

Speaker 1 ([00:00:07](#)):

You're listening to the journey on podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick is a horseman trainer international clinician and author who's mission is to help people achieve a deeper connection with their horses and therefore themselves and everyone around them. Through his transformational training program, Warwick offers a free seven-day trial to his comprehensive online video library. That includes hundreds of full length training videos and several home study courses at [videos.warwickschiller.com](https://videos.warwickschiller.com)

Warwick Schiller ([00:00:41](#)):

G'day, everyone. Welcome back to the journey on podcast. I'm your host Warwick Schiller. And I have a special guest on the podcast today and her name is Cathy Woods. Cathy woods is a Yogi, so she teaches yoga. She teaches yoga to Horse riders. And I met her a few years ago at horse expo. We actually caught a, a shuttle bus together, but,ul'm so glad I got to have this conversation with her on the podcast because there is just,uso much more to what Cathy does than, than just yoga and, yeah, pretty amazing stuff. And I hope you enjoy this conversation with her as much as I did Cathy woods. Welcome to the journey on podcast.

Cathy Woods ([00:01:33](#)):

Hey, thanks Warwick. Good to be here. Thanks for having me.

Warwick Schiller ([00:01:37](#)):

Yeah, this is gonna be fun. You know, it's funny that we were just both in the same place at the same home recently and supposed to catch up and we didn't. So that was at equine affair, horse expo in Columbus, Ohio. And you know, it was a four day thing. We were both there for four days and didn't see each other.

Cathy Woods ([00:01:56](#)):

That's amazing, but we were both a little busy, right?

Warwick Schiller ([00:01:59](#)):

Oh, I was, I was very busy. I swamped at the booth and you actually had a yoga thing one morning that I was invited to. And I, it was at 10 o'clock and the doors opened at nine. I was at the booth, I thought, oh, I'll just do a few things and I'll come over. And I had a line of people there wanting to ask questions or connect, you know? And I think my demo that day was at 11, I think. And I, you know, I had five minutes to live the booth to run over this. So yeah, it was pretty busy.

Cathy Woods ([00:02:25](#)):

Yeah. It was pretty busy. Well, we did miss you at yoga class, but we sent some good vibes your way that morning.

Warwick Schiller ([00:02:32](#)):

Oh, cool. Thank you. Yeah. You know, we were just chatting before we got on here about being tired after that, you know, I've been home for two years and not really talking to anybody and, you know, being at the horse expo, like, I don't know, it's like for you, but for me, lots of people that come up to the booth, a lot of people have questions, but a lot of people want to come up and talk about how, you know, some of the things I've shared, things like that have helped them or even, you know, changed

their life sort of thing. And when you're talking to those people, you've gotta be like, right, right there. Like almost like an intimate conversation thing. And like 10 hours of that a day will just wear you out.

Cathy Woods ([00:03:14](#)):

So true. Yeah. You have to be very present. I like to be very present with each that I talk to, but it sure does utilize a lot of energy when you're doing that for 10 hours and several days in a row and much like you, I live very remotely here in the smoky mountain, so, you know, really didn't see anybody. And did a lot of work from home these past couple years. So it was definitely a little bit of a, a, a shocked my nervous system in some ways to be out there in the big world again, and lots of people and, and talking that much and being that present. And for me, how I balance that and counterbalance that as I come home and I just take a few days to try to unplug and just be out in nature and not do too much peeing for a few. And, and that, that levels, it levels things out for me a little bit, but I have to take that, you know, counterbalance time to to, to re recharge and recalibrate.

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:11](#)):

Yeah. I, I certainly do too. So you're in the smokey mountains. Where are you in Tennessee or something

Cathy Woods ([00:04:16](#)):

In the north Carolinas, smokey pretty remote little area called Fontana. It's up near font dam. And my husband and I live here on 30 acres. So it's remote and quiet. And the nearest town to us is about 20 to 30 minutes away. And we like it that way. We've been here 27 years. I think. Now

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:37](#)):

I was gonna say, that's not a smoking mountain accent. You got there.

Cathy Woods ([00:04:40](#)):

No, it's not. <Laugh>. I was in Florida for about to, where

Warwick Schiller ([00:04:44](#)):

Are you from originally?

Cathy Woods ([00:04:45](#)):

Originally born in New York in Brooklyn, New York. And thankfully I lost that accent too. And then I lived in Florida for 20 years. I had moved out of New York when I was about 12, so I wasn't there that much of my, my life Florida, 20 years, and then here about 27 years. So I'm a really a north Carolinian in, in a lot of ways.

Warwick Schiller ([00:05:09](#)):

Oh, wow. So let's talk about what you, you do. So here, a couple years ago, you wrote a book called yoga for riders, and you had sent me like an advanced copy to see if I could do a little blurb for the back of it. And my blurb ended up on the back of it. And I wanna read it out to people because yeah, because I want you guys to, to get what I got out of it. So Cathy's book, it's yoga for riders principles and postures to improve your horsemanship. But what I said was, while cleverly disguised as your yoga for rider's book, this text contains the secret source to having the ultimate connection, the communication with your horse, creating the human mind by ID connection is not only a spiritual practice, but the key to

about a horsemanship. I highly recommend this book for anyone seeking to deepen their relationship with their horse. So, yeah, it wasn't just a, I didn't feel it was just a yoga for writer's book because I, I, I felt like there was so much more to it and we'll get, we'll get to the book here in a bit, but let's talk about what exactly do you do now and how did you get there? What led you there?

Cathy Woods ([00:06:11](#)):

Thank you. And thank you for that beautiful blurb on the book. That just warmed my heart when I read it, because I was like Warwick Scher. Got it. He got what this book was about. So that, that really meant a lot to me because that's been one of my challenges on this journey is sharing that this is more than just doing yoga postures on the back of your horse. It's not the trend of the week, like goat yoga or beer yoga. So I'm always, so when people actually get the essence of, of what my work is about, and I guess you know, kind of my backstory is you know, I like to say I'm a born Yogi because I really had YOIC awarenesses and interests at a very, very young age. And I'm talking probably six to eight years old.

Cathy Woods ([00:06:56](#)):

And I do talk a little bit of about that in my book. And I did not grow up in a YOIC family. Dad was a truck driver. We lived in New York. Mom was a stay at home mom. So I had no idea where these YOIC awarenesses were coming from. I would spontaneously do yoga postures. I would, I felt there was a value to holding postures extended time and challenging my body and mind in that way. And I remember being in those postures and, and slipping into very contemplative states. So I had an interest in yoga, really my whole life. And at a very young age, I got introduced to yoga in a much bigger a and studied with my guru, my teacher for many years. And I got on the path of what I call true yoga or authentic yoga very early on.

Cathy Woods ([00:07:48](#)):

And I feel really fortunate for that because I've seen the tradition over the years become so westernized and Americanized and heavily focused on the athletics of the posture, weaving out the true essence. And to me, it's a beautiful and sacred path to self realization and to become a more aware and skilled human on so many levels. So that was my yoga story. And, and, and it's, it's, there's a lot more to it, but studying with a true guru from India and, and really, really learned the roots of the tradition. I then continued teaching started teaching also at a young age and about, I guess I've been teaching 31 years now. It's crazy to think it's been that long, but it has. And about 12 years ago, I combined my yoga and my horsemanship, and that happened very organically.

Cathy Woods ([00:08:43](#)):

So I was noticing things that I was doing on the mat, like slowing down, like being present, like body awareness self correction, breathing awareness, what would I do when a fearful or anxious thought came up? I would, you know, alter my breathing. If I felt challenged on the mat. So a lot of these things I was doing on the mat, and then I was finding, I was naturally doing them with my horse. If I went down to the barn and I was fragmented and nervous and scattered, I would have not so favored bowl interaction with my horse that day on the days I would go down there more centered and focused and maybe did a little mini meditation before my interactions with my horses were much more fruitful those days. And then I'm a long time avid trail rider. And I would notice I would be riding and self-correct like, oh, my weight doesn't feel are calling the stirrups or gee, I'm holding some tension in my shoulders. Let me do a few shoulder rolls to work out that tension. Gee, I've got a big Creek crossing coming up and I feel some fear or anxiety rising. Oh, I I'm holding my breath. Let me stop for a minute and breathe my way

through this experience. And then I was noticing it would help breathe my horse through challenging experiences. So, so it was just a, a kind of organic bridge from the yoga mat to my horsemanship from ground to saddle.

