

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

[00:01:29] **Sue:** So I imagine that sometimes you feel that you may have missed the boat with your kids, and Ann and I are certainly no exception. This was especially true when it came to things like them making life changing decisions due to their uncertainty about climate and their future and the world's future. There are a lot of big feelings around this and it really, really matters. So today's episode is a little different. It's a conversation between generations about climate and how it's perceived so differently and how to stay connected through difference. Our guest is Mason Marriott Voss, a homesteader who lives in southern Maine. He's a former debate coach and speech writer. He left the city to begin radically rethinking how we live, how we relate to our environment and each other. He now spends his time growing food, working to raise class consciousness, and falling in love with nature. We hope you find this conversation meaningful on a number of levels. And let's get to it.

[00:02:32] **Ann:** Yes. So there's many topics like you mentioned that we're going to cover, but one of the ones that impacts our security and it impacts every one of us, even if we're not aware of it today. And that's the impact of climate on our environment and on our own sense of safety in the world. So climate change in the world is impacting us every single day, whether we're aware of it or not. Actually, our awareness about the topic varies depending on so many different aspects. Where you live, what privilege you have, how old you are, how old you, well actually yes, how old you are, what generation you're a part of, and when that awareness came to be. And we're going to talk about that today. So for many of us, these conversations, when we mention the word climate change - please don't click off cause it's a tough one. It's a tough conversation to be had, but essential. And been working on this podcast episode specifically for a long time in thinking about secure relating, relating to such a difficult, difficult topic. And we've realized that we've been having hard conversations in our house for many, many, many years. Right?

[00:03:42] **Sue:** Yeah. Let's call them what they are: Arguments. Very intense arguments. It is true. And hopefully the conversation's evolved and so we have decided to take a huge risk and be Uncensored, and we have brought the oldest of our three kids on the podcast today to join us in the evolutions of this topic and how we've talked about it and so much more. So we want to introduce Mason Marriott Voss, welcome to the show.

[00:04:12] **Mason:** Thank you for having me. It's great to be here. I actually do want to start quickly with a terms question. You know, and you referenced it as climate change. A lot of other people have been talking about it through the lens of a climate crisis cause change sounds really innocuous, but I think that as a lot of this conversation will show, and it's been pointed out to me recently that it's more of a human crisis. The climate in the grand scheme of things will be. The Earth will in the long term be fine. But humans, both our big civilization thing that we do as well as like our individual lived experience of our day-to-day lives are deeply in crisis right now. And that's what you know we're going talk about is that experience of it.

[00:04:56] **Sue:** I love that change actually, cause I could not figure out when we were talking about climate change, I'm like, that's so distant. Yet when we really get into it, it's so vulnerable. So I really like that shift actually. So, what did you say, human crisis? Because you're right, once we die off, the world is going to continue.

[00:05:27] **Mason:** Right. The earth will be fine. And this was brought to my attention recently that, you know, like you said, Mom, it's not distant, it's not out there away from us. It's very much an US problem.

[00:05:27] **Ann:** Coming to that realization about how much of a crisis it really is, is an evolution for all of us, isn't it? Like there's ways that we can see it as a crisis of this moment, a crisis of the future. But it's extremely real in the present. And Mason, for personally, you've been a big part of my reckoning with that, seeing it as a real in time, present moment. And so have actually all the kids, so I don't want to just say Mason, but the way Mason just joined in the conversation. That's the conversation we're having as washing dishes along the way for years and so you can see that the level of insight, but the level of challenge is really important and personal. And so you know what started off by talking about how the different generations have been impacted. And I remember very specifically, so many years ago, you all talking about the impact of climate in the present sense. I mean, I can't even remember, it was probably now eight years ago, I don't know, but talking about. Just this really dim view of your futures based on this topic

[00:06:44] **Mason:** This was me and the siblings. Yes.

[00:06:48] **Ann:** And I remember my response to that. I got really angry. And in particular, you were the older one, and I was getting angry at you because you were going to really impact the younger kids in feeling the depth of something that I thought you were exaggerating. And the evolution between that and now is pretty powerful.

[00:07:10] **Mason:** So you were angry at me for what? For saying something?

[00:07:16] **Ann:** Well, for one, yes, it was such a painful topic, and we're washing dishes and lightly having a conversation. So there's the destroying of the mood right then. And we all know, for me, that's very "let's stay in the moment". You know what I mean? Like, we're washing dishes and we're laughing, and now we're talking about the destruction of earth, and the, and the human crisis. So that shift hit my nervous system in a not very fun way. I can

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

say that I didn't respond in a very secure, relating way. I got pissed. And you were the culprit. You bringing this dampening experience to my joy was painful and I didn't like it, but it was also a whole nother level. Right. And that is you were bringing the reality of something. To me closer and upfront that is was I was aware of, but keeping at a much further distance than I am now and where I will be in future conversations cuz I keep moving cuz these conversations are deepening. But I think I was mad because it hit my nervousness system. Been such a painful level of hearing you guys. Experience such pain and I didn't want you to experience, I didn't want the reality to be that, and y'all talking about it as reality. Was too painful for me to be able to take in. It was so painful that I couldn't, and I wanted to shut it down. I wanted to shut the whole conversation down, not only for my moment, but also because my body couldn't handle the level of pain. Thinking about my kids not having the kind of future that I them having, or that I just thought was inherently going to be there and being confronted about that reality was just too over.

