

## EPISODE 176

*“TS: It was like, “Okay, this is not going to work.” And so, what I got to see was that all the work that I had thought that I had done around, “Who am I?”, I really got to see how attached I was. I got to see how attached, “Oh, I’m attached to being a studio owner, I’m attached to being a prominent member of the community.” Like, this feels like a death right now. It’s like, all these parts of me are dying and I’m really glad that I had this yoga philosophy to kind of lean on, to recognize, “Oh, this is what they’re talking about in the Yoga Sutras, this fear of death, this idea that I’m going to go bankrupt somehow feels like a death and what am I going to do about it?” I need to lean into the darkness right now. I need to lean into the death because the truth is that this is not who I am. This is just another mask that I have put on that’s actually keeping me from seeing the truth and being the truth.”*

## [INTRODUCTION]

**[0:01:05.5] LW:** Hello, friend, and welcome back to the Light Watkins Show. I am Light Watkins and I interview ordinary folks just like you and me who have taken extraordinary leaps of faith in the direction of their path, their purpose, or what they’ve identified with as their mission in life, and in doing so, they’ve been able to positively impact and inspire the lives of many other people who’ve either heard about their story or who’ve witnessed them in action, or people who directly benefited from their work.

And today, I am back in a conversation with my dear friend, Tracee Stanley, who I originally interviewed back on episode 43. Tracee has a new book out, it’s called *The Luminous Self: Sacred Yogic Practices and Rituals to Remember Who You Are*, and I invited Tracee back on, not just because she’s got a new book out but she’s got a phenomenal backstory of what I now recognize from having done all of these interviews where a guest discovers what they’re here to do.

They always pivot and Tracee has this wonderful story of The Pivot. She was a successful Hollywood producer, she was in an abusive relationship, she started some Yoga studios, which I actually taught at one of them when I first moved to Los Angeles and despite her external success, she had this question that was lingering in her heart. It was that still small voice that

we're all familiar with, "Tracee, who would you be without your successful Hollywood job that you don't really love, without the marriage that you find to be abusive, without your Yoga studios that you started?" "Who would you be without your financial security?"

And that led Tracee through a period of self-discovery, where she had to pivot in many ways, she left producing, she got a divorce, she closed her studios down, and she almost went bankrupt, and those were the years when Tracee had to lean the heaviest on her various spiritual practices that she had learned and studied in her Yoga experiences.

And that consisted of mantras and kriyas and rituals for spiritual awakening and protection and abundance and purification and healing. Tracee also did a ton of what she now refers to as self-inquiry work, which includes mind mapping and many other practices for peeling back the layers and getting to the core of who you are, and so in this conversation, Tracee and I are going to dive deep into philosophies and ideologies of the sacred yogic practices and rituals for remembering who you are and I know you're going to walk away from this conversation with lots of nuggets of wisdom and probably with the inspiration to practice some of this rituals for yourself.

We do go into Tracee's backstory a little bit but we do a deeper dive into how Tracee grew up back in the earlier episode, episode number 43. So, definitely take a listen to that one to get even more context of how Tracee became the wise woman that she is today, and in the meantime, let us get into my conversation with the luminous, the radiant, Miss Tracee Stanley.

[INTERVIEW]

**[0:04:41.8] LW:** Tracee Stanley, welcome back to my podcast. I can't even remember if it was called The Light Watkins Show before or At The End of the Tunnel but we've rebranded in the last year and a half or so and so now, it's The Light Watkins Show. Still about purpose, still about people out there overcoming obstacles to live their most authentic life, luminaries such as yourself who are using their platforms in books and courses to make a positive impact, leave behind a wake of positivity in the world, in their life.

And something we talked about in our previous episode was this whole idea of – I can't remember what you called it exactly but how it sticks with me as this idea of the eulogy during

your funeral, what you want people to say and then reverse engineering that to today's behaviors.

So, how were you going to behave so you can inspire people to get up there and talk about how Light was so kind and Light was so generous and Light went above and beyond and the extra mile for me and that's what it comes down to is this – just showing up on a day to day, moment to moment basis. So, that's the impression you left on me. So, thank you for that, and welcome back.

**[0:05:50.8] TS:** Thank you, thank you. It's really nice to be here to be with you, thank you so much.

**[0:05:55.8] LW:** Absolutely, and so for those newer listeners who listen to this conversation and think to themselves, "I want to know more about Tracee's backstory" we have a whole 90 minutes of doing a deep dive into the whole backstory, except, I don't remember you talking about this egg yolk situation in our first podcast, you left that out. That was a pivotal part of your whole story.

It makes sense why you're like bald-headed now and I mean, I never knew any of that and I was surprised to read it because I thought we went pretty deep. I thought you, you know, you went there with me but apparently, you were still holding back.

**[0:06:36.1] TS:** You know, you know how to go deep and I had to prepare myself. I was like, "Let's see how much deep work he's going to dig."

**[0:06:45.6] LW:** Give us some context on what we're talking about, set the stage because this brings us into your current work, *The Luminous Self*. Let's do a little montage of your superhero origin story.

**[0:06:57.1] TS:** Thank you for that, yeah. The reason I came back to this story is because I needed to look at where my deepest wounds were that were keeping me stuck, and when I did a few practices for a bit of time, there's a practice specifically called Vichara, which means deliberation and it is the idea of deliberating until you get to the seed of something or the cause

of something, and when I was deliberating on this idea of why I was afraid of being successful and I've been successful in my life.

I was a film producer, I had Yoga studios, but I always felt like I was capable of much more, and I felt like I needed to hide what I was capable of and so when I did this deliberation, I got back to this moment in time when I was in junior high school and I was jumped on the bus, and these two girls, they jumped me and they smashed eggs in my hair because they didn't like the way I wore my hair.

They didn't like the way I dressed, they didn't like my glasses. What I realized was, this was a pivotal moment in my life that shifted everything. The moment that happened, I stopped wearing my glasses, which meant that I couldn't see the board anymore.

**[0:08:24.8] LW:** You sat in the back of the room too.

**[0:08:26.8] TS:** I sat in the back of the room, I was missing homework assignments, I got dropped eventually from my French, wasn't doing well in French, got dropped from honors English. Just started to shrink and disappear. Let go of the clarinet, let go of the violin, let go of all the things that were bringing me joy, and what I did instead was because I had to get through getting into the high school or into the junior high school with myself covered in eggs is I pretended to be Cleopatra.

And so, I walked through the halls as much of the egg as I could get off of my face and off of my hair, I walked out and just pretended that I was in my kingdom, and stood up straight, head forward, didn't really look at anybody, and I remember going to a healer like 25, maybe even 30 something years ago and her saying to me, "Oh, you're carrying a lot of shame" and this is really where my spiritual journey really started and I was like, talking about it, "I'm not carrying any shame, look at – you know, I'm Cleopatra."

**[0:09:38.8] LW:** Successful, yeah.

**[0:09:41.7] TS:** And she said, "Oh, no, it's right here." She touched this space right between my shoulder blades and I just started bawling, and she said, "This is where you've been holding all of the things you don't want the world to see" and this was one of the things that I didn't want

the world to see, was that I was covered, still, in this egg yolk, in the shame of being different, not belonging.

