

**Candice Schutter:** [00:00:00] Welcome back to The Deeper Pulse. We're in the final stretch of the 'cult'ure series, only a couple of weeks to go. And this week we're continuing with a two part conversation. We touch upon some critical themes that are sure to resonate with pretty much anyone who has been closely following the 'cult'ure series over these many months.

If you missed last week's episode, you're going to want to press pause and circle back. Today's conversation picks up right where we left off. So let's get to it.

The stories and opinions shared here are based on personal experience and are not intended to malign any individual, group, or organization.

[00:01:00] This week, we're jumping straight away into part two with Adi Goren.

And just a quick heads up that Tracy and I invited Adi for one more sit down as a part of the Deconstructing Dogma series over on Patreon.

So if at the end of this episode you want to hear more, this is a great time to try out a seven day free trial. Especially because when the 'cult'ure series wraps, bonus content will continue on for the foreseeable future.

In our bonus convo that drops later this week, Adi speaks candidly about the economy of the Org. We talk numbers and how the Org's business model is pretty old school in that it fashions itself, sort of, after a feudal system structure where the majority of folks are struggling to make ends meet while a select few at the top are prospering.

We also examine how and why it is that organizations like the Org are able to get so many people to work for free or next to nothing, most of them women, all for a cause.

[00:02:00] There's lots there. So if you'd like to learn more head over to [patreon.com/thedeeperpulse](https://patreon.com/thedeeperpulse).

But first, let's pick up where we left off last week.

Just as a quick recap, in the first half of this conversation, Adi shared a little bit of her personal backstory and how she came to discover the Org practice. She spoke about how she stepped away from a career as an architect and subsequently devoted herself to creating a viable and cooperative community of Org teachers in her home country of Israel.

Toward the end of last week's episode, Adi had just shared about her regretful choice to reach out to Marissa for support with a sticky situation in her home community. She was publicly shamed by the Org co-founder, growing ever more disillusioned by a dysfunctional, enabling, and toxically positive culture.

And as the episode was wrapping, Adi was describing how, in an effort to do damage control, the Org CEO made the journey to [00:03:00] Israel to offer his support and friendship.

And, as it turns out, to groom Adi for a new role with the company.

We're going to pick up right where we left off.

Here's part two with Adi.

**Adi Goren:** I looked at him as a father figure. It's like very new agey, very listening, very supportive, very, like, you know, it's like a completely different kind of father figure. And I think a strong part of my personal healing in that week when he was there, is that I made meaning. I made everything. His input, I gave it, meaning. I really let him support me, you know. That was what was supportive is that I allowed myself. For everything that he said and suggested, which in hindsight was also a lot of manipulation. But at the time I didn't see it. [00:04:00] I really, I really felt, um, I looked up to him like a father. I really respected him.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

I, I wanna chime in here because one of the things that's been really great about connecting with you, Adi, is that we both had a close relationship to Seth. And we've been able to talk about that. And the, the disorienting nature of that attachment. And the, the love bomb entry into that attachment, how compelling it is. And how there's some real genuine connection that's there. And also a very dysregulated human who can cause a lot of harm simultaneously.

And I've spoken about this in my, in episode 33, how my relationship to him did in many ways mirror my relationship to my stepdad. And that there's a true bond here. And then there's also some manipulation and abusive dynamics going on, right.

So I just want to say. I don't know, just to share with everyone out there and [00:05:00] to, sort of get your back Adi around how genuine it feels.

**Adi Goren:** Yeah.

**Candice Schutter:** In the early moments of the relationship with Seth. How, how it was for me. And how I do think there is a, a part of him that is trying his very best. And is offering love in the way that he knows how to offer it. And there's an undercurrent of, in my opinion, him needing validation to such a degree that he's manipulating the situation simultaneously and not able to see that.

And there's, there's a pattern also of fixating on the next rising star. Selecting them, choosing them, zooming in on them, shining the light on them, spotlighting them, like all the things.

So I just, I, when you told the story of. It's sort of like a courtship in a way, even though there's nothing romantic on. It is sort of like a courtship.

**Adi Goren:** There's a man who's hanging out with me, who wants to listen to me. Who's witnessing my work. Who's taking photographs of me. I mean, it's [00:06:00] incredibly empowering and loving. And.

And I want to say also, I remember a moment. I mean, he, he told me that he was, uh, at some point a contractor, a builder. And I told him I'm an architect by profession. So we connected on that level as well. And he said to me something that really stuck with me and, and was also the birthing place of The Architecture of Movement is he said to me.

Because I had completely walked away from architecture and turned into movement and shut down that entire side of my personality and of my being. And the architect archetype was basically asleep.

And he said to me, I really think that for your healing you need to own both.

And I was like, that's so powerful.

And I had, you know, in 2010, I had no idea what that would look like. How can I be an architect and, uh, movement? And only four [00:07:00] years later did I understand the way that the two can merge in, in my being, in who I am.

So that was also thanks to Seth.

**Candice Schutter:** Excellent advice. Yeah.

**Tracy Stamper:** Yeah. And that's beautiful and profound to hear and has changed the trajectory. That's a huge gift.

**Candice Schutter:** Right. Which really underscores the both and of all of this.

Like this isn't about painting certain people as victims and other people as villains and that they're. Like, it's about bringing that complexity and that nuance in and saying, like the really wonderful things came out of most of the relationships we talk about.

It's just, we're here to talk about the pain and the hurt. And so, yeah, there's more emphasis on the icky stuff because that's what we're Deconstructing. We know how to be in good relationship dynamics. That's great. It feels really good. But like, how do we move through when it is disorganized, disorienting, and a both-and helpful-harmful situation?

I [00:08:00] mean.

**Adi Goren:** So an entity comes from the United States being kind of with an attitude of this is going to be the territory where I am going to develop the Org work. I and another seven teachers have grassroots settings here. And I'm creating intensives and so on. And then this doesn't really work. But now she's already a second generation trainer in training. The big email clash that happens and the devastation of it, uh, Seth comes over for the rescue. From my perspective now, it looks like he understood that these are two, very successful business opportunities for him. So he would like to keep these two players on the playing field somehow.

