

Frederick Marx

SPEAKERS

Jeremy Melder, Frederick Marx

Jeremy Melder 00:00

Happy 2021 to all the listeners of Beaming Green. Now I'm hoping that you could help me in 2021. I want to grow this podcast and make sure that people know about what options there are to live a sustainable life. I have a number of topics that I cover throughout the year. And I'm really excited for 2021. As I've got some great guests coming on, please share this podcast. with as many people as you know, via social media, or just by word of mouth, I really would value your support. Thank you. Hello, my name is Jeremy Melder. And I'm the presenter from Beaming Green. Before we start, I would like to acknowledge that this podcast is being held on the traditional lands of the bundjalung people and pay our respects to elders both past present and emerging. The beaming green podcast is a weekly podcast, which will help you to take out some of the stress and confusion about how to live your life more sustainably. And we do this by introducing people that have first hand experience and expertise in all aspects of sustainability. So you can get some amazing insight on how you can implement the simple and practical solutions to enhance your life and the lives of your family. Today, I'm really excited to be speaking with Frederick Marx, who is in Oakland, California via zoom. He's a founder of warrior films and an Oscar and Emmy nominated producer, director, writer and editor with 40 years in the film and TV business quite extraordinary, really. In his work, he focuses on the plight of disadvantage, and misunderstood communities, people of color, abused children, the working poor prisoners, and at risk youth. Frederick, He is best known for his award winning documentary, Hoop Dreams, which was produced in 1994. Today, we are going to be speaking about his new book "Rights to a good life", which I've read and highly recommend the Welcome to Beaming Green. How have you been?

Frederick Marx 02:33

You know, it's it's funny, I've been very, very well. And I've to expressing that with a caveat up front. Because the times are so extreme, and so many people are suffering so widely around the planet. And I think on the face of it, it might sound presumptuous or arrogant or just outrageously out of touch. for someone to say I'm doing great.

Jeremy Melder 03:08

Yeah, it has been difficult.

Frederick Marx 03:13

Yes, it's an extremely difficult so I really, you know, I acknowledge that reality. But part of what makes it a wonderful time for me is that I see so many opportunities for my gifts being brought forth into the world. And there's so much of a need for understanding this time that we're in as a rite of passage. Hmm. And so the whole last chapter of my book is about that. You know, and, and so I like to bring as much comfort as possible to people by offering that framework of understanding about this time.

Jeremy Melder 03:59

Yeah, absolutely. So, Frederick, you know, I know you're not one to really brag, but you you know, you have produced and directed a number of films, you are an author, you also have a blog. We here to talk about, you know, the book that you've just been discussing is the rights to a good life. Now, there's been a bunch of hard work that you've done. When do you think this journey started for you? And what was the inspiration behind this?

Frederick Marx 04:30

Well, one of the things that I mentioned in the book, in a sense, it started for me when I was nine years old, and my father died very suddenly. He had a heart attack. He was 41 years old. He said Good night to me, and then was gone forever out of my life the next day. And that was just a tremendous shock, of course, and I kind of grew up with post traumatic stress because of that event. But on the way to the funeral, my uncle, his younger brothers, he put his hand on my shoulder and he said, Well, Freddie, you're the man of the house now. And you better believe that I wanted to be that man, you know, for my mother for my older sister and my younger brother. But of course, at nine years old, I had no capacity for that. And it was inappropriate, frankly, to, you know, to. So my uncle didn't stick around to mentor me to teach me how to become that man. No other men showed up in my teens, when I really desperately needed it to be initiated into mature masculinity. And no other mentors really showed up for me. So I, I grew up with this sense of vacuum of gap. It's like, how do I become the man that I want to be? I have no idea. So, you know, cut to over 20 or more like 30 years later, I did a weekend workshop in Chicago called the Mankind Project, new warrior training, adventure 1995. And that was it. For me, it was my long overdue initiation into mature masculinity. And ever since then, I've been obsessed with this theme of rites of passage, and how mentorship and rite of passage are really two halves of one hole. And both are required for each of us to realize our greatest potential as human beings.

Jeremy Melder 06:49

Absolutely, I totally agree with it. Now. I also remember seeing in the book, an African proverb that you had said, If we do not initiate the young, they will burn down the village to feel the heat. Can you unpack that a little bit for me, what that means to you?

