



The Athena Wellness Podcast
Episode 125 – The Soul of Power with Christian de la Huerta
March 27, 2022

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[00:00:05] Kathy Robinson: Welcome to the Athena Wellness Podcast, the show that invites you to take a seat around the community fire and listen to stories that inspire. I'm your host, Kathy Robinson, author, coach and founder of Athena Wellness, a company that's dedicated to supporting you on your journey to live more wholeheartedly.

[00:00:30] Kathy: Hello and welcome to Episode 125. Thanks so much for joining me.

I'm so pleased to share a conversation that has stayed with me for a long time. It's about understanding your relationship with power – not egoic power, but soulful power. It's about how learning how to stand in your power by choosing positivity can get you through difficult times. And it couldn't be a more timely conversation.

Today's guest is a gentle man who is deeply rooted in his own beautiful power and freely shares his wisdom. I'm joined today by Christian de la Huerta, who is the author of *Awakening the Soul of Power, How to Live Heroically and Set Yourself Free*. He's also a teacher and leader in the field of breathwork and self-development. The theme of Christian's work is personal transformation.

Here's what we cover:

- What personal power is and why it's so important;
- How hiding our true nature impacts our power;
- How the hero's journey helps us reclaim our power; and



- The paths and practices that can help us be a conduit for soulful power.

We end this episode with our Dose of Inspiration segment, where Christian shares some of the things that are lighting him up these days. And as always, I'll put links to those items and Christian's website, where you can find his book and download a chapter when you join his mailing list.

And now onto the show. I hope you enjoy the conversation.

[00:02:14] Kathy: Christian, welcome to the *Athena Wellness Podcast*. Thanks so much for being here.

[00:02:19] Christian de la Huerta: Thank you so much for having me, Kathy. I'm glad to be here with you.

[00:02:23] Kathy: Please share a bit about who you are and what you do.

[00:02:27] Christian: Well, I've been doing personal transformation retreats and workshops for the past 30 years on different themes, including personal empowerment, relationships that have a chance of actually working, life purpose, particular focus on women's empowerment. I'm an author, a bestselling author by a couple of measures, and have been doing life coaching and executive coaching for a long time as well.

[00:02:56] Kathy: How did you come to do the work that you do today? Can you tell us a little bit about your backstory?

[00:03:02] Christian: The shorter version is I come out of the psychotherapy tradition. My father was a psychiatrist. My degree's in psychology. I was on a track to get a PhD. So, I've always had this propensity to do this kind of work.

Before that, I was raised in a very Catholic environment. I went to a Catholic Jesuit school. And in those days I thought I wanted to be a priest. I had that sense of



what they call a vocation, that desire to serve humanity, to serve the sacred as I understood it then.

Then I realized some 30 years ago when I discovered breathwork as a healing modality, I jumped tracks. I never went for the PhD. I've been incorporating in my work now, some skills from my psychology, counseling techniques, that kind of stuff, and some other teachings that are more from a spiritual perspective, teachings from the East, about understanding the ego-mind, that kind of stuff so that we can break free from that self-made prison.

[00:04:08] Kathy: It's interesting when we get those impulses sometimes that we channel them into what we see as a model. So you were getting this sense that you wanted to go deep in a vocational practice and the only thing that was in front of you, given your upbringing, was priesthood, not knowing that there were so many other paths that you could take.

[00:04:29] Christian: Yeah, yeah. These days in my own way, I don't need to be ordained by anyone or any institution to know that I am still fulfilling that role. If we go define a priest or priestess by somebody who is a conductor, who takes people back to deepen a relationship with the Divine and to have a connection with the Divine, then I am certainly fulfilling that role.

[00:04:52] Kathy: Yeah, without a doubt. That leads us to your latest book, which is about The Soul of Power. I wanted to start the conversation to give our listeners some context. From your perspective, what is power and why is it so important to awaken it?

[00:05:08] Christian: Well, let me begin by saying this. I think most of us have a misunderstanding about power as you point to. We have a conflicted relationship to power, an ambivalent relationship. Part of us wants it, part of us is afraid of it.

I think what we fear, Kathy, is that if we really stepped into our power, if we really expressed ourselves to the max, to the fullest, if we were all of who we are, that



other people wouldn't be able to handle it, and that we might end up rejected and alone.

We also fear that we might abuse it. And no wonder, how many abuses of power or have we witnessed or experienced? All we've got to do is turn on the news any given day to witness at least one abuse of power, not to mention what's going on in the world right now, as we speak.