So I feel that he had created a role for me, kind of [00:09:00] giving me the carrot that I'm hoping for. I understood quite early on then, I would not be the second generation trainer for the country. So I'd given up on that dream because obviously, like there can't be two producers. There's obviously no room for two local trainers.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Tracy Stamper:** Oh, so you had wanted, that had been a dream at one point?

**Adi Goren:** It wasn't really a dream, 'cause I hadn't taken the black belt yet. But it's a natural progression as somebody who has been building community, who had my students become teachers. And I mean, it's like a natural progression. I have built a community of teachers at the time.

And that's where I felt that the narrative was being colonized by her. Is that she obviously had a very different perspective. Um, everything that was built, it seemed like was communicated outwardly, also probably [00:10:00] to HQ, as this is my doing. Meanwhile, it's not her doing. We've been doing all this work together years before you showed up.

**Candice Schutter:** Right.

**Adi Goren:** Um, but there was a very strong taking of credit where credit did not belong. That was very annoying. That was, that was infuriating. Annoying would be kind. It was infuriating.

Um, and so, he said, I think in one of our communications, that he would like for me to work for HQ, and represent, uh. Like again, kind of the whole love bombing and rising star talk.

It's like, you're like, la la la.

**Candice Schutter:** It's a lot. It's a lot when it's coming at you from him. It really is. It's quite the sales pitch.

**Adi Goren:** Yeah, it's a lot, it's a lot. It's like, Ooh, all my, all my, all my feathers.

**Candice Schutter:** All my feathers have been fluffed. That's right.

**Adi Goren:** [00:11:00] And dare we say, I mean, we are all dancers. And so by the archetype of the dancer, we love being seen. I mean, we are.

**Candice Schutter:** Mmhmm.

**Adi Goren:** teachers, but we are also performing in a way. So it was, um.

So, he offered me a position. And it was very unique, cause he said, you will be the first and only HQ, um, member who's not working in Portland. You know, we trying something new.

And then later on, he, he added somebody in Germany as well. So we were kind of like, also like a trial run of people outside Portland were going to work for HQ. Like satellites. So to serve local Israeli community in Hebrew and possibly grow it in the whole Middle East. I mean, that's how, that's his words. And basically do all the, the membership, any communications of explaining how the [00:12:00] system works in Hebrew. And basically support the community.

I was not feeling very confident to do that. It felt like a bit, I take work very seriously. It felt like, like a very serious responsibility in the way that I perceived the Org. And it took me a few months before I said yes.

And when I said yes, he sent me.

Back then there was no Zoom. It was before WhatsApp. He sent me a phone that I could see Marissa's light and I could see Seth's light and the receptionist light. And so I, I was literally like somebody with the phone of the actual office. I was like, I was feeling like, I mean, I'm in space technology.

And I've got this phone that I can talk inside the United States to people. People can phone me inside the United States, and I'm picking it up. In meanwhile, the whole of [00:13:00] India is picking up the phone right now. But it was like brand new.

**Candice Schutter:** Hmm. Right. Right.

**Adi Goren:** It was like new technology.

And very soon after I started working there, uh, the person was in charged of the general email, kind of communicating the voice of the Org to anybody who has any kind of question to the general email that's published everywhere, on the website, everywhere. Um, it's the go to email. I was in charge to answer it, because the person has resigned or quit or was.

**Candice Schutter:** Who knows?

**Adi Goren:** Who knows?

**Candice Schutter:** Uh huh.

**Adi Goren:** So I took over that email.

Oh, it wasn't tended to for a few, for like three weeks. So it was like a chockablock emails unanswered. And I dove right in. And every time I answered an email, I felt what would the voice of the Org say?[00:14:00]

**Candice Schutter:** Hmm. Mm hmm.

**Adi Goren:** That's how seriously I took my work.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** Yeah. I mean, I'm laughing at it now, but I was just so devoted. I was so like.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** Like, yeah. I'm representing something so kind and good and big and healing and wonderful. And how do I best answer this?

**Candice Schutter:** It seems like a little side note, but it feels kind of important. Can you tell us about themes you were noticing in terms of things people were writing about?

**Adi Goren:** Uh, it was very odd to me that people were very concerned with their profile page on the website, on the international website that, uh, that HQ was managing. That their correct belt level be reflected. It was really strange to me. And I noticed how important it was for people to be positioned in the hierarchy.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

**Adi Goren:** It was clear that they took it as, [00:15:00] um, as their level of importance was reliant on this is how my profile picture looks and that's, that's. There were some things that they could manage on their own, but the belt level had to be done from the inside. A person from the inside would have to do it for them.

So that was like a very strong pattern. And I shared with you, Candice, that it reminded me from, um, army days, this thing of ranking. It's like if you outrank someone, then you have more power over someone.

**Candice Schutter:** Yes.

**Adi Goren:** And I don't know if I shared this with you in our talk before the podcast, but very soon after I started working for HQ, they changed the fees for membership from 420 to 520 US dollars. So there was a massive uprising. Um, I don't remember the specific communities, but there were certain communities that had [00:16:00] they ganged up together. Um, They would have been able to impose their power back onto HQ. But they didn't know about each other.

And they couldn't unite as a collective. Because the system is not set up for teachers to unite as a collective. For teachers to have some kind of an organization body. It's just not in the system. So that's how the system can continue to manipulate and power over, by separating.

So, Seth had told me. I told him that this is what's happening. What do we do? I mean, people are saying that it's unreasonable prices and that the price hike is too much.

And he said the official response is basically it's take it or leave it that. I mean, it was beautifully said, blah, blah, blah. But the bottom line is this is the new price. If you want to

stay on, stay on. If you [00:17:00] can't, then goodbye. We're always here to take you back. It should you choose to.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

**Adi Goren:** It was hard to communicate.

**Candice Schutter:** I bet.

**Adi Goren:** I felt the plight. And I represented the bad guys. I'm a teacher, and I agree with my fellow teachers. Um, but, that was the job.