And I think, the worst thing that happened from that because this whole thing started because these girls didn't like the way I was wearing my hair, was that I started pulling my hair out, and when I was pulling my hair out, my mom noticed. They took me to the doctor, it was misdiagnosed as something else.

**[0:10:28.2] LW:** What is it called? They thought it was?

**[0:10:29.3] TS:** Well, it's called Trichotillomania is what I actually have, which is this idea of like compulsively pulling your hair out, it's basically an anxiety condition and what they thought it was, was something called Folliculitis, which was like an infection of the follicles, and this is people just not looking deep enough as to what's going on and I was able to hide it for a long time because my hair was long.

So, I was able to kind of cover up the spots that were happening and this is something that continued until I started practicing Yoga. When I started practicing Yoga, I actually had like an awakening moment in the middle of an Asana class, where it was like, "Oh, me, pulling out my hair is related to this moment, it's also related to the fact that I have a choice." That the anxiety somehow within me was starting to decrease.

This fear was starting to decrease and then I was able to kind of see a little bit more of what was happening.

**[0:11:35.8] LW:** The way you described the incident on the bus was so visceral too. I think every person can relate to that. Either you've seen it in a movie, or you said, it seemed like everyone on the bus knew what was about to happen.

**[0:11:48.4] TS:** For sure.

**[0:11:50.4] LW:** And you saw the driver notice and you did a great job of bringing us into that moment. So, I just wanted to applaud you as a writer for that because it plays a pivotal part in the narrative of you, kind of rediscovering yourself and you talk about your true self, which if

you've been to the Yoga class more than a few times, you eventually have heard someone reference Self with a capital S. So, how are you defining our true self versus our small S self?

**[0:12:25.2] TS:** I don't know if it's able to be defined, I think it's something to be revealed. I really feel like once we start to kind of define these things then, people start to look for something and I think that's part of the problem with our Western spirituality, right? Is that we're being pointed in a direction of looking for something external. I think the thing that I can say is that this true self is inside and it's something that we have to kind of get comfortable with asking ourselves the question, not, "Who am I", right?

As I talk about in the book but also, "Who am I not?" And I think that that's maybe a little bit of an easier route to go because when we ask that question of who am I, it's such a big question but if we start to ask, "Who am I not? Let me peel back these layers of who am I not. What am I laying down?" You can start to maybe let go of the labels that other people have put on you first and then you can start to let go of the labels that you have put on yourself and that society has put on you.

And then, when you start kind of peeling back and you start to do practices that allow you to be a little bit more still and a little bit more quiet, you start to feel or at least, in my experience, I've felt sort of an undercurrent of a vibration, and it's like, "Oh, I recognize this vibration from somewhere. This vibration is similar to the vibration of nature, it's similar to the vibration of peace and love" and then at the same time, there are practices that have brought me into a place where I felt this immense light and no pun intended and felt that I was this light, you know?

And that I'm not separate from this radiance, I'm not separate from this luminosity, this is who I am, and so I think the journey is different for everyone and maybe the answer is also different for everyone. I can only speak for my own experience but I do think that we're on this earth in this lifetime to be able to taste that light, that essence, that frequency, however, it comes to us.

**[0:14:47.1] LW:** I remember from our previous conversation that a part of your life experience is, you mentioned moments where you betrayed yourself, you mentioned leaving your successful Hollywood producer job behind, you mentioned getting divorced, you had to close your Yoga studio at some point. Obviously, nobody closes the studio because it's doing so well

and you almost went bankrupt. So, just to kind of put what you're talking about into application when you peeled back those layers, what did you discover?

**[0:15:18.4] TS:** You mentioned the Yoga studio so let's talk about that for a second because that was –

**[0:15:22.3] LW:** Which I taught at. That was one of the first studios I taught at.

**[0:15:24.5] TS:** You taught there and then I moved, right? We kept that studio open for a while and I moved to Shasta and I opened another studio there, and the closing of that studio was really around the betrayal of my partner and the fact that I felt it was not safe for him to be teaching in the space any longer but it coincided with 2007, 2008, right?

And it was like, "Okay, this is not going to work." And so, what I got to see was that all the work that I had thought that I had done around, "Who am I" I really got to see how attached I was. I got to see how attached, "Oh, I'm attached to being a studio owner, I'm attached to being a prominent member of a community." This feels like a death right now. It's like, all these parts of me are dying and I'm really glad that I had this Yoga philosophy to kind of lean on.

To recognize, "Oh, this is what they're talking about in the Yoga Sutras, this fear of death" right? "This idea that I'm going to go bankrupt somehow feels like a death and what am I going to do about it?" I need to lean into the darkness right now. I need to lean into the death because the truth is that this is not who I am. This is just another mask that I have put on that's actually keeping me from seeing the truth and being the truth.

[BREAK]

**[0:17:03.3] LW:** Were you incorporating these particular practices in this book when you had this realization or was this like a spontaneous moment of insight you had after you hit some sort of rock bottom moment spiritually? How did you come across this awareness?

**[0:17:18.6] TS:** So, I was doing a practice that's a practice from the Himalayan tradition called The Cave of the Heart Practice, which brings you into this space, in the cave of the heart that is filled with light, and if we think about the correlation between being filled with light, it correlates

to the Yoga sutra 136, which is “Vishoka Va Jyotishmati” which basically says that each one of us has a light within us that is beyond all sorrow, beyond all conditioning. Cannot be diminished by any external circumstances and is there before we had a name, and will be there when we no longer have a body, and the ironic thing is that that sutra was the sutra that I read decades before that brought me into the deeper desire to know Yoga beyond the poses. I started looking for teachers who could teach to the promise of that specific sutra.

So, to find myself there, later, after doing this practice and having this, I would say, almost like a building of light happening, a building of this awareness of light, of really becoming light, of feeling the light around my entire body, like, in my auric field, that was the beginning of, “Oh, I remember reading and studying these sutras but I didn’t have a way to really apply them to my life.”

And now, because I have studied them so much and I’m feeling the death grip coming to me, I’m actually now, “Oh, okay, I’ve been Dvesha. Now, I understand a little bit about what they were talking about. Now, I understand a little bit about Raga and Dvesha, the attachment and the aversion. Now, I get it. Okay.”

**[0:19:11.8] LW:** That’s what’s so fun about life, you know? If you choose to accept that you can’t fully learn these concepts until you have to apply them in real-world situations. So, if you want to be patient, if you want to experience patience, generosity, abundance, a lot of times, it requires you to find that within yourself, when you’re facing these very challenging situations and so that’s one of the things that I connected with about your story that you wrote about in *The Luminous Self* is you kind of use yourself as a bit of a, I’m going to say, guinea pig.

But you use your story as a template for showing other people how they can do the same thing for themselves, in order to experience what you call the transformation from living with the virus, the virus, I love that word, the virus of self-forgetting and collective amnesia. Why did you call self-forgetting and collective amnesia a virus that we have to kind of overcome in order to awaken to our luminous self?

