule, and I would say this, I would state this to my staff because it was just like a game I played. And out of every 10 patients say that would come in, five of them I would be like "Hey you should probably do some Qi Gong". Right? And out of those, one of them would do it. And the one that did it was usually the one that got better and stayed better. And so, here I am being like, hey look, I'm going to teach you how to fish, you don't need me, let's get you to boost up your vitality and just develop a sense of wellness and ease and create a cushion in a force field and all things that you need.

And you're too stressed out; you're too worked up in all that kind of modern lifestyle stuff. And here's a practice that's specifically designed and engineered as this ancient technology that has helped billions of people over thousands of years, and I'm giving it to you and you're not doing it. And so, it was just amazing to watch like people who just were not willing to crossover and do some breathing to offset disease and enhance their lifestyle. And so, the flip side of that is just do Qi Gong. It helps, it works, it really does what we say it does, and it's not because I believe in Qi gong. I actually didn't believe in Qi Gong, I took a couple of classes and I was like "Holy crap, what's that?" And so I experienced Qi Gong, and the difference between belief and experience is enormous.

Kevin Snow: Right, we'll linger with that, absolutely. And I've seen that with my own practice as well, so you've been mentioning the very simple stuff thus seem to be more difficult things to take.

Pedram Shojai: And that's it, that's it. It's like, I'm going to tell you that I have some new technology that dropped down from NASA that's going to change everything and that's all great, that's all fine and I loved the technology. But how about the old stuff, like, eating vegetables or soup when you're sick and all that? So, building on that is vitamins are fantastic, right; getting yourself prepared through inoculating your micro biota is amazing. So, we've actually been working with these pills that dissolve in your mouth that replenish the bacteria that have been found to be dominant in people who get sick less of it. So every time you take antibiotics, every time you use Listerine, every time you do all these types of things, you're killing good and bad bugs. And so, what are you reinoculating them with? If you're eating a lot of sugar you're in trouble, right. And so, how do you manage that balance? Is one, you take out the sugar, you take out the diet sodas, you take out the garbage and I don't have to tell you guys about that, if you want to go there, we will. So stop eating garbage and stop feeding the bad bacteria and then reinoculate the good bacteria and then you have this friendly force that travels with you all in and around



your nasopharynx which becomes your frontline of defense against any sort of airborne invasion and then your gut becomes a frontline.

You know 70% of your immune system is in your gut. So, what is your immunity looking like there and how do you offset it? Most Americans, look, most people have a certain degree of resilience and it's not like the parasites are new to us. Actually, there's a certain degree of evidences coming out right now saying having a certain amount of kind of bad guys to attack keeps the troops busy because when the troops aren't busy fighting real bad guys they turn on our gut lining, they turn on our thyroid tissue, they turn back on us and transaminase autoimmunity and they start creating all sorts of weird problem because we've eradicated so much of the onslaught that now our armies shooting us in friendly fire. And so, there's a tremendous amount of evidence coming out right now saying it's not those bugs that are the problem, it's the red 17 and the GMO corn and the gluten polypeptide chunks that we can't digest well. And all sorts of crazy stuff that's coming from modern farming and chemical exposure that's getting our bodies to become weak, so by the time we go to some foreign country and some bug hits us, we go tumbling instead of saying like "Oh I got these".

Dr. Robyn Benson: So, we're getting a little static back there.

Kevin Snow: Hello.

Dr. Robyn Benson: So, Pedram?

Pedram Shojai: Yes.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Okay.

Pedram Shojai: I am, yes.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Yes. So, yes. This is really an important information that you're sharing to everybody. Can you talk a little bit about eco-tourism exactly for people who have never even heard that term what really means and you noticed that global green warrior, so explain that.

Pedram Shojai: Yes. I mean, I could take my family on some Disney cruise but just chucks the trash out of the back of the boat or I can go to some amazing village and work with them to help teach my kids about the local environment, the forest, the gorillas, or whatever and bring abundance and bring a lot of joy to the people in that environment. I can go to a safari lodge if you will that has very good practices and helps restore the animal populations, or, I can pay some guy to help me go out and poach a lion. And these are the decisions we need to now start making and it goes

back to that conscious capital equation which is you vote with your dollars. So, where are you spending your money and what are you supporting just because you're, you say "Oh, I'm going to go travel." It doesn't mean that your travel should make the world a darker, scarier, and more polluted place. And so, I have been involved in a lot of initiatives with medical tourism and eco-tourism which is, look, there's an amazing array of stuff that's happening in this planet. I just had some billionaire come to me and say "Hey my kid's a punk, help me out." And I was just like "Send him to India." Right. And so, we chucked him into some monastery and have to go fetch water and help the poor and be of service and stop being a pain in the ass.