So there's a 10 hour difference between Portland and Tel Aviv. So when these guys are back in Portland, they're waking up. I'm going to sleep. When I wake up, they've gone to sleep.

So in fact, there's maybe just one or two hours where we overlap. So I was living the radar, doing the silent work of answering emails. So nobody noticed me. There were just, uh, Yamuna who was on the podcast. She was cutting my checks. So, you know, everything I had to do, I got through her. And, uh, things were, were working fine.

But I did [00:18:00] notice, uh, it was impossible not to notice the love bombing. Um, we're welcoming onto the team so and so. We're looking forward to having her. And then like a couple of weeks later, she's just gone, vanishes. Like she's never been. There's no mention of why she left.

And that was going on a lot.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** These introduction emails of who's joining our team.

And also what was shocking to me was the amount of emails where people were saying, uh, I'm not going to show up to the office this morning. I'm sick.

And I was thinking to myself for a wellness practice, the amount of sick leave. It's just, something very off here. I mean, people were calling in sick all the time. And I remember telling my friend that the turnover of [00:19:00] staff was quicker than changing socks and underwear. It was just like.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** In and out, in and out.

And, uh, fortunately for me, one of the staff members who was there was really looking out for me. She was chiming me in with all the things that are going on under the radar. So she

would text me and say, this is happening right now. But in formal emails, there was no mention of anything.

So I knew what was going on with, because she kind of fed me the information. So it was clear that there's two levels of communication in the office. What she can speak on the phone, what she can tell me on the phone. And meanwhile, she's writing to me, um, big fallout now. This is going on. It was. It was very. Yeah, it was hectic.

[00:20:00] What saved me along the way was having the little red flags that helped me, uh, navigate the path. Even though I was all in, there was always a question mark hanging out next to me.

So, I remember when I was working for HQ, uh, one of my colleagues was on leave, so I got to cover her inbox. And her inbox had communications that were circulated amongst the first generation trainers and Marissa. And I witnessed the interactions. And they were very patriarchal. They were very, I'm the tyrant, and you all are listening to me. This is not a democracy. This is my way or the highway.

So these attitudes I read. I was horrified. And I carried on with my [00:21:00] work.

**Candice Schutter:** So let's move to the sort of, turning point in your story. There was this event. Do you want to describe for us, set the stage for this event?

**Adi Goren:** So at that point in time, Marissa's daughter was working from outside the office. And I was working from Israel. And we were the only satellite components of HQ.

And Seth had this idea that we should all think what is our ideal Org reality and come together and brainstorm together.

So I was sent an email saying that they're going to get a ticket for me and a ticket for Marissa's daughter. And we're going to all get together in Portland. And I'm super excited. Um, I was really happy about the idea and being invited. And then prepared like a whole [00:22:00] demonstration of what I'm going to share. I really took it to heart.

And a couple of days later, it was decided that it's too expensive and we're just going to be communicating in through Skype.

So, uh, with a time difference, it was Friday night in Israel. Friday night is like Sunday lunch for most Christians. Uh, like the family time. And in Israel, Friday night is the night where we have like a big family dinner. So I'm now Friday night dedicating to this conference call.

And we are around the table, except that I'm on a computer screen. And I see whoever is on my screen, I don't see the table. So my sensation was, I'm at home. I'm in my pajamas. It's late at night. I think it was like nine o'clock at night in Israel on a Friday night. It's like a very relaxed setting.



[00:23:00] Marissa wasn't in the room. It was, uh, the general manager of the time, the person who was in charge of the computerization. It was all the people who held positions like me, who were dealing with the memberships and so that was the stuff.

Seth was, uh, saying. And he talks like very, like, upbeat and quick, and kind of like, he's got like this cowboy thing. And he's very energetic. And it's really, it's fun to listen to him.

And then he says things like, um, and maybe I'm, I mean, I might be misquoting him. But the gist of things was they were offered a lot of money over the years to sell the Org as like infomercials kind of level. They never went for the money. They are passionate about the work.

Okay, that being said, he said, I could have been driving a Ferrari on the French [00:24:00] Riviera by now. But no, I'm here and I'm like hardworking. And I'm like passionate about getting this right.

And then he went on to say, the Org should be, I don't know if he said as successful. But the way that he sees it, his ideal Org reality is it's like Nike, that it is like Coca Cola.

And I'm thinking to myself, but Coca Cola is drink. And Nike is a shoe and a clothing line. And the Org is a personal development and movement practice. How? I don't get it. It's like, I don't get it. This is commodities that people buy and use. And the Org is a program that is like a spiritual quest. It's a personal healing modality.

It's like, what's going on? So I'm like puzzled.

And at some point also getting a [00:25:00] bit horrified by how he is presenting it. And reminding you, I'm like, this is Friday night. I'm totally relaxed. And I'm like, this is bullshit. You know, that's what I want to say. And that's how I feel.

And, uh, he went on to say about the next generation trainings.

And I'm so sorry, Tracy. Because this is, this is touching your story so directly.

Um, he said, we've got 55. I think, something like that. 55. He literally did an elimination process. And he said, we've got 55. And then he did the calculation, a business calculation. Each of you will bring about four people to each training, four trainings a year. You will source your, your best friends, your friends, your family, your local community. And then, he literally, [00:26:00] you will run out of people. And you will drop away.

And, you know, and then when he said that, um, I can't say that he broke my heart. It, it, um, it horrified me. It horrified me that he's so detached from my ideal Org reality.

And my presentation was how it is a grassroots program that is connected to what the teachers are needing and support of. And it was just a fracture between what my vision. And

my experience, not my vision. I don't have visions for things. I just have my experience and what I want there to be. And what he's suggesting, it was such a clash.

And um, when the floor was open to comments. I lashed out at him. And I [00:27:00] basically said, um, to quote him, I went ballistic.

Nobody said anything after I'd spoken. He was kind of shell shocked. So he didn't respond either. They just moved on. And, uh, the following day I got an email from Marissa saying that I am not aligned with the Org vision. And, uh, suggesting that my work with them should be terminated.