**[0:20:18.9] TS:** I think that being in the pandemic really sparked this idea that okay, we have all of this kind of many, many pandemics that are happening and as I was watching and feeling into what was happening in my community and then the world at large, I was like, “Oh, there is



another virus” And this virus is that we have forgotten who we are because when we remember who we are, we treat people with kindness, we treat people with compassion, and we understand that we are collective and that what I do affects you, and what you do affects me.

And we can’t leave anybody behind and what I saw was a lot of leaving people behind, and to me, that felt like, “Oh, there’s just another virus running in our system that we are just completely unconscious of.”

**[0:21:05.4] LW:** And when you talk about the practices and rituals, obviously, you introduced a lot of these in your book. There are a couple of schools of thought on this and I’m curious what your direct experience has been and how you would advise someone navigate the variety. One school of thought is you pick one practice and you just do it over and over and over and over.

And then through that, through going deep with one practice, you’ll uncover aspects of the practice and of yourself that will reveal things to you that you would not have revealed otherwise and another practice is set, obviously, you kind of tune in to what you need in the moment and you do that until you feel intuitively that you need something else, and then you graduate yourself from one thing to another thing.

Or maybe you just have two or three of these things going at all times and you made a disclaimer in your book that I thought was really interesting. You were speaking to teachers and healers and you were saying, “Use these practices that I’m introducing to you, but don’t teach them right off the bat, you want to have some depth of experience for yourself.”

So, just talk about that, talk about the relationship between these practices, should people do what they resonate with and stick with that if they love it, or should they allow themselves to try a bunch of things, try everything, and see what resonates? What do you – because there’s a lot in there.

**[0:22:24.8] TS:** Yeah, there’s a lot of practices and that is for a reason. I feel like there’s definitely different types of seekers. There’s the seeker who is going to sit down with the book and say, “Oh, I’m going to spend a year with this book going through as recommended, each practice for 30 to 60 days and I’m just going to continue with the book until I’m done” And I’ve seen that with *Radiant Rest*, a lot of people have done that.

And then, there are some people who will be struck really hard by something in the book that's a practice and they'll say, "Oh my God, I have to do this practice" and they'll do that practice for 60 days, and so, for me, I feel like any practice, I was really specific about the practices that I chose to share and I feel like any of those practices done over a long period of time with devotion and consistency will lead you somewhere.

And whether that is, it leads you to the next teacher that has a different practice or another practice within the book, that is going to create some sort of revealing to you and you know, when I was writing the book, I was thinking about, of course, these ideas of impermanence are very present, right? After the pandemic, after the heat of the pandemic.

And I thought to myself, "Well, if I were to not be on the planet tomorrow, what would be the practices that I would want to leave behind that I know for sure, if they are done consistently, create transformation?" And those are the practices that I put in the book. So, for me, I feel like, yes, they are also accumulative practice that one builds upon the other, upon the other, upon the other in the book but I think taken individually, they also create transformation.

But they should be done consistently and with devotion, if you can, and "consistently" doesn't mean I have to do it every single day at the same time, same place to me but really dedicating yourself and saying, "Okay, I'm going to do this for 40 days and I'm going to try my hardest to do it five times a week if I can, depending on what my life is like."

**[0:24:50.4] LW:** I wrote a book on meditation, it was a "How to Meditate" book called *Bliss More: How to Succeed in Meditation Without Really Trying*, and in my book, I wanted to emulate my actual training as closely as possible, and in my training, people typically have to pay you know, four figures to be in the room with me. So, it's not for everybody. Obviously, people, a lot of people can't afford that kind of thing but when I first started out teaching 15 years ago, I would teach for a sliding scale.

And what I found was that whenever I would make exceptions, which I did quite often in the early days, people would typically have more excuses around either showing up to the training or in their practice and there were some exceptions but I did notice a pattern, and anyways, I

always valued that exchange component when it comes to spiritual learning. Like, sacrificing something, whether it's time or attention.

Like, people market Papasan as a free training. It's actually not free at all, it's actually quite expensive because you ask yourself, what is 10 days of your time worth? Because you can't do anything else for those 10 days.

**[0:25:59.0] TS:** Right.

**[0:25:59.5] LW:** So, that's actually more expensive than my training, which I'm charging, you know, \$1,300 for because I think, most people who are living full lives would agree that 10 days of their full-time attention is worth more than \$1,300, if not, call me up. I've got some work for you to do for 10 days. I'll gladly pay you \$1,300 if you devote yourself to me full-time for 10 days.

But the point is, I think it's good to have some sort of exchange of time and/or attention or energy and I'm just curious to hear your thoughts on that when it comes to these practices because it's hard to implement that when you talk about a book. I mean yeah, someone could buy the book and that's what \$15, \$20.

But how can a well-intentioned, well-meaning practitioner of these rituals of practices that you have in the book, how can they raise the stakes for themselves to create that exchange in order to allow the effects of the practices to go even deeper? If you subscribe to that at all, I don't know, I just want to open that up for you.

**[0:27:03.0] TS:** Yeah, no, that's a great subject to talk about. So, I do offer sliding scales on my meditation teacher trainings and you know, the exchange is more of the application and the meeting that we're going to have before you enter the training and I do think that for me, what I've noticed is that it doesn't really matter about how much am I paying to get in. It's really, what I've seen is, what's my desire to get free?

What is my desire to get free? What is my longing to get free? How strong is that? And then that to me is what I see determines the devotion, and so you know, I've been very surprised with *Radiant Rest*. The number of emails that I've gotten from people that I don't know, people that

have never trained or studied with me at all, who said, “Oh, this is the second time I’m going through the book, I’ve done all the practices. It took me eight months to go through all that” and I’m like, “Wow, this is somebody who was either, maybe touched by one of the practices, realized the depth of the practice and decided, “Okay, I’m going to make the time and space to do this” and I really think that it comes from desire.

I think that sometimes, we may have that longing in our hearts, sometimes we may be in so much pain that we’re willing to do anything to remove that pain, and I think that that also is a fire that can create the devotion to practice.

**[0:28:43.0] LW:** How can we stress test our desire? There are things that I’m dabbling in now that I know I’m not as committed as I could be, you know? But there are other things that I’m deeply committed to and I’ll go above and beyond to do them.

**[0:28:57.6] TS:** What’s the difference for you?

**[0:28:59.8] LW:** I haven’t invested myself enough in things. I notice that things that I invest myself into, I’ll show up, I’ll do the work, you know, even though I’ll do it begrudgingly sometimes but I’ll do it because I’m invested in it, and so for me, money gets my attention. It may not be that way for everybody, to the extent that even with my first book that I self-published, I dragged my feet on that for three and a half years.

And then, I finally broke down after just being so sick and tired of excusing myself from working on it, and I sent my friend a check for \$4,000 and I said, “You are obligated to cash this check if I don’t finish this manuscript by such and such date” and all of a sudden, the time I didn’t have, the excuses, all that went away.

**[0:29:44.6] TS:** Yeah, okay.

**[0:29:46.5] LW:** Because I gave myself that investment of attention in order – because I knew that that’s what spoke to me and again, money doesn’t speak to everybody but there could be something that speaks to people. So, that worked for me, what if you tried to stress test your desire?