And so, when you add to the mix the fact that we've also been conditioned to make the emotions weakness, we hate conflict. We avoid confrontation. What happens is we give away our power, our innate, inherent power that nobody can give to us. Nobody can take away from us.

We are the only ones who can give it away. We override our dreams, our preferences, our thoughts, our beliefs. We say yes when inside we really feel *no* for an illusion of security, for a false sense of acceptance, and for crumbs, morsels of pseudo-love. That stems from the confusion about what power is.

So the theme of this book and what I guide the reader along is like, how do we step into our own personal power in a way that's not about hierarchy, fear, control, force, domination, manipulation? How do we step into power in a way that's not about hierarchy, that doesn't require that we push anybody down, step on them, put our knee to their neck in order to feel powerful? How do we do it in a different way?

[00:07:06] Kathy: You also would talk about the different characteristics of power, be it masculine or feminine. Can you talk a little bit about those two different dynamics and how we are seeing that play out in, as you say when we turn on the news and we see some of these things? How does that dynamic work itself through in the world today?

[00:07:25] Christian: Yeah, the book is for everybody, its message is for everybody. We all have a conflicted ambivalent relationship to power but it has a



particular message for women. That stems from my belief that the empowerment of women is the single most important thing that needs to happen in the world. It's not to idealize women. It's not to put women up on a pedestal. Women also abuse power, disproportionately, men do it way more. At least at this point in our evolution when we look at it worldwide. And it's certainly not to give women more crap that they have to do to clean up the mess that we find ourselves in.

It's because as a species, as a world, we've been running very off-balance, very off-kilter where it comes to what you were just talking about the balance between the masculine and the feminine energies that rule all of creation, including our world, and including ourselves. Because much to the surprise of some humans, we're part of the cosmos. We're going to be governed by the same principles that govern the stars.

In the cosmos, there's a balance between the masculine and the feminine energies. We've gotten into trouble because we've suppressed it. We've turned the feminine into something that's weakness, into something less than, something that, in a way, is to be subjugated and controlled. It's a faulty assumption because if we want to talk courage, strength, power even, let's talk about the power of creation that resides in a female body.

[00:08:58] Kathy: Well, you bring up a good point of it's not just women taking more of a leadership role, but it's really balancing the masculine and feminine sides. Can you speak to that a little bit? What are some things that we can do ourselves and then radiate that out into the world?

[00:09:17] Christian: Well, yeah, definitely, that's what it's about, about balancing. If we expect to find that balance out in the world, it's got to start within us.

And so, here's one thing - it's the emotions. The emotions, like I was saying earlier, we've labeled them as weakness. It's like, "Wait a minute. That's another faulty assumption. Who says?"



The emotions are neither strength nor weakness. They're not bad. They're just energy. What used to be spiritual teaching that everything is energy, now we know from quantum physics, it's true. That means this chair that I'm sitting on, the body, the emotions, it's all energy, even when it feels solid. Energy cannot be destroyed.

For the years and decades and lifetime that we have suppressed our emotions, that we haven't given ourselves permission to feel and express those feelings, that stuff doesn't go away. That stuff gets lodged in the tissues of our body. After years, upon years, upon years of doing that, we walk around with layers and layers and layers of repressed emotional crap.

Here we are trying to have a relationship with the present, it's all getting filtered through that lifetime of suppressed emotions and unhealed past traumas. It's like, "Yikes!" How any relationship can work is actually beyond my understanding. Because we haven't been taught how to approach them, how to hold them. We certainly haven't been taught to clear ourselves from that.

So, that's one little adjustment that would change our lives. First of all, accept that the emotions are just that. And give ourselves permission to feel and to learn how to communicate those feelings courageously and responsibly. Of course, we're not going to go around having a tantrum like a two-year-old. We're going to develop that sense of mastery about how to communicate our emotions in a way that's responsible and graceful, meaning that in a way that it can be heard, that it can be received.

So when we talk about it from that perspective, emotions are a weakness. But when we're talking about emotional mastery, the ability to do all that, it's the opposite of weakness and that will change all of our relationships.

[00:11:28] Kathy: Mmmmm, yeah, I love this idea of self-regulation because it feels like when these emotions come up, sometimes our first thing to do is either to run or numb. I think as we get older and as we *Awaken the Soul of Power*, which is the title of your book, *How to Live Heroically and Set Yourself Free*, as we learn to do



that, we need to find new ways to self-regulate that isn't about numbing or pushing something down and actually releasing it.

Before we get into some of the details, tell us a bit about the book and why you decided to write it.