[00:09:04] **Mason:** Yeah, it really can be and often is. I also will say that I certainly probably was being very antagonistic in my portrayal of, and in, in the conversation I was having. I can't say I would've come at that time, would've come from a very like grounded or secure way in my own relationship, both in the household, but also to my environment. My, I wouldn't say that my relationship was secure at that point either. I was very much. In like the other end of the extreme of like the full despair. There is no hope. There is no future headspace and and outlook, which, you know, there's an element to it of like, let's be realistic, let's be reasonable, and let's look at what the science says. And it's really easy to get there from that. But that's also not a productive place to have a conversation or live your life from, to be always present in the total despair because, you know, it paralyzes you. You can't, why do anything if there is no hope for any future ever. Um, and I want to be careful and acknowledge that, you know, for the vast majority of the history of this conversation, the types of people who've been pushing the narrative. Like, don't go to despair. Don't be crazy. You know, it's gonna be okay. Like those people are like oil executives and politicians for president. Like, those are not the type of people I'm trying to emulate in this discussion. But it is important to still hold back and say like that, that despair isn't valuable, but acknowledging, you know, Who has made that argument before and and saying like, I'm not coming from that place.

[00:10:42] **Sue:** I actually think that's important cuz I was thinking about this. I have a lot of shame and you know, having things, not completely doing all the right things, things like that. But could you say a little bit more May about that transition from our I mean, you were in a terrible, terrible, terrible place. And like Ann, you know, we were really worried, we were resistant. We wanted to just say, oh, it's not true. You're being fed these things. And especially like even thinking about not wanting to have children, just the rollout of the impact of this. We even just not that long ago when we were watching that movie, what was it called? Don't look up. Don't look up. And all three of you got really mad at us at the end. Because y'all, you'll literally experience the movie differently and that, you know, that hasn't been that long ago. I am very interested because I imagine people listening are gonna be in this shame place, or this, like, as Anne was talking about, about pushing it away or flooded and overwhelmed. So maybe say a little bit about your transition to the place that you are now.

[00:11:45] **Mason:** Yeah, I, I certainly, you know, like you're saying, Into it very much, very quickly went down like the doom loop of, you know, it's all going to hell in a hand basket. There is no future, like you said, like why have children, that was the, I think that might have been the conversation, Anne, that you're referencing in the kitchen. It was about that specific context and that specific question about having kids or bringing someone into a future where there is no future. I, I was certainly very much there and I don't know what exactly, there wasn't ever a clear moment for me where I moved through and, and, and beyond that kind of space and out of that space. It's certainly been a process very long and very slow process, and y'all have been a part of that in all of our arguments and discussions has moved it out of that space and coming through that transition and being in the space more where I am now, where, you know, I try to be as realistic and and real as possible, right? The most recent I P C C report from the UN just came out and they said, you know, if. Don't act within the year or so that we will likely see the worst effects of climate change. We're definitely gonna miss our two degree Celsius mark, which scientists for a long time have been saying is the threshold that we have to keep things below. But I don't wanna make this about the science part. This is about like, how do I stay in that space of knowing those things, knowing the science, and being realistic about what's coming down the pipe. And preparing and putting on the best version of myself that there is to show up and deal with that. And I think for me, the biggest part in that transition has been really feeling and realizing that every degree matters and that 2.1 degrees is very different than 2.2, which is very different than 2.3. And. This sort of despair versus avoidance back and forth. The polarity of it to me misses the very real spectral nature of it that there are a whole range of outcomes that we have complete control over, and that the way that we actualize those things, if we just go to despair or we just go to avoidance at the end of the day, those are both different forms of climate denial. Those are both the result of. The outcome is just, I don't have to do anything either because the problem is too big and we can't

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

solve it, or because there is no problem, and that just distancing in both ways doesn't get us closer to resolving any of those issues.

[00:14:25] **Ann:** That's really, really important points that you're making and I'm glad you brought the sciences. We, this is not about the science, but we can't ignore the science, so I'm really glad that you brought that report in because it's really real. And yet, like when you talk about the two extremes, and that's one thing I, I feel so important about you being part of our conversation is. It does feel like we've been part of helping one another move out of our extremes. My extreme of just, this is too painful. I can't touch it. Sue's extreme, you know, and yours, I'm going to go down because it's just too much. The countless hours of being willing to have these hard conversations. We're gonna bring it back to the Therapist Uncensored process of secure, relating, impacting. The threat impacting our nervous system. One reason we go to those two extremes is that we get out of our window of tolerance if we're flooded with such distressing, no hope and threat in our body. Our natural tendency, if it's too much for us, is to go to one extreme or the other. We go out of our window of tolerance. We get where we have to have complete denial, get rigid, get angry, the problem's out there, or go flat and. This progress of having all these difficult, difficult conversations with the science in it is so important, and how do we help people have these conversations? Seems incredibly important part of this episode.