Warwick Schiller ([00:10:09](#)):

So what you're really talking about there is just, self-awareness,

Cathy Woods ([00:10:12](#)):

Self-Awareness very much self-awareness and energy awareness and yoga is a practice of awareness. I mean, I always say if I had to describe the word yoga in one word, I use the word awareness. It's not about athletics. It's not about competition. It's not about flexibility. Those are misconceptions. It is truly about awareness. And the idea is the more we become self air and more integrated through meditation through yoga, the more we start to carry that heightened and integrated awareness with us off the mat into our daily lives, not just our horsemanship, I mean, for horsemanship, for me, that just became the delivery vehicle for this message of awareness, because I have interest and passion for horses and animals and, and saw how they were wonderful mirrors of our own energy as, as you well know.

Warwick Schiller ([00:11:06](#)):

Yeah. Most certainly. So tell us about your guru. How did you find your guru and did you go to India and what, tell us about all about that. That sounds like that's a interesting story.

Cathy Woods ([00:11:15](#)):

It's interesting. So, yes, again, I had these kind of self-awareness, is this interest in yoga? Weirdly my family thought that was, you know, very odd, like where is Cathy getting this from? Because there were no TV shows and magazines about yoga at that time in the sixties. And I guess I was probably late teens and I was taking a yoga class through a, from a friend and somebody came into class and they had a little flyer and it said, Yogi, Emmet Desai master at the art of living. And I saw this picture and I saw those words and it just resonated on a cellular level. Like I wanna master the art of living. What is that? And he was a very intriguing looking you know, Indian gentleman guru Yogi Emmet Desai, and he's the founder of Crio yoga, which is a big yoga ashram or yoga center now in Massachusetts.

Cathy Woods ([00:12:10](#)):

Now, back when I was going there, it was very much an, a ashram in those days. And I went and took a weekend workshop with Yogi decide he was coming to Florida and it, it truly put me on the path of authentic yoga. It felt like coming home, the minute I stepped into his presence and I felt such a connection with the whole lineage. And then when we learned so much more that weekend, about postures, we learned about you know, the philosophy of yoga and the inward and outward observances of a Yogi, which are called the yamas and yamas. And I heard, you know, Yogi chanting for the first time and truly it was like coming home. And I just wanted to embark on that path in a deeper way. So it wasn't really even like an option. Like, do I wanna do this?

Cathy Woods ([00:12:57](#)):

My sales were saying, you're home. This is, this is where you, you need to put your energies. And ironically enough, though, I love Yogi Desai and, and honor him as, as one of my teachers in gurus, I've chosen never to become certified in any specific tradition. I've never changed my name to a Sanskrit

name. I've always also felt there was a lot of importance for me to stay in my own lane, my own authenticity. And I believe that we all have the ability to extrapolate universal truth. It doesn't come from the guru, they just help set you up to where you can become self realized. And to me, that is what true yoga is about the path to self realization.

Warwick Schiller ([00:13:43](#)):

You know, it's really interesting this interesting yoga as a child, you know, I've had like Carrie lake was on the podcast and Carrie lake is like, she doesn't like to become all that. But I, I, you know, I describe her as an animal communicator who teaches people how to communicate with animals, but she doesn't really, she teaches you how to be in touch with your own body, which if you can do that, then you can communicate with animals, but she could do it from a very young age. I asked her, you know, so when, when did you first know you could do this? And she goes, it was my first language. I could communicate with animals before I could speak. And I asked her, so how did that go? When you could speak? And you could tell your parents what you were doing.

Warwick Schiller ([00:14:30](#)):

And she said, oh, how do you think it would go? You know, it's like, oh, Carrie, don't be silly. Oh, Carrie's being, Carrie's talking to our imaginary friends again and stuff like that. So it's, I've never heard of anybody that was drawn to the yoga at a very young age. That, I mean, that's, you obviously, that's your purpose here? I mean, that's why you've been put here. If, if you were drawn to that at such a young age, that, what, what was that like? Did you feel like the weird kid or whatever did you talk about that with your friends? Or did you just kind of keep that to yourself?

Cathy Woods ([00:15:02](#)):

I kind of kept it to myself truly. I don't even know that I knew it was yoga because I don't even know that I knew that word, but my body was doing spot postures and you're old enough. And I'm old enough to remember the, do you remember the Flintstones cartoon?

Warwick Schiller ([00:15:19](#)):

Oh yeah.

Cathy Woods ([00:15:20](#)):

Okay. So that is what I used to use to time myself for 30 minutes. And I would sit in full Lotus position with, you know, both legs crossed and I would watch the Flintstones for 30 minutes. That was like a little discipline that I did because I knew there was some value to the prolonged holding of the postures and transcending the mind. And that was kind of one of my little childhood vehicles to time myself, to sit in that position, no matter how uncomfortable I got or how much I wanted to fidget or move around, I would make myself stay in that position for exactly 30 minutes. So I used to time it to a cartoon, which is pretty strange, but you know, kind of a kid thing to do. And then I remember being in half shoulder stance and I would stay in that pose for 20, 30 minutes and contemplating big things for, you know, a 6, 7, 8 year old about living and death and dying and just, you know, the bigger picture of life.

Cathy Woods ([00:16:15](#)):

So these were things I really did keep to myself. My mother always said, you know, Cathy, you're kind of an odd child. You, you know, some things that you sh I don't even know how you know, or should know.

So the parents thought it was odd, but they indulged me in it. And, and let me do that. And then that kind of led at me to getting involved in dance because I was very physical and body aware. And maybe they thought that was a, you know, another way for me to channel this energy. But then as a teenager, I got introduced to meditation oddly through a psychology class. Now I am not a academic scholar. I did not love school. I was always envision being out there with horses and my animals, or I was going over choreography routines in my head during, you know, math class and science class.

Cathy Woods ([00:17:03](#)):

But I took a psychology class and there was a Medi our teacher did a week on meditation. And now looking back, I'm sure she was a Yogi because she was writing like Sanskrit words on the board and said, pick one of these words and make this your mantra. And we did a whole week on meditation. And unlike any of the other schoolwork, I was like keenly interested in this topic. In fact, out of all my notes from school, I still to this day have my meditation journal from that week. And I found that week of meditating changed. So, so many things for me. So I would go home and I was like, my organizational skills changed. I was like organizing my bedroom, which my mom was really happy about. I was remembering my ballet routines much better. So I was noticing, and just that week of meditation and I was probably about 16 years old at that time that, wow, this, this is having an impact on my life. And then again, when I was about 18 or so, and, and, and found, oh, there's a guru that actually teaches this stuff. I was like, yep. Sign me up. And of course parents thought I was, you know, inducted into a cult, some craziness, and they were worried about me, but clearly I fared, well,

Warwick Schiller ([00:18:15](#)):

You know, there's some, you said something minute ago about like sitting crosslegged in the loaders position for, for the extent of the Flinstones until at the end, when Fred kicks the cat out the door, or maybe it was Dino, he put out, and that was the cat. I think he puts the cat outside at the end. The, you know, I was listening to a podcast recently with it was Joe Rogan and I don't normally listen to, to Joe Rogan, but he was talking to SA guru. And he was talking about saying who he is, SA guru.

Cathy Woods ([00:18:49](#)):

Yes.

Warwick Schiller ([00:18:50](#)):

Yeah, yes I did. So he was talking about Joe was asking about, about yoga and, and, and he said, you don't need to do a whole lot of positions. He said, some people spend all their life mastering one position when you can. And, and you kind of touched on him indigo. And let me help me, help me if I've got this wrong. But I think the act of sitting in an uncomfortable position and focusing on your breathing or whatever it is you're focusing on and not focusing on the discomfort and working through that is the spiritual practice. It's the, it's where the, is that, you know, that's where the growth comes from. That's where the it's that it's that hardship thing. Is that, is that right? Yeah.

Cathy Woods ([00:19:42](#)):

Yeah. So I would call it the posture of consciousness. You know, you're, you're being in a position in a posture and you're being fully conscious to it, but not necessarily reactive to it. And I think what it helps train us to do. I think what it helps train us to do is when we get put in challenging life postures, and we do, we all do at times, this helps us to navigate those because I think we're always seeking comfort. And sometimes you can't escape the discomfort if somebody passes away or dealing with a,

you know, an illness, a major life, things happening, those are the challenging life postures that we get put in. So I think we can hone that skill on the mat that when we get in discomfort, what do we do with that? Do we run for it? Do we stay with it? Do we try to alter it? So I, I look at yoga, the yoga mat as a training ground for life, and I say yoga mat, but I also mean end the meditation cushion as a training ground for life to help us navigate life's challenging postures.