[00:12:02] Christian: What inspired the book, a couple of things. One was my older sister. I'm one of, a Catholic family and one of nine kids, second-oldest, and only 12 years from oldest to youngest so we're really close, really tight. My sister, my older sister, was one of these natural-born leaders growing up. She would boss around not only the nine of us, but the entire neighborhood of like 15, 20 kids. Not in an obnoxious way. It was just the type of thing she'd say, "Hey, let's go do that," and we would all say, "Okay, let's go all do that."

When she hit puberty, Kathy, she turned that thing off. I don't know what happened to this day. I don't know if somebody said something to her or whether she just picked it up through osmosis from the culture that women don't behave that way. But she turned that thing off and she assumed this Mother Theresa persona. I never really understood that because I know that's not the only situation. I know so many women who have done that.

Then the other part of it was inspired by this balance between the masculine and the feminine. A few years ago, I submitted a proposal for another book on a different theme to an agent in New York who said, "Great, I want to work with you, but I want to see some of these marketing ideas implemented before we approach a publisher," which would've taken me a year to implement them. I was like, "Eh," slam on the brakes, I was spending the advance in my mind.

And so then I thought, all right, if this is not my immediate solution, what would I really write about? If I'm not going to write for an advance, what would I write about?



It took me like three days just in that question. And then it was one of those light bulb moments where about a month before, I'd been sitting in meditation and for only the second time in my life, I'd heard audible words. Now it's happened three times, but then it was only the second time.

And the words were "The Soul of Power." I was like, "Oh, what an interesting idea." I didn't think any further about it. I just put it away, got the URL and forgot about it.

So now, a month later, it's like what would I really write about? It hit me. It was like, all right, if I really believe that the empowerment of women is the single most important thing that needs to happen in the world, what am I doing about that directly?

It was like soul power, women's empowerment, it was like, "Hello, how do we do it in a different way that it's more power with rather than power over?" That began my journey of thinking about this and doing retreats. And to begin to figure out what's going on in this twisted relationship we have with power in our world.

[00:14:39] Kathy: Mmhmm. I love those stories about the ideas that come forth like that. I mean, that truly is creation, being able to be open to hear that and then put those pieces together. Then you're off on a whole new life path.

You write about how hiding our true natures, just like your sister, our wearing masks, you call it, impacts our power. How does that happen and what are the implications when we do make that shift and it's not to our own advantage?

[00:15:10] Christian: Yeah, I know that one personally. My adolescence was one long depression with suicidal fantasies because I was struggling at the time with reconciling this religion in which I was raised, my spirituality, with my sexuality. I knew from a young age that I was gay in a religion that told me that I was going to burn in hell for eternity because of that.



Flash forward, these days, no matter what happens in my life, no matter the details, whether a relationship works out or it doesn't, a project succeeds or it "fails," I never question my sense of self. My self-acceptance, my self-love is established and unshakable.

I know about hiding our true nature. And why do we do that? Fear. Fear of rejection. This fear that we're going to be rejected, that we're not going to be accepted. It's connected to our deepest sense of abandonment or survival stuff. We don't want to rock the boat too much.

What happens is we stuff ourselves into tiny little packages in order not to rock the boat too much, but the price that we pay is we're miserable. What happens if we're stuffing, our power authenticity, what we're risking is lives of soul-devouring mediocrity and relationships that ultimately cannot work. Because if we're approaching others from a place of inauthenticity, how can we even be met? How can anything that we might interpret as love is not even real love, it's pseudo love because we're not being real. We're not presenting ourselves as who we really are so it's not an effective strategy.

[00:17:06] Kathy: Yeah, there's something to that; you said something that is staying with me here. That's this idea that there really is this path and when you go through something like that, if you can turn that into power, that really is the hero's journey that you talk about.

So, maybe can you put it in context of the hero's journey? What is this process like when you reclaim your power? How does that start and then what are some of the things you can do along that path to help you along?

[00:17:39] Christian: Yeah, I try, because the stuff that we're talking about is not easy. Many of us spend a lifetime running away from this stuff. We're numbing out like you were talking about. In all the infinite creative ways that we use to numb out and not feel, whether it's drugs or alcohol or sex or workaholism or too much exercise or gaming or social media. And all these strategies that are ultimately not



effective because that stuff is not going to go away. It's only going to grow and fester and become worse. It's going to continue interfering with our relationships and the quality of our lives.

But being willing to look at that stuff is, to me, nothing short of heroic. Because it's facing our own inner demons. The rewards are priceless. The rewards for being willing to do that are freedom and self-acceptance and self-love, but it doesn't make the process easier.

