

Podcast Series, Holistic Nature of Us

Episode # 20 Meet Pam Montgomery

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Hi I'm Judith Dreyer,

Thank you for joining me for this pod cast series "The Holistic Nature of Us".

My intent is to take us, you and I, into a better understanding of the concepts behind our holistic nature and how that ties directly to the holistic nature of the world around us. How can we connect the dots in practical ways that we are nature and nature is in us?

I will be featuring authors and educators, practitioners and others whose passion for this earth helps us create bridges. We'll see what's trending, what's relevant to our world today, not just for land use, but to connect the dots between nature and ourselves. It's time for practical action and profound inner change so our natural world is valued once again.

And today I'd like to introduce you to my guest Pam Montgomery. Pam is an author, teacher, practioner who has been investigating plants and trees and their intelligent spiritual nature for more than 3 decades. She is a founding member of United Plant Savers and more recently the Organization of Nature Evolutionaries or O.N.E. She is also the author of two books: the highly acclaimed *Plant Spirit Healing – "A Guide to Working with Plant Consciousness"* and *"Partner Earth – A Spiritual Ecology"*.

Welcome Pam.

PAM: Hi Judith. Thank you for having me.

JUDITH: Oh, I'm delighted. And I'm really delighted, not just delighted, but absolutely curious and interested in this new organization called O.N.E, The Organization of Nature Evolutionaries of which you are a founding

member. Could you tell us more about that and the mission of this organization?

PAM: Well yes. Primarily our mission has to do with living in co-creative partnership with all of life; with the plants, the trees, the animals, and the elements, all of nature. And also, to be bringing forward earth rights. The understanding that the earth and all of its aspects, like rivers and forests and all that, have a right to live and to exist. There's a big movement right now across the globe really in lots of different areas about earth rights. We are also very much in support of earth rights and do as much as we can to bring the knowledge about earth rights and how to go about working in this way. We're trying to educate people about that. We also very much, and integral into the work that we do, is bringing in the sacred. Being aware that we are working with a very highly intelligent natural world and plants and trees are a part of that, of course and that this bio-intelligence that is all around us has a sacred quality to it. It has a quality to it that connects to that source energy place and so we want to bring that in as well. Like this understanding that the earth and all of her beings are sacred, and that we need to treat the earth in that way. And when we treat the earth and nature as a sacred being, it's less likely that we'll completely destroy it, destroy the earth. So that's some of the stuff that we're about. It's very exciting. It's great.

JUDITH: Well it has to be somewhat challenging too because we still have the mindset to command and control. What you're suggesting, and these movements are suggesting, is more of a collaborative effort so that we work together. In my world, I feel, we're one of many species. And we're also a predator species. So that tells me that we have a responsibility to manage how we approach the world and how we take from the world, so to speak, on all those different levels.

Tell us a little bit about just a basic approach you might take in a class to get people to understand there's intelligence in nature.

PAM: Well it depends on the class, but I do a lot of plant communication classes and we've actually taken it beyond plant communication and going very deep with plants called plant initiations. In a plant communication class what we would do is have the opportunity to spend with a plant, a plant that calls you, you know one that calls you, and we might sit with the plant. We might go through our sensory awareness, so all of our five senses, and experience the plant that way. We also tap into the vibratory resonance of

the plant. You know everything has a resonance. We have a resonance; plants have a resonance and the idea is for us eventually is to match the vibratory resonance and ride that same wave length with the plant or the tree. It's like when you match resonance with a plant, it's like you're right there and you're riding that wave, that frequency with the plant and it's like looking out from the eyes of the plant. It's like you actually merge on a vibratory level. That's another thing that we would do. You receive that resonance as a felt sensation, a sensation in your body somewhere, a sensation. You identify that and then you become aware that oh, this is how my body senses, and we're not talking emotion, senses the vibratory resonance of this plant. You identify it so that you then call it back up. Those are a couple of things that we do. I mean also do work with the daydream, being in the daydream of the plant and we work with breath. We work with our breath with the plant. We do shamanic dreaming with the plant which is using a drum or a rattle to be able to go into that other dimensional reality where the plant spirit lives. That's some of the plant communication stuff that we do and it's really wonderful because it helps people to realize that these plants are also intelligent as well. They actually have something to share with me and there's an exchange. I mean the simple kind of things that we have exchange with. But what the realization is that happens for people is that we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for plants.

JUDITH: That's right.