Frederick Marx 07:11

Yeah, absolutely. And, you know, just by the way, you know, for years, I've been trying to research the exact source of this, because I realized how insufficient it is to say it's an African proverb. I mean, you know, which country which people, right so I'm, I haven't found it yet, but I'm still looking. So what that means to me, again, on one hand, it points to the necessity of initiation. Because if we do not initiate young people grow up and become a danger to the whole community and to themselves, and of course, even to their immediate families as well. But the part of that sentence I like the most is, they'll burn down the village to feel the heat. And that's something that we have to understand about young people about adolescence, they want to feel the heat, they want to be put into circumstances that really test them, that really drive them. And so they want to be moved close to that fire, so that they can learn what it feels like to be burned. So we need as adults, as elders, as mentors, to create circumstances, initiatory experiences for them where they can feel that heat, but in ways that are safe, and ways that we can adjust the heat to just the right temperature. So it's not so hot that it burns them, and maybe

some of them die. Yeah, it's not so cool, that they don't get initiated, they don't transform. So that's what I love about that sentence.

Jeremy Melder 09:06

So you're really meaning it's like challenging, them in a very safe and sacred space. So, they can actually express themselves to find their authentic self. Is that what you think that means as well?

Frederick Marx 09:24

Yeah, absolutely. You know, each of us is endowed at birth, with something unique and brilliant. Every single person on the planet is and our task as a community, through initiation and mentorship is to uncover what it is that is unique and wonderful about each of us to bless those gifts. And then to encourage the young people to go forth and to give them to the community because we all need those gifts that they have

Jeremy Melder 10:00

I totally get that. I mean, I remember when I did my ceremony with MKP, that feeling of gratitude and love and safety, which was overwhelming. I think I wept for two or three days after doing my MKP weekend. And it was really, truly wonderful. And it was nice to feel that safety that I don't think I've ever really experienced. And, you know, I really would recommend anyone that's contemplating doing that sort of a weekend to do that, because it's really quite valuable. Now, what do you think your view on, you know, initiation of both the, the, the male and the female? You've mentioned in the book that, you know, you see that there is a validity of both of those. I know that the book primarily, from my opinion, focuses on the male component, because that's your expertise. But what are your thoughts on the feminine side?

Frederick Marx 11:08

Well, I think girls need it just as much. But I also think that it takes different forms. Girls, by and large, now it well, it doesn't it doesn't. Okay, I guess that's the more complex and true answer. You know, boys do not have that physiological demarcation of adolescence that girls have, right? Boys don't have menstruation, right? We know, we do have physiological effects, you know, our voice is deep in our testicles, drop, we get hair on our bodies, etc. But, you know, it's not as dramatic as, as what girls go through. So, so that's one difference, you know, so elders and women of the village need to recognize when this happens with girls, and then to introduce them immediately into its meaning. Right, you're now becoming fertile. What does that mean, in terms of being an adult woman? And what does it mean in terms of both rights and responsibilities, because both are key. So you know, but we, but we also have to recognize that what in the past were strong gender distinctions no longer really apply in our modern world. And so girls, and rightly so, you know, they want to go on what you might call adventurous rites of passage, like boys do, right? climbing mountain, crossing rivers, you know, scuba diving, whatever it may be as much or more than the boys and of course, I have every right to. So we need to allow for that. And we need to allow for both genders to be initiated simultaneously, together, at the same time, that we also continue to allow for there to be models where they're initiated separately. Yeah. And, you know, for me, personally, I'm extremely grateful that I was initiated with men only. Because for period of time, I needed to leave the world of women behind, and I needed and this gets

back to something you were saying a moment ago, I needed to learn that I don't have to compete with men for resources all the time that I can actually learn to cooperate with them, and learn to love them as my brothers even though I don't even know them well, to really accept them into my heart that was impossible for me prior to.

