MINDFUL
IN MAY

Dr. Elise Bialylew, founder of Mindful in May (mindfulinmay.org) and The Mind Life Project (www.mindlifeproject.com) and author of The Happiness Plan, interviews Shannon Harvey

Shannon Harvey

Shannon Harvey *is the award-winning director of two internationally acclaimed documentaries – My Year of Living Mindfully and The Connection, which are about the link between our mind, body, and health. Her book The Whole Health Life is about finding good health after being diagnosed with an autoimmune disease. As a journalist and filmmaker, she spent many years working for leading news organisations such as the ABC and Fairfax. She's the recipient of the National Press Club of Australia's "Health Journalist of The Year" award and now produces a popular blog, while balancing her health and being the mother of two adventurous boys.*

Elise: Shannon, it's great to speak with you again. We were just saying it's been about four years since our last conversation, and that was at the time that you had roughly released your wonderful film, *The Connection*. So, I highly recommend anyone listening, go and check that out if you somehow missed it, but now we're having a conversation because you're just about to release something very exciting, your new incredible documentary, *My year of living mindfully.* We should have probably pressed record when I was just going on

about how brilliant I thought it was, we missed that bit. What a truly remarkable documentary and so much hard work has gone into this. As I said before we started recording, I just hope that this film spreads far and wide because I think the message in it is just really important for everyone to hear. Before we properly dive into this conversation, I'd love for you to share with the listeners just a little bit of your background in case they've somehow haven't heard of either of these films and how you came to create them.

Shannon: Well, first of all, thank you for that absolutely heart-warming and delightful introduction. I really appreciate it. You've taken the time to watch the film, which has been 32 months in the making full-time, and an absurd number of international and domestic flights and 23 interviews with scientists and three in-depth case studies. So, it's been an enormous effort, and it needs to come out into the world. *My year of living mindfully* is a feature documentary that essentially started because I'm a health journalist, and my previous documentary which, as you mentioned, is called *The Connection*, was about the evidence demonstrating that when it comes to our health, our mind and body are inextricably connected. It is essentially like a film essay making the argument that if we really want to turn the chronic disease epidemic around, we need to actually take this science seriously, because the mind-body connection is so fundamental in the healing process. So I was feeling brave and ready to start my next project, and I really wanted to turn my mind to the mental health crisis because as everybody knows, we are in the midst of an epidemic of suffering and everybody is looking for trustworthy, reliable, evidence-based information on what we can be doing to protect, nurture, and nourish our minds. The shocking thing for me is that, when I went searching for the mental equivalent of a jog around the block, or the mental equivalent of eating our five servings of daily fruit and vegetables, there was nothing. There was one thing that seemed

to tick all my boxes, and it obviously had to have a foundation in evidence because that's the kind of health journalism that I do, but also it needed to be something that could be practised daily, and that could be done by anyone, anywhere, in any circumstances. The closest thing I came to was mindfulness, and so the project was born.

Elise: Wonderful, wonderful. Before we go into the journey of the film, you've interviewed so many different scientists, not just in this project but in the previous one as well. How would you define mindfulness? How do you understand it, having just done this incredible experiment on yourself which we'll go into?

Shannon: I love that question. Often, I think when we're talking about mindfulness, we use dictionary definitions, and the most renowned definition that's being used by scientists and teachers alike is Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition, which is the awareness that arises from paying attention on purpose in a non-judgemental way. Now, I might not have got that 100% accurate but that's the gist of it.

Elise: You pretty well did.

Shannon: In the past, I've used that definition because it's so universal, and it does kind of capture the essence of mindfulness, but now having meditated every day for significantly more than a year, I've come to think of it as simply learning to understand how my mind works. I think that definition makes it a little bit more accessible to people. So just like learning to read is a skill, mindfulness is a kind of simple awareness training that teaches us how to

understand how the experience that happens inside this thing called a mind and body unfolds. Does that make sense to you?

Elise: Yes it does, it does. I think the other thing that I really like about how you've articulated it is that a lot of people come to meditation and think it's about creating a particular outcome in the meditation or mindfulness practice like, "I'm coming here because I want to feel calm." So then when they arrive and it feels not so calm at all they think, "Oh this is terrible, like why would I bother doing this. I feel horrible." But what you're saying is it's about actually understanding the mind. So, therefore, there's no bad meditation because it's all about just being there, observing and starting to understand just what the mind does, and therefore how it can create suffering in our life if we don't know how to manage it more effectively. So I really like your definition.