PAM: I mean all of our oxygen, all of our tissue, all of our food; I mean it just goes on and on. That awareness comes in and it changes things. It changes how you relate to the natural world when you realize that, "oh I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for these plants and trees." Then the other thing we're doing is plant initiations. We just had one last weekend with nettle and this was a benefit for O.N.E, the Organization of Nature Evolutionaries. Everybody comes for 3 days and we make what I call an elixir. It's not technically an elixir but basically, I call it that. We take different parts of the plants and make different preparations; so, alcohol based, water-based, an essence, and we combine all of this together to make an elixir and then we spend 3 days mostly fasting, not eating very much, so that we drink this elixir 2 oz 8 times. We drink 16 ounces over a period of 3 days and we do all of these different things. And we're just working with one plant for 3 days and it's amazing. It's super amazing what happens. You know these are common plants. We're not talking like psychotropic plants. We're not talking about ayahuasca or any of that kind of stuff. We're talking about

common every day plants right outside your door. And what you do is, as you're gathering for the initiation, gathering the plant, every step of the way you're treating the plant as a sacred being every single step of the way. When you harvest, when you make it into a preparation, when you're mixing the elixir, all of it is in a ceremonial context and so that's how you're treating the plant. When plants are treated like sacred beings it really changes things. And how they interact with you. This whole idea of initiation, I mean originally, it was a young person being initiated into the tribe. That is what it was originally. Now we don't have very many initiations left any more and most of the elders have passed on. There's maybe some in a few little isolated pockets on the planet but not really. So, part of the plants evolution is that they're stepping up to the plate and becoming the elders. The plants and the trees are becoming the elders and they are initiating us into what it means to be truly human within the collective. How is it that we be on this planet and living within the collective of humans and nature and animals and all of it and how do we do that and let it be okay that we are different and unique beings? That we're not low carbon copies of each other and that it's okay to live within this diversity and thrive? The plants and trees are actually stepping up to take on the role of the elder initiating us into what it means to be truly human living within the collective. It's quite powerful. It's really awesome.

JUDITH: It has to be. It's hard to describe that, isn't it? Because unless you experience it, it's very hard to get that feeling across.

I want to go back to a couple of points that you mentioned. First of all, in the Holistic Nature of Us, one of the principles on the wheel that I use is intuition and that's the center. We know we have an intuitive sense, right? I want to stress to our listeners that the natural world accesses us through that intuitive sense. That to me makes it practical in terms of understanding. So, if people can relate to the fact of – they come to a street corner and they have a feeling to go right instead of left and they're so glad they went right because they find out there's a traffic jam if they went left, that gives a practical way of understanding intuition. We have a gut feeling. It's part of our inner radar or inner make-up. But the dot that you've connected with the work that you're doing is that that sense, that intuitive sense really helps us get in tune with nature in a way that we have not been taught before. Programs like yours are teaching us how to use that sense to get back into communication with nature. And I love what you said about the trees and plants becoming our elders and the fact that there's an intelligence there.

You know we think of intelligence as somebody who has a high IQ and can read a physics manual in 2 seconds. But there's more to intelligence than that. There's an operating system that says, this really works and how come you're not paying attention, right? Nature has those systems in place. Tell me more of your work on that level because I think it's really important to highlight that.

PAM: Yes, well the whole intelligence, bio-intelligence is quite up and coming now-a-days. I mean there's a lot being written about it and so people are, at least in the scientific community, there's a huge wake-up to like, "Oh there's this massive intelligence out here." And there's the whole bio-mimicry thing now. There's a book written about that where you know they're observing nature and mimicking nature and realizing that here is this, and this is all in place and it's been here for what, 3.6 billion years or some astronomical amount of time. It's like plants and trees in the natural world have the long view. You know, here's the long view, where us, we've been here, what is it if you look at the whole thing, like one second or two seconds. I mean if you look at the time span. We're just a blip you know? We're just a blip compared to how long plants and trees have been here and the natural world. There's actually an understanding right now in the science, this is in the science, and it was the point at which, and I think it's 2.3 billion, no million, years ago was the point at which algae and the early life forms, plant life forms began to make decisions, began to say (take on things like) about inheriting qualities, about how to reproduce, about you know making decisions about form and function and all that. This started like billions of years ago. The understanding now in the science is that our, what would be called higher mind or conscious awareness began, the evolution of that began when plants started to make decisions 2.3 billion years ago. And so it's kind of like, wow!

JUDITH: Yeah.