Jeremy Melder 14:01

Now, I agree with that. One of the things that I was thinking about while you were just talking, Frederick was that, in my opinion, men or boys have a hard time because they don't don't get modelled expression of feelings as much as the feminine In my opinion, you know, we go to school and generally speaking, it will in my experience in Australia, it's been mostly being taught by by the feminine and, and women and we're not really modeled the emotion of a man. And, you know, there's particularly in Australia we call it the blokes, bloke, you know, goes to the pub has a beer, and he expresses himself probably in an incorrect manner when he's drunk. And then then it affects the feminine or the, his children. I think there is a role in this for me Men to learn how to be vulnerable in a safe space without needing alcohol. What are your thoughts on that?

Frederick Marx 15:08

Oh, absolutely. And we and by the way, we have the same expression in American English, we say the mans man

Jeremy Melder 15:16

yeah.

Frederick Marx 15:18

So, you know, in some ways, it speaks to the vacuum that our dominant culture has right now that we do not offer adult men, other opportunities for initiation, other opportunities for bonding with men as their peers, and opening their hearts and doing deep kinds of sharing with them. So in lieu of that vacuum, we have bars, right? We have, yes, we have sports. Right. And, and, you know, those, well, sports, you know, can be a kind of a simulation, sometimes, if you will have an initiation. But we do not consciously initiate man. And we really need to do that on a massive scale, as a whole society, because men who are not in touch with their feelings are dangerous, are dangerous.

Jeremy Melder 16:31

Yes, I totally, totally agree with you. And, you know, I'm currently experiencing that for my, my dear brother, whose son is going through a very difficult time right now. And he's only in his early 20s. And, you know, he's going through, well, the whole drug thing, and, you know, it's, it's really having an effect, obviously, on the family. And it's difficult to enter into any discussion with him because of the state he's in and really needs someone that can actually guide him in the right way. Have you come across? More or less? What not a question? I'm sure you've come across this sort of situation before, but in terms of engaging with someone that is obviously, you know, caught up in a circle of influence with drugs and so on? What do you recommend, in terms of how this can be addressed?

Frederick Marx 17:36

It's a great question, Jeremy. And it's, it's actually it's quite complex in our society now. Because, you know, going back hundreds of years, especially with indigenous people around the planet, there would be no mistaking when a youngster starts acting out like that with drugs and alcohol or abusing little sister, or burning down the house. Yeah, it's time. It's his time, right. And so the whole village would know that. And so the elders would come. And they'd say, young man, you're coming with us, right? And he wouldn't have a choice about it. You know, it's tricky in today's society, at least in the United States, because of the rights, you know, that young people have, and nobody, everybody's afraid of potential child abuse issues. And, and we, and it is important that we respect the integrity of young people and their own volition, right? their own needs and desires. So what I recommend are usually a number of things. You know, one, and this is arguably more important than initiation is mentorship. Can that young man get coupled with a man who he respects, but who can help guide him in ways that are safe, so so that can be a coach that he knows through school, it could be somebody that he knows who church, it could be a relative and uncle, grandfather, even. It doesn't matter really who it is, as long as that young man has respect for that adult man. And that adult man then has the capacity to contain that fire of that young man, and then to begin to direct it in productive ways. So that's, that's really important. But then there's other things too, that can be done and, and what I do when I work with parents, is I try to put in front of them the palette of possibilities for initiation, because there's so many, right, yeah, weekend workshops, like MKP, you can go and sit on the land. You know and fast for Three or four days as a young person for a vision to inform your life, that's a beautiful initiation. So I say what is the young man drawn to? Is he drawn to nature? Does he loves outdoors? Great, then maybe doing an initiation on the land of fasting initiation is right for him. But if not, then there's all kinds of other models, too. You know? So that's what I tried to do.

Jeremy Melder 20:26

Yeah, I guess the, the challenge in this situation is, is that this, this child, or adult, young adults, is not able to see where they're at. So they're sort of fogged by their situation. So it's very hard for anyone to give input into what, what what would be valid, or seen as valid by the child. So it's, it's kind of hard to engage in that. So I guess it's a time where you have to wait for it to let that person actually come to that point of seeing that they need help.