To me, it is heroic. To bring choices rather than to live out, as you know, from the place of societal conditioning and decide to walk our own path and to decide what's right and what's wrong for us. If we're not going to go by stuff that was written 2,000 years ago, that was taken out of its cultural and historical context, that was written at a time where women weren't even human, where women were property.

To walk this solitary path is heroic. And again, incredibly rewarding, liberating, empowering. But because it's so intense, I tried to make it easier by having really short chapters with practices – make it interactive. And also by weaving in the hero's journey and bringing in examples of that from culture, from movies, from TV, literature, that kind of thing.

We're grateful to, even though the hero's journey has been part of history for many, many thousands of years, it's in our mythology, the person who conceptualized and named it as Joseph Campbell. In a very simplified version, the heroic journey is the hero.

And I used that word without gender, because shero, I just can't do. I don't like that because in Latin, it has nothing to do with gender. The he/she thing does not happen in Latin, and because heroin just smacks of something else.

[00:20:06] Kathy: Right. Literally.



[laughter]

[00:20:12] Christian: The hero basically leaves the safety of the village, of the environment, and receives a call. The call, in our lives, it could be a death in the family, a divorce, or loss of a job. That's the call that sends us on this journey of looking for meaning, looking for what's going on, what's this all about.

In the process, we encounter many, many challenges, we make some allies, some friends, we have enemies. In the heroic journey, sometimes we experience a lot of accidents and dismemberment but somehow, we come back with all that wisdom, all that experience, everything that we've learned, and come back to the village to share it with our community.

That journey can definitely be applied to our own personal process of growth. In my case, it might be having to deal with such difficult existential questions at a young age was very difficult, very challenging. But I'm really grateful for it because I am who I am because of that. The fact that I was able to face those questions and resolve, was able to move from self-doubt and self-hatred to self-acceptance and self-love and self-empowerment.

So now I can help somebody to do it in a real authentic way because it's not something I read in a book. It's something that I know works because it worked in my life from a very personal, deeply felt, in a deeply felt way.

That's an example of a hero's journey. We're all on a hero's journey.

[00:21:50] Kathy: Absolutely. Just speaking a little bit more about your journey. When I think about the traditional hero's journey, the hero gets tapped on the shoulder and they say, "I hear you but no thank you. I like my life the way it is. I'm going to stay here." Then gets tapped repeatedly.

So, did you find that same kind of call and response that it was just like, "No, I don't want to go there?" and then you were invited on the path multiple times?



[00:22:16] Christian: Huh. Good question. A former teacher used to say, "When you get the call from the soul, you either go willingly or you're going to get dragged by the hair kicking and screaming." (laughs)

[00:22:28] Kathy: Exactly.

[00:22:33] Christian: You know, I think when I got the call, the big one, I said, "Yes." I was ready. I had lived enough of life to know that even though I had a very enviable life back then, I had a nice cushy job, I was making good money, I had a sports car, the Armani suits, beautiful lover, living in South Beach right at the time the Renaissance down there in Miami and yet, I wasn't happy and I wasn't fulfilled.

It seemed to me the more that I had and the more that I was sought after socially or professionally, the more that there was something missing. What was missing for me then was that it was my spiritual connection. Because as I struggled with my sexuality and spirituality, once I fell in love and understood the difference between having sex and making love, once I was able to combine those. I'm not creating a hierarchy here of sex and love, but for me, that's like, "Wow, now I get what all the poetry and all the movies and all the stuff is about."

And from that day on, there wasn't a priest or a rabbi or a minister or psychiatrist or an imam who could tell me otherwise. I knew in the depths of my soul and my heart and my cells that being gay wasn't wrong and it wasn't sinful and it wasn't a sickness. But what happened then is I threw the baby out with baptismal water and wanted nothing to do with that smacked of religion or spirituality. I didn't know that there was a difference back then.

At this point in my life, when I started searching, it's like that's what was missing. I had rejected or tried to reject or run away from a whole integral part of who I was. In the same way that I tried to reject my sexuality, I was now rejecting my spirituality. And so now I realize how ludicrous that was. Because those are just parts of who we are - inherent, intrinsic parts of who we are.



At that point, that's what I realized was missing. And so I started a search. I looked East. I looked at Buddhism and Hinduism. I started learning about different models of looking at ourselves, understanding the ego-mind, and learning practices like meditation, like breathwork that were conduits to inner peace and my life changed.

