

Missy Singer DuMars [00:00:04]:

Welcome to another episode of Women in Food. I'm your hostess, Missy Singer Dumars. This podcast is all about the intersection of 3 things, food, business, and the feminine. Each episode, I invite you to sit down with me and my interview guest as we dive into this intersection to spark your food curiosity, share a favorite recipe, and give you some fun food explorations along the way. I'm inspired by these guests, farmers, chefs, bakers, cooks, writers, and food makers who all bring their passion for beauty, nourishment, community, pleasure, connection, and deep care to others through food. These are women who advocate and take action towards increased food awareness for themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods. Before I introduce today's guest, I have one request. If you could, go over to iTunes or whatever app you're using to listen and give us a rating and review.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:00:55]:

It's a simple act that helps other people find the show. Thank you so much. So today, I'm happy to introduce to you me. We're doing something a little different today, and I've brought on my friend and colleague, Paul Zellizer, to interview me. Paul is a coach for social entrepreneurs and host of one of the world's leading social entrepreneur podcasts Awarepreneurs. As you can imagine, Paul's work fits perfectly with Women in Food, which is committed to elevating the diverse voices of women in our food culture. Having said that, Paul is one of the best interviewers I know as well as an avid gardener, although he said, quote, off the charts obsessed gardener and food lover. So I absolutely know we'll have fun talking about food.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:01:43]:

I'm thrilled to see where we go in this conversation about how growing a business is like growing anything. And, of course, if you've been a listener, you know I'm an egg farmer, so we'll dive deep into all the things about chickens and eggs, except which came first. Paul, welcome to Women in Food. I'm so honored to have you here taking the interviewer role. But before we switch chairs, I have one question for you. What is your favorite way to eat eggs?

Paul Zelizer [00:02:09]:

Thank you so much, Missy. It's really an honor to be here. Really, really an honor. My favorite way to eat eggs. Well, my absolute favorite, it sounds simple. I'm kind of a minimalist. The first thing that comes to mind is a fried egg over a really nice stir fry with, like, a spicy sauce over the top, you know, with, like, homemade greens. And I grow my own mung bean sprouts, like, stir fry, like, really well done with a homemade sauce that has Sriracha sauce and a little bit of sweetener and just drizzle that over the eggs and, you know, you break the yolk and it goes into the rice.

Paul Zelizer [00:02:47]:

I don't know why, but that's what I'm thinking about right now.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:02:49]:

Oh my god. Yum. I love to break a yolky egg over rice with a little bit of sesame oil.

Paul Zelizer [00:02:55]:

Oh my gosh. Yeah. Or sesame seeds. I like the sesame seeds. Or

Missy Singer DuMars [00:02:58]:

both. Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:02:59]:

A little bit of peach. Yes. Yes. I could eat it. I could eat that for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:03:05]:

I know. I know. I like, eggs just make almost everything better, I think.

Paul Zelizer [00:03:08]:

Yes. Yes.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:03:09]:

Absolutely. Well, here we go. I'm handing the chair to you. Let's have a conversation. This is fun and different.

Paul Zelizer [00:03:17]:

Well, first of all, let me just say, Missy, as somebody who used to live on a farm, although I didn't do it professionally, I know you've had a recent tragedy where some really wild weather happened and completely leveled a really important part of your infrastructure and took out your greenhouse, a historic greenhouse, by the way. So I just wanted to say, you know, I'm sorry and acknowledge it. And, also, like, just for anybody who's listening, we're talking about growing a business is like growing anything. You know, somebody has been a parent and somebody's lived on a farm and I'm an obsessive gardener, Those moments are hard. And and I just wanted to start there and just say, first of all, I'm sorry. And how are you doing with that?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:03:57]:

Thank you. One of the things, especially in my years having a farm now that I'm learning about myself more and more is that I'm an extremely resilient and resourceful person. And I think, I have to thank my dad a lot for that. In certain ways, he and I talk about it regularly. Number 1, he was a big jokester, and I just learned to roll with punches with him instead of take it personally. But, also, he's said to me over the years, like, you can use your energy for 2 things. You you know, you can spend your energy and be upset, or you can spend your energy and, you know, solve it. And so I tend to go towards the spend my energy and solve it and fix it.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:04:40]:

And so it's heartbreaking. It's really hard to sit in the living room and see the shattered destruction out the window there because it hasn't been It's gonna be a while before it can be cleared and cleaned up with, 2 to 3 feet of snow that then fell on top of the mess. And I'm already problem solving and going through the steps with insurance and and all that stuff. And, I think one of the other big things is that over the 7 years being here, I've built myself a

community. And so I had so many people reach out to me, like, how can we help? What can we do? Right now, there's nothing particular except stay everyone to stay safe in our region. But I know I'll be able to call and help when I need it and when I'm ready to physically work on it. And so those are the things that really helped me get get through. And for sure, I flow with the grief and the sadness as well.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:05:32]:

And, you know, those things for me, those things weave together. You know, there may be a wave of grief and then, all right, back to work and wave of sadness and all right, back to work. And that that's kinda how I flow.

Paul Zelizer [00:05:43]:

Yeah. Thanks for sharing that. I just felt like talking about growing, whether it's a business or a farm, like entrepreneurship and farming. Like, you know, I live in New Mexico. Last year, we had almost 3 weeks straight of over a 100 degrees and so many farmers, like like, my tomato, all of so many things just got baked to the ground, like, literally just scorched. And then in, August, we had to start over again. Yeah. You know? And those things just happen, especially with some climate So I I I just wanted to say thank you for what you do in holding space and start there as a way to just say, I think you've I I we should back up.

Paul Zelizer [00:06:23]:

Missy, you and I have known each other for, you know, a year or 2 or a decade. Right? Decade or 2. A decade plus. Right?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:06:30]:

To a decade plus. Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:06:31]:

A decade plus. So I've seen you have some ups and downs and the shattered greenhouses and the incredible ups as well, some really peak moments as well. And and one of the things I wanted to explore with you is just that resiliency. And and you mentioned your dad. And and when I was looking into, like, what wants to be highlighted about your journey, you talk about on your site, and you and I have talked about about that family history and both in terms of life, but also in terms of business. And entrepreneurship is kind of in the DNA that you that you inherited. Talk to us a little bit about that history of business and entrepreneurship in your family. And how has that influenced your journey?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:07:12]:

Oh, for sure. Well, my family's business, which now doesn't exist anymore, when my father and his cousin retired, they closed the business down and sold the last buildings, that we owned. But it was a furniture and retail business that I grew up within. My great grandfather, who I'm actually named after, started it, Grandpa Morris, and has had many iterations over the years. I've heard stories of toy stores when I was a kid in kind of the eighties. It was there were crib stores, mattress stores, La Z Boy stores, baby furniture, all the different things. I've seen it go

through through bankruptcy, through ups, through downs, through selling all the buildings, going down to the original store, rebuilding again, all all the things. And so I grew up with business as a conversation, you know, around the holiday table and the family table on that side of my family.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:08:11]:

And, it's interesting to think about because I don't think we talked about money outright openly, but business. How's the business doing? It's been up. It's been down. We're thinking about this new idea, you know, that kind of thing. And, I love that I still talk to my dad a lot about business, even though he's retired. But he has so much wisdom to share and and perspective that I appreciate. So I grew up with that. And in fact, I think I tell him my in my website that I started my first business in 5th grade.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:08:46]:

Our, gifted and talented class started a school store, out of out of, like an extra door in the nurse's office in elementary school. And in fact, my dad and grandfather came to our class and taught us about inventory and inventory tracking and how they did it. And I remember being really excited about my dad and my grandfather going to school for the day. So yeah, so I think it, an awareness that business is part of everything has, has always been woven into, as you said, into my DNA. And even my, college degree is in theatrical lighting design. And I remember my mentor and professor bringing all the design, you know, technical theater design students together and saying, look, it's called showbiz. Showbiz. The biz.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:09:36]:

There's business in there too. And you need to know how to conduct business as well as do all the fun show stuff. And so, you know, and I was excited to hear that part of it and embrace that part of it. So, so I think it's, it's very natural for me. And as a coach, I have to remember that it's not necessarily natural for other people.