Frederick Marx 21:04

Well, yes. And no, you know, we, I do talk about this too, in the book about mentorship. And, you know, one of the key qualities of an effective mentor, is to be able to sit down with a young man, and without judging him, say, okay, you know, I understand you're doing a lot of drugs, you're drinking a lot, whatever it is, fine. Now, let's let's talk about what are going to be the outcomes of your decisions, the outcomes of your actions, and then you can start talking about well, okay, on the downside, you know, there could be addiction. There could be danger, physical danger, you might harm yourself or your friends, you might get in a car wreck, I mean, whatever, you know, talk about all of those downsides. And then after you've had a full discussion about all of it, and then you can say to the young man, okay, it's up to you. Are you if you're willing to pay the price? continue down the path, you know, but if you're not willing to pay the price, then it's maybe time to reverse direction.

Jeremy Melder 22:18

Yeah, no, I totally agree. Now, I know that you You are a mentor yourself in terms of seeking mentors? It's not I don't know. But it's not really that readily obvious to me, in terms. I mean, I belong to MKP, I see some wonderful elders and mentors that I can speak with. But in the community at large, there seems to be no shining lights, if you know what I mean. You've mentioned the church and things like that. But how do people find these mentors or elders that they feel safe with? Because it might not be their immediate family? You know,

Frederick Marx 23:01

yes, it may well not be and in fact, yeah. Most often, it shouldn't be at least it shouldn't be their parents, right? Yeah. But an uncle or something would be fine. No, I think the key factor is when a young person sees an adult. And it could be in any circumstance, it could be a performance on a stage, or it could be a speech that they see on television, but they're drawn, they're drawn to that person. And whether they consciously say it or not, you can feel that draw. And what they're feeling is I want to be like them. Right? I want something of what that man has, I want something of what that woman has. Right. And so once you've established that, then you just encourage the person to go after mentorship with that person.

Jeremy Melder 23:55

Yeah, yeah. I appreciate that feedback, because it might be valuable. In terms of elders, is there a particular age you think that someone comes into being an elder?

Frederick Marx 24:09

I wish it were simply a biological fact

Jeremy Melder 24:12

it is you can you can be 60 and not an elder. Right?

Frederick Marx 24:15

Exactly. You could be 70, or 80, or 90 and not an elder. And it's funny that you say this, because I'm actually going through the book with a copy editor right now. And we're trying to decide when and if we should capitalize the word elder, in order to distinguish that from elder where it's just an elder person, but they're not really an elder with a capital E, meaning that they understand the important role that they have to play in other people's lives. Because that's what eldership should be about is giving back.

Jeremy Melder 24:53

Yeah, absolutely. And it's

Frederick Marx 24:54

not only through mentorship, but it's through all of the acts of service that you do you know, Through all of the accumulated life wisdom that you have, and even the money that you have the resources that you have, how can you effectively give them back? And then nourish the greatest number of people with that sovereign blessing? Because that's what it's Yeah.

Jeremy Melder 25:18

So speaking of the sovereign do, you know, it might be illuminating to some to just talk through some of the quadrants and the sovereign? If you wouldn't mind expanding on that? Because obviously, we're both familiar with that, from our days of MKP, but just for people listening.

Frederick Marx 25:35

Yeah. So these are ideas that originally actually come from Carl Jung, the student and disciple of Sigmund Freud. And then they've been adapted and changed to some degree in the last 50 years by modern psychologists. And the key ones that inform our work with MKP are Robert Moore, and Douglas Gillette. And together they wrote a book called King warrior magician lover. Okay, so those are the four key archetypes that they I identified. And they exist in all people. Right? And so King becomes Queen for women, or let's just make it non gender and call it sovereign. Right. So how you know how to give a thumbnail sketch of these energies? Well, we all have them. And the question that for us to determine is where are we weak? In some areas? And where are we strong, maybe too strong? And where are we just right? And so the key is to have that balance of just right among all four energy quadrants. Now, for me personally, that journey has meant discovering that once I did my initiation, that I'm very strong in the lover, magician, axis. Yeah, well, most mkp men are, you know, so lover is like feelings. sensory experiences, sensual experience, experiences, magician is all about creative energy learning, accumulating knowledge, etc. But the warrior king axis is, of course, just as important. And that's where I've had to do most of my personal work over the last 25 years, is strengthening that warrior king axis. And for me, that meant partly bringing my warrior out of shadow. Because as a sensitive feeling, man, I was not about to express that full on fierce warrior energy for fear of offending. Yeah, yeah, people, you know, and then of course, the sovereign has to guide it all. Yeah. So the sovereign has to know what is the the skillful means, right? to enact the greatest sense of nurturance, among the whole village among the whole community. And we and he is, you know, he, she, that that energy is the force that directs all of the other energies toward the right goals.