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:47](#)):

Wow. Yeah. You know, I was I had a meditation practice for quite a, quite a while and I was up to half an hour a day. I I'd, I'd meditate half an hour, a day in the morning. And then I started and I always did it in a chair. And then I started doing, sitting on a cushion and I wasn't in low division. I was a, is crushed legged, but doing, sitting on a cushion and, oh my goodness. The, the, the difference in trying to control your mind while your body starts going. And yeah, that, that, that was, it was like, you know, to the, you know, it wasn't adding it wasn't two times more difficult. It was to the power of 10 sort of thing. But it, yeah, it was really interesting. And my wife really got into during COVID, my wife's sister-in-law got certified in, was getting certified in Kini yoga mm-hmm <affirmative> and you had to teach so many before you gonna come certified, but it's during COVID.

Warwick Schiller ([00:21:52](#)):

So she started doing them online. So we'd do this, <inaudible> yoga with my sister-in-law once a week. And a lot of times just sitting there crushed legged in a position, and, you know, like you might have your arms above your head or doing something like that. And you do it for a long time, and it's not a hard thing to do for a little while, but having your arms above your head, doing these certain poses after a while becomes extremely uncomfortable. And initially I'd have to take a break, you know, but then when you really, you know, they have the, the focus on the breathing and, you know, you breathing, you think such and you breathe out, you breathe, think Nam, you know, sat numb and just stick into that. So at Naman, and just focusing on that after a while I could, it was, it was so cool. It was like, I wanted to pat myself on the back because you could sit for much longer and you could, I actually, I did that and I've, I've always kind of, you know, my life I've always taken the easy way out sort of thing. You know, I've always sought comfort and, and yeah, it was, it was kind of a interesting, interesting thing to kinda, I don't know, you, you feel like you've accomplished something, you feel better about yourself. It's actually kind of cool.

Cathy Woods ([00:23:04](#)):

Yeah. I would, you know, I look at that also as like building, building the mental muscle, because the mind always has so much to say. Yeah. And, you know, I always say thank the mind for its opinion and come back to the breath or come back to the mantra. But to you know, keep building that mental muscle and, you know, a lot of people say to me, well, I can't meditate and we'll start out with a few minutes. And, you know, the idea is not to totally transcend thoughts if you can do that. That is, that is wonderful, but it takes an adept master to be in existence without thinking. And I've had moments of, of that in my practice over the years, which is called Samma where I'm like no longer identifying with the body or any discomforts or mind stuff. And I think the only thing I can akin it to, and I don't even know this for sure, but maybe like death.

Cathy Woods ([00:23:54](#)):

It's like, like there's this awareness, but that I'm not the body and I'm not the mind and I'm no longer even identifying with it. If that makes sense. I don't want, and I sound too esoteric because I really am a

very practical yoga teacher. And my I think that's one of my gifts is to be able to share these kind of sometimes esoteric practices in a very practical and relatable way. But yeah, there, there are moments that we can go beyond the limitations of our, our mom. And it is such a, a feeling that you do wanna pat yourself on the back, like, wow, I did this because we're so in our minds and, and our society and our school, they don't really teach kids to take any mind breaks or to train the mental muscle. We're very focused on the physical of course.

Warwick Schiller ([00:24:44](#)):

Yeah. That you know, now that I'm 55 looking by, I can, like, I think they teach all the wrong things in, in, in school. Actually, our son, when I, my son was in second grade, I took a job working for some wealthy clients of mine. So I basically had a nine to five job training, which is and they got him into the little private school that their daughter was going to, and they used to teach yoga. That's the kids in there. Oh, nice. Want to do yoga. And I, you know, I think yoga, you know, things like yoga and meditation should be something that every kid learns as, as a life skill, you know, what's the good of being able to count and a, and spell if you just stuck in your head all the time.

Cathy Woods ([00:25:29](#)):

Exactly. It's, it's such a life changing practice and to teach mindfulness and, and to take time to observe the workings of the mind. And that's what we do in meditation. Again, we're not trying to just stop all thoughts. We're watching them drift in. We're noticing them. Where is that thought coming from? Is it coming from fear? Is it coming from ego? Is it coming and from anxiety and, and also having tools to thank the mind for our opinion, for its opinion. And coming back to the present moment, I mean, the word yoga itself means to yo or to unite to yo body, mind, and spirit. So anything that we are doing, that we're all in one place at one time, we're doing yoga. So you, there could be the yoga of conversation like we're having. Now, there's the yoga of washing your dishes. There could be the yoga of hiking.

Cathy Woods ([00:26:16](#)):

And for me, it's the yoga of horse horsemanship. So it's the yoga of it's, it's when we're doing one thing at one time fully collected. And I talk about this in my book, when a dancer is fully immersed in their dance, or you go and you hear musical performance, and that performer is up on stage and they're just so into their craft. And they don't even, they're not even acknowledging the audience out there. That's a form of yoga. My husband's a, a woodworker. And when I watch him work on the lay, then transform a log into a beautiful piece of art. He is 1000% right there present doing that. And that's a form of yoga. And my guru taught me that a lot of people seek adventure sports, and maybe horse horses are one of those rock climbing, kayaking, things that force us to harness and become fully present because at the core of our being, our nature wants to be congruent and not fragmented, which we operate from a fragmented place in so many other areas of our lives. But when you're doing an adventure activity, you have to be fully there. Otherwise, perhaps you're not you know, you can get injured or, or worse. So I think yoga can be considered in any form of, of whatever you're doing. If you're doing it wholly and present, you're doing yoga.

Warwick Schiller ([00:27:35](#)):

Yeah, I did. One of the podcasts I episodes I did was called books that have influenced me. And one of the books in that podcast was a book called stealing fire by a fellow named Steven Kotler. And he also wrote a book called the rise of Superman, which is about achieving the flow state. And a lot of it had to do with you know, like extreme athletes these days. But there was a guy in one of those books named



Dean Potter and Dean Potter was one of the best world's best rock climbs. He actually died in a wings suiting accident in Yosemite here several years ago now. But in that book, he said something like, you know, I don't, I don't really even like rocks. I climb rocks because of the state that it puts me in. I ha you know, I have to be so present. I, I, I've done a little bit of rock climbing with my son and yeah, it's just you and the rock it's it's, it's actually, it's actually pretty cool.

Cathy Woods ([00:28:33](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And, and I, you know, riding horses, I mean, here in the Smokies, it's, it's not just like a, a big wide, you know, easy day in the park trail, you have to be fully present to not, you know, guide your horse off the air edge, or step in a hole or stir up a bees nest, or, you know, gee, there's a tree down on the trail and, and having to Bush whack around that. So to me that is also has been an opportunity to really be fully present and, and what I'm doing. And, and that's, that's a great gift. I think that we can give ourselves is to be present because how many times are we operating on the complete autopilot? You know, whether it's driving our car or, or leading our horse from the, the barn to the pasture and to bring more presence to that. And I lead a little section in my retreats called mindful riding. And I actually put people in the saddle and I tell them, put down your reins and let me guide you. So it's kind of like being led on a pony ride, and it sounds very elementary, but I'm having them focus on the air, on their skin, the breath, what parts of the body are moving, what ho is off the ground. So to just become more present in your horsemanship too, is a gift.

Warwick Schiller ([00:29:46](#)):

Well, you know, that little blurb I put in the back of your book here about, I said, creating a human mind, body connections, not only a spiritual practice, but the key to better horsemanship. And one of the reasons for that is, is because your horse can tell when you are present, you know, when you are, when you are present and not having a story, you know, so present is being in the moment without having a story about the moment, no judgment or anything, it's just what's happening right now. Horses can tell when you are that way. And that's probably the biggest thing, one of the biggest things to help relax, you know, relax horses is to be present around them. You, and, and the thing that makes them all wackadoodle is when we're not present around we're, we're in our head, we've got a story in our head about what might happen or what did happen three days ago, or, you know, that sort of thing.

Cathy Woods ([00:30:33](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. I, I agree. Yeah. Adept horsemen are, are yogis. I mean, they may not call themselves that, but I believe AEP horseman are reading energy, body language subtleties their present. So they may not call themselves yogis, but that is what an adept horse whisperer does. I, I believe so. It's bringing in that, you know, present moment, essence and not, not fragmented. And as you say, the horse feels that the horse picks up on that. And then, you know, just from a physical standpoint, when I, our bodies are tight, intense, we're restricting our horses movement, not just with our, our, our energy, but our, our physicality. So there's just so many ways that the whole of yoga pairs so nicely with, with horsemanship.