Shannon: Great.

Elise: So moving on to this movie. As I asked you before I didn't know whether it was okay to talk about the end of the movie because I don't want to ruin it for people, but it was really interesting. But let's just talk about what you actually did. So what did the movie entail? And perhaps through interviewing all these scientists, what were some of the things that you heard that kept you motivated to do this pretty intense commitment and experiment?

Shannon: Yes, so the kind of concept for the film is that I wanted to know what would happen if I meditated every day for a year, and I convinced a whole team of scientists to track me. We tracked pretty much every single biomarker that has been linked to mindfulness to see what if anything would change as a result

of my daily practice, and I started with 20 minutes a day using an app, and then I built up to 45 minutes a day doing MBSR and other app-based practices. Then I slowly slowly built up my practice until I was ready for a 10-day silent retreat, and then at the end of it all we kind of revealed the results to see what changed. All throughout the year I also travelled widely, and talked to many of the leading scientists who were pioneering the understanding of the sort of how mindfulness works, for whom mindfulness works, under what circumstances and in what forms of delivery does mindfulness work. Then I also interviewed what I think are some very compelling case studies of people who have used mindfulness for a particular purpose, and for whom mindfulness has actually changed their lives. So, it was a really interesting project because it kind of had a very personal story, which is my story of meditating every day for a year, how you do it, and how you fit it in. But also the kind of scientific thread, the scientific storyline and then the very personal storyline of the case studies. As for your other question about how I found the time and what was the advice that I got, I think my favorite piece of advice came from a neuroscientist from the University of Miami named Amishi Jha. We just hit it off. She's a full-time working mother, she was trying to fit in meditation and mindfulness practice as well and she said to me, "Just take the posture." She explained, "It's like when dentists say we need to floss one tooth, because the truth is nobody actually ever flosses one tooth" She said, "You know you're there. You've got everything out so you may as well just floss all your teeth" So basically I took that sort of floss one tooth attitude with my practice, my daily practice. It's like, "What? Just gonna sit?" It's funny like now I'm well past a year of meditation, my commitment to meditate every day, and I haven't skipped a day since the project technically finished, and I no longer have an army of scientists who are holding me to account.

Elise: I was going to say that's probably a brilliant way of anyone committing because you can't let them down.

Shannon: Totally. Definitely.

Elise: That was genius of you, that was genius.

Shannon: Finally enough now I think, now that I don't have the scientists as my motivating force, it's become a bit psychological. I don't want to skip a day because if I skip a day, then I'll be back to day one.

Elise: Yes, that makes sense.

Shannon: Really, you know the whole point of my commitment to a daily practice is that I'm the kind of person that easily falls out of routine. Life is so so busy, and without that, "Okay, this is something I need to do every day in the same way that I need to eat my fruit and vegetables everyday," it would be really easy to say, "Oh, I don't have time today. Today I'm too stressed," or "today I won't do it. I really would rather just sit at home and watch Netflix instead." Pretty quickly you fall out of the routine and then you kind of wake up and realise you haven't done it.

Elise: It's a really interesting point that you raise, and I wanted to actually offer the counter position to people listening because for me personally and my practice over the years, I would say it hasn't been a religious everyday thing, but what I've found is most of the time I have a practice. There will be periods

where, for like a month, I completely lose track and that might coincide with having a new-born or whatever it is. I think for me something that has become very obvious is a community, and having like-minded people that are in your sphere that can be a reflection for you. For me personally, I've been very fortunate, my mum and I are sort of meditation buddies and we'll kind of like look at each other and if someone's become a bit more irritable, we'll say, "Have you fallen off the meditation track. Are you meditating?" I think that's actually a really important thing about community as a way of supporting one another to stay on track as well. And for you, it was initially the scientists who were your community in a way.

Shannon: Totally.

Elise: And I also think for people that do struggle to create these very solid entrenched habits, I think that message around compassion is really important, and that's been very helpful for me as well. You just start again, and there might be times in your life where you can be doing 30-40 minutes and there might be other times where you just can't, I mean you always can, but it's just so much harder and it's about weaving this practice throughout the day. Short moments many times. I think it's really incredible, the commitment you've made and what you've done. I think that it's almost like the brain gets addicted like it does with exercise or something, and now, it's a non-negotiable for you. But I also feel that for the listeners that might just think, "Oh my God. I don't think I could ever do that," I feel like there's different doorways depending on our personalities, into this practice.