**[0:30:03.4] TS:** You know, I think, for me, it's about discernment, right? It's like, the thing that is really most important to me is having time and having the spaciousness to do the things that are important to me. So, for instance, right now I'm in a certification program for ecotherapy, and when I got the – I signed up for it, I was very excited, it's like, one of the first programs of its kind and then I got the syllabus and I was like, "Okay, I can do this syllabus." And then I got the times for the classes and they were like, it's 13 weeks and I was like, "Okay, I can do this."

And then, they sent another email, which was like, "Oh, there's another second set of classes per week that you have to do for these 13 weeks." And so, I was like, "Okay, this requires discernment." Is this important enough for me to be able to feel like I'm giving up all this time? I know it's going to take about 10 hours a week, maybe more of my time to go through this for the next 13 weeks, while I'm doing this book launch and I thought, "No, this is something that I'm passionate about."

And I'm willing to create the time, I'm willing to shift my bedtime a little bit later in the night, so that I can do these things and because I know that what I'm going to be learning is going to help, not only me, but is going to help the people that I work with. So, for me, my value is around time, less around money.

**[0:31:38.8] LW:** That is still value.

**[0:31:40.0] TS:** Yeah, we're still talking value. So, I think part of the answer to your question is, our stress test maybe has to do with, what do we value most, right? And when we find what we value most, then we determine, "Is this worth it?" When I weigh it on the scale, is this learning that I'm going to do for the next 13 weeks, is it going to outweigh the time that I'm going to lose, the time that I won't spend with my family, the time that I'm not going to rest, the time that I'm not going to get to create other things.

[BREAK]

**[0:32:19.9] LW:** It reminds me of the adage, there's not such thing as "I don't have time to do something" it's just not valuable enough to you. It has a value but there are other things that are greater in value and so the things that you're doing, you don't have to say what your priorities are, we already see what they are but based on what you're already just naturally inherently

spending your time doing, at least they're valuable to you that you're getting something from it, right?

**[0:32:41.6] TS:** Yeah.

**[0:32:42.9] LW:** And this is interesting because, I would say also that even experiences like disappointment, unhappiness, like being in situations where you're experiencing these things on a chronic basis, this is not a popular opinion but I believe you're getting something from that. Maybe it's something that your ego is getting or some other part of you that you don't recognize as getting.

But I had a friend who is in a long-term marriage and this is, kind of ties back to your idea of self-betrayal from your past work, but in a long-term marriage, with a partner who she now, identifies as a narcissist, she didn't identify him as a narcissist while they were married, but –

**[0:33:24.1] TS:** You never do.

**[0:33:24.9] LW:** Yeah, but you look at the behavior, objectively, there's very – you know, it leans towards narcissism very obviously. So, finally, this person divorced her. He's the one that left her, unexpectedly, of course, and so she was reeling, reeling with anger, reeling in pain, sadness, all the things, all the emotions.

And later on, she meets this other person, this other guy who just adores the ground that she walks on, always wants to check in, like the opposite of a narcissist essentially, and I noticed her complaining about this guy, always being on top of her, always asking her about her day and always, you know, doing it, and I just reminded her, I said, "Don't you remember, like, you hate it when you were neglected and when the person only thought about themselves?"

And I didn't say this to her because it's not a nice thing to say but I just thought in the back of my mind, I think some of that abusive behavior, she actually, deep down, I won't say she enjoyed it but it made her feel something that maybe she related to, and there's some psychology circles and beliefs that say that we choose partners based on what we felt as a child and that we were –

If we grew up in an abusive relationship, we may find ourselves – or we grew up with parents who abandoned us or abused us in some way, verbally or otherwise, we may be more prone to attract partners who remind us of those same sort of tendencies because we're comfortable, we're familiar. I'll say, we're familiar with those tendencies. So, you talk about this term, Samskara, that's where I'm going with all of this.

**[0:35:08.1] TS:** Oh, yeah, Samskara.

**[0:35:09.2] LW:** Samskara, and you related that to the egg incident, which is something that happened to you as a child and I want you to kind of break that down and unpack that term for us because I think people can relate it to what they're experiencing now in relationships, versus what they were experiencing before as children.

**[0:35:27.1] TS:** Yeah, so, Samskara means impression or imprint and we're constantly receiving Samskaras every moment and we kind of categorized them as good, bad, or neutral. I have a Samskara around Light Watkins. A good Samskara around Light Watkins, and then I might have a negative Samskara or bad Samskara around someone else that causes me to avoid them, that causes me to not want to deal with them, and at the same time, these Samskaras get reinforced, right?

They get reinforced with things that happen through our life. So, I have a Samskara that it's not safe for me to be successful, and then I have some success and then maybe I have a friend who doesn't want to be around me anymore because I'm successful, and that keeps getting reinforced over and over again and so the key for us is to really be able to see that our Samskaras when they start to accumulate, they create what's called the Vasana, which is a coloring.

And that coloring is like a coloring that goes over, let's say, a windshield or over your glasses, that you don't actually even know that it's there, and so you're just seeing the world through this coloring of all the Samskaras that have accumulated and the beautiful thing about meditation and Yoga is that it starts to clear off the coloring.

It's like, how many of us have ever been in a meditation and all of a sudden, we have an epiphany or a clarity or a knowing about something. It's almost like it drops down out of nowhere

and when it drops down out of nowhere, you're like, "Woah, how did I not see that before? How did I not know that before?" And then, that's a little bit of the coloring getting scratched off. The problem is, it's because we're so distracted, is that the minute the meditation is over, and you start scrolling on Instagram, you forget the epiphany and then it evaporates into thin air and you're trying to grab it again.

So, hopefully, you go back to your meditation cushion the next day or maybe even that minute, to try to come back to that place where things can become clear again, and so I think that part of the process of spiritual practice is for us to A, become aware of the coloring, to do the practice that could sort of scrapes off the coloring and then B, aware of, "What's the origin of the coloring?"

It's not like you have to go through every single little thing that happened in life but to figure out like, "Oh, there's imprints here, there's impressions here that created this coloring and how can I get free?" And so, one of the questions that a teacher asked me a long time ago that I love to ask people is, "What are the three lessons that you're tired of learning?"

Because if there's lessons that you're tired of learning and if people are listening, it's a good idea to pause the recording and write these lessons that you are tired of learning down and then when you come to these two or three lessons, maybe there's 10 or 15, you look for a common theme around these lessons.

And so if there is a common theme of, "I'm afraid to be successful" I'm taking my own example, then you have to ask yourself, "What am I getting out of this? What am I getting out of not going for my success, for not just showing up and being my true self?" And then when you ask that question, then you get to see, "Oh, what's the payoff for me?" So, the payoff for me might be –

**[0:39:10.7] LW:** I get to complain.

**[0:39:12.4] TS:** Well, I wouldn't even say I get to complain. I get to hide.

**[0:39:16.3] LW:** I get to hide.



**[0:39:17.7] TS:** Right? So for me, it was like I get to hide and when I hide, I stay safe. So, complaining is just another layer of something. There is something else for me.

**[0:39:28.3] LW:** Underneath that, yeah.

**[0:39:29.5] TS:** Underneath that and it was I, in order to stay safe, I need to hide. If I'm successful, I'm out in the limelight and it's unsafe and so I think that those are the questions to really ask and then the practices help us to continue to unwind that and to live with into the question of these lessons of the Samskara, of the Vāsanā, and to practice these practices of deliberation, where we can go back to see not only cause but the cure, right?