Warwick Schiller ([00:31:20](#)):

Yeah, I think so. Let's talk about your guru again. I'm excited to hear about did, so you, so you said, where was the, where was the Ashram in Michigan?

Cathy Woods ([00:31:32](#)):

Well originally he was from India and then he opened up a small ashram in, I wanna say Sony town, Pennsylvania. This was before my time before I was involved with him and then became the founder of the Corella yoga Institute which still exists to this day. And Corella was his Swee cor Swami Corella Ji. So Yogi Desai opened the Corella center and brought these profound teachings to the west. And I will tell you anybody that follows him or knows his story, like many teachers in gurus and people in power. There was a lot of drama that came up around him. So he had the Corella Astra for many, many years, and then some personal drama came up and he was asked to actually leave. But carpa center, which is the largest center in north America for yoga still operate.

Cathy Woods ([00:32:27](#)):

It's much less of an Ashra and now more of a mainstream yoga center, which attracts more people rather than just Swee or people that really wanna live a yoga lifestyle. And Yogi Desai is still teaching he's in his upper eighties. He has now a small ashram, smaller ashram in Florida. It's called the, a yoga Institute. And I still do stay connected with him. And I know there was a lot of drama about the scandals that went on. And again, I never put him in a, a position in my mind that he was more than human. And the people that did were devastated when there was some discrepancies that came up. I, I honor that he's, he was a human, he made human errors, but his teaching is so profound. And when he is in that teaching space and chanting and speaking, I, I weep from it.

Cathy Woods ([00:33:20](#)):

It's just, it's so palpable, the, the power of the, the true essence of yoga that he exudes. So I've also had the pleasure of, of getting to know him personally, he's come and stayed here with my husband and I, several times I've hosted retreats and, and programs for him. And I do reference him a lot in my book. There's a couple little stories in there about him and several quotes that he has, has shared with me over the years that I feel are very profound, but, you know, spending time, personal time with the guru outside of the ashram like here's an example. There's a story in my book called the yoga of Denny's. And he was here in Asheville giving a retreat and I picked him up afterward and he was coming back here to our place. And I said, where would you like to go eat guru dev?

Cathy Woods ([00:34:10](#)):

And now Asheville is like an abundance of great restaurants. And he said, oh, I'd like to go to Denny's. And I was like, Denny's okay, well, you're the guru. So we'll go to Denny. I thought it was kind of, you know, kind of low level casual dining. We go to Denny's and walking in, he is enamored by the flowers outside, and he is just carrying on about the beauty of the flowers, and this is gorgeous. And then he, the waitress or the hostess hands us, our, our menus and seats us. And he goes, oh, she was just so pleasant. And he opens the menus and he goes, oh my gosh, what a beautiful menu look at these, these colors on here and how they laid it out. And just, he was so childlike in his awareness and so present. And the rest of us are just like, oh, it's Denny's we walked by the flowers, we opened the menu, we picked the scramble eggs, and you, but he, for him, it was like this whole other experience. So being in the presence of somebody that's that present and that aware and that open and that childlike is, is just so beautiful. Cuz you see, so little of that in, in our culture,

Warwick Schiller ([00:35:17](#)):

It's kinda like the Buddha looking at the Lotus flower, isn't it?

Cathy Woods ([00:35:21](#)):

Yes. Right. I same beauty and simplicity.

Warwick Schiller ([00:35:26](#)):

Simplicity. Yeah. So what, tell me, what was he like to be around? Like was there a vibe cuz I imagine there's a vibe comes off this guy, like there's an energy that comes off him that you just wanna plug into is, is did he feel like that? Yeah,

Cathy Woods ([00:35:42](#)):

He did. And, and certainly more so when he was in a teaching setting, but again, that was in that story I described as just in a regular, everyday setting and, and that is empowering to be around, but certainly when he's teaching and he is, you know chanting or, or teaching, it's almost like he's channeling, it's almost like he's not he's he's out of his own way and spirit is coming through him and it's just so profound. And I do, I have found again, not to sound so esoteric, but he would chant oh one time and I would have tears come down my eyes because it was just so I don't know it's it was like oneness. It was like unity. It was like connection. And then the teachings would really expedite my growth. So after being around him and it said that gurus of that level can emit something called Shockty putt and share that energy with the group or the audience. And there would be, you know, cathartic crying or laughing or people having all kinds of breakthroughs. And then I would notice I would go home from these experiences and my own teachings and understandings would grow so quickly after being at his presence. So that I think was the, one of the value of having a guru. It helps leads us, lead us to our own path of self realiz so much quicker than trying to, to muddle through it on your own.

Warwick Schiller ([00:37:08](#)):

Right. Did you ever, did you ever see the Netflix series called wild wild country?

Cathy Woods ([00:37:16](#)):

I did. Yes. And I know a lot of people that were big show followers. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:37:22](#)):

Yeah. So that was about the bug one. And what was fascinating about that? For folks who haven't seen that thing. So, you know, the bug one was, he had a, an ashram in India, but he was not your average, holy man, where he didn't, he didn't give a anyway. He was, he was interested in money and sexuality. So he, he started printing these books and like he made lots and lots of money and all these followers would come to India and they would print all these books and they made a lot of money. He ended up buying several thousand acres in Oregon, come to America because America's the land of, of religious freedom. And he can do it every once and, and bought these several thousand acres in, in rural Oregon. And they ended up basically building his city up there and he had lots of followers and it turned out that America is not, <laugh> the place, America's a place of religious freedom, as long as you've got the right religion, I think <laugh>, but anyway, he like your, like your guru, he kind of ran into some trouble at some point in time, but ended up in jail.

Warwick Schiller ([00:38:22](#)):

But one of his followers had been a lawyer and so he could go and visit the Barua in jail as his legal representative. And I remember them interviewing this guy and he was saying, I would go and see him all the time, not cuz we had to discuss his case because I just felt the need to be in his presence. And

that's what I was getting at with, with your guru, like you is, is there that like you just around him? I was like, oh my goodness.

Cathy Woods ([00:38:53](#)):

Yeah, there really is. There's a certain magnetism or energy that they exude and, and Warwick, let me tell you, not even being in the guru's physical presence. I had an experience when I went to, he had after his drama at Carala, he went back to his original ashram in Pennsylvania and I would go up in the winters and spent some time there. And it was wonder because there would be maybe six of us residents there studying with him in the morning versus being at the big yoga center where there'd be, you know, seven, 800 people. So I had these, you know, powerful experiences there and he, they gave me the key to go to this little house on the property called moti Dom means house of liberation. And this is where my guru's teacher Swami K studied or, or lived rather in silence for like 13 years and just channeled divine and just wrote and shared these teachings only with Yogi Desi.

Cathy Woods ([00:39:52](#)):

So they said, well go up to the house. It's still a shrine go and, and spend a time and meditate and moti Dom, well, I go up there and the key is not working in the door. It's just not working. And five, 10 minutes later, I'm like, oh, and we call him BAJI, which means beloved grandfather. And I said, Babaji, I, I really wanna go into your, your, your home here into your shrine. I tried the key and the door unlocked like, like butter. And here I literally was there 10 minutes trying to unlock the door. So I go in and I literally fell to my knees. I just felt like I was in the presence of a San, the smell, the energy tears. And I just wanted to bow down very reverently in that space. Then ironically, I go back and I give them the key and they said, oh Cathy, we're so sorry. We gave you the wrong key. But obviously, you know, I was able to, to open the door and I just always felt like that was such a special moment. So not even being in the physical presence of the guru, but in the presence where he lived and where his shoes and his alter was and, and spaces hold energy. So that was very powerful and I have more than one experience like that. Of being in the presence of teachers and masters that it just kind of in inexplicable really. It's just a, it's, it's a feeling,

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:20](#)):

You know, when you said they of gave you the wrong key. I just had this like every hair in my body just stood up. <Laugh> that was crazy. Oh my goodness. Have you ever been to, have you ever been to India?

Cathy Woods ([00:41:33](#)):

You know, I have not. And I can't really say that I'm really drawn to, to go there and if I have the opportunity, I, I will, but I haven't felt like I've needed to do that to enhance my own practice or teaching or anything. So, no, I haven't.

Warwick Schiller ([00:41:50](#)):

Wow. No, I thought you, you might have yeah. I've I'd like to go to India one day just to <affirmative> everybody that's been there. That's told me about it. Just says it's just, you just have to experience it. There's just, you can't, you almost can't explain it, but yeah. I thought you may have done. Yeah. Okay. So let's get back onto your, let's get back onto your journey here. So you've you born New York, go to Florida then, were you living in Florida when you were first starting with your guru?