[00:24:55] Kathy: I love that moment when you say there was this recognition and no one can tell you otherwise. That's really when you hit on a vein of truth, when you just know it that deeply and it doesn't matter. I think also that tap on the shoulder, I think that's when you accept, "Okay, I'm on this path now," because you know it, you can feel it.

Once you were on the path, what made the journey easier for you?

[00:25:22] Christian: Yeah, that's a very insightful question, too, because it didn't make the journey any easier, even though I knew it was the right thing to do and I wasn't fulfilled. And even though I felt like none of that stuff, none of it was enough to make me happy. The next few years were really, really difficult and really challenging. That was part of the heroic journey, too.

Because in my case, I joined a spiritual community, an ashram. And lived in a mostly monastic, mostly celibate for five years. If you would have told me I was going to do that, I would've cried or laughed at the sheer impossibility.

[laughter]

That wasn't even the hardest part, Kathy. That wasn't even the hardest part. It was still such a journey of deep surrendering that shook up everything that I knew and the way that I did life. That was incredibly difficult but incredibly empowering at the same time. I wouldn't be who I am if it wasn't for that.



Yeah, that's the hero's journey, right? There's going to be ups and downs, there's going to be peaks and valleys. And if we keep one step at a time, one breath at a time, the rewards are priceless.

[00:26:40] Kathy: It feels like so many people are searching for something out there and really when you sit down, be it on a cushion or somewhere out in nature, and it's just you and you confront yourself, it's like going through that doorway, that point of no return. If you can sit in that fire with whatever it is that's coming up.

The image that comes to mind is that of a blacksmith. You're putting this heavy metal in the fire and it makes it malleable, it makes it more pliable. I think that's what we do with our soul when we just sit there and breathe. It sounds so simple but it's so difficult.

[00:27:24] Christian: Spoken by somebody who's obviously walked their journey, otherwise you wouldn't be able to speak about it with that depth. I know that you weave some of these Principles into your Athena work. So, thank you for that.

And you're right. It's like how much more evidence do we need that nothing external to us is going to make us happy? How many more examples of the political leaders or celebrities who have all the money, all the power you could want, and they're freaking miserable? The slightest tweet sends them into a tailspin of reactivity and self-hatred and overcompensation for that.

How many more celebrities do we need to witness either with severe addictions or taking their own life to begin to realize that there's nothing, no worldly success that's going to fulfill us, that's going to make us happy. All those answers are within. It's as simple and as challenging as that.

[00:28:30] Kathy: What I love about your book is that you outline these 13 paths and related practices that help us be more of a clear conduit for being able to accept this soulful power and develop this soulful power.



I just wanted to list them because I just love this list. Each is a chapter in your book: forgiveness, gratitude, self-discipline, vulnerability, belief, self-expression, generosity, congruence, truth, letting go, and surrender. That, in itself, is poetry. That is the journey.

What I love about it is that you can start on any path. So, if vulnerability seems too scary, we can start with self-expression. It's all paths that are going in a similar direction, which I just love.

But these paths allow us to practice showing up for ourselves authentically while also letting go of outcome, which is what you suggest. That is quite a paradox for us to hold. That I need to show up in my power authentically but at the same time, I need to let go. Can you speak to that a little bit and why that's so important?

[00:29:43] Christian: (laughs) Yeah, there are so many paradoxes in this. It's a mindfuck. Like vulnerability. We think that to walk around like these tough guys, uncaring, unfeeling, nothing's going to get to me, we think that's powerful but that's not. That's like walking around in a self-made prison, fear-based, just anticipating the next attack, the next shoe to drop. It's like living in DEFCON 1, sometimes sneaking in the first punch preemptively just in case. What a way to live. That's like prison.

Where if we think about it, to open up and make ourselves vulnerable in a way, but it is such a much more empowered way of being because it's in relationship with life. We're saying, "Hey, life, whatever you throw my way, I got this. I know who I am, I got this." That's an incredibly more empowered way to live than walking around like this.

And the letting go and that's another beautiful one. That's also part of the ego construct of the mind, that's always trying to grab, grab, grab, mine, mine, mine and I want it and I want it now.



And it doesn't work either. It doesn't get us what we ultimately want, which is peace of mind and happiness and relationships that work and to love and feel loved, to have a roof over our heads and meaning and purpose, doesn't get us any of that.

In that short chapter, I think I tell a story from that I got from Richard Bach in his book, *Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah*, and it's short, it's brief. Basically, he tells a story of a village of river people who live at the bottom of a river. The whole life is holding on so that they're buffeted by the stream and that stream doesn't carry them away.