Jeremy Melder 28:37

So, my understanding, and I agree with all that you've said, but the idea for the way I view it, and I might be wrong here Frederick is that, you know, if, if you if you can stand in the sovereign in the, in the axis, and at any given time, depending on the need, you can act, you know, getting good access to the warrior or to the lover or the magician, when needed, if you are, you know, a perfect person, which I'm definitely not, which. But that's the ultimate goal, if he could achieve that is to be able to be in that, you know, in that center, holding the staff and being able to be that, you know, king queen, or in the, you know, an axis is that is that about right what we're what our ultimate goal is.

Frederick Marx 29:40

Well, yeah, exactly. I mean to be balanced across all four quadrants. But I'll tell you one thing since you mentioned perfect. You know, I have a shadow of perfection, where I tell myself and shadow I'll just tell your listeners in case I'm familiar with the term. You know, it also comes from Jung. It's all of that dark, geeky stuff that is true about who we are as human beings, but we hide it. we repress it, we deny it, we pretend it doesn't exist. And until we learn to turn and face those shadows and to accept them and embrace them, and say, yes, this is me, too. This is me, too. And actually love them, and actually utilize them as energy sources for doing our work in the world, then we're going to be in big trouble. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. So the difference for me, there are no perfect people. But the difference for me and

high quality people versus a lesser quality people, if you will, are people who know their shadows, who are deeply familiar with them, and can keep them in and clearly in front of them, and are open and transparent about Yeah, like, I just want to go it's like I got to perfection. Yeah, yeah, believe the rest of the time talking about all my shadows, but we don't have enough time.

Jeremy Melder 31:13

Thanks for sharing that I really acknowledge that. And now I, I, when I was reading your book, I was quite touched with what you've been through with your partner, wife, Tracy, when she was not very well. And I just wanted to acknowledge you for sharing a little bit about that, in terms of let me rephrase that said, the way we look at dying, is, in the Western world particularly isn't really that, in my view, very healthy, we don't see that as something that we celebrate. And what I noticed from reading the book is that you did a celebration of Tracy, before she passed away, and acknowledged her and people came and sat beside the chair, that deeply touched me, I just wanted to ask you to speak to that, because I just don't think in Australia, perhaps in this in the United States, we don't do enough of that.

Frederick Marx 32:29

I agree. And it's one of the things that I've discovered in the course of my life as kind of a side mission, if you will, to promote life honoring celebrations, so that if we know somebody that we dearly love is passing. Why wait until after they've passed to gather and sing their praises. Let's do it while they're alive, and do it to their face. Yeah. And so this is what we did for Tracy. And, and I've actually participated in others that we've done for other people. And it's so simple, and it's so deeply meaningful and rewarding. And I think that it fills a need in every human being, to know that the life that I've spent has been meaningful, and that whatever gifts that I have, I have shared them. And the people around me have benefited from them. So that they're reflecting that back to me now and saying, Thank you. I'm the woman I am today because of what you did in my life. And that's what Tracy got to hear before she died. Yeah. So just by the way, you know, the first book I wrote is called a destiny was part it's all about Tracy die.

Jeremy Melder 33:53

Okay. I'll have to read that. And

Frederick Marx 33:55

it's about, yeah, it's about my journey through the grief afterwards. And so there's an even bigger section in there about the life honoring celebration that we did.

Jeremy Melder 34:06

Yeah, with my partner just lost her mother. We've been looking after her for probably the last five years. And we, you know, did our best to honor her while she was alive. But you know, what you did, I think was worth mentioning, because I don't think we did it as well as we could have. But we did the best we could with what knowledge we had. One of the things in the book is about community and I like the story about the woman with a dog and about being in touch with community. Can you unpack that for me about that story and and the value of community?