[00:15:53] **Sue:** one of the things that I'm also thinking about is not everybody is having these conversations. A lot of people are not having these conversations either. We're so protected and privileged, you know, we're the last people that are gonna be impacted in some ways, and there are folks that don't have the protection to not be right in the middle of it. So I'm wondering if we can sort of talk a little bit about that around the privilege to ignore it in a way, and what we can learn. You know folks who have been in it, who have been already up to their elbows in it.

[00:16:24] **Ann:** Well, that was part of the anger, right, Mason, for you and the kids, is that we had the privilege to ignore it too much and that reality is real, and that was been part of the dialogue.

[00:16:36] **Mason:** Absolutely. I think that story, mom, you were telling about the end of don't look up, which spoiler alert, like they don't solve the problem and everyone dies, and it's a metaphor for climate change. If you haven't seen it, the end of that movie, the question that really activated me and my siblings was, Y'all asking, you know, like, oh, what would you do? Like very casually like, oh, what would you do if, you know when the asteroid is gonna hit and we haven't solved the problem? Like, how would you spend your final days?

[00:17:06] **Sue:** I think that's a good question.

[00:17:12] **Mason:** an interesting question, especially to ask your kids, you know, just to get to know somebody better, but at the same time, it came from a different place. From y'all than it, than it hit whenever it hit us. Because, and I remember saying at the time, like, like we actually have to answer that question in our lifetimes. Overwhelmingly likely, we will have to actually answer that question. What do I want to do with my final days that are gonna be cut short because of a natural disaster? And so there's that intergenerational privilege. There's also the class privilege of being able to have the resources. Move if your coastline is flooding or to access increasingly scarce resources. As you know, food prices will continue to skyrocket because we can't grow any more wheat, like the capacity for access in those ways is gonna confront us in very unequal ways. But then also a tornado doesn't much care for state lines or or tax districts, so it's going to. Everyone is gonna hit everyone differently.

[00:18:15] **Sue:** Even now, it's not even going to, right. It's already

[00:18:17] **Mason:** happening. Right. The tornado reference was to the Mississippi tornado that just went through. Right.

[00:18:23] **Sue:** It's, this isn't the future thing. This is, you know, we're seeing climate

[00:18:26] **Ann:** storms already and that's one reason why we are having these conversations is that people are feeling it. We can't ignore it. Like we used to be able to say, not now, maybe never. Right. It's, it's, we're we're feeling it we're.

[00:18:38] **Mason:** And that's kind of, I think what's been so interesting about, you know, learning about secure relating from y'all. You know, the big principle I've learned is to be secure in, in your relationship or in your relational model, is you have to be fully aware of what's affecting you. And kind of what we're seeing and what we're talking about is the environment, the climate being something that's clearly affecting us every. And that we're really not aware of it and not letting it in. That's Ann's version of it. Or on the flip side, that it affects us in ways that completely are earth shattering and we're completely shut down. I know so many peers and friends who go just all the way to that place of despair and you know, I've asked this question, you know, what is your relationship to the. And you know, I've gotten the answer before, like, how do you have a relationship? I, my relationship with the environment is the same as a relationship with any other dying person, which is such a fatalist and it misses that whole spectral outcome, that every degree is different, that there isn't one universal outcome that's gonna affect everyone. And we

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

want to be having these conversations. And there's a whole cottage industry of like blogs about, you know, dealing with your climate anxiety. Online and Sure, go check those things out. But I think it's really interesting to step back again from that question of privilege and think about the fact that, you know, we're grappling with this in our community, in our socioeconomic and racial brackets and are really struggling to like figure out an answer to that sort of deep despair question. But there are communities that have been struggling with those similar questions for a long time. That really stands out and has really informed a lot of my politics and thinking recently is it is better to oppose the forces that would drive me to self murder than to endure them. It is better to oppose the forces that would drive me to self murder than to endure them. Huey Newton was a co-founder of the Black Panther Party, and he wrote that he was writing about a spike in suicides in black. In the late sixties and early seventies that sort of motivated him to step up and push back and fight against those systems. The nihilism, the apathy, the, there will be no going up from here, kind of feeling of being, not having a future. And his response was to organize and work and push and create communities that respond to that and provide an answer. And so I think it's really important, and it doesn't have to be the Panthers. We can go back and find communities who've forged this trail already, who've been through these struggles of having really deep hopelessness in front of them and have found ways out or through or with it forward. And we don't have to, as a community of wealthier, white folks don't have to sort. Navigate that path blind whenever it comes to these challenges that do create those same feelings for us, which are new to our communities, but aren't new to the world. And we can, we really can and should, I think, be turning to history and learning from those of us who've, who've faced those challenges before and who've risen up and risen

[00:22:00] **Sue:** Like, like be more specific. Where are you talking about turning?