Cathy Woods ([00:42:22](#)):

Correct. Yes, I was. So it was like my late teens, I think when I met him and I started teaching yoga at an early age too.

Warwick Schiller ([00:42:34](#)):

Okay. so the, the, the thing with the key in the door when you had the wrong, when, when was that? How old were you then?

Cathy Woods ([00:42:41](#)):

Oh, I was, I was an adult, so that was probably about 2 15, 20 years ago.

Warwick Schiller ([00:42:50](#)):

And so before that time had, had you spent a lot of time at that place or was that one of your earlier experiences there?

Cathy Woods ([00:42:59](#)):

I'm not clear on what you mean. That was probably my first trip to Pennsylvania, but I had spent many years studying with Yogi decide prior to that. Yeah. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:43:09](#)):

Oh, okay. So where were you studying with him prior to that?

Cathy Woods ([00:43:13](#)):

In Florida. So I was living in Florida and I was taking classes there, became aware that he was coming into town for a weekend retreat, took that weekend treat. It was so wow, powerful that I said, Hey, I've gotta go up to the Ashra in Massachusetts and see what this is about. And then I became a regular follower. I hesitate to use the word D devote T I would say more of a follower. And then when he left that center, went back to his original place in Pennsylvania. I stayed connected with him. And, and again, still do, even though he's back Florida. So geographically we've, we've all kind of moved around a bit.

Warwick Schiller ([00:43:48](#)):

Okay. You know, when you said a minute ago and you didn't get into details, we don't have to get into details, but when you said he, he, you know, he had some indiscretions or got into some trouble and then watching that wild, wild country about the bug one. And I imagine, I imagine when you have, I don't know when you just have that many people almost adoring you and I don't know, it would be, I think you'd have to be a, an extremely strong human to not maybe get a little bit off track at some point in time. I mean, you know, it's, that's a, that's a lot of you know, that's a lot of power for, for one person who doesn't really ha it's not like you know, it's the president of the United States and he's got, you know, he is got the chief of staff and he's got an advisor and he is, got all these people kind of giving him input like this guy's he is the input. That's, that would, that'll be, that'd be a difficult situation to be in. I think

Cathy Woods ([00:44:56](#)):

I agree. I agree. And I'm, I'm very careful too, in my teaching to not put myself in that position, I don't want people feeling like I'm their guru. I'm happy to teach and share any wisdom that I have. But I don't ever wanna put myself in that position. So I'm very careful. And, and as you know, when you're a public figure, people see what they wanna see a lot of times. So I think people would see in the guru, oh, he's an enlightened master. He can do no wrong he's above human or, or even, you know, I think one of your questions on that little questionnaire was like, you know, what is a kind, maybe a misconception people have? Well, I think people think when you're a Yogi and a, on the YOIC path that you have no stress, you have no headaches, you have no worries.

Cathy Woods ([00:45:39](#)):

You you're always chilled out and, and being around Yogi Desai and my own, knowing my own person that's, that's not necessarily true. I've been around him and seen him get a little bit stressed or a little bit impatient. And of course he did us because he's in human form and the same thing with myself, it's like, people will say, oh, you know, you must be so calm all the time and oh, must be so nice to be that relaxed and have those abilities to, to harness your mind. And truly I use it because it's a tool because I'm not wired that way. I'm not wired quietly and calmly. And not, not, I'm not naturally an anxious person, but I do experience anxiety. So the yoga is a tool. So people see me and, and think that I'm gonna be a certain way. And then sometimes they get to know you and, and you're not because you're still in inhuman incarnation. And certainly I'm not going around calling myself an enlightened master and nor do many of these teachers people just see them as that and put themselves in that, in that role,

Warwick Schiller ([00:46:44](#)):

Right? When you, you know, the it's funny life, life principles and horse principles are all the same, but, you know, I, I did a one of the episodes of the podcast I did on, on something I 'em up with called the principles of training. And I did a TV show a few years ago called the principles of training. And I talk about 'em a lot at clinics, but one of the principles of training is create a tool before you use a tool. And a few years ago, I did a year of therapy. And in that I did individual and group therapy, but in, in the group therapy one night, we're going through this workbook. And it was about the, the therapy was it was called dialectic behavior therapy. And it was for people with emotional regulation issues. And one of the, the homework every week was to, to, you know, practice these things to use when you have an emotional regulation issue. But the point was, you have to practice these things when you are not having an emotional regulation issue. You know, you go out trial riding, you can't solve a problem on the trail that you didn't teach your horse at home or ready. And it's the same thing with you when you are doing the yoga. You're not doing it when you're having an emotional problem, but the yoga mindset helps you when you do have something come up. Is that correct?

Cathy Woods ([00:48:03](#)):

That is correct. So I say, you know, practice while the waters are calm, don't wait till

Warwick Schiller ([00:48:08](#)):

Practice while the waters are calm. That's a great on. Yes. Yeah.

Cathy Woods ([00:48:11](#)):

Yeah. So I think that that kind of speaks for itself. So yeah, I mean, the it's again, the, the, the yoga mat, the meditation cushion, great training ground. And then when we, we find, we start organically using these tools. So for example, you might be sitting in a traffic jam and feeling impatient and anxiety come

up and, oh, let me do some, some three part to help offset some of that negative emotion coming up. So if you didn't practice that tool on the map, you're gonna have a hard time practicing that when you're in the traffic jam.

Warwick Schiller ([00:48:42](#)):

Yeah. You can't do anything when you're wound up that you, you couldn't do when you weren't, when you didn't practice, when you weren't wound up, or as the Navy seals have a saying that I always thought was a Navy saying, but it's actually, I found out it was from a, like a 600 BC Roman yeah. Roman philosopher named UCCI and that saying is you don't rise to the occasion. You fall to the level of your preparation.

Cathy Woods ([00:49:10](#)):

Mm that's good. Yeah. Never heard that. That's very <affirmative>

Warwick Schiller ([00:49:15](#)):

And I think, yeah, I've heard it as the Navy seals you.

Cathy Woods ([00:49:19](#)):

Yeah, yeah,

Warwick Schiller ([00:49:22](#)):

Yeah. Practice is key because yeah, most certainly is. So what did a minute ago, you alluded to one of these, some of these questions that you've selected, and one, one of the questions you alluded to was what's a common me in your profession. So, and a lot of times I have to say, what is your profession <laugh>? So your profession is a, a Yogi teacher, yoga teacher. Is that what you're?

Cathy Woods ([00:49:48](#)):

Yeah. I call myself a Yogi, which is a woman dedicated to yoga tradition and yoga practice. And, you know, I'm, I'm an advocate of always listening. I inner voice, and I've watched how my, my business of yoga teaching has changed and kind of morphed into more of the equestrian field. And but, and, but there definitely are misconceptions. And for example, with yoga and horsemanship, most people hear that and think, oh, it's yoga on the back of your horse. And I even encouraged my publisher to title this book, like practical parallels of yoga and horsemanship, not yoga for riders, but they felt strongly that it was more marketable as yoga for riders. But I think that's a misconception when people hear, I merge yoga with horseman shift, they think we're standing on the back of the horse or doing acrobatics. And any postures that I do while mounted are that have true benefit to the equestrian to learn, to move from center symmetry, feel core strength being present.

Cathy Woods ([00:50:56](#)):

So I, it's really hard sometimes for me to articulate to people that it's not doing yoga on your horse. This is safety conscious. We're wearing helmets, somebody's holding your horse. You're not barefoot. You're not standing on your horse. So that's frustrating for me at times, because that's what most people think when they hear of the work that I do. And there are a lot of people out there doing that which makes it a little harder to sell what I do as, as a whole different different lane. And then secondly, I think the other misconception is the one I alluded to before that just being a Yogi people think you're going to be

and behave a certain way and maybe never have a meltdown or never throw a cuss word out there. And, and that is also very untrue. So anybody that's spent time with me knows that you know, there's this like, like my guru, there's this very clear person when I'm in that teaching space and I'm out of my own way, but then when I'm not in that space, I hone those skills. But I'm also still very much Cathy, the personality Cathy, who is made up of genetics and products of my environment and all of that.