My response to Marissa's email was, I am aligned with the Org vision. And I was invited on a conference call to voice my opinion. My opinion doesn't run the show. It's just my opinion. I was asked to offer my opinion. That was my opinion. And I think it was quite clear. I mean, it didn't say so, but it's quite clear that you cannot [00:28:00] fire a person for doing the job that you've just asked them to do if they did the job. The job was tell us your opinion. If you don't like my opinion, don't take my opinion. But don't fire me over it.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

**Adi Goren:** She didn't fire me.

But I was devastated. I, the, the fracture was there. She was no longer my figurehead for a long time. He has just devastated me with his vision. I've never heard him speak like that before. I was horrified. I, I, I was really disgusted. And internally I was out.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

**Adi Goren:** I was out that moment. But I couldn't be out, because my life was invested in it. My livelihood was invested in it. I had spent [00:29:00] six years that preceded that conference investing all my energy and all my attention on building this. So I couldn't leave. I was in a catch 22 right there.

**Candice Schutter:** Can I interject for one moment? Because I want to just ask you one thing before you continue. I'm wondering if we could just take just a moment to look critically at this idea that you went ballistic.

**Adi Goren:** Yeah.

**Candice Schutter:** Because it feels very much to me like this is an example of tone policing. That this is an example of this person has a, and yeah, maybe there's a cultural difference in the way that you deliver your truth. But not only did they ask for your opinion, the whole purpose of the session, as I understand it is to brainstorm about the vision. And to offer feedback and to refine the vision.

And so you hear Seth's vision, you feel a sense of horror. Understandably. [00:30:00] And you express it.

Like, do you, Adi, now looking back, knowing what you know now, do you think you went ballistic. Is that how you would describe the feedback you offered?

Can you give us just a hint or a peek at the feedback you offered? Even if it was said in a raised, animated voice. What is it that you were communicating in that moment that he didn't want to hear?

**Adi Goren:** I don't think that I was shouting. I wasn't shouting. I was speaking passionately. I didn't respond directly to his elimination process. Of how, I guess he was, uh, suggesting that, um, there would only be 13 left from the 55. It'll be like a natural fizzle out.

But I did say that this is, this is people's, this is people's lives. This is people's livelihoods.

**Candice Schutter:** Right.

**Adi Goren:** And, uh, and I remember [00:31:00] also, uh, years later sharing it with a local Org leader here. And telling her my story and how horrified I was at that meeting. And she just said, you know, I think you're being naive. I think that's just business.

**Candice Schutter:** Wow.

**Adi Goren:** Um, so until I met you and the podcast, I had believed that I am naive. And that my natural reaction maybe was an overreaction. I thought what I felt, shamed for voicing my opinion.

And I wasn't in the room. I wasn't in the setting. It has its rules of codes of behavior. I wasn't subscribing to those codes, because I'm sitting in my pajamas in Israel, in my living room and chatting to you.

So, you know, I felt embarrassed that I had spoken the way that I'd spoken. Cause I did feel that it was a faux pas.

**Candice Schutter:** Tracy, I'm really [00:32:00] curious, you as a second generation trainer hearing this story and hearing Seth's description of what can only be described as the commodification of individuals, the disposability of individuals, their lives and the devotion.

I have to emphasize to listeners who aren't a part of the Org or haven't been following this series closely when it comes to the Org. The amount of investment that individuals who have gotten to this point have invested. Literally countless hours. There's no way to calculate the number of hours, the tens of thousands of dollars in many cases that have been spent, especially for those who are traveling to these trainings. The sense of identity, purpose, feeling of being on mission. Feeling like, I mean, pretty much everyone I've spoken to who was really invested in the Org said, I saw myself doing this for the rest of my life. Till I was

on my deathbed, were the words that Mark [00:33:00] had said about running the studio that he was a part of. And that's a really common sensibility.

So these folks who are investing in something that they see as a lifetime investment. For Seth to speak about you all in that way. They'll just fall away. And it's, it's fine because we'll have our 13 remaining that can, and then we can.

And we see this happening. And then we can seed the third generation. We can do it all over again and get the money all over again. And for him to actually name what we all know was going on, like, what's, what is that like for you, Tracy, to hear that?

**Tracy Stamper:** The first time I heard it. Candice, you had shared that with me. Um, after the two of you, I think I was traveling. I wasn't able to join you for the first conversation. And, thank you, Candice, for sharing that with me. Because that is not a piece that I would want to react to publicly. [00:34:00]

I did call, and I left you an audio message about my authentic in the moment response. Hmm. I was, um, there were a lot of expletives.

Right now I'm thinking about all of the endless promises about how as second generation trainers, we were promised so much support. And very specifically, it was very detailed. It was outlined. It was, part of the whole package that we were sold.

And when I think about how fucking hard I worked to make this work, including sacrificing at times, what was really best for my family. Because I so wanted this to work. And I so wanted to be a part of this. And I so wanted to share the [00:35:00] work.

And to hear about, that was me he was talking about.

I don't know if he knew that at the time. I don't know if he was thinking in terms of names. But that was fucking me. And the sacrifices that I made that took a toll on my family. To just hear that, oh, well, there'll be some who fall off. I was one of the ones who fell off, and it was fucking devastating.

And it's not just their business plan. It's my life.

**Candice Schutter:** Yes.

**Tracy Stamper:** It's my life. Adi, like you were saying, these are people's lives. Like what, what is numbers with a business? Those come and go. Years in a life. Don't come and go.

**Adi Goren:** The Org is not Coca Cola.

**Tracy Stamper:** And it is not Nike.

And in a lot of [00:36:00] ways, Adi, I feel like this was a missing piece for me. Because I felt that lack of support. I felt that, oh, they'll just fall off. But the lip service was so different. And it was so confusing.

And so to finally, thank you so much for your courage in sharing this. To finally hear, yeah, that was all part of the plan.

It's like, thank you for just naming the elephant in the room.

Thank you.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah. These are people's lives. And I also.