Shannon: You know that's such a great point, and I think that the listeners are really lucky to have somebody like you offering that kind of level of wisdom

and guidance. That's the sort of thing certainly that I was trying to grapple with in *My year of living mindfully*. It's advice like that that makes a huge difference in not beating myself up about things. If I've set myself a target to meditate for 45 minutes a day and I only manage five minutes, it's easy for those kinds of stories to happen in our head about how we're failing, how we're not good enough, and how we're not achieving our goals and all that. So your advice, to the people who are listening will be really invaluable.

Elise: Thank you, and I think it is that thing about having wisdom in knowing ourselves, and just being honest about who we are, what our personalities are like and what we need. There was a conversation I just had with another person that's featuring in the program. I think for me mindfulness is about paying attention to what's going on in your thoughts so that you have that ability to question, "Hang on. What stories am I telling myself here and are they actually leading me to wholesomeness or unwholesomeness?" So something that's positive in my life or not positive. So if we're beating ourselves up and then we've failed once and we abandon the practice entirely that's a real shame. Anyway back to you. So we've talked a little bit about what the film is and I want to then ask you again, the many scientists you came upon, was there a particular conversation or piece of research, I mean there are probably many that were like light bulb moments to you: Real kind of nuggets that you were thinking, "Wow, this is mind-blowing," and really motivated you to keep going?

Shannon: Oh there are so many. One of the really difficult things about making a 96-minute film when you interviewed 23 scientists is that the interviews often go on for two hours. It's like there are so many moments that have hit the cutting room floor that, unless something happens and we're able to turn the cutting room floor material into a podcast or something, it's a real shame that

there's always amazing material that will probably never get shown. But I think if I had to pick out one moment to mention here that was quite profound, it was when I travelled to the Middle East and I met professor Emil Bernstein who's developed this moments of Refuge project; a nine-week program for traumatised refugees. It's underpinned by mindfulness and compassion training, and for me, that was a really transformational interview because when I set out to make this project, as I said earlier I was looking for something that could be practised by anyone anywhere in any circumstances. Something like the mind's daily serving of fresh fruit and vegetables. When I met these refugees who have been the first couple of cohorts because they're kind of looking at this in a really experimentally rigorous way, and I met some of the asylum seekers who were participating in some of the first groups, I saw that there were virtually no adverse effects for these people who are, based on the research some of the most traumatised people on the planet. These were African asylum seekers whose story is just absolutely horrendous. They've been through torture and violence, child soldiers, and that sort of thing. There were two particularly interesting things that were told to me by two of the different refugees. One of them told me that for him the mindfulness practice was like medicine. Another asylum seeker, who was the cultural facilitator in the group, was at the time desperately trying to get a passage to another country like Canada or Australia or something like that, and he said, "If somebody offered me 10,000 Israeli shekel or mindfulness training, I would take the mindfulness training." When somebody's saying that, it's such a case study of how it can actually be transformative, and my life is so different from their lives. The problems that I worry about daily are just monumentally different and yet this very simple tool which teaches us to understand how our mind works, is so cross-cultural and cross-circumstantial.

Elise: That was a really fascinating part of the movie for me, and also coming from a mental health background, just seeing that it could be used in this context and that cross-sectional ability of this practice to work. Also interestingly, Amit Bernstein's doing this in a very rigorous informed way - because another conversation I'm having in this program is around trauma and mindfulness- and we know that if not done in the right way with people that have suffered unresolved trauma, it can actually be traumatising and not helpful.

Shannon: Exactly.

Elise: It was really interesting to hear that part of the film. I wonder as a creative person, a filmmaker, a writer, how has your own journey with mindfulness over this last year and a half or however long it's been, how did that help you in the process of creating and making the documentary if at all? Did you notice anything that was different that sort of popped up? Because I mean, making a documentary is an incredibly stressful thing to do, when you've got no control, and you've got no money. You're following people that disappear some of the time, so how is it just from a metaperspective as a creative? Did mindfulness help you?

Speaker 3: Well it still helps me. It helps me enormously. The project actually got more and more stressful as we started running out of money and having to problem solve all sorts of other issues, and yet as I kind of ramped up my daily dose of mindfulness, my experience became more and more clarified. It was really interesting, and this is an anecdotal conversation that I've had now with several scientists. We're still trying to drill down to the dose question of

mindfulness. Like, in what dose should we be practising. That's probably the question you get.