Frederick Marx 34:46

Well, yeah, and I'll just first say a side note, you know, in that chapter, you know, I talked about how community historically used to be so geographically determined. Right, we hopefully, you know, a couple 100 years ago, we knew all of our neighbors. And we depended on them. And they depended on us. And that was fundamental to our survival as individuals. Now, of course, we have community in so many different forms. And we can have community like you and I are in community right now. Right across the world, you know. So Terrence told a beautiful story, that, in a sense is kind of about old fashioned geographic community, right. So in his neighborhood, there was an older woman who used to walk his dog every day. And she had recently moved to the neighborhood. So he noticed her, and I think, you know, would say hello on passing. And then after a while, he stopped seeing, and so he grew concerned. And so he actually went and knocked on her door. And she didn't answer the door. And so eventually, they had to break the door down, and they went inside, and they found her passed out. And so, you know, they call the ambulance, she went to the hospital, and it helped to save her life. So, a week or two after this, you know, he's seeing her Walker dog, again, in the neighborhood. And he says, Don't make me take a switch on you, right. And that's, that's jargon and African American slang meaning, you know, take a whip to your, to your behind the discipline you, you know, Call me, call me and check in with me, here's my number, here, and my cell, my home phone, everything, call me and check in so that I know that you're safe. So it's a beautiful video about how we watch out for each and I think

Jeremy Melder 36:57

that's really important. I think that's something that worms are highlighting that is because I don't think that's something, particularly in a western world, that we do very well, like, you know, we know our neighbors, because we live in a small community. But if I was in a city, and I lived in an apartment block, would I know all of my neighbors? Most likely not. So I just think that was a really lovely story about engaging with community. And I really resonated with that.

Frederick Marx 37:28

Well, and we can do it, too. I mean, to some degree, I mean, I live the building where I'm speaking right now is a three flat. So there's three apartments in the building. So when I was moving in, one of the first things I did was I went to both of my downstairs neighbors, introduce myself, said, here's who I am. And if I can do anything for you, when you're out of town, like taking your mail or walk your dog, let me know. And vice versa. So that's Can I agree with that?

Jeremy Melder 37:59

Frederick, now, we're going back to mentoring. And I was again in the book, touched by your mentor, Harold Ramis, if I'm correctly pronouncing him, Ramis, and you know, how he's impacted on your life as a as a mentor? Would you like to tell us a little bit more about that? Because I just thought it was a lovely story, how he helped you.

Frederick Marx 38:27

Gosh, there's so many ways I don't think I'll remember half

Jeremy Melder 38:32

that okay.

Frederick Marx 38:33

yeah, so Harold was a mentor, for at least 10 years for me. And part of what made him an excellent mentor for me was that he's a famous filmmaker. So he knew the whole filmmaking world. And he knew all of the various challenges that could come from being in that career. So so that's one way, maybe the most superficial way that he helped me, because when I had problems with partners, business problems, and he would help me to sort through, first of all, whether it was important enough to fight for or not, to maybe just let it go. And then if it was important to fight for how to fight for it most effectively. Well, one of the beautiful ways that he mentored for me was things that he mentored humility, he modeled it. He was such a humble man. And this is a man who has known the world over Yeah, as an actor, a writer and director and was a famous man. And yet when when he was on my board, and we would have due to my very bad planning and bad judgment, we would have board meetings in Chicago in December in the middle of Winter. And so he would have to drive from 30 miles north of town in the suburbs where he lived through the snow, and the freezing temperatures to get to where we were having the meetings, and he would do it. And he would never complain or say a thing about it. So that was something else that he did. Gosh, I feel bad because it's been so long since I, I read my own.

Jeremy Melder 40:29

But that's okay. No, but I just remember him being quite instrumental in guiding you in specially in the film, but also in your life, I felt felt some resonance there that he was very, very much a guiding light for you. And I just wanted to say that, that I felt that by reading that. So I just wanted to touch on that if he wanted to.

Frederick Marx 40:52

Well, I'm just gonna add another point that I do remember now from my own blog about him. Honor the teacher, right, honor the mentor. And when I knew he was dying, I knew that he was in such bad shape that it was difficult for him even to get on the phone. So what I did was when I wrote him, I just wrote him and I was effusive with the ways that he had made me a better man. I told him that So in a sense, I gave him my own little mini life honoring celebration. That's great, right to tell him how he impacted my life, and made it better. Yeah. These are important things that we need to do with our mental. Absolutely,

Jeremy Melder 41:37

absolutely. Now I haven't, this is something that I noticed that you've just you've you've finished a film that it's talking about return soldiers, and they're coming home and how it seems a bit inadequate in terms of when they come home. And as to how they're looked after. Now, I, you know, my brother in law lives in Oakland in San Francisco, and I visited him and going to San Francisco in the town, I saw so many vets on the streets. And I was quite I was I was quite saddened by it. Because I just thought these people have put their life on the lines and you know, done something, what they believe for their country. And, yeah, I feel that they need more. And I agree with you. And I could fill in that short video clip that you had on there. I could feel the anger and rage that was coming out about not being a particularly from a black persons perspective.