Warwick Schiller ([00:52:09](#)):

Yeah. That's great to hear, you know, it's funny, people tend to think like, say with you, oh, you're a Yogi, so you don't have any problems or someone with a lot of money, like, oh, you are rich, so you don't have any problems or, you know, whatever you've got, you've got a nice horse. So you don't have any problems or you, whatever it is, you know, it doesn't matter what it is. People tend to think that when you have all that stuff, it's easy, but it's really the inner journey. That's the, that the, that's the thing. So this question that I asked you yeah. That you chose common myth about your profession. Another question that you didn't choose, but I might ask you anyway, that goes along those lines. Is what advice would you give for someone who wants to enter your profession? <Affirmative>?

Cathy Woods ([00:52:52](#)):

Hmm. Well, the biggest piece of advice is you can only teach to the level that you are in your own practice. So in other words, I see a lot of people going to yoga teacher training, and they're paying thousands and thousands of dollars to do this. And I'm not discounting it. I'm not saying there's a no value to that. But I come from the day before there was ever yoga teacher training, before there was certification, it was a practice that you practice and you embodied, and you studied with different teachers and gurus combined with self-study. Now what I see a lot of is people entering the yoga field. They go to these classes, these certification programs and let them learn the ABCs of yoga, and they're able to come out of that class and maybe they know how to sequence a posture series or have a scripted gut meditation.

Cathy Woods ([00:53:45](#)):

And that is very, very different from studying with a yoga teacher who embodies the essence of the practice. So, yeah, I think just, you know learning to embody the practice because the, your class is going to be able to tell just like you were saying, your horse can tell when you, you know, congruent or your, your per present your class can tell when you're teaching a yoga class and you're just pulling the ABCs of yoga and not embodying that essence, that's a felt experience. So when people take my programs, feedback that I often get is, wow, that was yoga. Oh, that's what yoga's supposed to be like, oh, that's the yoga I've been looking for. And, and they say, it's so different studying with you than, than going to the local gym and taking yoga. Why is that? And why that is, is because I am devoted and dedicated to the practice. I embody it. I use it in my own life on and off the mat. So I guess that would be one of my, my biggest P pieces of advice is to embody it don't feel like you can just learn this stuff in, you know, 20 minutes in, in a, an online yoga teacher training course.

Warwick Schiller ([00:54:56](#)):

Yeah. I think it's a bit like horse training. Like you can become a cert, you can join some association and become a certified certified horse trainer and, and yeah. You know, I don't think the horses read the piece of paper.

Cathy Woods ([00:55:11](#)):



Right, exactly. <Laugh>

Warwick Schiller ([00:55:13](#)):

So I might, I might, I might breeze through your questions here, because I think there's some really good ones in here. And I always, this, this question, here's the first question. And I always love this question, cuz I always learned something. What book do you recommend most? And it's not necessarily the, the book, your favorite book, but like, if you tell someone about a book, like you should read this book, what book do you recommend most?

Cathy Woods ([00:55:39](#)):

Oh gosh, I have a couple, but I would say my favorite is a book called the untethered soul by Michael singer

Warwick Schiller ([00:55:47](#)):

By Michael singer. Yes.

Cathy Woods ([00:55:49](#)):

Yes. Do you know Michael singer? Okay. Yes.

Warwick Schiller ([00:55:52](#)):

My wife's favorite book. Yeah.

Cathy Woods ([00:55:56](#)):

Oh, well my favorite book too, and one of my favorite teachers, he, I believe is one of the most adept spiritual teachers of our time and he kind of goes unnoticed and recognized and he flies below the radar and I've had the pleasure of spending time I'm with Michael singer and he is also very much connected to Yogi Desai. He has a center called temple of the universe, which is very close to Yogi Desai, ARA. And when Yogi Desai was going through all of his, his troubles Michael singer, I call him Mickey singer really embraced him and, and took him in. And so they're, they're very dear, dear friends. So there's that connection. And oddly how the book came about for me, I saw an advertisement for this book and it was a horse running across the beach and I saw the title and it said untethered soul.

Cathy Woods ([00:56:46](#)):

And I thought, oh, let me file that away. I like, I like the name of that. I like the cover. And then I forgot about it. And I didn't even notice who the author was. Then a yoga student comes to class and she brings me this book and she says, oh Cathy, I think you'll really like this book it's called the untethered soul by my, I said, oh yeah, I forgot about that. I, I wanted to read that book and she loaned it to me and I opened the book and I see his picture. I'm like that's Mickey singer. I, so I didn't realize that that was Michael singer, who I knew as Mickey singer and had actually spent some time at temple of the universe. So a profound book that was just a little sidebar, sorry. But it's a profound book that really teaches us kind of walks us through the relationship of our own thoughts and emotions. It helps us to uncover the source of fluctuations in our own inner energy and tips to how to free ourselves from, you know, patterns that are in range in yo we call those some scars.

Warwick Schiller ([00:57:47](#)):

So it's a wonderful some scars. Exactly. Yeah. Well, he talks a lot about some scars in the book, doesn't he?

Cathy Woods ([00:57:54](#)):

He does. He does. And he has some wonderful podcasts on too. So I think, you know, he's a teacher. I, I certainly would point people too, but I think that book in a lot of ways was, was a life changer. For me of just the way he explains it and you know, all these different teachers and masters are really saying the same thing, but oh yeah. Like horse horsemanship trainers, it might be just, somebody says something to slightly different language, right?

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:19](#)):

Yeah. I think, I think people just resonate with how the message is present rather than the message itself. Cause I think everybody's got the, the same message. So you mentioned, you said, oh, there's kind of two books and one was the untethered soul. What what was the other one?

Cathy Woods ([00:58:38](#)):

Mm-Hmm <affirmative> oh, I love autobiography of a Yogi. And you know, unless you're a yoga person, you might not really enjoy this as much, but it was a

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:47](#)):

Book that that's theand isn't it to

Cathy Woods ([00:58:49](#)):

End and, and I've reread it. It's the story of Parma HAA yoga Nanda.

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:53](#)):

Yeah.

Cathy Woods ([00:58:55](#)):

Yes it is.

Warwick Schiller ([00:58:55](#)):

I, I have a

Cathy Woods ([00:58:57](#)):

Has center in Encinitas, California, if I'm not mistaken. Yeah. Yeah. And it's just you what?

Warwick Schiller ([00:59:04](#)):

Oh, here a few years ago, probably at the start of when I started looking at things a bit differently, Robin and I decided we were gonna go up to, oh, it's like right by Stanford university up here for this one day, one day thing. And it turned out it was a whole bunch of, and it was a whole day of different, different things you could go and see and do. And I think the first, first thing we went to was a lecture by a Stanford. What did she do? She was a doctor that was educated at Stanford and she had all this information about the, the the benefits of, of meditation. But like they had, you know, it was the science

of the benefits of meditation. It wasn't like, yeah, I did it and I felt great. It was like, you know, it was double blind studies and all that sort of stuff. And that day I bought that, that book. I've actually got a t-shirt that's got yoga and on the front of it, it says change yourself to change the world.

Cathy Woods ([01:00:03](#)):

I love that.

Warwick Schiller ([01:00:06](#)):

Okay. So next question for you would be, what is something, an unusual habit you have or something you do that's out of the ordinary, which is not talking to spirit and having him unlock the door for you with the wrong key because,

Cathy Woods ([01:00:27](#)):

Oh my unusual habit and I, I rather like it is, I think I have the ability to turn my dreams into reality and I've been doing that my entire life. I have, I'm 57 now I have remained self-employed my entire adult life. That was one of my goals also as a young child. So I think that is one of my habits or gifts is to be able to really turn these dreams and visions into reality. And I do that through listening to my inner voice through being and clear and through being persistent and determined and creative and oftentimes finding creative workarounds to, to make things work. You know, in my book, I, I quote it's my own quote it's right thought and right. Action blossom from clarity. So when we are clear, then we are totally guided to what you wanna do and how to, to implement that. So I think that's a unique habit or, or gift that, that I have

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:36](#)):

So manifesting basically.

Cathy Woods ([01:01:41](#)):

Yeah. That's that sums it up. Yeah. Manifesting

Warwick Schiller ([01:01:46](#)):

Well there, yeah, we both have the unusual habit. That's the same. Okay. So next question would be, what accomplishment are you most proud of?

Cathy Woods ([01:01:59](#)):

Probably my yoga for writer's book. Again, as I mentioned earlier, I wasn't the best student in school. I didn't love being in school and doing academic stuff. I'd rather be hanging out with animals or doing a dance or routine or something. So as not being a, a real academic scholar to produce a book that I'm really proud of and, and really happy with on, on every level has been one of my greatest accomplishments and to be able to take the teachings of combining yoga and horsemanship and put them into a, into a succinct book. I feel like that's been one of my greatest accomplishments, so I'm really proud of myself for doing that. I did it in a very short time. I've written articles before, but did never not have the experience of, of writing a book. So I also had some support with, you know, my publisher and editor and things, but you know, it was, it was 99% me, so I'm pretty proud of that accomplishment. Never, never thought, you know, back a and I was in school that I would be an author of a book. And now I feel like I have several books in me. So it's inspired me to write more.