Paul Zelizer [00:09:56]:

Yeah. Nice. So you've mentioned a couple of things you've done from, you know, snacks out of the spare room in the office. We had one of those at my high school too. I was like, oh, cool. I know exactly what you're talking about. And and and then lighting design. So give give people like, some people might know the iteration of missing now, but walk it back a little bit.

Paul Zelizer [00:10:17]:

Like, give us a short version of some of the things you've done in your nonlinear journey.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:10:22]:

Well, what's interesting is when I went to college, I really wanted to go eventually to rabbinical school and be a spiritual leader. And I also, in high school, was very involved in our television, you know, public TV, television studio, and technical television, and loved that. And so had a realization at some point that a rabbi is a, guide for life, a counselor, for personal matters, not just religious, and felt like I had to go live life in order to counsel other people about it. And so I

went to college pursuing television and, couldn't get into the introductory television classes as a 1st semester freshman, and somehow landed myself in an advanced theatrical lighting class that I shouldn't have even been in because I didn't have any prerequisites, but they let me stay and crash coursed me in some of the skills I needed that I was missing. And, I went on to lead the lighting department and do my work study in the scenery department and work a lot. This was at George Washington University in Washington DC. Work a lot professionally on the side, assisting designers, and, met a designer who I ended up working for who became a mentor and dear friend for many years, and, he taught at a different school. So I transferred after 2 years.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:11:48]:

But I got my degree in theatrical lighting design as a BFA. And, in my summers, I was interning for one of the larger theatrical, supply companies that would rent for Broadway and all kinds of stuff. And I was interning in an interesting new department that was new at that time in the late nineties, newer, called structural integration, and they were working with contractors on specifying specialty lighting for new construction of theaters, renovations, say, of like Radio City Music Hall and things like that. And realizing that architects didn't understand the special needs of theatrical lighting, and so they developed this process and this department. And so I interned with them, and then they hired me out of college. And, one thing led to the beginning of another, and I ended up in Las Vegas as a project manager on major projects like the Wynn Resort and Celine Dion's Theater, which is now called the Colosseum at Caesars and the Fashion Show Mall. And, you know, being a project manager in my early mid twenties, handling multimillion dollar projects and, like, learning on the fly a lot, under a lot of pressure. And that kind of almost broke me, I would say, and having a first marriage that was struggling and, left all that.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:13:12]:

And on the side, I was studying a lot of spiritual healing and energy work like Reiki and things like that, shamanic, teachings, and decided to go to massage school. Really different. So I went to Hawaii, lived on Hawaii, went to massage school, learned, structural integration there, which is really interesting that there's this, like, integration thing, system integration, structural integration that just flows through my life also. And, came back to Vegas. One thing led to another. And a lot of times through all this, my side jobs would be in business, like being a business assistant or doing finances or this or that. Helping just helping a business better whatever they were doing. So when I lived in Hawaii, I was helping a wonderful nursery, water garden nursery, you know, up level their systems to computers.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:14:04]:

I helped my dad's business up level to computer systems as well and organized their information differently. So there was always that theme in there. And eventually, over the years, I, this and that. I landed in California eventually and, started working with a holistic business coaching. And, actually, I had my own coach before that, which is who introduced me to you, Paul. And, Leah, my friend Leah, who was my first business coach ever, and said, you gotta know Paul. And then you happen to be in town in San Francisco at the time. And I'm like, oh my god.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:14:39]:
I can meet him. That's how we met. And,

Paul Zelizer [00:14:43]:
I think that was, like, 14 years ago.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:14:44]:
That was a long time.

Paul Zelizer [00:14:46]:
It was a long

Paul Zelizer [00:14:46]:
time ago. Yes. 2,000, maybe 9, 10, something like that.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:14:48]:
Yeah. 1000, maybe 9, 10, something like that. Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:14:51]:
Like that. Uh-huh. Yeah.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:14:53]:
And, so over the years then, I started to realize, like, all my experience within holistic communities and healing and health and wellness and spiritual work combined with my understanding of business kinda led me into doing more officially business coaching. You know, I've always consulted, been operations managers for companies and and, you know, led various projects for them to improve their systems and all that stuff. And so probably since about 2010, 2011, I've been so about that long. Longer, I'd say. I've been coaching and consulting for businesses in whatever way they needed. And, Yeah. And then landed myself on a farm. Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:15:38]:
I was just gonna go there. So so hold the the business coaching, which you still do, and I'm gonna ask you more about that. We're gonna get there in a second. But I was gonna say, and now you're doing this business coaching for quite some time, and another one of the great loves of your life you met, and you landed at this place called Crown Hill Farm. Tell us about the farm, and if somebody, like, had never been there. Like, if I don't know. If you had a drone, and you're flying a drone above Crown Hill Farm, what would you see?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:16:06]:
Well, it's not called Crown Hill for nothing. We're up on a hill in western New York in a town called Eden. It truly is a garden of Eden here, and Paul and I joke around about it being western New York, not upstate New York all the time. I cannot say that. And, I'm up on this beautiful hill. It's a big, old, sprawling white farmhouse with a wraparound porch and about 13 acres. And I'm

nestled here between woodlands and a certified organic hayfield on one side of me, concrete grape vineyard, a small concrete grape vineyard on the other side of me, a view on the horizon of Lake Erie when it's not windy and cloudy and snowy like it is now, and, and it's a lovely spot. We've got a big, old, historic barn.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:16:54]:

We had a historic glass greenhouse attached to the house that we last week. Until last week. And I grow heirloom vegetables here. I do a lot of events. We're a no till, low till farm, so I have no tractors, no big machinery. We do everything by hand. And I raise chickens, ducks, and geese for eggs, which is how I know so much about eggs, and, sheep for wool that I hand dye with natural plant material, plant colors, mostly from the land here or the farm here. And I do a lot of work with chefs, local area chefs and, food businesses.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:17:37]:

And that goes back to my business knowledge of understanding that I'm mostly a solo farmer here. And so I had to decide what business model, what way of working, a, is really exciting and engaging for me, and also makes the most sense and use of my time and energy. And so working with restaurants works way better for me than going to farmers markets every week or having a 100 or 200 person CSA or things like that. So I do have a small CSA, and I do a lot of events, and I work with restaurants mostly here.