Frederick Marx 42:55

Oh, exactly. Right. Yeah. Well, first of all, bless you, you know, for you know, having your heart be so open to these men and women who you're absolutely right, serve their country. And now here they are living on the streets, and begging for some of them. And it's it's heartbreaking. And by the way, I live in Oakland. So I see homeless vets almost all the time. And yes, there are more in San Francisco. But there's plenty of Oakland too. So one of the things that my film makes clear, and by the way, it's five films, it's actually a five film series called veterans journey home. Yep, is that veterans are stuck in the middle of a rite of passage. And the military does not give them what it is that they need in order to successfully transition back into civilian life. Because what they need is a psychic and emotional homecoming. They need that final stage three of the archetype of initiation, which I'll just say, is usually the first stage of separation, which they go through when their heads are shaved, and they're inducted into the military and taught how to act and think as a unit and for their brothers and sisters and not for themselves. Right. That's a beautiful lesson in many ways, right? And we all need that lesson. The second thing is ordeal is service. They go overseas, and you know, they see death. They see death, you know, either up close and personal or at arm's removed, but they also experience all kinds of sense of betrayal and loss. And this is dramatic too. And it could come in the form of they unintentionally kill women and children. Or it could come in the form of their buddy dies in their arms, and they feel responsible for not preventing their death could come in a million different forms, but they carry this psychic and emotional burden. Yeah, from what they've done. And then what happens, they go home, the military says thank you for your service. Good luck, soldier. And that's it. Nobody teaches them how to let go of the psychic and emotional burdens. So the film series highlights the ways that we as community can come together to support veterans, to hold them through this transition back home, so that they can and what has to symbolically happen is that we as civilians, need to take the burden off of their shoulders, whatever they're carrying, and put it on us on the collection. And together, we hold that burden, so that they don't have to suffer it alone. And so that they're not driven by nightmares, and driven into alcoholism and drug abuse and homelessness, etc. Trying to fight off those demons. No, we invite the demons out. And we say we'll hold them with you. Oh, that's what the films are about. Fantastic.

Jeremy Melder 46:29

And you're trying to get them released. Is that right? You're looking for someone to

Frederick Marx 46:36

Well, we're finishing the last two right now. But the first three have been out for about a year now. And we've entered them. We've won screenings in about 23 festivals, and one two Best Documentary awards. So we're slowly getting them out. But obviously with COVID, it's not easy. But yeah, we're getting distribution. And in fact, if any of your listeners know ways to bring these films to Australia, please reach out to us

Jeremy Melder 47:08

now coming to role of leaders. In your book, you say that today's world is in dire circumstances, much of the exploitation, environmental destruction, racism, sexism, and warfare are a function of an uninitiated, men, suspended in positions of leadership. And it's funny, I was having a conversation about this with another friend of mine that said that our world is run by men, but they're really children or teenagers. What are your thoughts?

Frederick Marx 47:50

I couldn't agree more. Yeah, there are teacher teenagers and adult clothing. Yeah. And, you know, one of the quotes that I have in the book is from Robert Bly, who considered one of the foundational members of the so called men's movement, which started in the early 80s. In the United States. And Robert says, you know, in Africa, It's unthinkable that somebody could become president of the country without first being initiated. And, you know, it just rings so true. Because if you're not initiated, you're not going to know the value of human life. You're not going to know it. And unless you know, the value of human life, you're going to make really bad decisions about sending men and women off. Yeah, to fight wars that maybe shouldn't be fought at all.

Jeremy Melder 48:51

Yeah, I mean, we could talk about leaders in quite a few countries. you've had a few challenges yourself.