Thank you, first of all, Tracy, for being willing to go there. I mean, this is raw stuff. And it is your life and, and your, your years. And deception around the marketing to all of you has a real deep and lasting impact on your lives. And [00:37:00] it was really important to me that we underscore this.

And I agree, Adi, thank you so much for being brave enough to share this with us. Because this is something I think a lot of trainers, as bittersweet and gut wrenching as it must be, need to hear like this is flat out. There's an awareness around it. This isn't even something that's happening blind. It's part of the business plan. Like you said, Tracy is just, it's, it brings just a feeling of disgust over me, and sadness. Yeah.

So after you have this email exchange with Marissa, one of the ways you described it when we first talked was sort of you made nice.

**Adi Goren:** Yes, I made nice. I'm I'm now out to keep my job. So I'm going to say whatever it takes to keep my job. I'm [00:38:00] aligned with the with the Org vision. I'm also playing small. You asked me for my opinion. I gave my opinion. That's all it is. I'm completely on board.

So then I stay on board and then come September, I'm producing the second level training in Israel with the trainer that I took that hosted her now already. And she tells me, that she had just been to Portland and that she felt that something stinky is going on with my, uh, my rival.

She went into the office. She was there for a long time. They had a meeting. And she has a feeling that something bad is happening behind the scenes.

**Candice Schutter:** Hmm.

**Adi Goren:** I don't know what that means.

About two weeks after she leaves, I get a phone call from Seth. And it's [00:39:00] again nighttime in Israel. And I'm at my home. And he's shouting at me on the phone. He's yelling. And he tells me that she had come into Portland. So probably a second generation trainer

event. So she was there. And she came to the office. She had translated a letter in which I had written to her in Hebrew. She translated into English. And in the letter, um, I am threatening her. Uh,, and he's shouting at me that we don't do that. And that's not how Org members treat other Org members. And you are part of the Org HQ. And we don't treat, that's not how we treat Org trainers.

, I'm quite shocked that he won't have a conversation about this. Because the letter that he's referring to was written before, we, like years before when we were fighting before the peace.

**Candice Schutter:** [00:40:00] Oh.

**Adi Goren:** It's an old, old, old letter.

**Candice Schutter:** Wow.

**Tracy Stamper:** You're kidding.

**Adi Goren:** And he doesn't want to hear my side of the story. And he doesn't want to hear anything. And I felt he was looking for an opportunity to fire me.

And, uh, he yelled at me on the phone and I said to him, nobody yells at me. And that's basically how the relationship ended.

Um, so I was, I don't know if I bring it across. I'm kind of feeling dissociated from it. But it was very, um, it was horrifying on so many levels. How dare he yell at me? How dare he not listen to my side of the story? I am working for him. I am his staff member. Ask me. Ask me. He wouldn't ask me. He was out to fire me. I felt that he was looking for an [00:41:00] opportunity to get his rage out at me for what happened four months prior. That's what I felt. That was what I felt was going on there.

And at the same time, I don't understand why is she backstabbing me now? Years later. We don't have anything bad going on. It's like I don't get it.

And, um, I was sick for three weeks after that. I was ill. I, like, my, my skin. I had like boils and rashes. And I was ill to my stomach. And I was, I was very ill for three weeks.

And I, I didn't know how I'm going to, how do I walk away now? I'm managing the website that I had started in 2006 with the other seven. And, I am [00:42:00] known in the community for working for HQ. How do I step away? How do I walk away? What do I do?

My livelihood is from HQ and from my Org classes. And for Org trainings. That's how I make a living. What do I do?

So, I mean, the, the fracture was so deep. And, uh, I'd written a very high road letter, a beautiful email explaining. And I am leaving, my position at HQ. And that the website is going to be phased out. And I walked away.

And then the following two years was an exploration of how am I continuing to teach. Keep my student body.

And by the way, my student body doubled the month that I'd left.

**Candice Schutter:** Oh.

**Adi Goren:** Doubled. I had [00:43:00] 60 students and I had 120 students the following month. And it just, for me, it was a feedback, like an energy feedback of how much I was investing my energy in somebody else's business. It's not my business. This is my business. And.

**Candice Schutter:** Right.

**Adi Goren:** When I was investing my energy, students were showing up. So I started teaching my classes and, and asking myself, authentically speaking, why am I saying what I'm saying in my classes? Is this what I, I believe? Is that truth, in my mind? Is this, is this my experience? Or am I saying what I was taught to say?

**Candice Schutter:** Mm-Hmm.

**Adi Goren:** Am I mimicking what I saw my teachers?

And within two years, my language changed. And I was practicing Aikido all this time. I had belonged already in an Aikido community, which was a very good anchor for me. [00:44:00] And, my friends remained my friends and my colleagues.

But for me, the first week after Seth yelled at me and fired me in such a disrespectful, hurtful, and uncalled for. It, I just felt it was so unjust. I just, it's. How can you treat me like this? It's just, just like, I couldn't fathom it.

That first week, I was furious. I remember, walking with my best friend, uh, on the beach and telling her all my revenge plots.

[laughter]

just getting everything out. And, um, yeah. So it was, uh, it was, it was very good. I aired it out before I sat down, write the letter, and to choose.

I wanted my [00:45:00] fellow teachers and the students, it was important for me that there would be peace. I didn't want to create havoc. I didn't want to create drama.

In hindsight, who I am today, I would have spoken up. At that time, I believed that it was the right way and the high way. I no longer think that.

The reason why I don't think that is that now I've been away for 11 years, almost 11 years. And the same problems persist. At the time I was made to believe that if only Adi wasn't on the Israeli terrain, there would have been a beautiful, peaceful community.

It was her. And I wasn't developed enough. I wasn't aware enough. It was. It was me.

**Candice Schutter:** Gaslight. Gaslight. Gaslight. Gaslight. Gaslight.

**Adi Goren:** And blamed [00:46:00] and shamed and gaslight.

Um, and now I know that it is something very wrong systemically. I own my lack of awareness. But that is, um, my shadow work to do. And I'm doing it. But there is also a bigger picture in which my shadow fit in beautifully with the bigger shadow.

