

Rachel (00:00):

Okay. So Julie, my first question that I ask everybody, I'll ask you three questions. When you think about global warming and the climate crisis, what do you think about and how do you feel?

Julie (00:17):

I immediately feel really sad and I think what is life going to be like for my two year daughter when she is older.

Rachel (00:27):

So tell me more about that.

Julie (00:29):

I mean, Ben jokes all the time, he's like, I guess we have to move up north. I don't know what that means, but I mean, reality. The water she drinks, her accessibility to quality food. What are the toxins that she will inadvertently have in her body and what that means. I think about reproductive health for women. I mean I guess an example would be, I recently went back to California to a place that I used to fish when I was like seven. And I recently went back for the first time. It's been like over 20 years, and I was so sad to see that that place is just not what it was.

Rachel (01:20):

What did it used to be like, and what is it now?

Julie (01:22):

It used to be like, it was on a delta and there was wildlife, and marsh and cattails, and it was green everywhere. And there was like a strawberry farm nearby. And now it's like dry and not a fishing place. There's nobody around there were no animals, like you wouldn't have guessed that it was a wetland or a marsh, because it was so dried up.

Rachel (01:51):

And it made you feel sad?

Julie (01:53):

It was really sad. Yeah, because it's like a place where I'm like, oh, this was a place that I learned how to fish. And I think of that for Chloe of what would these places be if any, at all for her, when it's her turn.

Rachel (02:13):

What do you do with that sense of loss?

Julie (02:18):

I don't know. I think taking action as best as you can. I mean, I kind of come from a place of how can I be more responsible in terms of where I put my money, how I spend my money. Unfortunately there's corporations where you just naturally have to spend your money to get access to whatever. Like, where do those corporations put their money? We signed up for a CSA this year as a way to just being mindful of like buying more locally, being mindful of our waste. Make sure that we are really composting

everything this year. Something that like, I want to make sure leaving as little of a footprint as we can, as best as we can.

How do we cope with that? I don't know. It's really hard to differentiate, like being in a city with limited access to green space and knowing how to navigate that in itself. So I don't know how to compare it, but I mean, I certainly think that there's so much that we could be doing. So I guess it's more about like mourning the loss and the grief. And the next phases would be like the education piece and the action piece, and what can you be doing on a local level, on a state level kind of like...

Rachel (03:56):

And what can we be doing on a local level, on state a level? I mean, how do we need to show up to this moment, and are you right now? With no judgment.

Julie (04:08):

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I think at the very least, I mean I was telling Ben, it's so easy to compost. It is so easy, I feel like New York City is doing a really great job. For the most part at least we can go to the farmer's market every weekend, and have a place to put our compost. And for all the people who, I mean no judgment here too, but also I feel like the people in my co-op building who aren't participating in that it's laziness, it's pure laziness. There's no reason like the compost spot is two blocks away.

We have a garden as part of my co-op. They have a garden, they're composting. You can express interest in that, you bring your compost down to the garden, how easy it is to separate your scraps, like come on. But people just need to make that effort. Even as little as we had all these people, we don't order Fresh Direct, but there's people who do. And they are giving these like plastic tote bags that are supposed to be reusable, and that's what they're intended to be. But because of COVID people aren't actually recycling them, and I just keep finding them in the trash and it's really upsetting. But then I found a local pantry that collects them as a way to redistribute the food to people in need. And so I started collecting them from the co-op, and just walking them over, and it was really astounding to just see how many people throw those bags away.

Rachel (05:42):

So how does it make you feel when you see that behavior?

Julie (05:45):

Really angry, 100% angry. It's hard, because I feel angry and disgusted, but then there's also a level where I'm like, yeah equally someone else could be like how can she be eating meat? Or order from Amazon still. Use disposable diapers is something that I feel really guilty about. But I guess for me, it's like you do what you can with like the lifestyle that you have. And if you have dents here then like really be mindful to make sure that you're not making dents elsewhere.

Rachel (06:38):

What do you feel hopeful for?

Julie (06:43):

I feel hopeful for the new administration and the priorities. And kind of the way that months have been allocated these past eight years and kind of what that it might mean for us, for the future. And hopefully for the long term, I hope that people have more platforms to share their stories, to make the impact.

Just to create that awareness for other people to actually have a better understanding of like why me, why is this important? What can I do? Even having difficult conversations with family members that maybe they're not used to having.

Rachel (07:26):

What kinds of conversations are you having with people about climate change? Like that?

Julie (07:31):

I mean, an example, even like water usage, California's been having such a water deficit for so long. And I think what's hard is culturally, I have some family who are war refugees. And their idea of like, what is wasteful or what is accessible, and what is considered a luxury are very different definitions. And I think what's really hard is an example is a relationship I have with my mom. She'll come and in California, because there's such a water crisis, she's so mindful of her water. And then she comes here and she's like, oh you don't pay for the water bill, I can take a longer shower. And I'm like, actually, no, you can't take a longer shower. That's not really how it works. It doesn't matter who's paying for that water bill. This is what it means when you take a longer shower that you don't need to, or if you're washing the dishes, you should still, you should still do it in the most conservative way in terms of saving water because it's X, Y, and Z.