And this is where the pairs of opposites come in from the yoga sutras and other modalities that I think can be really helpful but I think we have to get to the core, what is the payoff? The payoff is never, "I want to be in more pain." There's always something underneath that.

**[0:40:21.5] LW:** These are really great questions and really beautiful insights and what it's bringing up for me is questions around how do you integrate this with therapy because confronting these deeper truths can be a bit confronting. It can be hard to do, what's the Vedic perspective on therapy, on talking things out? I know that's the value of having a teacher/mentor, how are you thinking about this but through the lens of *The Luminous Self*?

**[0:40:50.6] TS:** Yeah, and then *The Luminous Self*, I say it very often in the very beginning of the book even of how to use the book is one of the parts of this is tap support and support means to have a therapist, that means to have a mentor or someone who can support you. Yoga teachers, meditation teachers, we are not psychologists and we are not therapists unless we are, there are many people who are blending those two things together. I am not a therapist.

**[0:41:18.7] LW:** [0:41:18.7 inaudible], she's a great example of someone who's very well versed in meditation and in psychology.

**[0:41:25.0] TS:** Right, that's a great example. I think that a lot of times people come to spiritual practices and maybe feel like they don't need therapy. Therapy can be so helpful because what I noticed and I've done this before, where I will be coaching someone and then I will bring in one

of my friends who is a psychotherapist and a yoga teacher so they understand how these practices can bring up things very quickly.

Sometimes more quickly than a therapy session can, right? And we work together. With the permission of the student, we work together to create a practice. So I think the thing to do is to really be aware that if something difficult comes up that's emotional and unexpected that you already have hopefully someone in your support system that can help you to mine through and weed through all the things that do come up.

That happens very often that people are working with the therapist while they're doing this work and sharing with the therapist what they uncover from these practices. I've heard some Vedic teachers are like, "Oh, we don't need therapy" and I do not believe that. I think finding the right therapist can be very supportive.

**[0:42:47.3] LW:** I'll just share a little bit about my personal experiences with therapy. I've seen a couple's therapist a few times, I have my own therapist for a while, I am currently not in therapy but when I did do it, I did it more out of curiosity. So I was like, "You know, therapy is a thing, let me just see what it's like. I don't think I need therapy but let me just see what it's like" and what I found was it was fantastic to have someone to just talk to without reciprocity.

Because with your partner, you can just talk and talk and talk about your day but eventually, you have to say, "Well, how was your day?" and you have to listen as actively as you were speaking otherwise that relationship is going to go off the rails very quickly. So that's not purely an objective, you know, having a purely objective exchange with the other person because there is something transactional in that dynamic, and the same thing with your friends.

Your friends can't really be objective because they understand your context, you understand theirs and then you're going to start – if they start telling you stuff you don't like, you're going to start thinking about areas of their life where they're being hypocritical and you don't do that with a therapist. So, a therapist is like prostitution but for talking, that's what I realized. So, it was like, "I just get to pay this person just to be here and listen to me."

And I don't have to ask them about their day and distract my process by worrying about what they're going through in their life and while no one is perfect and you're not expecting the

therapist to be perfect, just kind of a wonderful little outlet for just talking and a lot of times, you can kind of see things, blind spots or whatever just through just talking about it, which is something we don't do and if you do it by yourself, you risk being seen as crazy.

You know, if someone walks in and hears you talking to yourself, so it is a really beautiful way to uncover insights that you may not see otherwise and then you pair that with work like luminous self and what that does is it gives you language that your average therapist may not have that has been vetted over thousands of years, such as Samskara, to explain why some of these things could be happening and then you depersonalize those situations and then you could see them more objectively and you can move through them quicker.

**[0:45:05.4] TS:** Yeah, I love what you're saying because you know, Patanjali is often referred to as the first psychologist.

**[0:45:12.0] LW:** Oh wow, I didn't know that.

**[0:45:13.4] TS:** Yeah, because essentially what he's doing is he's creating a dismantling of limiting beliefs so that you can arrive at your true self, which is I think what a therapist wants to do. A therapist wants you to be and activate your best true self.

[BREAK]

**[0:45:44.6] LW:** I think people get I'm not my job, I'm not my positions, I'm not my house, I'm not my car. We get that on an intellectual level at least. It can be hard to disidentify with that but you go further and you say you are not your personality. So, you're trying to tell me I'm not the fun-loving guy that I think that I am, what the hell am I, Tracee?

**[0:46:07.9] TS:** Well, your name says it all. It's interesting, I used to think before I started doing this work, you know reading and studying, well we know that we are not our job. We know that we're not our position in life but often times when I ask people, "Who are you? Answer this question, who am I?" they will answer the question with the very same things –

**[0:46:34.9] LW:** I'm a lawyer from Kansas.

**[0:46:36.8] TS:** Yeah, even –

**[0:46:37.8] LW:** I grew up with a single parent.

**[0:46:38.9] TS:** Yeah, “I’m a mother, I’m a lawyer” and it’s like, “Okay, what’s underneath that?” So, this etymology of the word personality comes from persona, which means mask and it refers to the different masks that we wear and if we ask ourselves and really be truthful with yourself to ask what are the masks that you wear, what are the masks that you put on? Maybe you put on a certain mask when you go into your job.

Maybe you put on another mask when you go to meet your in-laws. Maybe there’s another mask that you put on with your partner, like a new partner, right? You think about that old Chris Rock thing where he talks about you send your representative on the first date so –

**[0:47:31.9] LW:** You’re not meeting them, you’re meeting their representative.

**[0:47:34.5] TS:** Exactly. So, how many masks do you wear, and then ask yourself, which ones are you ready to lay down? Start there, which ones are you ready to lay down, and which ones are causing you pain and discomfort? Because now, people have come to expect you to be this X, Y, and Z personality. The person who is always caretaking, the person who is always giving, the one who is always giving advice.

Whatever it is, you have to look at that and so the personality is comprised of what we just talked about, the Samskaras and the Vāsanās. When they become so concretized, they form the personality. When the Vāsanā, the coloring on the glasses or the coloring on the windscreen become so concretized, it forms habits and the habits keep going and going and going and those habits form a personality.

I am the sum total of all of my habits that I do consistently, all of the thoughts that I think consistently, that forms my personality.

**[0:48:46.0] LW:** You talk about power washing your windshield, I imagine that’s what you’re referring to with peeling back those layers. So, your book is full of rituals and practices, give us an example. How can we power wash that windshield to purify the personality, lay down what

was no longer serving us? What's a practice? What's something that someone could do to make that happen?

**[0:49:10.6] TS:** You know, I think one of the most powerful practices in the book is this practice on impermanence, which is the practice of visualizing your death and being on the funeral pyre as a body that no longer has any prana in it and seeing that body go back to the elements and going back to source and when we start to do that practice, we start to see all of our attachments.

The personality becomes very unimportant but we get to see our attachments and we get to really sense into, "Well, what part of me is it that dies and what part of me is it that remains?" and I think those are the deepest questions we can ask.