Warwick Schiller ([01:03:07](#)):

I'm sure you have several books in you. So tell me, cuz I'm, I'm, I'm in the middle of a book and have been for a few years now. How was the, how was it the writing for you? Was it, was it hard because you know, all this, the it's not like you are writing a novel that you've gotta figure out the plot. I mean, you know, all this stuff, how hard was, and, and I'm the same with the book I'm writing. How hard was it for you just to get things in order and concise, you know, not too long, not too short. How was that process?

Cathy Woods ([01:03:39](#)):

It was a process that's for sure. I tend to be long winded, so I was working with a developmental editor and that was, I found that very helpful. She would tell me, you know, this is too much information or, or this is too little information. You know, like I think the problem that I had is because I know and understand some of these concepts, I was writing them a little too vague, assuming other people would get them. And this developmental editor I worked with, she said, you know, Cathy, you get this stuff, but you really need to spell this out better for somebody that's new to this path, or maybe doesn't understand this concept as innately as you do. So that was one of the challenges was to, you know, get it all down on paper and yeah, it's all been in my but actually putting it on paper was another story. And it helped me gain more clarity about my work too, just having to, to pair it down and to be able to explain it in, in a shorter and, and more direct way.

Warwick Schiller ([01:04:40](#)):

Yeah. I found, you know, what did they say? If you wanna learn something really well, teach it because you, it to be able to, you know, teach it to somebody else. And, and I find like doing clinics, I've mentioned this before on the podcast, but I find that doing clinics, I will be, you know, doing something with a horse and explaining what I'm doing at the time. And something will come out of me that will give me a deeper insight into what I was doing there that I didn't, you know, I didn't even know I knew it, but then all of a sudden it's, I'm aware that, oh, yes, there is a deeper meaning behind that, that I wasn't sure. I actually knew. But now thinking back, yes, I knew that.

Cathy Woods ([01:05:22](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Another saying that, that I've heard, I can't coin it is we have the most to learn from what we are teaching.

Warwick Schiller ([01:05:31](#)):

Wow. That's a great one. We I'm gonna write that down. We have the most to learn from what we are teaching. Okay. So next question for you and I love this one is what do you think your true purpose here is this world?

Cathy Woods ([01:05:48](#)):

Wow. Well, I, I know that it is sharing yoga and sharing it in a very practical, relatable way, non esoteric that people can use it in their own lives, that they understand the bigger teachings of it. And I guess the ability to be able to, to share that in, in different formats, I mean, I've taught for corporate groups, I've taught for high level equestrians, I've taught for trail rider friends I've taught at ASRA. So being able to share in whatever way that audience need to hear and not be in my own ego about that, like, oh, I have

to look like a Yogi or I have to look like this high level equestrian to just be authentic and, and to just share. And I think that's my true purpose. And I read a, a book that also resonated with me.

Cathy Woods ([01:06:43](#)):

It's called God is a verb. And this was a book on mystic called Judaism. And it said that God or creator God is always, Goding. Warwick is always Warwick in Cathy is always Cathy in. So we're always in action. We're always growing and developing and, and learning. And I think that's my true purpose is to share these gift and to keep learning and, and experiencing life. I, I think that's what it's all about and, and experiencing a life that I wanna live to having some say so in creating that and manifesting that and the direction that that life takes to whatever degree is within my power,

Warwick Schiller ([01:07:29](#)):

You know, it's interesting while I was listening to you right there, I was just flipping through your book here. And one of the chapters, chapter 11 is called the power of intentions. And you were kind of just almost referring to, to that right then. Yeah. Very cool stuff. Okay. So now the question that you asked is, yeah, what did you wanna be, be as a child?

Cathy Woods ([01:07:59](#)):

Well, I, I guess I wanted to be a Yogi. I didn't know that word, but I knew I knew something along that those lines of that practice that kind of organically came about. I also wanted to be a dancer in a choreographer, which I fulfilled that dream as well. And I wanted to be a veterinarian or work with animals in some capacity. So again, kind of was very clear as a young child of where my interests were and pursued all of those, not the veterinary part, but being involved with animals and animal rescue and interacting with horses and giving these events that I clinics. So I've got to fulfill that part of, of working with animals and dancing. I have a long dance background. I was dance semi-professionally with a ballet company at one point in my life. And so yeah, pretty much fulfilled what I wanted to be as a child. And it's funny you ask that question because I have an old yearbook from like, I don't know, I think it as elementary school or middle school, and it says, what do you wanna be when you grow up? And I listed all those things. So I actually had them in writing, which also alludes to the, the power of intention.

Warwick Schiller ([01:09:08](#)):

You know, it's funny when I get guests on the podcast here, and sometimes they will just gloss over something that, that is a, that could be somebody else's life and crowning achievement, and they just kind of gloss over it. And you just said, oh yeah, I was a professional ballet dancer for a while. Like how many girls, who, or people that start out practicing ballet get to be a professional ballet dancer? Like what's the, what's the percentage.

Cathy Woods ([01:09:35](#)):

Well, I don't know. And let me clarify. It was semi-professional, it was a ballet company in Florida called city center ballet. So I was certainly not with the Jorey or the New York city ballet. It was semi-professional. I, I, I started dancing at about age seven and, and loved it and enjoyed it. And then really when I made that flip to conscious yoga, it was like such a, a natural bridge. Cause I was already body aware and used to some of the physical disciplines. Yeah, so that was a period in my life. I studied dance from age about seven and I kind of stopped about at age 18, really when I started embarking more heavily on the yoga path, but was with a ballet company for probably three years and did some performances in the, the Tampa bay area of Florida. So it was, it was a real joy, but certainly nothing. I

have continued as a profession. I still dabble in dance. In fact, seven years ago when I turned 50, I said, I'm gonna go back to yoga to dance class. And I went and started taking adult ballet, which was interesting because the 50 year old body is way different than the 18 year old body <laugh>

Warwick Schiller ([01:10:42](#)):

For. Yeah. You know, it's funny though, like ballet is, you know, it's just such a, a, a discipline. You know, I had a client years ago who had been a professional ballet dancer. Do you, do you remember BR shampoo?

Cathy Woods ([01:11:02](#)):

I do. Yes. Mm-hmm <affirmative>

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:05](#)):

Okay. So, you know, BR Shamp for those who don't know, they used to, you know, they used to have like a brick lady, a Brett girl for the year. And I remember Kate Jackson who was on Charlie's angels. She was a Brett girl. Well, anyway, this, this lady I know who was a professional ballet dancer was a brick girl. So was obviously, she was a, a famous ballet dancer, but she was getting in, she was into horses and she wanted to do the raining. And she started taking lessons with me and she had this green, you know, and she wasn't a, you know, she wasn't a terribly accomplished rider, but she decided she wanted do raining. And she had this green, young, green quarter horse, and she was coming for lessons once a week. And we were just working on basic, basic stuff.

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:49](#)):

And after about, I dunno, a couple of months, she'd probably been seven or eight times for lesson. She goes you know what work? I, I, I don't think this is what I wanna do. And I said, well, what do you wanna do? And she goes, well, I, I wanna do raining. And I said, have you ever danced Swan lake? Cuz that's the only ballet I really know of that in the Nutcracker suite. I said, you ever dance Swan lake? She goes, oh yes. Many times. And I said so and when did you start ballet? And she said, oh, when I was five and I said, oh, so you dance swine lake when you were five. And she goes, oh no, it takes many years of bending and stretching at the bar before you can Dowan lake. And I said, well, what we're doing right here, this is the bending and stretching at the bar and raining is the Swan lake.

Warwick Schiller ([01:12:35](#)):

And she looked at me and she's like, oh, okay, that makes sense now. And then she was, and then she was quite happy to do all this basic stuff, but she thought she wanted to do the big stuff and then realized, oh, this isn't, this is no different than ballet. This is exactly the same. But, but nothing's any different than ballet. Life is no different than ballet and life's no different than horse training. You don't just do the big thing. You do lots of little stuff that seemingly not related. And then all of a sudden the big things are relatively easy.