Elise: Yes.

Shannon: It's probably the first question here from anybody. How long should I be practising for? I sort of looked at it from a personal case study experimentally. So I actually documented the effects on my mind as I went from 20 minutes to 45 minutes up to two hours, and then the 10-day retreat, and then what I could really clearly notice was that my mental clarity increased with the dose. Now in my practice when I try to aim for 45 minutes a day, I tend to spend the first 20 minutes of my practice just thinking the thoughts that need to come up. The thoughts that are happening need to happen. It's almost like they just need to be witnessed so that then I can find a place of stillness. Like there's so much stimulation throughout that day, it takes 20 minutes just to enable my mind to settle**,** but as I increase that dose, it's really difficult to describe, but - you've probably heard this analogy before- it's like the mud in my mind is settling and it kind of makes way for an ease of thinking.

After the 10-day silent retreat, it was like the sensation in my mind was as though I was a child again. I don't know if you can remember what it's like to be a child, where everything is just really clear.

Elise: Immediate.

Shannon: Yes, a kind of a natural curiosity about everything. The silent retreat had this kind of amplifying effect on what I'm describing there.

Elise: Absolutely.

Shannon: Then as I kind of got back into the world the old stuff kicked in again, eventually the mud got stirred up again. I'm not saying that that's completely lasted.

Elise: Yes, but I think that when you do something like a 10-day retreat there is a level of insight that you get that can't be taken away from you even though the effects of it wear off, but I think each time you commit to doing something that intense, there's something you see and at least you know, "Wow. That's possible," even if you lose it once you've come back. What about just in terms of relationally for you. I mean you're a mother of two kids, and family life. In your practice did you notice any changes or anything that was different in that context for you after committing for so long in such a regular way?

Shannon: Yes. I think the more mental training that I did the more I was able to have it apply in everyday life. One of my friends, Craig Hassed, often reminds me that the formal practice is really really important, but mindfulness in daily life is equally as important. I think that the training, that sort of formal setting training, the whole purpose of it is to be able to apply it in daily life and that's certainly been the case for me, yes.

Elise: Could you be specific around, in what way, in what aspects?

Shannon: Still the usual ways. As any parent will tell you, my kids at the moment are aged 6 and 3, and so my life is full of busyness and tantrums and..

Elise: Rivalry?

Shannon: Yes sibling rivalry... uneaten food, all the usual parenting challenges that are quite universal, and just my ability to not be as reactive in those moments, to kind of just catch myself. The other thing actually for me is, I think naturally innately I've got an ability to monitor myself if I'm snapping at my kids. I'm not sure that it's only mindfulness training that makes me aware that I'm snapping at my kids but what the mindfulness training sort of adds is a layer of forgiveness, a layer of compassion for myself for being snappy. That's another really important thing. It's not to say I give myself permission to be constantly cranky, but it's just that I have little bit of understanding as to why that's happening.

Elise: Yes, to be kinder to yourself. I think so much of the practice is also not just the focus and the paying attention but the attitude of how you're paying attention, and then that translating into the attitude of how you're showing up in your life. So the listeners are probably sitting here wondering, "Can you ask her about what the results were? Can you get back to the point?" I don't know, I mean I personally think it doesn't ruin the film because there are so many rich, - as you said- these incredible interviews and bits of science. Are you comfortable sharing a bit of what happened?

Shannon: Yes, for sure. So, there were six scientists who were tracking all these different biomarkers throughout the year. We had two neuroscientists, we had people tracking a ton of immune function markers for example my cortisol levels. I had a really interesting researcher just checking my subjective well-being and another researcher tracking my gene expression. Suffice to say, there

were some really really interesting findings. As a responsible health journalist, I don't want to say that meditating every day for a year cured my autoimmune disease, because I have an autoimmune illness which is really one of the reasons that all of this investigative health journalism started in the first place, and it didn't. Daily mindfulness did not cure my illness. It certainly made me feel very differently about my illness and when the symptoms occasionally present it certainly helps me handle them very well. But there were some really really interesting findings particularly on that, so after I did the 10-day silent retreat, the expression of genes that moderate my immune function switched off, or what would scientists say-

Elise: Immune or inflammation, or-

Shannon: Yes. Inflammatory gene expression switched off. When I say switched off, the technical term is down-regulated.

Elise: Yes.