**[0:50:00.8] LW:** So, just on the technical front, this is a book. Obviously, there is an audiobook component to this, correct?

**[0:50:06.5] TS:** Yes, yes.

**[0:50:07.4] LW:** Okay, so how does that work? How do you do that exercise? Do you stop and write, just take out a piece of paper or do you just reflect and meditate? How does it work?

**[0:50:19.7] TS:** I'm glad you're asking these questions. So, there are certain practices that I have recorded, which I think are the simpler practices to dive into and there are other practices that I really would love people to come to my training for *The Luminous Self*, which is going to be happening in 2024, to learn how to do and to learn how to really, it's practices for 40 days if not longer.

So, how it would work for someone reading the book is that you would first read the exercise, right? Because this is how I learned it, you would first read the exercise, which is let's call it the funeral pyre exercise and it's a very simple practice and then you would lay down and you would close your eyes and you would take yourself, you would self-guide yourself through that practice.

And if we think about back in the day when you would read these books from teachers like Harsh Johari and you know, different Vedic teachers, they weren't recording these practices. You would read the practice and either you would do the practice and guide yourself through it or maybe you would get lucky enough a few years later that someone would be guiding this practice and you'd be like, "Oh, that's the practice that I read in the Vijnāna-bhairava-tantra" or "That's a practice that I read in Harsh Johari's book" and then you'd put two and two together.

So, in some way, I feel like there is this part that has to be a little bit of self-effort and this is the longing and the desire that we talked about, right? Is that if I know, if I read this practice of the funeral pyre and I'm like, "Oh, I understand how this can set me free, how this can start to release some of the things that are holding me back and peel back these layers, I'm going to read this practice."

"Maybe I'm going to read it and I'm going to record it myself on my phone and then I'll use that to guide myself through it but I am going to do this practice."

**[0:52:27.9] LW:** And what is it with 40 days? What have we found that's 40 days versus 30 days versus 60 days versus how many days?

**[0:52:35.4] TS:** Originally, when I started practicing, my teachers would always say, "Okay, this is a 400-day Sadhana, you're going to do this practice for 40 days." This is what the teachers of the teachers of the teachers and all these lineages would say and then of course, we'd find out later that science backs up this idea that it takes anywhere from 40 to 60 days to change the neuropathways in the brain.

So, if we're doing something consistently for that period of time, something within us is going to change and my opinion is and this isn't scientifically proven that those neural pathways are connected to the Samskaras and the Vāsanās that we talked about in spiritual practice. That coloring that we talked about, that rewiring that's happening with the neural pathways, that's shifting that groove that has been dug from all of the Samskaras and all of the imprints and impressions and colorings.

And we have to have a way to shift that and I think that doing a consistent practice is a way to shift that and I've seen it work on myself and with other people.

**[0:53:40.5] LW:** When you say consistent, you mean daily?

**[0:53:43.9] TS:** I'm talking about a daily practice. I am talking about a daily practice and this requires you, we talked about value, right? Earlier, like what is it that you value? Are you able to – so for me, this ecotherapy program was really worth my time and if I value time, is it worth it for me to sit down for 15 minutes every day and do a practice?

**[0:54:12.3] LW:** Does that make you present for those other 23 hours and 45 minutes?

**[0:54:16.9] TS:** Yeah, and sometimes we have to actually do that to know that because we can say, "Oh, your life is going to dramatically improve if you do a 15-minute practice every morning." Whether it's Yoga Nidra, whether it's meditation, whether it's chanting, something is going to shift but you have to do it in order to feel the effects, and what I would say to anybody who is like, "Wow, I don't know if I could do 40 days" is start with seven.

Start with seven days and at the end of seven days, see how you feel, and if you want to continue knowing that you are building momentum, you are building something is happening in your system, feel it, and make a decision. Is it worth you continuing this for another 40 days so that you can see what does it feel like now or 33 days, what does it feel like at the end of these 40 days?

I've had so many people who have told me, "Oh, I did the 40-day practice from *Radiant Rest* like you said in the book and I kept going for 90 days" or "I kept going for four months" and I'm like, "Wow, I never in my mind imagined that people would be going for four months" but it's because they're getting something out of it that is life-affirming. These practices are life-affirming.

**[0:55:35.9] LW:** When I'm teaching, I look at the opposite as well, which is you know, yes, it takes time. Yes, you have to be consistent, yes, you want to make sure you're doing it properly and all of that but these practices in it of themselves, which could be simple as writing down three things that you're tired of learning or envisioning yourself at your funeral, they're not hard to do, right?

What's usually hard when it comes to these practices and making the time for them are the habits that you're breaking and we don't appreciate. We underappreciate the strength, the grit that those old habits have over us, such as the habit of distracting ourselves, the habits of putting ourselves in situations that are below our deserving power, the habits of underselling ourselves or hiding, like that's a habit.

Hiding is a habit, it can turn into a habit, and just like where they call it death by a thousand cuts, health by a thousand choices. You have to make a thousand choices to overcome some of these habits and one of the ways you know that you're experiencing one of these really tough habits to overcome goes back to the Samskara conversation. You made a reference to you had a conversation with some woman, who was talking about – I think she was talking about her husband or something, something she had been angry about.

**[0:56:58.4] TS:** Yes, yes, yes.

**[0:56:59.7] LW:** And then come to find out, it didn't happen last week, it didn't happen last month, it happened 10 years ago.

**[0:57:05.8] TS:** 10 years ago, I'll never forget that moment.

**[0:57:08.7] LW:** And we all had those, you know, we know people who are holding onto stuff for that long and it's like that's not actually normal.

**[0:57:17.0] TS:** Yeah. I mean, I think it's more normal than we can –

**[0:57:21.3] LW:** I mean, it's not healthy normal, that's what I meant. It's not healthy.

**[0:57:22.8] TS:** It's not healthy, right but I think it's definitely very common. We think about someone who holds a grudge when you think about people who have estrangements and it's not to say that everything needs the forgiveness in the way of, "Oh, I'm going to be your best friend tomorrow" but you know for me the hiding, which was a protective mechanism because of the Samskara, I did it for so long that it became part of my personality, which then I would say, "Oh, I'm shy. I'm introverted."



When I go to a party, I don't go out and talk to people, I sit in the corner. I mean, I was producing films and I literally would section myself off so I wouldn't have to really talk to people at my own film premiere because I was that introverted, AKA hiding, AKA keeping myself safe because I was fearful of being successful because I knew that that had meant pain and suffering in the past.

[BREAK]

**[0:58:30.2] LW:** This concept of self-inquiry, why is it important and how can we do it?

**[0:58:36.3] TS:** So, I think self-inquiry is everything. It's a practice that is most known for the Sage Ramana Maharshi. Ramana Maharshi was a teenager when he thought he was going to die and he asked himself the question, "Who am I?" He kept asking over and over and over, "Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?" and really contemplating what part of him was going to die, what was it that was going to die, who was it that was going to die.

And he became enlightened in a very short period of time over this contemplation of his death and so the self-inquiry, this is the ultimate question is, who am I? I think the issue that we have is that we have so many more distractions than Ramana Maharshi had when he was a teenager. We've got all the social media, we have all the things that we want to buy, and all the places we want to go, and all the da-da-da-da, and you know this better than anyone with your spiritual minimalism.