Paul Zelizer [00:18:10]:

And give a sense of the events. Like like, what kind of things tend to happen at Crown Hill 4?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:18:15]:

Well, we do a series of farm to table dinners, for sure. So I bring different chefs. Chef friends of mine come, and they do a multi course dinner featuring Crown Hill products, and those experiences. I really consider everything a a learning moment, and so I give a tour and talk about the decisions I've made for this farm, why I grow things the way I do. Folks get to walk through, see the animals, see things in the garden, and then sit down to a beautifully laid meal in the orchard multi course, then having all those things they just saw growing on a plate prepared for them. And it's a wonderful, it's so much fun. I've always known from being here from the first moment here that's something I wanted to do. And, I love, now that we're a little bit past COVID, we're back to having one long table and everybody gets to know each other and foster a sense of community.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:19:12]:

The food is delicious. I get to highlight these amazing chefs, and they highlight what I do, and we talk a lot about the interrelationship of the farmer and the chef to our guests. So we do those dinners. I do host workshops on art, fiber, that kind of thing, here and there. I think we're we're looking at doing more fiber art workshops on the property this year and, building that out. And then we have 2, one big event, which is, this year, 2024, will be our 4th annual, haunted history hayrides because this house has a haunted history to it. And, my friends bring their Clydesdale horses, and we do hay rides and have food available and kids' activities, and it's

super fun. And then last year, we launched the Women in Food Festival, and we'll definitely be doing that again on a bigger scale this year at a warmer time of the year also because it was cold and rainy, so we did it.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:20:13]:

And we had some very intrepid women, and that's a fun event where it's it's like a in person bigger version of this podcast. So I have, women chefs doing demos and vending and selling their, you know, their products and and giving talks and things like that. And it's a great opportunity in this region to get to know, the women in our food system because, as we talked about with Andrew in the previous episode to this one, it's harder for them to be visible and seen. And so, that festival is a way to help elevate that.

Paul Zelizer [00:20:48]:

Awesome. So yeah, I'm glad you brought up women in period. So I'm just thinking my brain tends to organize things in buckets. So you have like this bucket of business coaching, which we'll talk more about, This bucket of farm and farm events, or maybe they're 2 separate buckets. I'm not sure how you organized it in your mind. And then you have this whole other thing you do, which is around women and food and starting a podcast and building community and being an advocate around the kinds of issues that you're talking about now, women both on the chef side and on the farmer side. Not just the guys suck up a lot of the air in the room. Right? Let's just say that.

Paul Zelizer [00:21:23]:

Right? So, like, talk to us about women in food, the podcast. What was your thinking? When did you start it? How is it different now than when you first, like, said, I'm gonna do a podcast. I'm gonna, like, be an advocate in this. So so why did you start it on Monday?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:21:38]:

The podcast. That was a later iteration. I started with my own frustration curiosity. Like, how do I get seen as a new farmer in this region that's got a deep farm history? How do I get noticed? And, you know, that's part of my curiosity. How do I get, you know, how do I get out there? How do I get known about? How do I market? And noticing when I first got here that there were certain, mostly white men, who were always mentioned in publications and in news when it came to farm to table, like the same chefs and restaurants, the same farmers. And I was like, where's the other voices? And then the very first dinner I had here in 2019, fall of 2019, one of my, one of my colleagues who I work with, who has an amazing startup called Produce Peddlers here in this area, they brought a bunch of guests, and they brought chef Jessica, which any of my listeners will know of chef Jessica. I've mentioned her often. She was one of my earliest interview guests.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:22:41]:

And she and I hit it off, and she's become a dear friend. And we cracked this idea of let's do a series in 2020 of dinners pairing together women chefs and women farmers. And I came she came to it from there's not enough women, and we don't know each other. I came to it from

that as well as business thinking of how can I create, like, a series of dinners that people can buy as a package instead of having to sell each dinner separately? So I often am thinking about systems or efficiency, and so I thought, oh, it'd be cool if we sell this series. So, like, at least 1 dinner a month, even if I do other dinners, would be this series, and people could buy the whole package. And, of course, as we all know what happened in 2020, no events happened.

Paul Zelizer [00:23:27]:
A little surprise. Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:23:28]:
A little

Missy Singer DuMars [00:23:29]:
surprise. I had already lined up some of the chefs and things like that, and so, on a whim, everyone was throwing things onto Zoom. I thought, well, let's do online classes with Zoom. And I've used Zoom for my coaching clients for years years, so I was very familiar with it, and, I did that. I happened to also be a guest speaker for an amazing organization called, Buffalo is Creative. In May of 2020, I got introduced to a lot of people, and one of those people was the community manager for Buffalo for Yelp at the time. And, he was doing an online food series and asked if I would teach a class, so I did that. And then he was excited about what I was doing, and so he picked it up and cosponsored it with me, co hosted it with me.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:24:17]:
And so I had Yelp promoting it to what's called their elite squad, and it became a great series. We did 16 episodes of Zoom classes. None of them recorded. I wish I recorded them now, but didn't record them at the time. And, you know, we would have 30, 40 people on each call, and people loved it, and it burned me out pretty much, to do them live and to organize them and promote them, and one after the other after the other after the other while running a season in a early pandemic. And, my therapist at the time, who's also an executive coach, suggested, why don't you make it a podcast? And I was like, gosh. I know exactly the guy who can help me do that, And that's when I reached out to you, Paul. And here we are with a podcast.

Paul Zelizer [00:25:00]:
Nice. So these different, like, buckets of things you do,

Missy Singer DuMars [00:25:06]:
first of all, how I keep thinking

Paul Zelizer [00:25:09]:
of the word organic when I think of white, and it's, like, so hilarious to talk about food and farming and organic. But I mean it in the sense, like, I don't know that there was, like, a strategic plan and a very linear, I'm gonna do this, and then I'm gonna do this, and then I'm gonna do this, and then I'm gonna do this. Like, my sense of you is, like, you hold things as an intention. I'm gonna start a conversation. And then as things emerge, you know, we all get

surprises. The the pandemic is a good example of that. But but you're just very use the word resilient. I'd also use the word brave, Missy.

Paul Zelizer [00:25:45]:

It seems to me like you're really brave about starting a conversation and then see what emerges and going with that, but not in a completely I don't know. It's like some I would use it as, like I would even say it's part of your genius. It's like there's an intention and there is a plan, but it's not like every detail buttoned down. It and here's the 17 steps that's gonna get me exactly where I am. Like, how if I'm listening to this interview, how can I understand your approach to growing a business is like growing anything? The growing the business part is a very particular flavor, and it's different than other business coaches or other business consultants that I know. Talk to us about how do you think about growing a business? How do you balance that of, like, I'm going to start this thing with women and food, and then it evolves and you're, the way you thread the needle on that is really different. How how how what's your vocabulary for that?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:26:50]:

Oh my gosh. Yeah. Well, you know, it's interesting. It goes back to people ask me, what do you grow on a farm? And my answer is usually my awareness is that I don't grow. Nature grows. I'm holding the space in the container, and I think that's true for the business as well. Creating a a space for what naturally wants to unfold from within is, I think, how I think about it, and I pay attention. I listen for what's asking to unfold, what's asking to grow from within.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:27:25]:

I also what you don't see visibly is that I'm tending that seedling of an idea for a long time before I before it pops up out of the ground, let's say, before I I put it out there. So I may have an idea about something or an inkling or an urge, and I'll pay attention to it, and I'm gonna sit with it for a while. I'm gonna let it percolate. I'm gonna let it, like a seedling, grow roots down first within me, within what, you know, what's really gonna feed that idea, what's gonna nourish it, what's gonna actually help it grow. I ask questions. And then there's a moment where it's time to start mentioning it. And in conversations, I start talking to people about it. And then I notice, like, is there energy? Is there opportunity? Is there people who are like, oh, I know a so and so who this is so and so.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:28:18]:

You should talk to them. And, you know, does it actually unfold and grow, or does tending it with attention, you know, it's it's not ready yet. And I I so it's a it's a combination of feeding and nourishing an idea, that becomes a venture while also listening to it, and I think that's how I approach business, how I approach clients, how I approach the farm. Like, I am a terrible garden planner. In fact, one of the local libraries is having me teach a class on garden planning. Like, it's gonna be intuitive garden planning because I don't make a plan really. I mean, I loosely make a plan, but it's very intuitive guided in that same way. Like I'll start with an idea and, what I think I'm gonna grow and where it's all gonna plant and go.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:29:04]:

And then, you know, I hand water the garden every day. And I notice, oh, there's a space here. Oh, this is done. Oh, this is gonna be done. Oh, this isn't doing well, and I adjust accordingly. So Yeah. I don't know if that answers your question.

Paul Zelizer [00:29:19]:

It totally answers my question. No. No. No. It totally answers that intuitive planning that I that that's a great way to frame it. And I'm thinking about if somebody's listening, and they're saying, well, I like that. That sounds good. But this is also we're talking about people's livelihoods.

Paul Zelizer [00:29:34]:

And in your case, there's multiple streams. So how do you help somebody who's listening bring that intuitive planning approach? And especially if there's multiple aspects of what they're doing, you're you're really good at, and these are very different knowledge bases, farming and business. There's a on a conceptual level, there's a lot overlap, but it's also really, really different between feeding chickens and, you know, tending seedlings and getting them from the moment they sprout in the ground to the moment you harvest them. Same thing with business, you know, these days.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:30:11]:

It's not different. That's the thing. Business isn't different from it's it's the same thing. It's tending that seedling and knowing what

Paul Zelizer [00:30:17]:

is, but there's also different knowledge bases. Right? Right? Like, if you you could say it in con at a top level, I agree with you, but there's also a lot to learn about. You know, right now, I'm thinking, you know, you do a lot with people around, marketing and sales and systems and business. And, and there's some overlap, but it's also quite different in some ways than chickens and ducks and sheep and wool and dying and events. There's there's some transferable skills or the same skills, but there's also just some knowledge base. How can somebody have that sort of breadth and an intuitive approach to what they're wanting to do in their business or in their career and have it work financially?

Paul Zelizer [00:31:04]:

Well,

Missy Singer DuMars [00:31:06]:

a few things. I'm writing notes so I don't forget my my points here. I think I start everything, farm or business, with observation and curiosity. And curiosity is one of my biggest values by far. And when I have, volunteers come work on the farm to learn about what I do here, I tell them it's you know, anyone can learn how to prune a tomato or weed a garden. But what I'm gonna teach you is about observation, curiosity, paying attention to the details, and to the big

picture. And, so whether it's on the farm or in the business, the same thing applies. You know, I notice what I see in the world around me.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:31:54]:

I notice what's happening in my business or in one of my clients' businesses. I get curious about it. You know, why is this happening? What's going on here? That's interesting. I've never seen that before. I wonder what that's about. And that leads me on a path. And so I think that's a way to foster that intuitive knowing, with actionable things. Right? And then beyond that, for me, it becomes the the through the the through line, the thread is about relationship.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:32:26]:

And when I work with my business clients, I talk about it a lot in terms of dating. You know? It's like I'll never forget a coach I heard talk about pop up, you know, pop up windows on a website. And I'm going to say something a little crass, but he said it like it's like going on a first date and the guy like whips out his dick and puts it on the table. It's like, that's a turnoff. You don't do that right away. You know, you have to tend a relationship and foster it over time. It's like first you meet for coffee or you just have a phone chat, and then you meet for coffee. And then you see if you wanna spend time again, and you say thank you, and you say, that was a nice night.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:33:03]:

Let's do it again, or whatever it is. And slowly, it becomes something or it doesn't, and you allow it to reveal wanna foster and, how to do that. And so I want to foster and, how to do that. And do it without it. I think the big thing is to do it without attachment, which I know is so hard when money is in play and when you need money, you know? It's so hard to lead with generosity when you feel like you've got nothing and to, you know, explore a relationship without an agenda when you have an agenda of needing to pay your bills. And so, you know, what I'm suggesting, I know, is not an easy thing, but is to set some of that aside to be aware of the human in front of you or the business in front of you or the plant or animal or whatever it is in front of you and be present with it and aware of what it needs and what you can give. And what you can give isn't always money. You know? It may be attention.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:34:10]:

It may be time. It may be a relationship that you have that can help the other person. And I talk about this Actually, we talked about this in the episode with Allison Dehoney, one of the early episodes. She and I met, and we forged a connection because I said to her, how can we support each other? You're intriguing to me. I'd love to get to know you better. I'd love to have a conversation how we can support each other. And she works in sort of the, food challenged areas of Buffalo neighborhoods and lower income communities. And I talked to her a lot about my struggle.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:34:46]:

Like, I want to provide food for lower income folks that's high nutrition, nutrition, but I don't know how because it costs me a

Paul Zelizer [00:34:55]:

lot to grow that food of that quality. And so I have to charge

Missy Singer DuMars [00:34:56]:

a lot even to break even, and I don't understand how to break that formula. And she's, like, but you've used your relationships and connections to help me to help this like, but you've used your relationships and connections to help me, to help this farm, to help that person, and, you know, let that be valuable. So there's that's always a lesson and reminder to me that there's so many ways I can be generous, that I can create connection and relationship that isn't always money based. And for me, I I I trust that what I give will return without overgiving. I think it's important to say without overgiving to deplete yourself. You know? There's a there's a balance there.

Paul Zelizer [00:35:34]:

Yeah. And let me just say, in 14 years, again, I have a pretty good sense of how you work, and you've worked with hundreds of people, and I've seen you be really supportive to folks in this way. And if somebody's saying, Missy, this sounds really good, and I wanna know how to do that, but right now, I don't know how to leverage this skill of of relationship and intuitive planning and not being press on the 1st date. Right? Like like, that all sounds good, but the honest truth is I'm really struggling to do this, and I need to move the needle or I want to move the needle in my business and in my financial goals. You're that's one of the things you do. So tell people a little bit about that part of your work. Like, how do you work with people, and who are you a good fit for?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:36:26]:

Yeah. How I work with people is to really, you know, look at what resources you have, which is more than money or objects. It's what you know, who you are, who you know, and then what, you know, what do I have and what can I do with it? You can always do something with whatever it is you do or don't have, you know, whatever you have. You always have something. You have yourself. You have your body. You have your thoughts. You have your ideas.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:36:52]:

You have your relationships. And what can you do with it? And so I start there. And and then, you know, and what do you want? And I think something I see a lot of entrepreneurs do is they go straight for this massive dream or vision without laying a foundation. And so for me, first of all, it's to recognize that building a solid business takes time. It's not an overnight sensation. Anyone I've seen who is an overnight sensation, either they've been building a foundation for a long time that nobody saw, or they're an overnight sensation and then they're an overnight fall. And so, you know, I you don't see too many. The really successful in a lot like, sustainably successful businesses that I've seen, it takes time.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:37:47]:

And so do what you need to do to sustain yourself. I've had plenty of clients who have a side job, and that's okay. If you need to do that to pay the bills while you create your dream, then

let's do that. You know, there's no wrongness to that. There's no wrongness to pacing how you grow your business. It's, you know, that's the understanding of the unfolding and understanding of the growth. And so I will, you know, look at what you have, look at where you wanna go, and look at, like, what are the steps to get there? How do we break it down? And what's the easiest, you know, most instead of easy, I'll say most easeful way. And, it's important to stretch our edges and stretch our growth and do it in a way that's sustainable at the same time.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:38:39]:

You know, stretch your edges, stretch your growth. I'm a risk taker myself in business. My dad and I talk about this recently. And, you know, taking a risk that is a risk and it might stretch you that you have to grow into, but also feels like you could possibly grow into it and stretch into it. And so finding that balance for yourself. And so that's kind of how I'll look at one of my clients and, you know, when we first meet, where you are, where you wanna go, what you have available to you resource wise, what's sustainable, who you are as a person, what you're passionate about, what how you work with yourself and with people, and and to kind of create what that pathway is with all that information.

Paul Zelizer [00:39:28]:

Right. And you're available to help people with that. If somebody wanted help with that, where would they go?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:39:34]:

Oh, for sure. Actually, you could go to spiritbizpeople.com, which is my coaching website, spiritbizpeople.com, and there's multiple options and ways to work with me there. I typically do 1 on 1 Zoom sessions, but I've also hosted, you know, so when someone's got a bigger project that they wanna launch or do and they really wanna do a bigger dive in a shorter period of time. I've hosted private retreats here on the farm. You can come stay here and have a sojourn, and we'll, you know, set some goals and work on a project. I helped one person, develop their private coaching business into an online course over the course of like a 3 I think it was a 3 or 4 day retreat here and meals and housing and time on the land and outdoors. Someone else working on writing a book did a personal retreat here. So it depends.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:40:35]:

And the best thing is to, you know, look around Spirit Biz people and then reach out to me.

Paul Zelizer [00:40:40]:

Cool. And I bet the food's really bad while you're there too. Right? Oh, terrible. It's terrible. Yeah. Well, speaking of the food, one of the traditions I love in your podcast is like, you're talking about the topic and then you're like, okay, recipe time. Right? So let's let's I just love how you you bake that in. And and since today we're talking about eggs and baking, right, I do that.

Paul Zelizer [00:41:03]:

So, you do a lot with with chickens and ducks and eggs are one of your favorite things to cook with. Tell us a little bit first about why do you love eggs so much?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:41:16]:

Well, they've become a fascination. I think eggs well, the chickens were the first animals we had on the farm, and I they're just they're they're fluffy and goofy and silly. And if you spend any time with chickens like, I've I have cats too, and I think chickens are actually more curious than the cats. And and I love to sit in the barn, especially in the winter when they're all kind of more in the barn more of the time indoors and on top of each other a little bit more. You really see their personalities and the the, like, chicken politics comes out and the pecking order is a real thing. And so I just enjoy them, and then the ducks and the geese as well. And then as I learned more about eggs, they're just they're good quality eggs are such a whole nutrition, and there's so many thousands and thousands of ways to cook them and eat them and enjoy them that, you know, there it what's fun for me in the kitchen is to be creative, and so eggs give a lot of room for a lot of creativity. So that's I think that's why I like and they're amazing.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:42:23]:

And, they've also been a a lesson in abundance for me, because I'll get anxious. Like, oh my god. We're almost out of eggs. We sold the last one. But it's like, you know what? A couple dozen will show up tomorrow, and they'll be right there again. And it's, you know, it's taught me to learn to trust the abundance of the natural world. Like, abundance is a natural state of being. You know, you use up the eggs, and there's more tomorrow.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:42:46]:

You use up those eggs, and there's more tomorrow.

Paul Zelizer [00:42:48]:

Yeah.

Paul Zelizer [00:42:49]:

And give us a sense, like, how men how much poultry do you have? Like, what's you talk about a barn or, like, what what's are we talking about, you know, a 200 square foot barn or a 20,000 square foot barn?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:43:01]:

Right? It's a couple. So I think I think I estimated 2 or 3000 square feet at least. Barn, it's got 2 stories, although I don't currently use the upstairs. I'm looking at a bigger project to restore the barn and turn it into an agriculture education and food education center, which is a big long term vision project. You talk about letting projects percolate for a while. This is a long term one. That's a slow simmer, like a good sauce, but it'll all come to fruition eventually. It'll be just right.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:43:32]:

But the poultry right now, I have about 51 chickens and a dozen ducks and 3 geese, and I bring on about 20 new chicks a year, a season. And, this year, I'm gonna add a couple of ducks and

geese because my my waterfowl flock is aging a little bit. And I guess eggs, I did just say eggs don't run out, but they do run out as happens with human women as well. But eggs do eventually run out. There's, like, a limited number, and as they get older, they slow down, and so I do replenish the flock regularly. However, I do let I let my poultry, age out here. I don't I don't cull them when they get old.

Paul Zelizer [00:44:12]:

Okay. And so some are around 60 birds. And, like so what does that mean egg wise? Like, how many eggs? I imagine it's an I used to live on a farm. We bought it with some friends. It was 3 and a third acres. And I think at the most, we had like 2 dozen chickens. We had about 30 guineas because we had really bad grasshoppers in the valley we were in. And, occasionally, there'd be a goose or something else in that little flock there.

Paul Zelizer [00:44:39]:

Right? And I remember when we had The guineas were wild. They were, they, they're an interesting bird. Very interesting. They are.

Paul Zelizer [00:44:46]:

They're,

Paul Zelizer [00:44:46]:

they're, they're quirky. Very, very quirky. Yes. But the chickens, yeah, they they they were much more regular, but there even then, there were seasonal ups and downs and, you know, in terms of the age, you know, range and where, Hen was in her laying life. But but, yeah. So what does that word? What does that mean? 60 birdish or 55 birds? Yeah.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:45:09]:

In the height of spring, we're getting with 50 chickens of all different ages. We're probably getting 30 eggs 2 dozen to 30 eggs a day, chicken eggs a day. And then, you know, like I mentioned, the ducks are aging out a little bit, so their laying is slowing down. But we could have 5 or out of a dozen, we'll have 6 or 7 duck eggs a day. And the the geese are interesting because geese lay so when you look at poultry, you'll get sort of a rough estimate of how many eggs a year different breeds lay. And, geese will lay 30 to 40 a year, although the bulk for any poultry, the bulk of laying is in the springtime, late spring. So the geese, you know, I'll get a bunch of eggs. I might get a few dozen goose eggs from my 3 girls in the spring.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:46:01]:

I have one girl this year who was like way off season and was laying every other day in the fall, for a while. So I had a couple dozen goose eggs in the fall. But for the most part, that's how many eggs. And I I actually have an app, and I count them every single day when I collect them. So I do know, like, I can't look it up quickly now, but, you know, how many 1,000 eggs I've collected in a year is quite a quite a number to behold.