PAM: There's this understanding now or I should say a hypothetical theory now that our cognitive abilities, our conscious awareness evolved from plants. It's kind of like this whole intelligence thing is like we have intelligence in one way you know but plants and trees have been developing intelligence for billions of years. Like you say, it's not about IQ or any of that. It's about being able to tap into this unified field that we're all a part

of. Nature is always giving us, you talk about intuition, there are all these little touches all the time. You're always getting these touches from nature when you pay attention to it.

JUDITH: Yes.

PAM: That's the key with intuition, right? You could be like, oh whatever, or that's just my imagination, or whatever excuses we make. Or, we can pay attention and listen and observe and be like, oh, okay here's the information that's trying to be given to me. Or if I pay attention to this, then I'll have a deeper understanding, or I'll have a level of communication that I can tap into. To me it's just really about, we have everything we need. It's our birthright. It's part of our birthright to be able to communicate with the nature world, you know? This is another aspect that's in the science right now. It's called biophilia, which basically means the love of natural processes, or the love of nature. And I extend that to the love of plants and trees. The biophilia, they're actually searching for a gene in our genetic make-up. They're searching for that part of us, that hard-wired part of us, that absolutely has to be, has a need to be close to nature because of our longtime association and our symbiotic relationship with the natural world. It's like we would not have our lives if we did not have this natural world out here. And so, this whole thing of biophilia is like wow. Then there's this connection on an emotional level. It's like because there's this, I would say love, engenders this, love of the natural world and it's a two-way street. It's nature's love for us and our love for nature. Here comes the emotional piece of it. You know we've got the cognitive awareness from plants. We've got this emotional tie with nature. We already know the physical one; I mean breath, tissue, all that. And then there's the spiritual aspect. So okay, so biophilia is where there's, in the science they're trying to identify the gene, an actual gene that's part of our genetic make-up that engenders this love for nature because it has to do with the need to be in close proximity to nature. And because of our longtime association and our symbiotic relationship with nature we actually need this. And so, you it engenders this emotional connection. And you look at this and you say, you know, about 100-150 years ago was when people started to leave the land. You know, leave the farms, go to the city and all of that, and if you look at the increase in I'll say disease but all the stuff now, all the chronic stuff, all the stuff that people are being confronted with, it has a lot to do because of the lack of proximity to nature and the lack of involvement with nature. So much of the compromise is around that. We've got all of our physical needs

are met. Our cognitive abilities have risen from plants. This emotional tie, this engendering of the love vibration with the natural world and then there's our spiritual aspect. I look at that and you know within the last, let's see 20, 30 years, in the last stretch of time, since the 60s anyway, let's say, that there's been this explosion in the interest in plants like psychotropic plants, flower essences, plant spirit healing, so working with plants on another level. On this energetic level, vibratory levels, I'll call it spiritual level. Plants have always preceded their animal counterparts in evolution across the board, always have from day one. So here we are at this stage and what I see is that this interest, this desire, this need and want to be with plants in a bigger way, in like understanding like this energetic spiritual intelligent nature of the plants. I think what's happening is that the plants, one more time, are preceding us in our evolution and now it's a spiritual evolution. We've already evolved fairly far physically so now this evolution that we're involved in right now is of a spiritual nature. Plants are preceding us in that evolution just like they always have. They're guiding us into this place of evolving spiritually and raising our consciousness. Raising our consciousness to the point that we stop destroying the planet.

JUDITH: I agree with you. I think that they're putting out the clarion call, you know. The earth is going to be fine. I don't know that humans are going to be fine, but the earth will be fine because her rate of healing and growth is different from our human nature or what our human nature perceives. You know we've evolved today because of our technology ahead of our maturity. Everything happens in a nanosecond, so we expect nature to just work in a nanosecond and it doesn't work that way. The work that you do slows us down. Can you imagine? I mean working with one plant for 3 days instead of going to the store and saying, "I want it now" and there it is? And the massed produced energetics of creating that plant is so different from what our ancestors taught us about the plant world.

PAM: Yes, so the whole slowing down thing. That's a really good point because plants and trees and the natural world in general, not across the board but in general, moves at a much slower pace than we do. One of the ways to tapping into the natural world and into plants and trees and water and all that, is slow it down. Part of that is shifting the brain waves. We're operating in beta, you know that's kind of the waking state in beta and what we want to do is bring it down a couple of notches to alpha. You know we bring our brainwaves down to alpha. Let's see, I have a little brainwave chart here that I love to look at. Beta is our waking state. Alpha is kind of

the state of starting to go into a, it could even be like when you're falling asleep but it's just that your brainwaves are slowing down so beta is like 13-30 hertz and alpha is 8-13 hertz and then theta is like 4-7 hertz. So ideally what you're doing is, you're slowing that, actually your brainwaves down so that you can come to the same level. And the slower you go, of course, the deeper the meditative state you know. It's really about allowing that to happen instead of still trying to balance your checkbook in your head while you're sitting with a plant. You know you want to get out of the beta state and that's a simple way. Now I feel like when I go out and sit with a plant just being in the presence of the plant helps me to slow down. You know it just helps me to just like take it down a few notches.