[00:22:03] **Mason:** Well, I think the Huey Newton example is a great one. I mean that. His response to organize and he actually, he coined a term revolutionary suicide to oppose that concept of reactionary suicide or just the, the, just the taking your life out of that place of hopelessness or foreclosing your own future in that way to say, even if I risk harm to myself by going up against a system that is powerful, even if I risk my own death in fighting those. It's still worth it. It's still better that we should take ourselves out of a place of comfort and hiding and put ourselves on the line for the change that we want to see. And knowing that those changes don't just come because we wish them to or they don't come because the arc of history bends that way, they come because thousands and millions of people organize and push for them and call for them and make them happen. And that even if that is going. Upset your daily life. Change the way that you live your life. Put yourself in harm's way that those are the types of steps that are necessary to really build beyond that sort of place of despair that, that cloistered vision that is just so cornered away.

[00:23:19] **Ann:** Bringing it into what we're often talking about on the podcast, about looking at your personal history, your own internal working model. We just did an episode of internal working model. Being aware of the narrative that precedes you and that's in your body and that's causing you and how you're responding to the world is an essential part of being able to relate in the current knowing what activates you and what you block. And so it strikes me, this is exactly what we're talking about on a global level. You're saying let's look at our history. On a global level, let's look at all aspects of our history of people who have struggled that they're part of our whole system, and let's turn to it. Let's integrate their struggle and learn from them. Not be all of a sudden in our own little world going, wait, this is new. This isn't new. This is something that we can integrate and assimilate into our world, the history that people have experienced, that we can learn from them and integrate the concept. Feeling helpless, right? Like one of the things we haven't as a privileged culture, and I, I'm real aware that many of our listeners aren't sitting here in. A place of privilege. I don't want to assume that everybody is listening because that's, I'm using Yes, thank you. Thank you. Right. But yeah, but that we can look up and go, oh my gosh. Right. This stress is impacting us and we can't deny it anymore. But to say this is new is just, it's, it's so untrue, right? Like the fact that you were aware in third grade isn't because climate wasn't changing when I was in third grade, people were there standing saying, Let's look at this. Let's look at this. And if we had listened back then and really integrated what was scary for us to integrate and make the sacrifices, we would be in a different place right now. And so being able to tolerate, we're talking about the part of shifting this is being able to tolerate all the massive discomfort inside of us to really broaden our awareness of the pain that's inside of us. And being able to sit with it so that then we can have the conversations that can pivot us into, maybe into action that could keep us from going for a 2.1 to a 2.3. Does that make sense?

[00:25:45] **Mason:** Yeah, it does. And I also think that it's really important to highlight that just because these conversations aren't new, doesn't make them easy. And speaking for myself like it's, it's. Years of processing and it will continue to be years of processing because the environment will change around me and my own experience of it will also change dramatically. And you don't just go from a place of, no, no, no, we're all gonna be fine to, okay, now let's do something about it overnight. There's a real struggle involved in all of it. And you know what our hope is in having this conversation is, is trying to figure out. Bridge the gap and help people go through that struggle to

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

encourage people to go through that struggle or, or engage with it and not turn away whenever it gets hard, but say it is worth it to dig in and really sit with it and feel it and, and struggle with it, which is, I hope, what we've been doing for the last several years.

[00:26:49] **Sue:** You don't have a flip phone. You are pretty much

[00:26:52] **Mason:** No, I do have a flip phone.

[00:26:53] **Sue:** I mean a smartphone. You've given up a smartphone, like there is, there are really big changes that you've made as you've progressed through this process of taking more responsibility. And I guess there's two things about that. One is I thought it would be helpful to just say a little bit about your process and where you landed, cuz you know, for a while I think that you as a, I mean you, you were on the tip of. Privilege, right? You're this attractive, tall, articulate, white guy with resources and you weren't comfortable in your own skin. You were really, we were really worried about you. You were not in a good space. And now it's like you're beaming and you're so happy. And I think this process of getting right with these things that we're talking about, that's also part of security and it might be helpful for you to just say a little bit about your journey.