You have stripped yourself down from a lot of this stuff but for most of us, there's this world of candy that's out there and distracting us all the time. When we ask the question, "Who am I?" we might again, going back to this question of, "Who am I not?" helps us to strip this away, right? Who am I not? Who do I not want to be? What part of myself that feels pure and feel true do I want to bring forward more and how can I do that?

**[1:00:07.3] LW:** What is a psychic knot?

**[1:00:10.1] TS:** Ooh, the psychic knot, the granthis.

**[1:00:12.7] LW:** What does that mean?

**[1:00:15.4] TS:** So, the granthi is a psychic knot, and the psychic knots are basically energetic knots that are said to be in the subtle body and some teaching say that these subtle knots are there to keep [kundalini 1:00:28.3] from rising too quickly, right? But we have these subtle knots near the base of our spine. We have the subtle knot near our heart center and our throat center and near our third eye and those knots are accumulated Samskaras and Karmas, right?

So, when we think about, let's say for instance, I've been heartbroken, I've been betrayed, I maybe even betrayed myself, and I'm sensing that there is this tightness in the heart center. When I start peeling away at those Samskaras and Vāsanās, I might start to sense a spaciousness in my heart. I might start to sense an opening in my heart and that's what yoga practice is for, is to release the knots gently.

**[1:01:19.1] LW:** Well, I think that's the only way to make it sustainable, right? Is if it happens gently, otherwise you risk the pendulum effect. So, I have one more question I want to ask you about what I read in the book and then I want to do a bit of – it's not really rapid fire but I want to list off some circumstances and I want you to give us some practices that just you don't have to go into detail about these practices.

But just to know that there are practices for these real-world circumstances that a lot of people are dealing with including ourselves. Okay, so you referenced the, I think it's called the – is it the Dagara Tribe of West Africa a few times in the book? Yeah, what can we learn from them? Who are they, what can we learn from them?

**[1:02:00.0] TS:** Oh wow. Wow, that's a big question. So, one of the foremost teachers of the Dagara tradition that came to the West to bring this wisdom, his name was Malidoma Patrice Somé, and his wife's name was Sobonfu Somé, and there is so much to learn. I think the thing that I would touch on the most right now is this wisdom of our ancestors because when we ask the question, "Who am I?" we are our ancestors, right?

We are our ancestors' dreams, we're their prayers, their DNA lives in our bones, and depending on who and where we come from, our people could have been enslaved, they could have been relocated. We can be completely disconnected from our traditions, from the places that we

come from, from the foods that our ancestors ate, and I do think that there is a portal that opened during the pandemic to this world of the ancestors, to the realm of the ancestors.

And I think that now is the time for us to start to explore that, so we can more deeply understand who we are and what we are, yeah.

**[1:03:09.6] LW:** All right, so I'm just going to go through a list of different circumstances that some people may be experiencing and I would love to just hear summarized version of a practice ideally from the book that someone could go to once they got a hold of that book.

**[1:03:24.9] TS:** Yeah.

**[1:03:25.5] LW:** To help them navigate that situation. So, going through a divorce or break up and you know, it's just heavy on my heart right now.

**[1:03:33.6] TS:** Yeah, going through a divorce or break up, I would do the Yoga Nidra, that is *The Luminous Self* Yoga Nidra, to remind yourself that you are not your circumstances, you are not the pain that you are feeling but that you are something much more vast and expansive than that.

**[1:03:51.8] LW:** Okay, beautiful. All right, I'm on the brink of bankruptcy, kind of like what you were experiencing many years ago.

**[1:03:59.1] TS:** Yeah, I would do the cultivating the opposites practice, right? Cultivating the opposites because those practices relate to the Kleshas. The Kleshas are known as the seeds of suffering, which we all have, and we're all experiencing them all the time and when we can actually get to see what those seeds are and then have a practice to be able to counteract them or an antidote to counteract them, I feel like that's a really powerful practice.

**[1:04:26.3] LW:** Just as an example, how long would it take to do this practice?

**[1:04:30.0] TS:** You could do it in every moment. You could do it in literally –

**[1:04:33.6] LW:** So, you would be walking around, you could be in the store, and you'd be doing this practice.

**[1:04:37.1] TS:** Yeah, once you understand what the Kleshas are, you'll start to see them when they pop up and then you can mentally just repeat the antidote to yourself and you can do it in real-time weaving this thing throughout your life and that's the best way to do it.

**[1:04:37.1] LW:** So, you don't need a cushion and altar and candles and incense and salt and crystals and all of that stuff.

**[1:04:54.0] TS:** No.

**[1:04:54.0] LW:** Tarot cards.

**[1:04:57.6] TS:** No.

**[1:04:58.2] LW:** Okay, I'm falling out with my friend. It was a misunderstanding, they're the problem, what's the practice I can do for that?

**[1:05:04.9] TS:** I think the practice for that is self-inquiry, right? Is that this isn't a place for the question, "What lessons am I tired of learning?" when it is in regards to this friendship, right? Maybe even in regard to other friendships. You know, I have a friend who has recently discovered that she felt like someone was using her and I had to point it out to her, "Well, this is the exact same situation as so and so and so from five years ago. Why do you keep putting yourself in this position?" and these are the kind of questions that self-inquiry can be really helpful for.

**[1:05:43.4] LW:** That's very powerful stuff because that could lead you to realize, "Oh wait, I'm not a clear communicator" or "I have a very loose relationship with my boundaries." It's not about them, it's about me having stronger boundaries.

**[1:05:57.4] TS:** That's right.

**[1:05:58.7] LW:** I feel aimless, I feel like I don't have a purpose in life and everybody talks about buying your purpose, follow your heart but I don't feel, I can't hear my heart.

**[1:06:07.9] TS:** I think I would do the do and do not do practice, which is another practice around impermanence. That practice will get you super clear very quickly on what you're here for.

**[1:06:21.3] LW:** I just don't feel any joy in my life, how do I reclaim my joy?

**[1:06:27.1] TS:** Well, there is actually a practice in the book called reclaiming joy. So, I would go to that practice, reclaiming joy, remembering joy, right? If we can remember what it feels like to be joyful like let's just think about when was the last time you felt joy. What were you doing? How did it feel in your body? The thing that happens is you start to feel the joy in your body when you think of that memory and then you can actually even remember that you are joy. That joy doesn't really need an external circumstance, joy is present all the time.

**[1:07:05.7] LW:** Love that. Okay, one more, I'm not feeling very attractive and there's just where weak sexual connection with my partner or with myself.

**[1:07:15.3] TS:** Wow, that's a big one. You know, I think that I would do the last practice in the book, which is the ritual of reassembling your body and first of all, dissolving your body but then reassembling your body into a divine temple.

**[1:07:32.9] LW:** There is something for everybody in this book.

**[1:07:38.0] TS:** You know, there really is, there's –

**[1:07:40.0] LW:** I tried to throw you some curve ball there.

**[1:07:41.6] TS:** You did, didn't you?

**[1:07:42.4] LW:** You got something for every situation.

**[1:07:46.6] TS:** You know, I think that these practices, the reason they're timeless, you know I am not making anything up here. The reason that they're timeless is because they work and that's the reason why I share them. So you know, there are a couple of practices that I kind of downloaded on my own from doing reading and other practices but these practices are timeless practices.