Frederick Marx 49:02

I was gonna say we've got the most dysfunctional one on wall right. Yeah. So and, it's interesting, too, that in the book I also talk about Robert said Robert Bly, again, men act out in dysfunctional ways because they unconsciously seek their Father's blessing. And look at Donald Trump. So lately, yeah. Here's a man who was probably shamed and humiliated from the time he was born by his own father. And all he's trying to do is in effect live up to daddy's good graces and get that blessing. And George Bush I think was hardly any different.

Jeremy Melder 49:48

Yeah. Now I agree with that. It's, it's, it's it's blaringly obvious, but it's it's a shame that we've got Well, there's two weeks to go. Isn't there?

Frederick Marx 49:59

We are counting down every minute,

Jeremy Melder 50:05

yes, there's been so many lives lost through this COVID-19. And people have really had a hard, hard year or it's still going on in the United States. And you know, that's also a part of, I would say, the leadership that could have hopefully curtailed this in somewhat and what I'm feeling blessed that I live in Australia, and there's, you know, as not not as much of an impact as you got you in America have experience. But I do, you know, pour my heart out to Americans that are doing it tough, as I'm sure there are people doing it tough all over the world right now. But Frederick, I really want to thank you for being on Beaming Green.

Frederick Marx 50:56

you're most welcome. Yeah, thank you. It's my pleasure. I mean, I get to I get to share what excites me and what I'm passionate about. And so thank you, thank you.

Jeremy Melder 51:07

And I hope that our listeners will download the book or buy the book, can you tell us about how they can access it, I'll put a link to this in the show notes, and also some of the films that you've done so that they can have a look, and maybe elaborate on how they can also support you.

Frederick Marx 51:26

Well, thank you for that question. Yeah. So the book is available around the world on Amazon, you know, what isn't? And so, yeah, you can, it's called Rites To A Good Life, or RITES. And the subtitle is Everyday Rituals of Healing and Transformation. And right now, we're sort of doing a sneak preview or advanced sales. So we're only selling it for \$1. Because I'm still making very slight changes to the book. In about three or four months, we'll have the audio book out. And we'll also have the hardcopy book out. So as for the films and everything else, I do go to warriorfilms.org. And as for how you can support us, you know, we're a nonprofit company. So that means we survive largely through donations. So if your call to donate great, you know, we welcome it, you can click on our website, it's very easy. If you simply just want to get updates from me. I welcome that, too. I send out newsletters almost once a month. And in those newsletters, we give away about 80% of what we do. So that means all the short films, all the blogs, excerpts from published articles, and sometimes excerpts from the long films. So and I always make it frankly, upbeat, and meaningful. So we do that once a month. And then. So all I ask is you just simply give us your name and an email address. And you're good. It's a very simple process.

Jeremy Melder 53:15

And I highly recommend the book. But as I as I just said earlier that I finished the book just yesterday. And there's lots of handy hints there for anyone that's wanting to get into this type of work. But there's just for Australian listeners, there is MKP in Australia. And there's also a sister organization called Women for Women. That's also operational in Queensland.

Frederick Marx 53:48

Yeah, but first, let me actually mention too, that there is a number of organizations to that initiated mentor. Oh, boy. Uh huh.

Jeremy Melder 53:56

You know, you're serious. Yeah.

Frederick Marx 53:57

And you know, the name is better than I can even

Jeremy Melder 54:00

spoken with Arne Rubenstein previously, who also does read rites of passage in northern New South Wales. And he's been interviewed on episode six, I think it was. But yeah, he's he right?

Frederick Marx 54:18

Yeah, I love Arne. So, yeah, just simply go to mkp.org. That's the public face of our organization. And you'll find all kinds of things there that I think are of tremendous use and value, not only to men, actually, but to women, too, so that they can begin to understand men all that much more deeply and meaningfully.

Jeremy Melder 54:46

Yeah. Well, once again, Frederick Marx thank you for being on Beaming Green. Thank you for being part of the Beaming Green podcast. The music for this podcast is produced by Dave Weir. We need more people to get on board and raise awareness about sustainability and climate change. The more of us that are shining the light on these issues, the more governments and businesses will listen. We would love you to subscribe to our podcast and share and engage in social media so that we can get some traction. Let us support one another and envision a future thanks for listening and see you next time.