[00:27:47] **Mason:** I, I mean, first it feels important to say like, I'm still the, like being of pure privilege. I'm still a tall white man with a lot of resources. Like those things haven't changed. But for me, like you mentioned, I, you know, I've given up a smartphone. I think that, you know, that's a step in the direction. I don't fly anymore. I work in agriculture. Um, I work on a local organic farm. We grow in southern Maine. It's a veggie farm. Shout out Wolf Pine Farm if you're in the area during the week. And I'm also a homesteader. I live on a five acre homestead in southern Maine. We grow all of our own caloric and nutritional needs, so I. In the soil with plants, with food all day, every day, both for a wage and also for a lifestyle. And I chose that. I left the city. I, you know, left my one bedroom apartment in Austin working from my desk on Zoom, right? Let's just say left college to go live differently because I truly believe. We have to take seriously the prospect of living differently if we want to continue to live at all. I don't know that there is any one right answer to like how you should live, and I'm certainly not the one to provide that for you. But I think that what I would encourage people to do is experiment in these conversations. Talk about what material changes to your life are reasonable for you. Make sense for where you. And always push that spectrum a little bit further. Put yourself out of a comfort zone. It's going to take us being really uncomfortable to prevent the worst of this, and being able to challenge what that looks like in a real pragmatic way. You know, I often run the risks sometimes of when I'm, you know, saying stuff like that, of sounding like, I think that this is an individual problem that, oh, you need to drive an electric car. You need to bike to work. I really want to avoid that. It's clearly a collective problem. There is no solution to this that is not collective. But I think that the metaphor of mask wearing is really valuable here because it's not perfect, but you know, we all understand like why you should wear a mask. Covid taught us a lot about masks and the value of them, and if I were to say, Hey, you should go wear a. If you're the only one in the supermarket that has a mask on, are you gonna affect the rate of spread of the pandemic? No, probably not. If you have that mask on, it doesn't make a difference to the overall like death rate if you're the only one in the supermarket. But if everyone had a mask on, that would make a huge difference and we know that and we like can feel that intuitively. And I would encourage you to think about your own decisions about climate change through that same lens. Modeling the behaviors and building the communities and societies and cultures that are sustainable that do think very differently about transportation or about recreation or entertainment. And you not using the one plastic straw will not make any difference. I totally get that. But if everyone didn't use straws and everyone ate locally, and everyone, et cetera, et cetera, That would make a huge difference because not only is it about those individual changes where now I recycle more, but instead we're also having conversations about why are we recycling? What is the point you're doing things in your daily life that are building communities and cultures that are attuned more to our environments and being more in direct relat. Or being more active, being an active participant in your relationship with your environment and not allowing it to be, as y'all were mentioning earlier, this sort of specter that's haunting your relational model and providing these outside stressors you're really attuning to and, and sitting with the how you interact with and affect your environment. And it's those kind of changes that I. Make the biggest difference and it's

[00:31:54] **Sue:** revolutionary because that's not at all, especially in kind of western individualistic domination, you know, when we think about the earth, it's like domination and taking over and you know, one of the things that I've done, I mean, I guess I was just thinking two, two different things. One is, It's been part of our tension in these conversations has been that you've really are walking the walk and are moving yourself more and more into that. We're trying. Right, right. Not perfect, all those things, but compared to us and yet we've been, you know, I've been worried that I was, we were gonna lose you. That you were gonna like go so far away and then we were in this. You know, nice house and holding onto resources and stuff. So there's been, one of the tensions has been we're in different places and how do we stay connected while that we go on our individual journeys. But I, I also just wanted to

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

say that for me, like talking about the what to do and stuff like that does, it feels overwhelming and I'm just like, yeah, yeah, yeah. You know, but my personal piece has been that I've been tapping into. And interested in, and you'll see on the podcast and in the series that we're bringing more people in that weren't just raised with this individualistic. We're separate from and we're dominating the world. And it has really, really been touching and been helpful. So just a concrete example. There was a suggestion to write a letter to Mother Earth. And again, initially that sounds crazy, whatever, but actually I started like kind of entertaining it. And actually just this weekend, a friend of mine that since we were six months old, I saw and we were just talking about how we were literally outside all the time, barefoot outside in the trees and I started thinking about my letter to mother. So there's just a couple of quick things in this. Is that, first of all, I didn't want it to be Mother Earth because like at first I was saying like I would write a letter to the friend of mine that I played with as a kid. And that I was very much a part of different than now. And I was thinking, why am I thinking of the earth as a she or a mother? You know? I wanted it to be my peer. And I realized it's like to think of it as like this life-giving organism that it actually is that we're harming is just almost heartbreaking. Like it hurts. And so that was part of my resistance of looking. You know, like thinking of it as our mother, thinking of this globe as our mother, which it is, and then how we're treating our mother. So that, that's just been a little bit of a version of sort of my getting more on board and really being able to feel it from this, uh, compassionate, oh shit, you know, I really do. Want to, um, be in more relationship with and get out of my, you know, domination and, and individualistic space. But it's heartbreaking. I mean, it's, it's like, you know, even talking about it, I can feel like, oh my gosh, this is just, that's a whole other way of thinking.

[00:35:01] **Ann:** So you're getting in relationship. With the earth itself, not just the effects on you or us as humans, right? Like and that's with the animals that we kill, the right people that have been displaced. Yeah. The trees. So getting in that kind of relationship, I think there's the, the, uh, the part of trying to relate securely to what is so painful. Is getting in touch with the impact that you are personally having, not just the impact on you, but personally having, and what are you willing to see in the relationship of the Earth or other people or other cultures and how it's impacting us as a whole? Again, I think of policies that. Are either going to impact us or not. And if we hold only our personal impact, like let's just say we look at the United States and what's gonna impact the United States, and we're gonna jump out of the Paris agreement. That is one at least aspect. And I am not at all claiming to have any intentional expertise on this, but at least it's a collective universal push towards really holding everybody accountable. But we pull out if it affects. In a negative way. And if we're just looking for our own sense of how does this impact me and if it impacts me in a good or a bad way, then I'll jump in. We're missing the interrelational. We're missing the v most important part of secure relating, and that is holding self and other, whether it's earth. As an other or each other in the family, but also communities all over the world that we have to give up our own sacrifices and be willing, but that's not easy. It's a lot easier said than done. Right? Like if I stop to think about Mason, you mentioned not flying, like that's not something I've been willing. To, to let go of, you know? So like, how do I rectify that? How do, how do I incorporate, what am I willing to take the train? That's true.