One of them finally says, "Well, I can't do this anymore. I can hack this." The rest of them are like, "What do you mean? You can't let go. You're going to be swept away and destroyed." It's like, "I know, I know, but I can't do this anymore." Then they pull in the guilt. "Well, what about us? How can you leave us? How can you do this to us?" She says, "Well, I'm sorry, I'm sorry but I can't do this anymore," and she lets go.

Sure enough, the current takes her and she's buffeted. She's buffeted against some rocks and a log down the stream but eventually what happens? The current lifts her and now she's floating above it all. It's like, "Wow, this is pretty cool. Pretty nice. I like this." There's another village of river people downstream. One of them looks up and she says, "Oh, look a Messiah!" (laughter)

So it's that mindfuck, that letting go is actually empowering and vulnerability is actually our empowerment.

[00:32:32] Kathy: Yes, absolutely. As you were speaking, the deeper that we go on any of these paths, it feels the less alone we are. She let go thinking she was going into oblivion but winds up being part of another community in a different role, in a different way.



But I think it reminds us as we go deep on these paths that we aren't alone. You know, even though we may be walking the path by ourselves, we're not really by ourselves.

I think it was a yogi that once said that we live in perpetual creative response to whatever arises, that we have that trust, that deep trust in ourselves, that we're being supported, we're being held by something larger than us that maybe we don't understand but we're not alone as we walk on this path.

I think that takes some of the-- You mentioned, folks that are looking outward to material gains and how lonely that can be. And it's interesting the deeper that you go within in solitude, the less lonely it is because there's more you feel this net. Another paradox.

[00:33:39] Christian: Yeah, beautiful, beautiful wisdom you just shared there. That connects back to the beginning of the book. I start explaining what the ego is.

Because I do a lot of different retreats, and for over 30 years, on different themes, relationships that work, personal empowerment, women's empowerment, life purpose. There are always two constants. One is teaching about the ego. The other one is breathwork. I've yet to come across a healing modality that works as quickly and as fast as that does.

We don't have time to really get into the ego here because I spend a couple of hours in a weekend or I spent the whole first quarter of my year-long coaching program diving into that and how to see it and spot it in ourselves so that we let ourselves free from a self-made prison of fear, lack, limitation, judgment, victimization and all like. All those different kinds of limiting and fear-based ultimately mindset, which I know you also get into in your five Principles.

But here's a simple way to think about the ego. If you put a baseball in the center of a stadium, that's what the ego is. Who we are, is actually the fricking stadium. We've allowed this tiny, tiny, tiny, tiny part of who we are to think that it is all who



we are. To make really important consequential critical choices about our lives, about our relationships from its very small, tiny, limited, and always fear-based perspective.

So part of what you're talking about is when we go within, it's shifting our identity from the baseball onto the reality of the stadium, which is what we really are. Call it the soul level, call it higher self, call it whatever you want to call it. At that level, that sense of loneliness and abandonment, it's all resizing the little baseball, the little ego.

Once we break out of that, we never feel lonely again. We never feel abandonment because we can't be abandoned. We're all interconnected. That's the ultimate reality. It's all interconnected and we're all interconnected and we're all interconnected with all of life. We cannot be abandoned or lonely, even if we wanted to.

[00:35:58] Kathy: That's a great visual with the baseball in the baseball stadium. I love that. I think maybe what stops some folks as they start to take steps on this path is that you mentioned this internal shift. As we start to do some of this work, everything starts to change inside. That can be very uncomfortable. Especially when you're still living in your outer world, you're still going to work with the same people. Your family, your culture.

Do you have any thoughts for those who have started down the path and it got a little uncomfortable, so they stopped? How might they be able to help themselves through those initial transitions that they inevitably will be going through?

[00:36:40] Christian: Yeah, inevitably. And again, first of all, I'd like to acknowledge anybody who's started the journey - because it really is a heroic journey.

Here are a couple of things that were really helpful for me in the beginning. One is realizing that this confusion is just part of the phase. Imagine we're going up the ladder, we let go of one rung, our hand is not yet on the other one. It's a



momentary phase. It's just the transitional phase where we feel uneasy, uncertain, afraid. Things aren't the way they used to be until then we grab the next rung, now we're established at the next level of consciousness. Then we go up to the rung after that. To know that they will pass and that things will settle.

And what is of love will be there on the other side of the transformational process. That was so reassuring to me when I heard that from my former teacher. Because for me, the hardest thing when I went on my spiritual journey, I quit my job, sold my condo, sold my car, gave away or sold most of my belongings, except for my books and my Armani suits.