Paul Zelizer [00:46:26]:

Goose eggs are big too. They're

Missy Singer DuMars [00:46:28]:

They're huge. They're so good, but they're giant. They're only the equivalent of 3 large chicken eggs.

Paul Zelizer [00:46:34]:

Yes. So Cool. So it's just several you know, may maybe on average, a couple dozen, you know, 2, maybe 3 dozen a day. Right? Yeah. So yeah. So, so you've had some, you have some materials to work with and you've had some, you know, and farm eggs. If you're listening to this and you haven't had the benefit of, like, really fresh I remember I'll tell a story. When my kid was, young and there was a bunch of changes, I got divorced and had to move to town, and we moved off the farm.

Paul Zelizer [00:47:07]:

And this was a kid who was raised on farm eggs that a lot of the food we grew as much as we could. You know, we'd throw the tops of various greens. These eggs were so not even yellow, orange is the only way to describe them. Right? So full of vitality. And this kid grew up and when we moved to town, I would still I'd go to the farmer's market and and buy eggs or even in the store, you go buy the, like, best you could free range blah blah blah. And as we would say, dad, these eggs are spoiled. And I'm like, no, honey, they're not spoiled. They're just not farm eggs.

Paul Zelizer [00:47:43]:

Like they're not right out of the back end of the chicken. They might be like 5 days old because that's how it works in the store. Right? So anyway, I just have to say, if you've never had eggs, like, pretty recent out of the back end of a chicken, it's it's try to give yourself that experience. Is that is that would you agree with that, Missy?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:48:00]:

I would agree. And I also and this is something I teach a lot of my customers is, different freshness levels are better for different kinds of cooking. So one of the best ways to have a very peelable, boiled egg, hard boiled egg or medium boiled egg is to use an older egg, actually. Yes. However, if you're gonna poach and you don't want the white to spread all over, you want the freshest egg possible. Right? So, it's good to have a it's good to have a sense of how fresh or old your eggs are.

Paul Zelizer [00:48:24]:

Now eggs

Missy Singer DuMars [00:48:24]:

can stay fresh for quite a I mean, edible

Paul Zelizer [00:48:25]:

for quite

Missy Singer DuMars [00:48:25]:

a long time, but slowly, air is coming into the shell a little bit at a time, and so that's why the the white will dissipate more. But that's also what will make it separate from the shell more, you know? So it yeah. I mean, fresh eggs are amazing and the whole range. I think what's more important of what you're talking about, Paul, with the color of the eggs is having them be pasture raised. So having them be, not pasteurized, pasture raised eggs because then they're getting the beta carotene and all the nutrients from grasses and bugs and things like that and sunshine, vitamin d. And there's been studies that show that, your pasture raised eggs are 2 to 300% more in all your nutrients and are actually 34% less cholesterol. So there's a lot to be said for a pass a true pasture raised egg. And that I think that has more to do with the flavor and the, you know, the color.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:49:32]:

The color will waver between what, you know, what they're eating. And, I just saw someone post something about you really know that your eggs are from a farm if, like, every egg you crack, the orange is the yolk is slightly different color. Like, if they're all perfectly the same bright orange, then beta carotene is being added to feed most likely and not naturally acquired. Because there should be variation because every animal eats a little differently. They all have their preferences. Some like grass, some like clover, some like worms, you know. So I think that's an a really great guideline to keep in mind.

Paul Zelizer [00:50:11]:

Absolutely. Our chickens, we were in a valley, 3 and a third acres with 3 households that I bought with friends. We all met in a permaculture study group, and there were the incredible grasshoppers and other bugs. That garden was about a half acre fenced in. We weren't growing that. We were growing about a quarter of an acre, very intensively. And the chickens had a had a decent sized barn, maybe a 150 square feet, but the run was all the way was like an I shape around between the main, open grassy fields where the grasshoppers would come in and fly in from. So we fenced about a 15 foot wide I shape all the way around a half acre garden, run for the chickens.

Paul Zelizer [00:50:55]:

And then we would just throw stuff from the garden as we were harvesting over the side of the fence. Right?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:51:00]:

For sure.

Paul Zelizer [00:51:00]:

And you can imagine a quarter acre garden, and every time you've harvest it, you know, a tomato got eaten by bugs, you'd throw the whole tomato plant and they'd eat the plant and

the bugs, as well as all the grasshoppers and things flying in. So, yeah, they were eating so many incredible nutrients from where they were.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:51:15]:

Yeah. You can definitely tell when it's tomato season with my eggs because the the girls get they, like, wait outside the garden fence for the cracked tomatoes or badger hunts, and I I toss them around. They love They come they come running for tomatoes, and then all of a sudden, their yolks are a little redder, a little orange, or

Paul Zelizer [00:51:33]:

A 100%.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:51:34]:

Love them, and the geese love them too. It's fun to watch them all Yeah. Eat the tomatoes. And then, like, a lot of the greens from my garden actually go to the sheep. They love all the brassicas and the kale and the leafy greens. So, everybody gets snacks from the garden.

Paul Zelizer [00:51:48]:

Cool. So now that we geeked out about eggs, in theory, one of your traditions on the show is to have a recipe. So what's what's one of your favorite egg recipes?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:51:56]:

Yeah. There's so many good recipes. There's actually a recipe I love that's called, Italian name, eggs in purgatory, which is fun, has all kinds of symbolism to it. It's kinda like a shakshuka style egg where you cook it in a hot pepper and and tomato sauce. And and the idea is that you're you're, becoming pure as the like, the eggs become are symbolic of your purity as the sins burn away because the white the whites turn from clear to white, in the hot spicy bubbling sauce. So that one's fun just for the story and myth about it, but my favorite way to cook and eat eggs is eggs in cocotte, which is French name. Basically means oven baked eggs or some people call it coddled eggs. And, I love them.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:52:48]:

First of all, it's easy. It can be super elegant if you need a quick breakfast or brunch for guests. It's really nice with a side salad. Like, I love to do a little arugula salad or something on the side and some toasty bread. But, basically, what you're doing is you're cooking the eggs in a, like, little cup in a bain marie. So a bain marie is when you have a larger tray with hot water, and then you put the custard cups in that, and that gently cooks it more through and more around without overcooking the top. And, so my favorite way to do that is I like to saute some spinach or greens, maybe a little bit of Shiitake mushrooms, and, some shallot or something like that, put it in the bottom of the custard cup, and then I sprinkle a little bit of, like, Swiss cheese on top, like grated Swiss cheese, and then you crack a raw egg or 2 on top, and you put one little teaspoon or so, tablespoon or so of cream or milk on it, which helps it cook more evenly. And then you put these custard cups in a bigger casserole dish with boiling water and then put it in the oven.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:53:55]:

And they are just it's just, it's creamy. It's rich. It's delicious. You dunk your toasty bread into it, scoop up all that goodness. It's, to me And it's so easy because you just assemble it and put it in the oven, and set a timer. So it's easy, but it's elegant and less common. And you could put whatever, you know, toppings you want in the bottom. So my favorite combo is the spinach, mushroom, and Swiss, but you can do anything.