Shannon: So, that was really interesting. Now that hasn't held because I've come back into the life that I have, and we can't obviously say for sure that it was the 10-day silent retreat that made that happen. There are many factors that were involved in ten days silent retreating, including-

Elise: More sleep.

Shannon: More sleep, no toddler tantrums. I was out in nature a lot, I was eating a super healthy diet. I had no access to email. So we can't say that it was

the mindfulness training specifically that switched off or down-regulated those genes, but it is really interesting.

Elise: Also the fact that we had Richie Davidson who I also interviewed a number of years ago. He did share the research that they've looked at about one day of mindfulness over eight hours. They've done blood tests and they've shown that there is an association with a down-regulation of the genes for inflammation.. So as you say, I think it's really good to be careful with how we articulate this. We don't want to be like-

Shannon: You can cure your illness.

Elise: Yes, but it is very interesting and this kind of finding has been discovered in different contexts as well.

Shannon: So that was one really interesting finding. I think there were two others that really stood out for me. One was structural changes that were observed in key regions of my brain that are associated with things like emotion regulation. That was really interesting because the professor from ANU who did that research, that neuroscientist, started out this project thinking, "You know, we'll see. No, maybe it'll be interesting to see if something changes." He's a specialist in brain aging, and when he saw those changes he was like, "This is really interesting and I'm kind of interested in this personally now" So that was fascinating. Another Mindful in May person for you.

Elise: That must have been so great to see that. That feedback, right? To be able to say, "Wow. I've actually changed my brain." It must have felt really exciting.

Shannon: Yes, it is. Really candidly though, we now know enough about neuroplasticity to know that when you repeat a behaviour over and over again, you should be theoretically making changes in your brain. So theoretically it should have happened but it was cool that it actually did happen.

Elise: Yes, and also that where it happens. If you do anything repeatedly it's going to improve that part of your brain, but the fascinating thing is, what part of your brain it's bulking up and what function does that part of your brain have which is around emotions and focus.

Shannon: Precisely. Yes. But truly, out of all the results I think that the biggest impact on me at a personal level, was the subjective well-being results. There's some really interesting work being done out of Deakin University about this idea of a homeostatic happiness and well-being set point. When they looked at my data, I was just below the average person's happiness and well-being set point when I began the project. There are a lot of reasons for that, including the fact that I had a 12-month-old baby and older brother trying to do the work-life two-step.

Elise: That you should have taken it maybe six months earlier and there would have been much bigger discrepancies.

Shannon: Exactly. So I was just below, and then at the end of the project, despite all the stress of making an independent film, despite the fact that I still have two children, a full-time job and all of that, I was off the charts in terms of my well-being. So that was really really interesting and that's kind of leading to

some thinking from the scientists about the idea that mindfulness might be restorative, because I think that I'm a naturally really happy person. I think I naturally sit above the average person's happiness and well-being set point, and I think that what the mindfulness did was it restored me to where I would normally naturally be. Obviously we can't say this will happen for everybody, but I think it's going to be really interesting to see how the research comes along in the coming years.

Elise: That's why I really respect the work that you do because I think as an investigative journalist, you're so measured with how you share the information. Of course, when we talk about research you have to have a lot of people in a study in order for it to have power as they call it, to be applicable to other people. Nevertheless, I think the fact that the neuroscientists in the brain scanner was saying, "I'm definitely going to go away and give this a go," is pretty compelling. What was I going to say? Oh, so you've spent a lot of time now through film, through your book, through podcasts, and blogging, not just around mindfulness but looking broadly at well-being and what we can do to be greater agents in our own flourishing and happiness and well-being. What are some things apart from mindfulness meditation that you have collected over the years that feel that they've made a difference for you on a regular or semi-regular basis?

Shannon: Thank you for that awesome question because I think it's really easy for us to try to find the one thing that is going to change our lives, and I guess if there's anything that I've learned from trolling through thousands and thousands of academic papers, it's that there actually is no one thing for good health and well-being. We actually need to take a whole life approach and that means doing things like exercising daily and regularly, or if not daily then certainly regularly moving, sitting less and moving more, eating our fruit and vegetables

and sleeping. I really think that my commitment to getting enough sleep has been a game-changer for my health and well-being, in addition to those things which probably sound really obvious. When I'm talking about a whole life approach it also means doing things like nurturing our relationships and our communities, and checking in with our mindsets and our mental states, as well as managing our stress levels. Something like mindfulness can help with that of course, but also on a relationship level things like making sure that we've got caring health professionals in our lives, caring, kind, well informed health professionals. I mean I really think that one of the big impediments in the fight against chronic disease at the moment is the fact that many of us only get 5-minute appointments with doctors who don't even know our names. So I know often it's really tempting to say, "I found the one thing and here's the one thing you need to know for good health and well-being." But I actually think that there is no one thing in that, this is about taking a whole life, whole person approach.