[laughter]

[00:37:50] Kathy: Good choice.

[00:37:52] Christian: Which says a little bit about my attachments, although I never even wore my Armani suits anymore.

But what I really grieved, the hardest part for me was leaving my family. Because I went off to the spiritual community in Hawaii. I didn't know when I'd see him again. I wasn't working. I couldn't just get on a plane and fly off.

And so, what was helpful to me was like, when she said a variation of that to me, another form in different words. Sure enough, years later, decades later, my family, who was freaking out because they thought I was doing some kind of cult, they're all here. We're incredibly, incredibly tight, and very loving. All my siblings have come to breathe. All the stuff that was so scary. And even my mom came to breathe.

So, what's of love will be there on the other side of this shaky, transitional process or this confusing phase. Did all my friends, my friendships make it? No. No, there were friends who I was friends with then who are no longer in my life but then that begs the question, were they real, authentic friends? The answer is no.



[00:39:06] Kathy: I love the way you describe that climbing this ladder. Then there's that place where you have to let go to be able to get to the next rung. I call that the liminal space. You're trying to navigate the space, you don't have words for it yet, but you know you're in it but you really can't describe it. I think that's what makes it difficult when you're talking to loved ones that you really can't describe what this thing is that you're going through. You just know that you're going through it, and you need to go through that.

That's hard sometimes for folks on the other side of that but that's beautiful advice that what is of love will still be there. That definitely has been my experience as well. It also makes it easier when you hit the next rung and you will because this is an ongoing journey. It doesn't end thankfully.

[00:39:52] Christian: Thankfully.

[00:39:52] Kathy: When it ends, it ends. It's okay. We look forward to the next step now. It means we get to be here that much longer.

Before we wrap up and give you some Dose of Inspiration questions, I'm curious who your heroes may be. Who do you admire for those who have navigated the path before you?

[00:40:18] Christian: Yeah, um, certainly, Superman and Wonder Woman, (laughter) my favorite superheroes. But people like Mandela, Gandhi, the Christ, people, looking back on it, who embodied that soulful power. If we look at Gandhi or Gandolph in their simple monastic robes, their sandaled feet, we would never know, or the Christ, we would never know how much power they hold until it's needed. Then get out of the way. Gandhi brought the British empire to its knees when it was at its highest point in terms of global reach without ever shooting a gun or landing a punch. That's power. That's power.

I have to include my parents in there, too. With all their limitations and the time and culture that they were lived in, that they were raised in. But the level of



sacrifices that they made for the nine of us, to leave a communist regime so that we would have a chance at freedom and choice, with nine kids. When we left Cuba, the oldest was 12. I was 10. My mom was eight months pregnant and lied about it because had they known, they wouldn't have let her fly. She said she was six months pregnant. That was just the beginning of their heroic journey of getting these kids through school and educated and ready for life.

My mom, in particular, the ability to love unconditionally even when she didn't understand, even when it didn't match their religion, what they were taught, it's like, I am who I am because of that. That's where I learned, my capacity to love. That's where I got it from.

[00:42:10] Kathy: Perfect. I love it. Christian, we wrap up these episodes with something we call a Dose of Inspiration. It's a few questions just to have our listeners get to know you a little bit more.

[00:42:21] Christian: Sure.

[00:42:22] Kathy: One of the things we're always curious about is whatever you've read or listened to lately that you've found inspiring or helpful.

[00:42:32] Christian: One book that I always like to, it's one of my favorite all-time books and it's short and it's simple. It's *The Universe Is a Green Dragon* by Brian Swimme. It's in Socratic dialogue, teacher and student dialoguing back and forth. And Brian Swimme is a cosmologist. He's a scientist. He writes about, in a beautiful, poetic way, he applies some of the principles that rule the cosmos to the human experience. Because much to the surprise of some humans, we're part of the cosmos. We're going to be ruled and governed by the same principles that govern the stars.

For example, one of them that he talks about is cosmic generosity and he talks about the generosity of a supernova that in blowing itself up, in exploding, giving up its form, what happens? Suns and moons and stars and systems, life occurs



out of that ultimate act of generosity. He says that if we're made like 99.999% of the atoms in our body are exactly the atoms that are found in the stars, that we can literally, not poetically, we are star beings. That we have within us that same cosmic generosity, that same desire to give ourselves away, and how beautiful is that?

[00:43:54] Kathy: Wonderful. It's good to know it's not just a Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young lyric, "we are stardust, we are golden." You know, I have a huge library and I do not have that book. I'm looking forward to checking that out. Thank you for that recommendation. Appreciate that.