**[1:08:10.5] LW:** You know, the thing is too historically with this kind of Vedic practices, they were all downloaded at some point by someone. That's how we have these practices, that's how we have meditation. Somebody closed their eyes one day, they kept doing it enough, they went deep enough, and they got the blueprint. "Okay, this is how it's done" and so they called it cognizing or cognitions and awareness and so even if you did download them, they come from the same source as all the other practices.

**[1:08:10.5] TS:** Yeah, I agree with that. I think that that is happening all the time that we're getting information and wisdom that's pertinent to time now, right? Because a lot of these practices are very old but we do need some other practices for what we're facing now. We're not living in the forest, most of us are not living in the forest.

**[1:09:03.2] LW:** Tell us more about the Luminous Self Training, that sounds interesting.

**[1:09:06.4] TS:** Yeah, the Luminous Self Training is going to be a facilitator training. I want to be able to hold space for people who are really interested in learning how to, first of all, embody the wisdom of these practices and then share them with other people. It's going to be a very small group, there's going to be 12 of us. We're going to be practicing together for nine months and that's going to start in 2024.

**[1:09:31.4] LW:** As someone who has published illustrated books, I just want to give Maggie Aileen a shout-out. How did you connect with her? She did some beautiful work for you.

**[1:09:40.9] TS:** Oh, she's incredible. So, she also did the illustrations in *Radiant Rest*. So, I connected with her because I wanted someone who had a practice and who understood because it's much different like trying to tell someone, "Oh, you're going to do this practice and this is what you have to illustrate" and I was living in Topanga Canyon at the time and I had a friend, Marisha, who was living there, who is a herbalist and she had a book that came out.

And I looked at the illustrations in her book about the herbs and I was like, “Oh, there’s something in these illustrations that feel like these plants have prana.” Like I’m looking at the illustration, I want to know who this is. So, she introduced me, I met with Maggie at Mimosa Café, and she had read – I had sent her like two practices to illustrate like as a kind of test and she said, “Oh, I just love this practice.”

And she starts to talk about like the dissolution and how she was feeling and the energy, and I was like, “Okay, this is my girl.” Yes, she’s incredible.

**[1:10:46.5] LW:** I also love how she illustrated multiple ethnicities, which I think is important these days as well because the default is, is to draw a white person, you know?

**[1:10:55.7] TS:** Oh yeah, no, that was very important for us to draw multiple ethnicities, different body types in *Radiant Rest*. Yeah, I mean, this is about belonging like you belong not only in this earth, on this earth, and to this world but you belong to yourself and I don’t want to ever create anything where someone feels like they don’t belong. As a black woman, I picked up many books with illustrations that were meditation or yoga-related and never saw myself represented. So, thank you for bringing that in.

**[1:11:31.7] LW:** Beautiful. Well, I wanted to just acknowledge you for again, showing up and giving so much, having such generosity of spirit through your work, and I think it’s going to be a very useful resource for a lot of people out there. So, where can people find the book?

**[1:11:50.1] TS:** You can find the book at [shambala.com](http://shambala.com). Up until November 10<sup>th</sup>, they’re going to be running a 30% discount on the book with the code “LUM30” so you can take advantage of that and you can also go to my website, which is Tracee, with two Es, [traceestanley.com](http://traceestanley.com), to find all the other independent bookstores that you can buy the book at and you can also sign up for the book club.

It’s a free book club, so once you buy the book, you just go to my website and put in your info. It will be a four-week book club starting in October, where we’ll go through the practices and through the philosophies together as a community.

**[1:12:29.6] LW:** That's amazing. When does the book come out?

**[1:12:31.8] TS:** October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**[1:12:33.2] LW:** Awesome. Well, we'll put those links in the show notes, and if people want to connect with you, Tracee, and see what you're up to and follow your inspiring work, where can they best do that?

**[1:12:45.5] TS:** They should go to Tracee, with two Es, traceestanley.com, that's my website or you can find me sometimes on Instagram if I'm not resting.

**[1:12:56.7] LW:** All right, well, thank you so much, Tracee. It was an honor and a pleasure, loved having you on, and hopefully, there will be other times in the future as I'm sure you're going to continue sharing and creating your work for others to enjoy and prosper from. So, thank you very much for coming on.

**[1:13:13.5] TS:** Thank you so much, Light, I really appreciate you, and thank you for all you do in the world with your books and your trainings and all of it. I really appreciate you.

**[1:13:22.8] LW:** Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[1:13:25.1] LW:** Thank you for tuning in to my interview with author and wellness thought leader, Tracee Stanley. You can grab a copy of her new book, *The Luminous Self*, everywhere books are sold, and I highly recommend following Tracee on the socials @tracee\_stanley and that's Tracee spelled T-R-A-C-E-E, @tracee\_stanley. Of course, I'll put everything in the show notes, which you can find at [lightwatkins.com/podcast](http://lightwatkins.com/podcast).

And if you enjoyed my conversation with Tracee and you found it inspiring and you're thinking to yourself, "Man, I would love to hear Light interview someone like..." here's how you can actually help to make that interview happen. You see, I reach out to a lot of people all the time who are very big podcast guests and some of them accept but a lot of them don't and that's because my podcast while impactful and while inspiring is still in its building phase.



So, when potential guests or their gatekeepers come across my invitation in their inbox to come onto my podcast, one of the most important metrics that they look into to vet whether or not this show is going to be worth their time is they look at the podcast ratings. They want to see how many ratings does this podcast have and that's why you always hear podcast hosts like me say please rate and review this show.

This is the best way you can support the show, etcetera and it really is just one tiny little thing that you can do literally right now that can significantly increase the chances of having me interview bigger guests. I don't think you can appreciate how significant that is because it only takes 10 seconds. It's not going to cost you anything, all you have to do is look down at your screen, click on the name of the show, right?

That's two seconds and then scroll down past the first five or six episodes, that's three seconds, and you'll see a space with five blank stars. All you do is click a star on the right and you left a five-star rating and that's less than 10 seconds, and if you feel inspired to go the extra mile, while you're there, feel free to leave a one-line review of what you appreciate about this podcast and also, don't forget, you can watch these interviews on YouTube.

If you want to see what Tracee looks like, go to Light Watkins Podcast on YouTube and you'll see my entire playlist and you can check out the video version of this episode and please, make sure to subscribe there as well. If you don't already know, I post the raw unedited version of each podcast conversation in my Happiness Insiders online community. If you want to hear what Tracee and I were chatting about before, we started the official podcast conversation and all the chit-chat and all the mistakes, you can listen to all that at [thehappinessinsiders.com](http://thehappinessinsiders.com).

All right, I look forward to hopefully seeing you back here next week with another story about someone just like me, just like you taking that leap of faith in the direction of their purpose, and until then, keep trusting your intuition, keep following your heart, keep taking your leaps of faith, and if no one's told you recently that they believe in you, I believe in you. Thank you, sending you lots of love, and have a great day.

[END]