**Candice Schutter:** Right. Yeah.

Interesting you bring in the shadow piece. There was something that you said, I wonder if you would share. You said it in our first conversation.

You sort of spoke to it from the very beginning in terms of like your sense of identity being tethered to the Org, right? And what that can end up looking like. And how that can end up showing up.

I just think that would be a really helpful thing to speak [00:47:00] to how we end up being taken advantage of basically when we surrender our identity.

**Adi Goren:** So I think that this is my own personal development through this whole experience is that I felt that, um, I don't think that I was losing my identity. I, I literally did not have a sense of identity. Um, I had, um, I was seeking to find myself through the Org. And, uh, I embodied the Org through me, but there was no sense of me. It was the Org. And I feel that there's a pattern in the way that I behaved that showed that I had no boundaries.

In Hebrew, there's a word, the Hebrew word for whore, is *prutza*. It means, it's the same word *pirtza* is, um, the same word for, uh, broken fence. The boundary is not closed.

So, [00:48:00] um, and also a sense of identity is like having a skin that you call your own. This is me. This is I. This is my identity.

I didn't have that sense. In a way, I felt I was skinless. And probably why I was feeling so hurt when I was, um, fired by Seth. It, it was like he could reach deep into me and hurt me the deepest. Had no healthy boundaries of saying. In fact, when I said do not shout at me, that was the beginning of me setting boundaries.

This is where. It's not okay to come in the middle of the night to my sacred home and yell at me. The, the, the empowerment, embodiment practice, disempowering me at such a level. It's, um.[00:49:00]



So my process of developing boundaries and, uh, having a healthy sense of identity was part of leaving. Part of leaving the Org was starting to, to ask, what is my authentic voice? What is my idea of freedom of expression? Of, um, what is healing?

All these questions that were burning in me, I could finally like really address and be allowed to stay in the unknown. It was not comfortable. But it was an exploration that I was, uh, working through.

I'm still exploring. It's a, it kind of comes in spirals.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

One of the most impactful moments for me of our first conversation was when, it kind of grew out of the conversation around the dancer archetype and this incredibly, I think, [00:50:00] astute observation that you had around who's attracted to the work. Um, the undercurrents potentially that are guiding people to the work. What the work provides, the void that it fills. And then the re traumatization that ends up happening in the culture.

And I just, I would love for you to speak to that a little bit. Because it really just gave language to something that I have been sensing. So, would you elaborate on that?

**Adi Goren:** Yeah.

uh, in 2010, I was exposed to, um, through the integral dojo where I studied, mindfulness and meditation. And um, through my Aikido sensei time, I came to meet Thomas Hübl, who is a spiritual teacher. And, uh, started studying with him and, um, Thomas teaches collective trauma. And it [00:51:00] had occurred to me healing collective trauma doesn't teach how to collectively traumatize.

**Tracy Stamper:** Good to know.

**Candice Schutter:** Good we're clarifying to that.

**Adi Goren:** And when I was introduced, uh, to, uh, Thomas' ways and, uh, his methodology, by attending, uh, week long seminars. A kind of intense seven day long seminars, uh, once a year, I start realizing that, uh, everything that I do in my classes and most of my students are actually healing trauma.

And it just gave language to something that I never, it never occurred to me that, um, Israel as a state was born out of the collective trauma of the Jewish people in the Holocaust. And, um, very many of us are 2nd, 3rd [00:52:00] generation Holocaust survivors. If not directly, then indirectly by having our extended family, there's just a void. I don't know who my great grandparents were. I don't know anything about. A whole story of my family and so many of people in Israel.

So the sense of identity and the unknowns of identity is something that is, uh, is not unique in Israel. It's, um, I don't want to go into it too much. But I want to say that there's that trauma, that's the underlying. And then there is the persistent trauma of and re traumatizing of wars. And so, the women in my class, we're all processing at some level a collective trauma. It's not unique [00:53:00] to any specific family. It's not a trauma that happened to a family. This is something that is happening to all of us.

And then on top of that, I'm starting to notice, there's also the feminine, the female trauma. The female body's trauma. And then things started to kind of like, uh, interconnect. I started realizing, um. I remember my, my Aikido teacher, I, I shared with him things about the Org. And he said, well, maybe, maybe the first entry to heal is to just learn to experience joy. Maybe that's what it is.

And it just dawned on me. Because I thought, oh, it's that was after I'd already left. I said, kind of like everybody's in denial there. They're just so in denial. Love and light, love and light. Joy, joy, joy. It's like, why are you not addressing the issues?

So he was very [00:54:00] compassionate. And he said, you know, maybe before that one has to learn how to just be in joy. And from there, only then able to start looking at what is really the trauma. What is really, it's like, it's another, it's a different phase of development.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** And I started noticing in my classes. I really developed a community completely separate from the Org, just like a very sheltered bubble.

So when Org students would come to my classes, I would feel energetically and in their attitude a very different vibe. So there is no presencing of pain in the body. There is no talk about pain.

And the human experience is painful. It is a basic [00:55:00] experience. And denying pain is not, is not going to eliminate it. But presencing the pain, and then learning to work with the pain. And learning to move alongside the pain. Carry on exploring joy and finding a way to express and to move with the pain, be it physical or emotional, learning how to be with it. That is how we start to heal it.

If we don't presense it, it's, it's always going to be a shadow element that's just going to come and bite us in the ass. It's just, that's just the nature of the beast.

And I would start sensing in my classes that my students behave a certain way, because they've got now other tools.

I'm not saying that, um, that I don't have, I mean, there's a lot of elephants in my room as well that I still need to develop and see. Not saying Oh, I've like figured it out.

It's not.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** You see. But [00:56:00] I do see the joy hungry people coming to get their fix.

And that really, it freaks me out a bit. Because it kind of triggers something in me. And I just want to like, okay, just breathe, just breathe.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

The high arousal states. And how there's this element of being able to connect to joy. It brings in a whole question, which could be a whole, maybe a good episode for deconstructing dogma on like, these high arousal states that get confused with joy that people then become addicted to.