Paul Zelizer [00:54:25]:

We're we're gonna have to pause the podcast because now I'm really hungry. That was so delicious.

Paul Zelizer [00:54:30]:

I have that problem. I have that problem.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:54:32]:

I notice every time I do one of the interviews, I'm, like, cooking the thing we talked about soon after

Paul Zelizer [00:54:37]:

because Right? I'm like, okay.

Paul Zelizer [00:54:38]:

I'm like, okay.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:54:39]:

I'm creeping that.

Paul Zelizer [00:54:40]:

Thanks, everybody. Gotta go. Gotta go try this.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:54:42]:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So and I'll we'll put the we'll put the full kind of technique and recipe up on the show notes for sure. But that's one of my favorite ways. But I also I love over easy. I love a soft boiled egg. I love I mean, I love to poach an egg.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:54:59]:

I love to do, you know, I love to do a Benedict and make a scratch, hollandaise sauce. That's when I'll go for the goose or the duck eggs for sure for extra richness. And, but yeah. And, you know, and, and scramble. I like eggs all the ways. I like to scramble. I, Cook's Illustrated, which I've been a subscriber for for a long time, had a what they call the French style scrambled egg, which is a very loose, creamy, another, like, creamy style of eggs that I I love to do sometimes too. And you have to actually kind of serve it in a bowl because it stays loose and custardy, creamy, and then dip bread and toast into that.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:55:39]:

So that's another way I love. That's a little quicker than a bain marie and blah blah blah, all the whole process. But, if I want a creamy egg quickly, that's that's sometime and I have good sourdough around requirement, then I'll do that too. There's a lot. There's so many ways to cook eggs.

Paul Zelizer [00:55:55]:

Sounds delicious. So one of the things I wrote down, Missy, and wanting to make sure I explore a little bit with you, you talk about in your bio on the Women and Food site, you talk about your approach to business, and and there's a couple words there you use, but one that jumped off the page is sustainability. That that sustainability is really important to you. And and I was thinking about that. Again, you have you have a number of different things you do. So I'm I'm thinking about sustainability, both in terms of the women who are listening to the show. Women are carrying so much these days. Right? If you're a woman with a business owner, you're oftentimes caring.

Paul Zelizer [00:56:32]:

I'm thinking my girlfriend is, like, the oldest daughter in a Mexican Jewish family and caring for her dad who lives a mile and a half down the road, and more of the load is landing on her or kids. You know? So there's relational things that women are attending to, plus a business, or if you're a farmer. Sustaining the being, the human, Right? That's one layer of sustainability I want to ask you about. And then I'm going to ask you about sustainability in a time of great disruption in terms of super cool organic farm store owner recently about how getting, food, at least in New Mexico, it's getting more erratic because of climate. And how do we think about sustainability on that end? But we'll come to that second part. The the how

Missy Singer DuMars [00:57:24]:
self sustainability?

Paul Zelizer [00:57:25]:

Yeah. Sustainability as a business owner and or a farmer and or a chef in these, ways where first of all, women tend to carry more than in general. And also, like, there's just a lot for us as anybody who's paying attention right now. There's just a lot to deal with, and then you're trying to live your life and grow your business or keep things going in a kitchen or on a farm. What's what kind of things have you learned in your years of trying to live consciously, take care of yourself, help your clients take care of themselves, about sustainability when women have so much on their plate?

Missy Singer DuMars [00:58:06]:

Well, there's 2 things that come to mind right away when you ask that. The the first is a number of years ago, working for other people where in a job where everything always seemed urgent and stressful, and I noticed I would be stressed a lot. I'm making a conscious decision that other people's urgency doesn't have to be my urgency. Other people's, like, adrenaline, adrenal stress

doesn't have to be mine. And realizing, having been divorced twice, changed colleges halfway through, that there's very few decisions and things that are like, if the house is burning or, I guess, if a tree falls on your glass greenhouse, it's kind of urgent. You know? But, otherwise, very little is actually as urgent as our modern culture has made it seem. And so to make a conscious decision not to take that urgency on myself, helps me take care of myself. You know? And and recognizing there are times to where, you know, there's urgency.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:59:11]:

My helpers on the farm sometimes freak out the first time I yell at them when we're moving sheep because you have to move quickly because they move quickly, and you have to pay attention. And that is a moment of urgency, but having those be short moments and, in fact, there's a there's a great this this is actually gonna tie back to eggs. There's a great book called *Pharma Ecology*, spelled f a r m, Ecology. And the name of the author is escaping me in a second. It's a book I loved. I loved. And there's, it's an MD Daphne. I can't think of her last name now.

Missy Singer DuMars [00:59:44]:

But she's MD, and each each chapter is a different part of food. So, like, one chapter is vegetables, one chapter is eggs, one dairy. But at the same time, she's comparing it to a patient of hers, and the lessons from the the farm or the ranch and for or the type of food as it applies to the patient. And I remember the egg section particularly. Go figure. And, the egg section, she talks about, some eggs that are pasture like a farmer who did side by side trials of of non pasture raised eggs and pasture raised eggs. And a lot of there's often concerns about the adrenaline and the stress on chickens if they're out on pasture and exposed to the elements and predation and things like that. But what she noticed is that being crowded into an indoor barn, there's low level constant stress that actually created less productivity and less, nutritional value in the eggs than the once in a while adrenaline burst, and and the same was true of her.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:00:45]:

She had 2 patients who both got very sick, and, one patient, sort of his job and work life was constant low level stress, and the other might have like a stressful day and then rest and then another stressful day and then rest. And the person who alternated back and forth recovered from the illness way, way, way faster and better than the person who constantly exposed themselves to low level stress. So all these things to say that our bodies are are made to have a burst of adrenaline and then recover as opposed to what our modern culture is, which is low level anxious stress all the time. And so find so making up my mind to not take on other people's urgency and and to pause long enough to truly assess what is urgent and what is not and then behave accordingly has helped me be more sustainable. And I think that's good for a lot of people. The other key thing for me about personal sustainability, whether self care, And I really feel like self care is is part of daily life more than going to a spa or taking a vacation here or there, and so finding little habits and ways for yourself that are nourishing for you. For me, I was just talking to one of my mentors about this. She asked me a question related to this, and I said, well, I have me time over breakfast.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:02:21]:

I will read a book or do crossword puzzles while I eat breakfast every day.

Paul Zelizer [01:02:23]:

Like, that is sacred time. It doesn't matter who's living in the

Missy Singer DuMars [01:02:23]:

house with me, who's coming and going, what needs to happen. That is my time. And, also making wise food choices for myself and eating good quality, healthy food is regular constant self care. So finding you know, getting outside every day, which I have to do anyway on the farm, but getting fresh air is constant self care. So finding ways to weave self care into daily life as opposed to work, work, work, work, work, then self care break, work, work, work, work, self care break, I find is more sustainable in the long term for personal sustainability.