And it fundamentally changed the kid. And so, the dad spent a 10th of the amount of money, the money went into a local economy which helped feed people and do things right instead of some global conglomerate crap that it sucked into some sort of profit machine that pays politicians to vote against the environment. And so, again, it's following the money and allowing us to use our money to make the world a better place and extending that from your local garden to your local farmers market to the textiles that you buy your clothes from and the electricity that you purchase all the way to the travel that you do, and really understanding that everything you spend your money on is an extension of your values. And if you're not looking at it, you are allowing other people's values to dictate the future direction of our planet and that is an enormous challenge and it's a challenge of our generation and the poor kids that come after us. Because I didn't invent a lot of the cool stacks that I have to deal with and I'm trying to clean up right now on my generation and my son who is less than a year old has the tremendous burden to carry if we don't do our part and really help to be a part of that solution now.

Kevin Snow:

So what is an urban monk?

Pedram Shojai:

So, The Urban Monk is the title of my upcoming book and that's why I'm home writing today. And it's, my first book was very esoteric. I mean, like I said I was a Taoist monk for years. When I first started teaching this stuff, I started teaching people about Taoist alchemy and it's an amazing book I've been told, and it reads well and those kind of stuff, but there's four people in the planet that know what Taoism is and want to read about it. And so, as I started to understand where people were, I started to understand what the problem with the spiritual communities have been which is we have this understanding of some sort of like far off [Shambhala Language 00:29:02.01] where if you want to have a spiritual life you got to change your name to pseudo, get like a tattoo, wear some turban, run for the hills, and like you're going to abandon your children, and all of that is

nonsense. So, how can I help bring the mountains down to the rush hour? Right. And so, that was really the prime. We're doing it with Rodale which is really traditional mainstream culture. Because what I really wanted to do was do what I ended up having to do for about 15 years in clinical practice is take the wisdom that I brought back from the East and distill it into something where people who have normal busy hectic lives can actually apply it.

I don't need them to be Taoist, I don't need them to be Buddhist, I don't need them to get a Pedram tattoo, that's all just nonsense. And so, the practicum of being an urban monk means understanding kind of like the bullets that are bound to come at you in modern life and understanding how to use this ancient technologies and these modern technologies to intercept that and offset the damage from that and really get ahead of that so that you can be a steward for the environment, a great community participant, a healthy robust person and just part of the solution. Because I feel like the good people in the world feel like the bad people are doing what they do and were powerless, and it's absolutely fundamentally untrue. So, The Urban Monk is a stance to say no, no, no, clean yourself up, get better in your community, become an active participant in the new economy and be part of the solution that's going to help make this whole place so much cooler.

Kevin Snow: Wow

Dr. Robyn Benson: So maybe tell us a little bit of that journey of the urban, I mean, I know it's like 10 modules because I know this is something that everybody can look into more if you're listening here live and you can find out more about this program.

Pedram Shojai: Yes. The book comes out in February 2016, it's the only way to go, but I've been training, I got a few thousands of people that I already trained in my Urban Monk Academy. I have been teaching this stuff for a long time, it's not like there's really self-help guys are out there that just think of something in the shower and then just start selling it to people and it's completely unproven. And when people say you're a new age guy, I stand up and say absolutely not. I fundamentally reject that, don't ever call me a new age guy because my Kung Fu lineage is at least 3,000 years old, my medicine is 5,000 years old, and I'm using the experience of thousands and thousands of generations of people before me whether it's shamans or Buddhist monks or doctors to bring you stuff that's tried and true and working, I didn't make this stuff out, right. And I've tested it in my clinic, I've tested it in my priesthood, I've tested it everywhere, and I will not present something that I can't stand behind, right.