She does have this idea of, oh, I'm in New York. And like, I'm not paying for this water bill. So I can let your water run as I wash your dishes and do it this way. And I'm like, no, no, you should do it exactly how you do in California. And it's like minimal, but she doesn't get it. You know what I mean? She actually doesn't get it because I think her brain is so wired on a who's paying for this water bill and what does that mean. Versus no, you should be mindful of your water usage regardless of where you are. I mean sometimes people at work, it's like you have a recycling bin literally right next to the trash can. And it's like, why are there still plastics and cans in the garbage can when the recycling bin was literally right next to it? I just don't understand. Or like, why is it so hard to just rinse your recyclables real quick?

Rachel (09:33):

Well, I wonder there's this sense that the problem is so big and individual responsibility does level up. But at the same time, it feels like the people who really can make a difference, people in power are not doing anything. And I think that there's a lot of different kinds of people, but there's some people who are really conscious of how their individual behaviors make a difference or just kind of like the tiny little impact it has. And making as little damage as possible, doing as little damage as possible. And then for some people it feels like, well... [crosstalk 00:10:30]

Julie (10:30):

My can doesn't matter.

Rachel (10:31):

It doesn't matter.

Julie (10:33):

Yeah, no, it's really, I hear you. I mean, Ben and I were in traffic and this guy rolled down his window to literally dump all his trash out the window. That was just so confusing and concerning. And it's just like it

doesn't hurt you to keep that trash in your car a little longer, and wait until you get home and just put it in the garbage can. And there's a huge disconnect there.

I agree with you. Certainly people in power are not, I don't think prioritizing climate change in the way they need to. And I think what's really complicated. We were talking this morning about how each country and the cultural values that come within that country, and how they view climate change, or prioritize or don't prioritize climate change really, is really disheartening. I think that gap between all these continents and countries, coexisting on planet earth. And it's like, you have some countries that are literally just dumping tons of toxic waste into the ocean. And then other countries that are like, I mean the fracking, and I guess for me, I'm like, I can care about it in my household and amongst my friends. And from that level, like we can create a strong voice as much as we can.

And I can only hope that like within my circle, or the people in which I cross paths with, I can change their opinion there. Maybe sometimes I just feel a little powerless in that regard. Where I'm like, I can't change all of the politicians' minds overnight. Obviously I think that's a collective effort and it needs to be consistent, and sometimes combative and very loud. But I think with change is always kind of like really showing people, why does this matter to you. You have to have that this is why, and this is what look things look like. And this is what it means if we keep going at this rate and this is where we're at. And this is who we're taking away from. Not just ourselves, but everybody else, the future it's so selfish and unfair. But yeah, it's sad.

Rachel ([12:59](#)):

Any final thoughts, or questions?

Julie ([13:04](#)):

So many, but I ask myself that a lot. It's like, we go and drop off our compost, and then I have guilt that I have a car and it's not electric. But at the same time, we talk about going electric all the time, and we're like but the city doesn't accommodate plugs for you. You don't have literally anywhere to plug in your car.

Rachel ([13:34](#)):

Right.

Julie ([13:35](#)):

So it's about changing policies and making it accessible, educating people. But on some levels, I think there's a huge gap in accessibility even to go green.

Rachel ([13:52](#)):

Yeah.

Julie ([13:53](#)):

But I will say when I lived in San Francisco, I think Newsom did a pretty good job at one point when he was trying to make, I forget what it was, but it was like, no waste going green 2021 or something.

Rachel ([13:53](#)):

Yeah.

Julie, Thomas Greene Park, Gowanus, Brooklyn
June 26, 2021

Julie (14:06):

It was a huge initiative.

Rachel (14:08):

Was it successful? It's 2021 now.

Julie (14:11):

I don't know. I haven't checked in with my friends there. Some of them work for the city.

Rachel (14:14):

Yeah.

Julie (14:14):

So they're like really in it.

Rachel (14:16):

Okay.

Julie (14:18):

But I will say in terms of like their efforts in comparison to New York City's efforts... [crosstalk 00:14:23].

Rachel (14:22):

Oh yeah.

Julie (14:23):

Like their composting program is incredible, and I think there's so much to learn, so much to learn. And just their policies around like green emissions. And gas is so expensive, but that's because it's clean gas and they just have different regulations.

Rachel (14:40):

Right.

Speaker 3 (14:45):

Chloe, mommy's doing a [inaudible 00:14:45].

Julie (14:45):

See and there's Chloe.

Rachel (14:45):

Hey.

Julie (14:47):

Chloe, you want to say hi, you want to say hi?

Julie, Thomas Greene Park, Gowanus, Brooklyn
June 26, 2021

Speaker 4 (14:49):

Snackies.

Rachel (14:54):

All right. Well, thank you.