JUDITH: But also, on that same level, when we go out in nature, (I work a lot with the Master Gardeners in the gardening world and there not so much into this aspect of it), but what does everybody say when spring comes? I can't wait to get out and put my hands in the dirt. I can't wait to get out into my garden. There's something that happens to us on an emotional level. And science has actually named that particular ingredient in the soil, I believe it's called geosmin that's in the soil that we actually breath and we actually ingest it even though we're not aware of it, just because of working with the soil, that slows down the brainwaves and makes us feel more peaceful, more relaxed. But even just taking a hike in the woods, helps too. I find it so curious that we have to label sitting on the ground and make a movement out of it when you know our elders told us take off your shoes, go walk barefoot for 15 minutes a day and get grounded. But now we have the grounding earthing movement out there which I think is...

PAM: Yeah all of that. I mean now you can get certified in forest therapy where you're trained on taking a walk in the woods.

JUDITH: Oh please. Oh, we're silly creatures, aren't we? But anyway, the good part about all of that is it is raising awareness. You may know of the book, "The Last Child in The Woods", he's got some very serious concerns about what we see in the school system. Kids are not going out there. On another level we have this very interesting school, I believe it's in the South Pacific, where people are bringing their children from all over the world and they've created this school system within nature. The kids, if they want a coconut, they have to learn to climb the tree and go get it themselves. And part of the principle is, kids are going to fall. They're going to get hurt, they have to learn. We're so afraid in some of urban communities for a bug to

come in the house, a bunny rabbit to eat all of our raspberries and how do we create the bridge in our urban communities that it's just as important there as it is out in the rural areas.

PAM: Well that's kind of interesting that you bring that up because this is kind of an issue these days with lots of people, a fear, a fear of nature, or a fear of being outdoors. And the primary one that's driving that is Lyme disease.

JUDITH: Right.

PAM: And so that's a really interesting kind of twist that's happening right now and I see it a lot. And so, it's like okay, so here we are in a situation, I mean you walk outside your door and you go oh my god it's so beautiful, it's paradise and at the same time, as we were talking earlier, there's a wild parsnip which you get the juice on you from the leaves and it's going to give you a burn on your hand and it's very prolific. Then there's Lyme disease which is carried by ticks and you know ticks are getting to be more present. Not that every tick is infected with Lyme disease however. It's just this real interesting dynamic now of how we adapt and how do we be with nature in its evolution and realizing that the proliferation of ticks and everything there's a reason why this is happening, which I personally think has to do with our agricultural practices and you know the imbalance on the planet. So anyway, but that's something that we have to be aware of and be conscious of. It doesn't mean don't go outside, of course but how do we manage this? How do we work with this? How do we integrate this? These are all questions that we have right now at this stage of like you know how to manage all this, how to manage yourselves. So anyway.

JUDITH: We know there are practical things we can do. I'm a hiker. I go out in the woods and I go off the trail too just because I know the area. I rarely come back with a tick, you know? And that's been a surprising thing for me is to step off a trail and there are certain areas yes, if it's deeply filled with a lot of brush yeah, I'll probably get a tick. But walking in between saplings, whatever, when I come home, I really don't have a tick on me. But I'm diligent about checking for it. And that's the key. We can go out in nature but that's the key. Put your pants inside your socks, wear a hat, wear light clothing and use the natural sprays if you have them and have access to them. We can do some of those things but I still see a fear amongst parents with young children. They don't want them to play outside.

PAM: Right, right. And so, that's, part of me feels like how do we, so here's this side of it and it's like oh my god, oh my god we can get Lyme disease on this side of it, and so what's on the flip side of the coin? What's on the back side of the coin? Is there a gift in this anywhere for us? Is it possible, you know one of the things I have found personally, I don't get ticks either by the way, they don't like me. They don't care about me, seemingly. Every now and then there will be one crawling on me but I have hardly ever had one in embedded. So, for me, but I'm not being in denial and I'm trying to be smart about it, but what's its done for me is that it actually makes me more aware. I'm actually come into a larger awareness and conscious awareness of my environment, where I'm walking, how I'm walking. Am I in tall grass now? You know, where am I in the landscape and how do I read this landscape? Is this, does this look like a tick area or not, then when I come back, I, like you say, you check yourself out. It's like wow, like I really haven't done that kind of thing with myself in like forever. And so, it's kind of like, so then I have to have a heightened awareness of myself as well because I have to look, and I have to check, and I have to see and feel and touch and like what's going on here on this body of mine. In a way it's this kind of strange thing of bringing more awareness into my realm of who I am, where I am, where I am in my landscape and how I'm going to interact with my landscape. You know?