And so, we're talking about sleep, we're talking about stress, we're talking about waking, we're talking about feeling lonely, we're talking about being stagnant at the workplace, right, we're talking about all of the things that are getting in the way of our vitality in our day to day life and working on transforming those through practices and understanding to get out ahead of it so that the things that bother your average person don't bother you anymore. I could give a damn what the Kardashians are wearing, right. And that's because I'm free. And so, that's the whole thing, it's like, "Oh my god, I'm so upset my team lost." What does that really have to do with anything in the grand scheme of things other than the fact Caesar invented a way to keep us all pacified in the coliseum, right. And so, it's really taking a fundamentally different approach to looking at life in a way where you understand yourself better. Because if you take that equation of noses and then you fragment it into our modern world where we have the priests who cannot tell us what to do in our spiritual life then we have our therapists who help put our crazy heads together and our doctors who send us to 75 different specialists and know to figure out what the hell is wrong with us. You realize that the answers are completely fragmented and everyone's running around like crazy people because we've lost our center.

And our center has to do with a much more fundamental question which is who am I, why am I here what's this all about? And Without that, it's all just distractions and entertainment and what keeps me from taking my chewing gum and throwing it out at a car window and who cares, really, right. And so, it's a bold stance for a modern person to step back into their birth rite which is meaning purpose, wisdom, drive, vitality and all the things that really define the heroic ancestors that helped us get where we're at, right. We're taking it back, it's a shame and a tragedy that our generations have gotten more and more diluted less alive, our sparkle is gone our environment is collapsing, we're allowing it to happen, real men don't do that, real woman are mama bears, they don't do that, right? And I'm not an angry environmentalist, I'm a concerned father.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Wow, beautiful. Can you share perhaps when you think about this creation, this Urban Monk Academy and all your life experiences, was there like a defining moment on one of your trips that really helped shape you that you can share with us? Or just like an A-ha, like, wow, this is it; this is what life's all about.

Pedram Shojai: I had a moment that I wrote about my first book, Rise and Shine that is the one that most people write me about. And so, it was the first that came to mind, and every time I even think about that the hair stand up, I was in the holy City of Kushkar, in India, and I was doing some Yoga and

meditation thing and I was so spiritual. So like, I'm a Western guy, I had the means to go away and go to India and it was such a luxury that I took for granted because I wasn't starving, right. And so, here I am studying Yoga with some person who was kind of righteous about the fact that they or who they were. So I walk out after a session, I'm walking in a town to do something, and there is this leper and there's obviously a lot of lepers in India still, who had lost one arm and both legs and someone had sewn him a pouch for his legs so that and his one functioning arm, he could drag himself along the street and get around.

And He was singing some devotional song and I was just taken aback and I was like "Oh my god, poor guy, look at that guy." Right. And being the western A-hole that I was, I pulled a rupee out of my pocket and walk over and was like, "Oh man, here you go." I'm trying to help the guy. And he just looks up at me, and the way he looked at me stunned me like for the rest of my life, I would never forget the look in this guy's eyes. It was just like pure, pure white light. I mean, it was the most beautiful eyes I've ever seen. And in perfect English he says to me "No thank you, I have already eaten, but my friend over there, signals with his head, I think is hungry." And I just collapsed and just started crying because here's this guy that's kind of the most deserving guy of my charity that I could have ever imagined, and he was wealthier than I would ever be. And the degree of humanity and the degree of just pure grace that was coming and exuding from this individual was just afford me, and it fundamentally shifted everything that I started to do in my criteria for studying with spiritual masters and people across the world fundamentally changed to really search for and appreciate that degree of humility.

And there's just a lot of BS out there, there's a lot of people trying to get people's money, and there's just a lot of noise in the world, of the destructions, there's also parasites and vampires. And a lot of what I have done and the desert shaman could speak to this probably better than any is really stand in front of that parasitic energy and be like that's bullshit, don't, you're not allowed to do that to people, right, and just bring a message of usefulness, utility, and personal empowerment instead of standing in front of people saying "Oh I should be your guru." And that is where I have drawn a line. I don't want to be anyone's guru I don't need to be a guru, I got so many faults on my own, right. But here is some really cool stuff I learned on my journey that can help you because it's helped thousands of people before you.

Kevin Snow:

That's profound what you're saying about the journey, that's really one of the points of this. He is talking about the journey, and the journey is having experiences like that. I used to tell people when I did quite a bit of

travelling which was I didn't really enjoyed the travelling part, I enjoyed being in other places and seeing the humanity of the world, right. So, we're trying to help people to get through that travelling part. And what is one thing that you were want to change, you've done a lot of travelling yourself, what do you really see about that industry as a whole that one thing you'd like to change about?