[00:36:57] **Mason:** I'm not, not the trains are much better, but like, it, it's, it's an improvement.

[00:37:00] **Sue:** Yes. But we all have different

[00:37:01] **Ann:** ways. Like we have to find our ways. We have to find what our ways are. And it can't be if I'm not living on a farm, right. And sometimes I've like had that guilt, maybe I should, but like, how do I relate? Do I personally relate to. Mother Earth or to the environment of what sacrifices am I willing to make? I have to be willing to go deeper, but these conversations help me go deeper. Honestly, the deeper I get into it, the more I'm really willing, I think, in a, in a more robust way to give up. If I can tolerate the pain of having these conversations, if I could really feel the impact on other individuals, it allows me to move that bar just a little bit at a time. For the betterment of you guys, actually our kids and y'all's future, but people in all parts of the world, not just what impacts me

[00:37:52] **Mason:** and like I do not want to underemphasize at all how, you know, the point Anne, you're making about it can be really, really hard and really, really challenging. But I loved Mom what you were saying about, you know, getting emotional about Mother Earth and I think the reason. Is the case is because you love your mother. I love all of my mothers like that. Pain comes from, from the love. And I think that that's the part, that's the easy part to tap into, to tap into the really deep love that we have for our environments. Like if you think really deeply about the spaces that you love or the spaces that bring you joy, that to me is the easiest way for me. It's, it's, I just absolutely Team fog. Yeah. Well, it, it just is so invigorate like it, it's energizing it just like I can't not smile. It's from that place that I think. That to me is the easiest entry point is like, where can you find the joy and the love? Because the, the pain and the loss is a lot and it's, it's there and you have to deal with it. But we can't do that without some kind of life raft, some kind of way to recenter and ground ourselves and. I think we're saying things that, at least from what y'all have told me, like it's a very literal metaphor between our relationships with our partners and our relationships with the

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

planet. That if you're in a crisis or any, some, you're activated by something going on in your relationship. Returning to those parts about your relationship that you love can reenergize it and reinvigorate it and move it forward in a new way. And I think that that sa, the exact same thing is. Of creating security with the environment is really tapping into. What about this do you love? If you're a bird watcher, you know, like that's, you don't have to go to the loss of the trees or the pain that we're causing. We can go to the. The joy and the happiness and the deep connection that we have with the places around us,

[00:40:11] **Sue:** the plants inside, if you look around right now and just your little house plants even, you know, that are, that are giving something to you and that you take care of and like bringing that to awareness of like, oh, you're in a relationship with these living or your pets, you know, animals.

[00:40:28] **Ann:** It evokes the nurturing and it evokes that better part of ourselves that if we're into the extreme of our shame or the nihilistic, it's no hope. We can't have access to that. So I love, you know, finding the love. Awakening by feeling the pain and reality, but finding the love. I love that like it's just like we can care. And for me it's like the love the people on the earth. And of course for me, sitting outside, we all know that that's my obsession. Being outside and having light, but like in the people, the people of all sorts of different parts of this world and tuning into each other. As individuals and as a collective whole. That makes me feel love, like sending this message out of secure, relating around this topic makes me so happy, right? I don't, we don't want this conversation to be a depressing one. It's a hard one, but we don't want it to be a depressing one because it, the, the goal is to inspire us into that love, into that action, and into the collective for each other, and I'm hoping this message hits so many people in that.

[00:41:34] **Sue:** I think you're entirely right that, and I love the point around the parallel between relating and, you know, our content today is this conversation. It's like being able to move in and out of the pain and staying connected as we do it and moving back, like not dysregulating, not getting overwhelmed, not, you know, not shutting down. And, you know, kind of coming forward in a way. And so I agree that it's like, ah, the minute, the minute we started talking about that, like I just opened up. So these, finding these, uh, threads of love and also these little anecdotes to inspire us. I'm wondering Mason, if you could share the origin story that we had talked about That to me, like these little anecdotes sometimes can be really inspiring.