JUDITH: And I think that's the underlying principle about how to approach nature today too. Because if we approach it with awareness, number one there are tremendous gifts there. I think nature is more forgiving than we are in some ways, I really do. Nature wants us to work with her in all it's aspects. If we can open ourselves to that, so to speak.

Well Pam our time has been well used this morning. I'm really grateful for all the things that you shared. Before we go can you give us, or sort of summarize, or give us three tips that are very practical?

PAM: Sure. You know sometimes people want to make this into like really hard work, it's not at all. It's all very simple and basically where we want to be at this point in time is to take up our rightful place within nature again. We're a part of nature too. We need to step into you know our rightful heritage you know, birthright of being a part of nature and step into that role, which is to be a steward of the land and of nature. To realize that, that we are a part of nature and simple things like walking out the door in the morning and taking one minute and again you don't have to do this for an

hour. It's like **one minute to consciously breath** and be aware that your in-breath is oxygen that you're receiving from all the trees and the grass and that all the green beings are breathing out oxygen and breathing in carbon dioxide. Our out-breath is the plants and trees in-breath and the plants and tree's out-breath is our in-breath. We're doing this cycle of breath. We're in exchange. This is such a simple but very profound when you bring it into a conscious awareness way of connecting with the natural world. And we do it every second, of every minute, of every hour, of every day. So that's really important, so that means that, you know, we don't need to hunt for being in relationship. We already are in relationship with the plants and the trees because we breathe. So that's super simple. And then you know you might have **little rituals in the morning**. Like a daily ritual that you bring in. I'm an early riser so I really love when the sun is rising. This time of the year it rises pretty early but just that moment and here you are, and the birds are singing. You know everybody is waking up to the day and the birds are singing and here comes this beautiful sun up over the mountain. You know the sun rise. There's this Buddhist practice when the sun rises there's a wave of heat that kind of pushes forward this wave of heat, so the Buddhist monks stand there at sunrise and they allow this first breath, they would call it the breath of the sun, to just wash over them. Begin your day and again five minutes, simple. It doesn't have to take a long time. Begin your day, each and every day with greeting the sun, sure sets everything and puts you on the right foot. Just simple, simple ceremonies. And there are other things you can do to, as simple ways to be with nature. I like to be in reciprocity, like **giving back**. You know? Like there's this reciprocal relationship. I'll carry with me like maybe a pouch of seeds or maybe some tobacco or something that I can, when I'm with a plant and we're making a connection, I give something back. I leave something there so the plant knows that I'm really wanting to be in this reciprocal relationship. Connecting in, just connecting in with some aspect of nature each and every day, each and every day. And go barefoot like you said earlier. Go barefoot!

JUDITH: Oh, those are great. Thank you. Those are great, great, tips. Great reminders. Pam before we leave how about your contact information? How do people get in touch with you?

PAM: Well I have a new website right now which I'm very happy about it's called Wake Up To Nature. www.wakeuptonature.com so please visit my website and I'm actually working on this next coming week putting together an online course. So that's kind of one of the new big things that's

happening in my life, is putting, you know I'm not a very techy person so I'm going how does this work? Plants on the computer, hmm. But I'm sure I can figure it out.

JUDITH: Well you have been so successful with all of your endeavors, especially connecting the dots between us and plants so I'm sure it's going to be a real success.

Well I can't thank you enough. Pam and I go way back. We're herbal friends from a long time ago and I am always inspired by her wisdom, what's she's played forward and how walks her talk. And for that I have a great deal of respect for you Pam and I'm grateful.

This is Judith Dreyer, author of *At The Garden's Gate* book and blog. For more information please go to my website www.judithdreyer.com. You'll find information about this pod cast, the written transcript as well as my class schedule. And please everyone, like and share! We all need to support each other.

I like to end *The Holistic Nature of Us* with a quote from Paul Hawkin. He's an environmentalist and author, who reminds us
"Sustainability, insuring the future life on earth is an infinite game, the endless expression on behalf of all."

Have a great day!