Pedram Shojai:

Yes. Well, I mean, the one thing I'd like to change and I don't if it's happening is being able to shield those planes from some of the radiation men. It's you spend enough time up there and you start cooking in those tin cans, you could just fundamentally feel the difference and there's technology now and I'm sure you guys have covered it to help offset some of the damage I have post your shirts I wear and all that. So, the biggest challenge I personally have with all the travel that I still want to do is the carbon footprint of it all. And it's an enormous one because it's a bit of a decadent position to be able to globe trot and go "Hey, this week I'm in Vietnam and next week I'll be here." And it's just the elite of the world can do things like that and have this enormous carbon footprint because the majority of our planet is stuck in some village and we'll never see the village next to them, right?

And so, those are kind of big fundamental core eco-issues that have really gotten me to slow down in my travel, right. And I do a lot more here, we're doing a thing is Santa Barbara, California where I'm trying to keep people more local, and have events that require less of that stuff like this, I mean, we're not sitting at the same room and there's very little carbon footprint from what we're doing right now. And so, those are some of the things that keep me up at night is how can we walk this earth in a way that doesn't damage her. And so, who knows, maybe there's some sort of teleportation or electronic airplane stuff, and we're doing a story on electronic flight actually this year. And so, there's all sorts of promising technology but right now there's a price to pay and we need to be cognizant of that and how much of my, I live, I have solar panels at my house and I have a two mile commute and I've really limited my carbon footprint because I don't want to be a part of that problem, but if I got a conference in New York, I just blew through, I might as well just smoke cigarettes. It's just it's a very difficult challenging perplexing time because the airplanes do a lot of damage.

Dr. Robyn Benson:

Well I've really loved this whole conversation and how you really shed light beautifully, Pedram on how to be a healthy conscious traveler and how you're doing that through everyday life and that's a big message throughout this whole summit is how do we bring this message into our day to day life. And so, I thought with just one final question for you since

you're a bio hacker, I mean, how do you really optimize your health? What if all the information you've learned over this lifetime and what you bring to your patients, and what you bring to your global audience, I mean, what has been your a-ha about how you really take care of your vessel?

Pedram Shojai:

I would say that for a new father, the loudest most thumping kind of swollen toe on that foot is the lack of sleep and my realization of what that does to one's health, right. And so, I have a very, very strong protocol built around getting enough sleep, getting in the dark, being in the quiet, right, and then taking the decompression time to get my body into the right state so that I can do the healing I need to do at night and we can get to do the neurochemistry of melatonin and DMT and all the powerful things that happen in the pineal gland and all spiritual practice that go with that. But if you're not getting sleep, you're host. And so, the first thing you need to hack in all of it is jet lag if you're a big traveler and you're using your melatonin devices and stuff to kind of hack your way into that and sleep, and then from there, obviously, vitamins and hydration, taking out the inflammatory foods and making sure that everything you eat is nourishing and not activating your immune system in a way that puts you into challenges with immunity and autoimmunity and all things that we all talk about now functional medicine.

And really just creating a culture of making sure you understand that it's a vitalistic model. So, don't treat yourself to cake, treat yourself to kale, right. What we do as some sort of reward is we honor ourselves for some sort of accomplishment by poisoning ourselves. Like "Oh my god, let's go out and celebrate and get really drunk on tequila." So you feel like crap for three days, right. And so, if you travel a lot and you have a big busy life, like a lot of the people on this summit, you have to really look at your relationship with vitality and what poisons you're allowing in your life and ask yourself are they worth it? And really, we could speculate with your body and say "Look I'm putting you up at 40,000 feet for 12 hours to go to Australia or where the hell I'm doing next week." What do I need to do to offset that and how much downtime I'm going to need, how much barefoot time in the dirt do I need? How much gardening do I need to do to balance my life so that I can maintain my sanity, my vitality and my health? Because trust me, as a filmmaker in all the stuff that I do, this is something that I deal with on a daily, weekly, monthly basis, and so, if I don't stay ahead of it, I'm under the sheets sweating and losing four days of productivity because I lost it, I'm down, and I'm sick, and I can't afford that.

Dr. Robyn Benson: Thank you so much Pedram. So we're going to end on that high note, that big message, "Eat kale, not cake." I love it; you're so awesome, thank you. And everything you shared, I mean, just the wisdom of the way in which you live your life and what you're sharing with your audience and for everyone listening, this was really viable information. So again, thank you from a world traveler, got two films, book, couple of books, one on its way, and so, join Pedram and his great program, The Urban Monk Academy. Take care everyone and thanks for joining us today.

Pedram Shojai: Thanks for having me. This was fun.

Kevin Snow: Thank you.