[00:42:21] **Mason:** Yeah, I was fact checking this and I couldn't one hundred percent confirmed, but I'm 95% sure it's a part of the creation story of the sue people from the Dakotas region, but part of their creation story, part of the myth is that the deer leave, they were being over hunted, and so the deer clan leaves and the. Clan of the people that go send a representative in, in our conventional term would be a, like a diplomat, and they negotiate a treaty with the deer clan where they promise to always use the whole car, like the, I don't know, the full list, but promise to, you know, always abide by these rules about how you use a deer once you've killed it as. How to not, basically not overhunting them and always ensuring that they still have an adequate population size and not exploiting them. So that is their way of passing down the histories and their teaching of what are your appropriate hunting patterns. How do you appropriately use and clean a deer? But at the same time, it's a very different creation myth than Noah's Ark or than the, you know, God made man have dominion over all beasts. It, it approach. The dear clan and the clan of the people as equals who come to the table to have an equal dialogue about how will this relationship work and unfold. And we don't wanna essentialize, like there are plenty of other examples that go in different directions, but it's just a different way of approaching or thinking about how you relate to, or how you be in relationship with your environment. And just if you thinking about the different ways that our culture influences and affects our relationships with the environment and. I think that that story inspires me to like really think deeply about like, I have a relationship with the environment. I have one, even if I'm not present in forming it, in, in guiding it and shaping it and being with it, I have one and where does it come from? What does it look like? Those are questions that, that story sort of really makes me ask how has it been informed and, and it's still informed by all different types of. So it's a very different mindset.

[00:44:36] **Sue:**It totally is. And that, and that's, I need that. Like I, I want to be shaken out of these things that I don't know, and to be able to see things that are right there that I'm missing. One other thing that you said, if you don't mind mentioning that I think can be helpful to some is this, it was an example of People coming together and not being in this dominion space, but being in this, it's, you know, it's almost like an extension of the story related to this treaty that you have shared. Would you mind saying a little bit about that, just real quickly?

[00:45:07] **Mason:** Yeah. So you're referring to the Coach Ababa People's Agreement. Coach Ababa is a city in Bolivia. Back in 2010, I believe it was before the Copenhagen Accords, I think there was a meeting of. About 40,000 individuals from over a hundred different countries, representatives from 40 different official government designations, as well as dozens of indigenous tribes, activists and local community leaders. Mayors who reported to have gone, just like local mayors and town leaders are reported to have gone and drafted. Basically over 17 days of like a 20

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

page document with a list of demands, for lack of a better term, about how to deal with and, and grapple with climate change, um, or the climate crisis or the human crisis. And, you know, I encourage everyone to go learn more about the Coach Ababa people's agreement. Look into it, fig read it. It's very short. And it's not written by lawyers, it's written by everyday people

[00:46:13] **Ann:** Give some examples, and we'll reference this in our show notes, by the way.

[00:46:17] **Mason:** Yeah. So it calls for all kinds of things. Everything ranging from like reparations for the atmospheric space that developed countries have taken up and payment to developing nations for, you know, halting or agreeing to halt. Their own industrial capacities, the sharing of technologies, the export of solar industries, et cetera, to countries. So outside of that question, it also goes to the elimination of debt, ending some of the deadlines, the WTO is extended, as well as recognizing an ammo, acknowledging the human rights treaties that are certainly not acknowledged by a lot of countries, including the United States as well as I think they called it. I wish I'd read it again right before this, but I think they. The treaty for the recognition or respect of Mother Earth is another, you know, set of documents that they put out about that. And I wish I'd read it more right before I started, but it's everything from social, political, economic, and environmental demands that they have. And it's inspiring to me to see communities of people that have come together in a democratic way and get 40,000 people to agree on anything like it's gotta. Some kind of common ground like compromises were made. This document is agreed upon by all of those signatories, but it doesn't reflect each of their individual beliefs. It's their collective compromise. And to think about the elimination of WTO deadlines and reparation payments from the global north to global south as like the compromise position is just. Normally a place that we think about that from, we think of those as the radical position, the far left positioned, but for those groups and those peoples, that's the compromise. And so really to me, it's inspiring to see like, oh, we can actually reach some pretty good consensus on some pretty basic things that we would otherwise think of as quite radical and sort of helping to expand that tolerance window that we've been talking about and, and. Push ourselves into those spaces of discomfort. I also want to add that I know that I often can get accused of being a little political, just a little bit, just a little, um, but, but I think that's okay. We clearly, you know, are in disagreement about some of this, like the three of us all here don't agree on everything any of us are saying. Right. We're all different. But at the same time, for me it's really important to repeat or to. Not being political or try to stay neutral in a dialogue is still a political choice. Staying out or staying neutral from a disagreement always, always benefits those who have power and who are in charge and in and of itself takes the side of the status quo. So to not be political or to avoid a political discuss. Is just as political as stepping into it and engaging with it. Always pick a side, even if that side is like, if you want a side with the oil CEOs, like, that's fine. Let's have a conversation. But it's still really important to acknowledge that every statement we make, especially on an issue like this, is a political statement. And we have to have those conversations in those ways. I don't know. I was feeling myself getting very political, just wanted to

[00:49:39] **Ann:** share that. But we can't move anything unless we're in conversations. Right. And so to, to whatever side you're taking, whether it's with the oil companies or really looking at Mother Earth, you know that the core is being able to be in conversations to move it right. If we just polarize and say, This is the only way. This is the right way. You're the wrong way. We don't move the conversation. And in order to have it, we have to and, and that's what we're trying to represent here. Have the really painful, difficult ones. But stay in, don't cut off. Don't just, if you're not gonna live the way I think you should live or the right way to be that I'm gonna move away from you. It's the tolerating and staying in which helps us all.