[00:44:10] Christian: You'll love it.

[00:44:12] Kathy: When are you most in your elements and feel like your truest self? Is there a place, is there a thing that you do that really connects you with your authentic self?

[00:44:23] Christian: That's a great question. I'm fundamentally introverted. And in points in my life, in my teenage years, that included being shy and afraid. What it means to me today is that I process things internally before I speak them as opposed to maybe an extrovert who is speaking and figuring out what they believe as they're speaking. I go within as an introvert and I have to figure it out. I have to be with it. I have to let it brew before I figure out what I believe and what I think.

So, along those lines, I think where I'm most comfortable would be in a beautiful, natural setting. I know many, many, many gorgeous natural settings, but because I'm from an island, I think the first thing that pops to mind will be a beautiful beach. I have a couple of favorite beaches. One of them is on Kauai in Hawaii. That's where I really drop in and drop in to just [breaths] take in a deep breath.



[00:45:25] Kathy: I love it and you can take some credit for that question. I didn't have that before. I added that after our first conversation a couple of weeks ago.

[00:45:34] Christian: I love that.

[00:45:34] Kathy: Thank you.

[00:45:35] Christian: I love that you did that. I love that.

[00:45:39] Kathy: What has you feeling inspired these days? What's lighting you up?

[00:45:46] Christian: Hmmmm, you know... I don't know when this is going to air, but at the time we're recording this, Ukraine is being invaded by Russia. And even though there's a part of me that is horrified and it's a heartbreaking thing, what is inspiring me is the response of the world and how it's having a unifying effect, which at least I didn't see coming. I don't think Putin himself saw that coming. Because I believe that we're at a choice point and that it's not even about Russia and Ukraine and where the border lies. The choice point to me is how are we going to do this? Are we really going to continue expressing power in that way, that abusive, disgusting, destructive, violent form of power?

And what I'm sensing, what I'm feeling is that so many of us and the numbers are increasing are just saying, "Enough people, enough, enough! We can't do this anymore! We're going to blow each other up!" Now more and more of us are aware of how interconnected it all is and we just can't do this anymore.

[00:46:56] Kathy: Wonderful. That's a good way to wrap this up. There is a feeling of optimism there in this sense of unity. Sometimes it takes something really terrible like this to bring most of the world together, but there is something that feels a whole lot better than the division that we've been feeling for a long time.

[00:47:18] Christian: Exactly. Especially the last few years.



[00:47:20] Kathy: Exactly. I'm sure our listeners are looking forward to getting in touch with you, Christian. What's the best way to contact you?

[00:47:28] Christian: Thank you for asking that, Kathy. The book is available wherever books are sold. You can get it on Amazon, and if you want to support your local bookstore, you can just order it there and it'll just take a little bit longer.

In terms of how to reach me, probably, the best way is my website and from there, they can access my social media. The website is called soufulpower.com and for anybody in your audience who goes to soufulpower.com and signs up to be on my email list, and we all know how easy it's to click unsubscribe if it doesn't work for you down the road.

But anybody who signs up on my email list, they'll get a sample chapter from the book and the one that talks about what it means to live heroically in the 21st century. They'll get some of the power practices that are designed to integrate and apply those teachings to our lives that we were talking about. And they'll get a recorded teaching and guided meditation about trust, about how to move into a place of trust, which I created specifically in the midst of the pandemic to help us navigate these times of fear and chaos.

[00:48:36] Kathy: Beautiful. Perfect. Thank you so much. What a wonderful conversation, what a wonderful way to spend an hour. I really appreciate you joining me, Christian. Thank you so much for being here today.

[00:48:46] Christian: Thank you so much for having me. I loved the quality and the depth of your questions. You asked me stuff that I hadn't been asked in that way before. It was just an easy back and forth and just a relaxed conversation.

So, thank you for having me on. And thank you for having the podcast to begin with. I know that because you were willing to do so and chose to do so, many, many lives are being helped along on their heroic journey. Thank you.



[00:49:13] Kathy: Thank you so much. Thank you.

[music]

[00:49:19] Kathy: Thank you so much for joining me today. I know there are many ways you can spend your time. Thank you for choosing to spend it with me. Until our paths cross again, be kind to yourself and show your Warrior Spirit some love.

If you know anyone who could benefit from today's episode, please pass it on. And many thanks for supporting the show by subscribing and leaving a review. It means a lot and it helps others find their way to our circle.

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Until next time, be well!

[music]

[00:50:21] [END OF AUDIO]