Paul Zelizer [01:03:08]:

Great. Thanks for that wisdom, Izzy. And and similarly, the another use of sustainability, especially in the farming world, right, is a little bit more like, how do we grow sustainability, and how do we, not contribute to some of the major negative impacts that the way food is grown right now? You know, so much so much of global warming is that we're not managing carbon in the soils very skilfully, so it's going up into the atmosphere and creating havoc and making life really, there there's a lot of suffering in what our choices in terms of how we're growing and, the food we eat, the decisions we make. Turns out it's incredibly impactful. What what is your thinking, and what's what's the conversation like among the women in food, network that you've built and you're tapping into about growing more sustainably? And part b of the question is, how can people who care about local food be helpful and cognizant that we're kinda disrupting the climate, and that's making it more challenging to grow food and to plan about, some of the cycles we historically have relied on, whether that's rain or temperatures or whatever.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:04:35]:

Well, you're asking a big question. I'm just I

Paul Zelizer [01:04:37]:

know. All over the planet

Missy Singer DuMars [01:04:39]:

are trying to figure out how to figure out What

Paul Zelizer [01:04:41]:

color are your shoes, Missy? Forget it. You don't have to answer the big

Missy Singer DuMars [01:04:44]:

Oh, Those are huge questions, and I I don't I don't know what the answers are for the planet. Thinking? How do you However

Paul Zelizer [01:04:53]:

How are you thinking about food in this time where we have done some disruption to the how are you and the

Missy Singer DuMars [01:04:59]:

people that you care about? I in some ways, it's willingness to have inconvenience Because I think convenience has led to a lot of the food system food systems that have now created problems, like how to do it faster, how to do it more efficient, how to you know, you were talking about, talking to your local brochure. And, one of the things I pay attention to is actually eating seasonally. Right? So you're not shipping food that's able to grow in another place and season than yours, and, which is saving on carbon output and all kinds of things. To me, that that feels like a simple it seems like a simple solution, but it's it's actually the beginning. All of us needing to look of convenience. And, admittedly, I have my points. I I love having a hot water shower and being able to flush the toilet. Like, those are all convenient things that are really lovely, and and it's inconvenient to can food and store it somewhere and think weeks ahead of what you'll need.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:06:15]:

And, if you live somewhere where food's not available, growing in the winter or having to go to this farm and that farm and that farm to gather all the things you want. But I think, in my interview with Connor, we talked about this is, start instead of so modern cooks now start with a recipe and then go find the ingredients, even if the ingredient doesn't grow locally or it comes from somewhere else, it gets shipped in. And so one of the things to do is start with what do you have. It's almost the same question as what I do with my business clients. Like, what do I have and what can I do with it? Right? So what do you have and then what can you make with it? Which is the opposite thinking then what's the recipe I wanna make and where can I go find those ingredients? And I think willingness to be a little less convenient, willingness to work with what's available at a certain time of year will lead to a lot of personal health, as well as the beginning of, dismantling some of the food systems that are really destructive.

Paul Zelizer [01:07:19]:

Beautiful. One of the other traditions you have on the show, Missy, is you like to ask your guests about a woman who inspires you? So, of course, I have to ask you that question.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:07:30]:

Oh my god. That's, oh, there's so many. Well, one of them is certainly Alice Louise Waters. I feel like she's one of my food heroines. And actually she wrote a lot about convenience in the Slow Food Manifesto. So I love her and loved reading her biography and, autobiography and, both her passion for local food and where it comes from and fostering relationships with farmers, as well as the way she built Chez Panisse, her restaurant, was very organic, and very how you described how I build a business. So, so I appreciate that about her. And then, you know, the

advocacy and work she's doing now is with the Edible Schoolyard and and Slow Food Movement is also really inspiring to me.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:08:30]:

The other one who, is a newer woman and food inspiration for me is Sally Schmidt. Do you even know who she is?

Paul Zelizer [01:08:39]:

I have not heard that name. No.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:08:41]:

Sally Schmidt and her husband were the creators of the French Laundry in California, before it kinda became the blood up sensation it is now. And, and I just got her cookbook, and it's so, so enriching to read, 6 California Kitchens and her story of different kitchens she've worked in and, another woman who is lesser known for something that is well known that she created and, also following, you know, following the threads of her joy and and what inspired her and what was fresh and seasonal and and, fostering community and relationship and and how she built what she built, over the years. And and her cookbook explores sort of adaptation over time, over her lifetime as well. You know, 6 different kitchens starting her mother's kitchen and ending with cooking for just her and her husband in the end of their lives. And so and then then having restaurants and everything in between. And so those are 2 women who I'm very inspired by in food right now.

Paul Zelizer [01:09:55]:

Nice. Missy, I can hang out with you all day, but you're busy. I'm busy. The listeners are definitely busy. As we start to wind down, are there any last thoughts or last suggestions you have for your listeners about growing a business and doing it in this intuitive, organic, we might use the word more feminine style, that you know so much about. You've you've dedicated so much of your time to creating a livelihood where you can be yourself, where you can have this approach, and you're not, like, answering to somebody about how many pounds of this kind of green or tomatoes and this number of eggs, and it's catastrophic if there's some ups and downs over the course of the seasons. And you run your whole life that way. What, what, what do you want to leave people with as we start to wind this episode down?

Missy Singer DuMars [01:10:48]:

Well, 2 things. First, I think it's important to acknowledge that I have a lot of privilege and a lot of help along the way and support, and, of all kinds from family, friends, and and supporters, that affords me some amount of ability to be flexible and to figure these things out and and to take my time. Like, I I don't I haven't always had, you know, the pressure of survival. And I think that's important to recognize for my listeners who might have heard any of this and been like, well, I still don't get how to do that when I gotta pay my bills this month. And so I wanna recognize that because that is part of the picture for me. And I do feel like support is accessible for most people, through pending relationships and some of the things we talked about, in terms of like how can we support each other, how collaboration and working together instead

of against one another. So I think that's important to acknowledge right off. And, yeah, which leads to really what what's most important to me is in whatever you do, whatever you dream, whatever you vision to pay attention and have awareness to the interconnectedness of things, the interrelationships of you, your business, your customer, and to tend to those things, to care for them.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:12:19]:

It's worth the energy. It's worth the extra effort. It's worth the 3 seconds to send a thank you note or thank you message to somebody or to acknowledge somebody for who they are, how they show up in the world. And I think that those things are what can build the network of support and help you build a dream because most of us have dreams that are way bigger than we can do ourselves. And so being generous with our care, I think is a way to start, fostering community and relationship that then can help you build what you wanna create as well.

Paul Zelizer [01:12:59]:

Anything else you wanna say before we you call this a wrap?

Missy Singer DuMars [01:13:03]:

No. Except to say thank you, Paul, for stepping in today. It was so much fun to roll reverse.

Paul Zelizer [01:13:11]:

It was so fun. I'm so honored that you asked me, and listeners, thanks for bearing with me. And, yeah, just thanks for asking me, Missy. I am such a fan of yours and such a I hope you feel like a advocate and supporter of what you do. This have been for years, and the longer I, have known you, the more I respect you. So thank you for this opportunity.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:13:34]:

Same. Same. Same. Well, thank you. I hope our listeners got a lot out of this. I hope you enjoyed this episode of Women in Food and got a bit of inspiration for your next brunch, breakfast, meal. As a last request, if you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you use to listen and give us a rating and review. It's a simple act that helps other people find the show.

Missy Singer DuMars [01:13:58]:

Once again, thank you for accompanying me on this delicious adventure, and join me around the table for our next episode and get ready to eat.