Cathy Woods ([01:13:08](#)):

Yeah. I, I agree with that. And, and also and correct me cuz you're, you're the, an adept horse trainer, but like in my programs I bring even high level. Equestrians sometimes back to basics and at first they're just like, oh, this is really, you know, not necessary. But then they find value to that. And, and it could be simply like leading three different horses and feel the energy of each horse. And to those of us who lead

our same horse every day, you can become very complacent to that energy. So simply leading a different horse is an opportunity to observe energy. So I think sometimes bringing people back to basics is helpful. And when I danced with the ballet company the ballet mistress made us all go back to take beginner ballet class. And we were all like, oh, why we've done this for years. And it was so helpful to go back to basics and remember those fundamentals and not operate on complacency or autopilot. So I think sometimes even advanced horseman or, or dancers or whatever benefit going back to basics, don't you?

Warwick Schiller ([01:14:15](#)):

Oh yeah. We had a, we had an intern a number of years ago who was really into salsa dancing. So into salsa dancing that she went to went to school, went to school in Mexico city. So she did a university in Mexico city and she, she she told me a dance saying, she said, beginning dancers tend to take intermediate lessons and intermediate dancers tend to take advanced lessons, but advanced dancers take beginning lessons. And I think, you know, I, I did a clinic in Scotland a few years ago and the guy that organized the, the clinic had been a black belt in karate when he was quite young. And he said once he got his black belt, he said he wanted to be a second degree black belt. And he thought he was gonna learn all this new stuff. And they said, so what you're gonna do now that you are a black belt, you're gonna go back to the beginning and you're gonna relearn everything you've already learned with a black belt's eyes, because you can only take in, you can only see it as deeply as you, as you were capable of seeing it.

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:13](#)):

And so I imagine when your teacher said, we're gonna go back and take beginning ballet, beginning ballet meant something different to you after you were an, you know, an advanced ballet dancer going back and doing the beginning was a different experience than learning the beginning when you weren't an an advanced ballet dancer.

Cathy Woods ([01:15:36](#)):

That's true because you have a different vantage point. Now it's a different filter. You're seeing it through as, as an advanced dancer, for sure. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:43](#)):

Yeah. I tell that people with horses, I tell people with horses that all the time that then you know, that the whole black belt story, you can't see it where a black belt's eyes until you're a black belt. And it's, it's kinda any book, you know, like you, you read a book and then it means something to you. And 10 years later, you go back and read the same book and it's like, oh, it's a, it's a different book. It's, there's more texture to it. There's more, you know, there's, there's a lot more to it than it was when you, you know, when you last read it

Cathy Woods ([01:16:15](#)):

Right. Perception and viewing it from different filters. And, and as we grow and change, I think our filters change as well.

Warwick Schiller ([01:16:23](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Most certainly. And you've got one last question here. I need to ask you, do you have a favorite horse?

Cathy Woods ([01:16:31](#)):

I have a favorite horse. Well I do you mean like personal horse or a favorite breed?

Warwick Schiller ([01:16:38](#)):

The question is, do you have a favorite horse? So you can interpret that any way you like.

Cathy Woods ([01:16:42](#)):

Yeah, I do. And he's on the cover of my book. He's an old guy now he'll be 28 soon. My other horse is 2032, so I've got two oldsters, but that's Dan and Dan is my hard horse. He's gonna be 28. I've known him since he's been about five and he was just a rocking trail horse and, and still would be, but arthritis is kind of getting the best of him and ring bone. But gosh, he's just, I, I think one of the reasons he's my favorite horse is he's a lot like me. He's kind of, kind of compact and athletic and he's smart and he's sharp and he's quick and he's got a ton of heart and always aiming to please. He's got a lot of personality, a little Aish maybe a little quick, quick to react sometimes too.

Cathy Woods ([01:17:33](#)):

So I think maybe that's why I relate to Dan so much. And we're just like, like one unit, I mean, this morning, it was kind of a funny story. I went and put both horses out their daytime pasture, and it's a big pasture that they like and it's divided into two and I put him out there and they were grazing fine in the first pasture. And I said, I'm gonna just go to the middle pasture and close the gate just so I don't have to go walk to the back 40 tonight to get them. And the minute I thought that, and the minute he saw my body language walking toward that gate, he hunkered down as low as he could and ran as fast as he could to make sure he got through the gate before mom closed it. So it's like one of those horses <laugh>. So, you know, I think something and he picks it up. So we, and we've just had so many great adventures together from camp trips to trail clearing to, to events. So that's my heart horse, Dan.

Warwick Schiller ([01:18:27](#)):

Yeah. He looks like a good guy. Okay. So, so it's been, it has been so much fun getting to know you a bit more, Cathy. How can how can people find out more about you?

Cathy Woods ([01:18:40](#)):

Yeah, so my website is Cathy woods yoga and it's Cathy with the C Cathy woods yoga. I'm also on Instagram and Facebook and I try to use those platforms to put good, helpful content and not just like what I had for dinner. So follow me on social. I try to keep us all plugged in that way. And I do live events this year, actually in may, I'm heading to Colorado. I do a find your inner cowgirl body mind equine retreat at sea lazy U ranch. So I still have a few spots opened if anybody's feeling spontaneous, that's coming right up. And

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:15](#)):

Then the other, when is that? This

Cathy Woods ([01:19:16](#)):



Year I'll be in Pennsylvania. Oh, that is May 5th through eighth,

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:22](#)):

Fifth through. Right. So tell us what's involved in that. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative> tell us what's involved in that find your inner cowgirl.

Cathy Woods ([01:19:30](#)):

Yeah. So my program is called body mind equine, and it's called find your inner cowgirl through body mind equine. And I do this every year. This is my fifth year at sea lazy U ranch, which is a lovely luxury guest ranch who takes the best care of their 200 herd of horses that I've ever seen. So I just love affiliating with them. So you're wind and dined and pampered at a five star resort, but yet program really turns into kind of a women's empowerment experience. Any level of Yogi or writer can come. We spend time on the mat. We do workshops and PowerPoints. We spend time in the arena with horses and then we trail ride in the afternoon and then we have really heartfelt discussion. So it becomes again kind of women's empowerment. Women's supporting women, lots of personal breakthroughs. So many people think, oh, I'm just coming there to do some yoga and ride some horses. And they find out it becomes more of a self discovery area. And so that's probably my all time favorite program to lead and that's coming right up. So I can't wait. And then I'll be in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts next year, Iceland. And my, you know, my calendar keeps billing with interesting events. Some of them are more clinic. Like some of them are more retreat, like, so just depending on what a person's looking for, but it's all on my website under my schedule.

Warwick Schiller ([01:20:51](#)):

Perfect. And the book yoga for writers, where can they get that?

Cathy Woods ([01:20:58](#)):

So my publisher is probably the best place to get that that's horse and writer, books.com. And you can order those online. They're also available on Amazon and, and other outlets, but of course, so I wanna promote my publisher and, and support small business. So that would be probably the best place to get that. And if you go on my website, there's a link directly to where to order it. And, and again, that book is so chalk full of YOIC nuggets. And it's so much more than just stretches on your horse. So I, that's some thing I really am passionate about getting that point across to people.

Warwick Schiller ([01:21:34](#)):

Yeah. It's a great book. And, you know, like I said, it's, it's, it's the secret sauce right there. Hey Cathy, thank you so much for joining me on the podcast. I it's been fascinating talking to you and, and, you know, I thought you were just a yoga instructor, but there's so much more to what you were here. And I think you are doing humanity and consciousness, a huge favor doing what you're doing.

Cathy Woods ([01:21:57](#)):

Mm, thank you so much. And, and truly the words that, that you put on my book mean the world to me, because again, like I said, at the beginning of this, you got it, you got the essence of it. And when I first met you and Robin I, I felt a, a really nice ice connection. And I'm like, these people kind of get yoga, they get yoga and there wasn't too many of those people at, at that I meet at expose especially clinicians. So I was thrilled to, to meet you and more thrilled that you were kind enough to read my book

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and, and share your thoughts about it. And I greatly appreciate your support and having me here night, look forward to staying connected.

Warwick Schiller ([01:22:35](#)):

Yeah. Looking forward to it too. So thanks so much for joining me and you guys at home. Thanks for joining us on the journey on podcast. We will catch you on the next episode.

Speaker 1 ([01:22:49](#)):

Thanks for listening to the Journey On Podcast with Warwick Schiller. Warwick has over 650 full-length training videos on his online video library at [videos.warwickschiller.com](https://videos.warwickschiller.com) Be sure to follow Warwick on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, to see his latest training advice and insights.