[00:50:21] **Sue:** And I'm so glad that you, you know, this has been your vision to bring these conversation, you know, to turn the mic on and to share this. And, you know, for a while I was like, why are we doing this? This is crazy, you know? But I really want to thank you that I think that you had a vision related to this. And, you know, if we move anybody, like our, our, my hope would be, yeah, that we would move anybody to what you were just saying, staying engaged, rather. Flipping out either direction so that you're not in contact, not in contact with yourself and your feelings, your environment, and then the people near you. So, you know, one thing just kind of as we're wrapping is that this isn't a call to like be perfect and it's not a call to do everything, and it's not a call. Like we live with this tension between Mason really doing all, you know, things more, you know, and, and, and in comparison, probably not nearly enough with other people, like your peers, but, but compared to us, you're far over there. And then I know compared to some of the listeners, we're gonna, I guess I'm just saying that like, no matter where you are, we don't know exactly what your move should be, but if you can tune into. And really listen, it's like what is possible? What is something that you have thought about doing but you haven't, or that you know that you sort of should, but you haven't? Or the conversation, you know, who do you wanna challenge that you haven't? So that might be a way of, or who's challenging

Intergenerational Conversation on Climate with a Young Adult Homesteader (202)

[00:51:52] **Mason:** you that you can, that you can listen to, come back and engage with, that you can listen to and come back and engage with in a really meaningful way. I mean, I think that that's part of the answer, mom, to your question, why are we doing this? Is cause like we've challenged each other. We've challenged each other a lot in a lot of different ways, and one of the hopes is that we would encourage people to continue to do that and challenge each other as well in your homes. Yeah. Don't break up with people that you love.

[00:52:22] **Ann:** No, but his staying in and us staying in, we've, we've deeply impacted one another and I appreciated you mentioned that earlier, Mason, and I've said it like you and all and, and all of our kids have really impacted and continue to, I'm not wanting to present myself as I understand my secure relationship to the environment. Man, it is a struggle, but to continue to stay in and have it. Boy, it really has been meaningful.

[00:52:48] **Sue:** Is there anything else, um, on anybody's mind, so that you wanna take the opportunity?

[00:52:53] **Mason:** Me in particular? Just, I mean, repeating that it's hard having a conversation, doing something you think is right. Going without a smartphone is hard. Well, I mean, that's also hard, but even figuring out what you think is right is hard. And like, I still don't know if what I'm doing is right or not. And that's why I love having these conversations with y. Having the challenge back and forth over what's reasonable, what's right, what's at least in the right direction and being comfortable in the unknown of, well, we don't know what this is gonna look like, whether or not that's the environment or your change in lifestyle or none of it. Like if just, just the un there is a lot of unknown and that's okay. And that exploration is the important part, not getting. Because none of us are gonna get it right. I make mistakes all the time. All the time by anyone's metric. I like make mistakes and do things wrong, let alone the people farther to my left. So, That to me feels worth repeating is just all of it is hard at every level and nobody has it figured out.

[00:54:02] **Sue:** Right. And so the only, you know, I guess the only right thing at this point is what Ann said earlier about staying engaged and not giving up and really just kind of staying. I mean, that's kind, I guess it's a summarize. If you're staying engaged with your pain and with your desires and with your family and with people who are different than you, that to me is kind of, that's right. I mean, I hate the idea of right and wrong. I was gonna say

[00:54:29] **Ann:** staying, but I was, as you were saying that, so it's like thinking sometimes my challenge is staying engaged when the conversation is really hard and how much I wanna back off of it. And that is, you know, especially if I think somebody's like eye rolling me and doesn't wanna listen, like, oh gosh, you know, Whew. Finding your secure place to stay engaged and not get self-righteous and mad or dismissing and, and like really looking at your ability to stay in the conversation and just staying in the conversation is hard.

[00:54:55] **Ann:** Right? Like that is real. We've had a lot, we were teasing. But you know, again, y'all have an image of our dinner table right here, right now.

[00:55:12] **Sue:** that if anybody's listening to this part, it means that they've stayed with us. So they, that you're staying engaged and you've stayed engaged with the conversation. And we really, really appreciate that. And if there's anybody that you know that. Could benefit from hearing this. We really encourage you to share the episode and to follow up with some of the resources that we're gonna put in the show notes and to just kind of push yourself if these kinds of conversations are valuable. If they bring you, um, meaning or value at all besides sharing, it would be great to jump onto your, wherever you get your podcasts and give us a rating and review. It's the way that other people discover us and it is extremely helpful.

[00:55:52] **Ann:** Helps us spread the word for sure of security far and wide. Thank you so much. Mason was so thank you. Your son loved having you on

[00:56:00] **Mason:** here. It was so fun. Thank y'all for having me. I really enjoyed it. Anytime. All right.

[00:56:05] **Ann:** Thanks so much and we'll see you around. The bend.