And we can also be addicted to pain. I mean, that's a whole other side of the coin, right? So it's like this sense of clinging to this one sort of flavor or shade of emotion. And this is sort of a defining thing.

And, and, I told the story in one of the podcasts when I went back to the Org studio after being gone for a long time. And I walked in and I was just like, [00:57:00] what the actual fuck is this? Everyone was altered in a way that I wasn't anymore. And it was just mind boggling to me. And seeing it from the outside. It was like, they're under the influence of something. They're on like a manic journey, sort of. Like they're not even embodied. Like, interestingly, they're like in this sort of dissociative place and calling it embodiment.

And I remember when we spoke, one of the things you said when we first spoke about this is you said that the thing about stepping into the dancer archetype, stepping into the Org is like when, when you're dealing with trauma, there are no words. I remember you saying like, when we're dealing with trauma, there are no words. And so movement becomes this vehicle. And it, everyone. Maybe not everyone, but everyone I've spoken to had this like, ah, moment with the Org. It was like, I have a voice through my body I never knew that I had.

**Adi Goren:** Yes.

**Candice Schutter:** And we [00:58:00] can begin to dialogue with things that can't be spoken about. Maybe because they're not supposed to be, or also we just don't have language about, because they're developmental traumas or they're intergenerational traumas. And there's no language in this existing culture that I live in that will allow it.

And another thing that you said that is of that vein, is you said, "the Org is the patriarchy pretending to be empowerment." The trauma is just actually repeating and recycling itself.

And then when people become commodified. So you, Tracy, go into this organization, you and many others, and you say, this is my path of healing and purpose and da, da, da, da, da, da. And you go in because this is your way out of the patriarchy. This is your way out of the capitalistic grind. This is your way. And then, those very same forces.

**Tracy Stamper:** Yes.

**Candice Schutter:** Act upon you. There's this re traumatization.

**Adi Goren:** It's the ultimate, uh, glass ceiling. You know, that's what it feels like. It's like, there's no way [00:59:00] out. It's like no matter where I go, I will always hit the glass ceiling. It's almost like I am, um, I'm thinking this is the story that I'm telling. And then I find out that I'm actually being cast as a side character in somebody else's main story.

And I get killed off.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

**Tracy Stamper:** Oh.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah. That's the moral injury at the core of this. And that's why this whole series exists because the therapist asked me the question, like, have you tended to your spiritual wounds?

And what she was saying, which I realized as I dug into the material, was the moral injuries that you'd suffered when you thought what you were standing for was holy and divine and all these things, and then it ended up being just more of the same shit that hurt you the very first time you were ever hurt. It's the same thing.

Like that's a huge, [01:00:00] massive moral injury. And like, how do we trust not the world, ourselves ever again?

**Adi Goren:** The redeeming factor is in the strength of spirit to grow and overcome. But the act itself is not redeemable.

**Candice Schutter:** And the shame that so many of us have carried for all these years is not ours to carry. And that's why these stories have to be told. It's not ours. It's not our shame.

Not to say that we don't have our own healthy shame to contend with. Of course we do. But there was a huge amount of shame offloaded onto each of us. And they were able to do it for so long because they siloed us from each [01:01:00] other.

And this is, it is a revolution in that sense, you know.

And some people will be like, oh, like you're trying to take down the la la la. It's like, we're just taking our fucking lives back, y'all. It's not about them.

**Tracy Stamper:** I just want to be fucking okay and not miserable. No, I'm not trying to do anything. I'm just trying to live my own life. And connect with like-mindeds and... Bah! Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** You know, and I'm feeling at the pit of my stomach now. It's the, the indoctrination that the work that I had embodied and received and have put in all the hours to develop inside myself. That I don't own it? That I can't teach it?

**Candice Schutter:** Hmm.

**Adi Goren:** It's like, uh, how dare you?

**Candice Schutter:** Yes.

**Adi Goren:** And the thing is that, I still have the thoughts of, is this my work? Is this The Architecture of Movement? Is this Org work? Da, [01:02:00] da, da. And it's, like, not okay. It's not okay to be asking that question. The fact that, that I'm asking it is the indoctrination that worked on me. That I believe that the work that I'm embodying is not mine.

**Candice Schutter:** Another massive moral injury right there.

**Adi Goren:** Massive. Massive.

**Candice Schutter:** And talk about colonizing the female body. Fuck. like, to colonize movement, dance, all the things to such a degree that we walk away feeling like they own a part of what we've embodied. Like, that is some seriously.

Ugh, like I'm getting just really fired up even talking about it. But that is like serious mindfuckery, and serious abuse of power, and a byproduct of colonialization that goes back so far. You know, this isn't just about like, oh, Seth and Marissa, how dare you? Like they learned how to do this from just [01:03:00] generations of colonizers.

There's an episode on the main feed about decolonizing our identity. And that's really what this is pointing to, is just another example of what when we're speaking about decolonizing our identity and taking our authority back that I just love that this has circled back to the body. Relatively speaking, my body hasn't been colonized anywhere near the degree of other folks. And yet we all carry some form of trauma in terms of that. That's an ongoing thing. I mean, look at, look at what's going on in the Supreme Court in the United States right now.

Like, we don't even have autonomy over our bodies in the minds of so many people. And this parallel with the Org is no accident. It's baked into the cake.

This is what I mean when I say capital c cults. When I say, it's everywhere. There's nowhere it's not. This is exactly it.

And I just appreciate so much, Adi, that you spoke to that piece around, you just really helped me to understand. [01:04:00] Oh, that is what happened. I walked into that room and I started moving. And I became addicted to the practice, because I had all this unprocessed trauma. And I had this space where I could speak a language, which was of sensation, that I had never, ever allowed myself to speak.

then I was harmed in that very same space. And man, that does a number on us.

So thank you for that piece. That's just been really huge for me. And hearing it again, it's landing even deeper.

Tracy, how is that landing for you?