Elise: Thank you. I think for me it's also been just about committing to maybe one thing first, and seeing how that feels and then move on because I feel I can get a bit overwhelmed and it's more than a full-time job to attend to all of these aspects of well-being in a way. So it can be a bit overwhelming.

Shannon: You couldn't be more right. I think when we last spoke, I don't think I'd done that self-experiment where I shot a short film where I attempted to take every single thing on the should-do list for the average working mother. So it was like everything from getting enough sleep to cooking a whole food meals, to meditating, to exercising, putting in your eight plus however many extra hours a day in order to get ahead in the workplace. I demonstrated through that experiment that it was like a Mission Impossible kind of take down, that it was

not possible to do it all . So what I concluded from that is it's not actually about what you do every single day, but it's what you do overall. So ok, you might not get to the gym or to your yoga studio or to wherever every single day, but if you get there twice a week, that's better than nothing.

Elise: Absolutely, and finally if you could pull a dinner party together of just a bunch of people who are either alive or not alive that you know or don't know, and I know you'd probably have many of them, you'd want a lot of different people but right now if you had to throw handful of invitations out, who would you love to have at your table.

Shannon: This is my favorite question that you asked. I just love it and I had so much fun on my way to work this morning thinking about how I was going to answer this question. So I've got a story in my head about what I'm going to say, whether I'm going to actually say it I don't know, but funnily enough, one person that I would have at the dinner table for sure would actually be my best friend who's a psychologist. The reason why is that every time we catch up, we just forget about small talk. We do like 30 seconds of, "Hi, how are you?" Kiss kiss, hug hug and then we go, "How are you" And then, we just cut through the crap and just get to the good stuff, and so I think that speaks to the kind of conversations that I really appreciate. Funnily enough recently I had the opportunity to almost have one of my dream dinner events.

Elise: Who was there?

Shannon: It was just this random group of people. So we were all in the same city for a conference. I met Bernstein, whom you're featuring as part of mindful

in May this year. He’s doing this extraordinary work with traumatised refugees. He's doing some other really interesting work about mindfulness, and Elissa Epel who's a really amazing researcher doing stuff on the mind-body health connection….

Elise: Telomeres, she wrote the Telomere Effect.

Shannon: She wrote the Telomere Effect?

Elise: Yes.

Shannon: So she and a friend of hers, who's a doctor, Dr. Marc Cohen who's based in Melbourne, he’s doing really interesting work in integrative medicine. I mean, the way the environment….

Elise: Wim Hof....

Shannon: Yes, exactly. The way that the environment can impact our health, and how methods like the Wim Hof method work...and so my husband and Marc's partner, we just all happened to have dinner together one night. Just to give you an idea this dinner conversation started because Alissa and I had just been presenting at the mind and life Institute. Alissa was grappling with some new neuroscience showing that consciousness might be entirely an illusion. So this is all happening within the first five minutes of dinner, it was like, "How are you?" "Well, I'm kind of grappling with the fact that consciousness might be an illusion," and boom, away went the conversation. You know, it's so lovely to have those exchanges when things go in unexpected directions but in meaningful directions.

Elise: Yes, and as you say you dive right in. There’s not much small talk going on there. Oh how wonderful, so you actually had had this kind of dinner party.

Shannon: Yes, hopefully there'll be more to come.

Elise: Many more dinner parties about consciousness and the mind and life. Thank you so much, Shannon. It's been such a pleasure again to chat with you. You would definitely be at my dinner party. I hope one day to actually manifest them. I love food as well, but yes thank you so much and I just wanted to say a huge huge congratulations. I really hope that this film just spreads like, well, I was going to say wildfire, but that’s inappropriate at this moment, but yes I hope it really spreads far and wide. I think it's such a valuable contribution that you've made.

Shannon: Yes

Elise: Yes, and look forward to the next one.

Shannon: Thanks for supporting the release of the film and to your listeners for engaging in this. We need all the help we can get to spread the word and I'm so grateful to you, so thank you.

Elise: My pleasure.*