**Tracy Stamper:** I am hyper aware right now of my heart beating inside my chest. I, That's huge. And to think about what drew so many of us in and that elusive piece that we may not have been able to articulate of being in my body finally [01:05:00] helps me land and have a home base out of which to deal with trauma. And then for that to become embodied and part of me and part of all three of us and part of Org practitioners. For those of us who then were harmed by the same folks who held our hand through the practice is it's, it's, it's beyond words to me. It's beyond words.

**Adi Goren:** Do you want to dance it?

**Tracy Stamper:** Yeah.

**Candice Schutter:** There it is. Beyond words.

**Tracy Stamper:** I do.

**Adi Goren:** Can I just say, Tracy, is that, um, is the invitation to come back into the body and to feel sensations, that is an invitation to start unravel unresolved trauma. That right there is the beginning. Because the whole reason why I left my body is because it was too [01:06:00] painful to be there.

**Candice Schutter:** That's right.

**Tracy Stamper:** Right. Right.

**Candice Schutter:** That's exactly right.

**Adi Goren:** And doing also not knowing it, I wonder about that also. I mean, I don't know. There's never once been a mention of the word trauma in all my Org days. Never.

Never ever.

**Candice Schutter:** No.

**Tracy Stamper:** That is playing with fire is where I from.

**Adi Goren:** Exactly. That's what I'm saying. Is that playing with fire, it's playing with fire.

**Candice Schutter:** Mm hmm.

And a lot of people got burned.

And this is not unique to the Org. This happens.

Someone I love just went to a workshop. Kind of a personal development, uh, intimacy, communication workshop. And, those blind spots were and are operating and have been for years in this particular company and organization. And based on this particular experience, [01:07:00] I start looking into this organization. And I find just many, many stories about people going into this environment in the name of healing their wounds around sensuality and touch and intimacy and communication, but there being no framework for understanding trauma and how it shows up. And people being put in these positions where they're retraumatized in the name of trauma work. Because there's no adequate training. Cause this is just a pop up thing that some people decided to do. And they have great intentions. And they developed their own curriculum. But they're not consulting with anybody who understands trauma, how it works in the body.

The fact that, you know, there's an exercise where somebody is told, and this is a very common exercise in this organization, where somebody is told to ask for what they want. And to name it and to say no and to say yes and to practice that.

Well, that sounds really fucking hunky dory if you're not a sexual trauma survivor. But I can tell you that all of those things [01:08:00] are immensely complicated and inaccessible to me if I get triggered and dysregulated. I can't say no when I need to say no. I can't always say yes when I need to say yes. I can't. I'll ask for what I want based on other people when I'm in that headspace. When I lose executive functioning, right?

So it's so complex.

And, you know, in some ways I have a lot of, compassion for Marissa and Raul in the beginning, not really understanding what they were creating. And not really understanding the, the monster that they developed. And the, and the deciding to turn it into a pseudoscience was going to bring in all these possibilities in terms of saying, oh, we're dealing with mind, body, emotions. We're doing all the things. As soon as they shifted from a fitness practice to this holistic practice, then they opened themselves to all these blind spots.

And a lot of these things weren't even talked about when they first started.

But the thing that gets me now is like, we do know about these things. We've known about them for a very long time. There's been many, many [01:09:00] opportunities to course correct. There's been a lot of feedback over the years. There's people now who are like, well, we should just give them a chance to. And those of us who have been through the ringer are just like trying to not shout at them, we've done all of this! All the things that you want to do, this whole checklist that you want to move through. We've done it. She's done it. He's done it. She's done it. Like, have we not presented the case clearly enough?

But we all has to also go through that disillusionment process and, you know, disconnect in our own ways.

But my point is, is they've had a lot of opportunities.

**Tracy Stamper:** Decades.

**Candice Schutter:** To address. Decades, yeah, of opportunities to address this. And to bring in a more, from the outside, a trauma informed approach to these things, and they have not. And that's where, yeah, a lot of us are getting fired up around. You know, it's not about wanting to take down an organization, but it is about wanting to mitigate harm. And if one of those things means the other one, I'm good with that. As long as people stop being re-traumatized and harmed [01:10:00] and hurt.

Because I mean, you saying 11 years later, Adi, you saying you can still feel that indoctrination in your gut around not having ownership over your own embodied learning and knowing.

**Adi Goren:** That's one. And what you were just saying about 11 years later, the same dynamics in the community. It's so much so that I was brought into maybe mitigate between two kind of community leaders now.

And after that, I told one of them. Listen, I just felt like I was retraumatized. It was horrible. I can't actually, I can't even hear it. It's just, it triggered me so much.

So the stuff that went on. And they're still carrying on. And it's just, it's perpetuating.

**Candice Schutter:** Yeah.

**Adi Goren:** And I don't have any intention to, uh, me [01:11:00] speaking out has no intention to, uh, bring down the house. I was there 11 years ago, and I chose not to. I could have caused harm back then. From the inside, I could have caused harm. And I chose not to. Um, And still choose not to.

But what I won't do is I won't shut up about it. I won't stay silent. I have a voice now. And I also feel safe enough to voice my voice. And anybody who wants to hear it is welcome. And that's my contribution.

And I still love many, many people who are practicing wholeheartedly and are doing amazing work. It's with a lot of compassion and also the paradox of how do we negotiate [01:12:00] this?

I don't want to be silent anymore. I don't think that's the right way to go about it. Even though it's people that I care about that are still doing the work. I don't want them to get hurt. I understand that they might be.



But I think it's, it's again, it's, uh, the way that I am, uh, self supporting myself through this is to say that medicine sometimes is bitter.

It, it might sting a little bit when I put this salve on. So it might be painful to hear all of this. But the intention is to heal, not to hurt.

**Candice Schutter:** Yes.

Well said. Well said.

Thank you, Adi and Tracy.

I really loved this conversation. And I have to [01:13:00] say that Adi's way of explaining things really lands in my bones. It's been such an honor to have her with us on the main feed.

And don't forget to check out this week's follow up over on Patreon. The three of us had a lot of fun connecting and I can't wait to share our more recent conversation later this week.

And as promised, this is the final interview of the 'cult'ure series. There's only two more episodes to go and soon after that all the action is going to be happening over on Patreon.

Why there and not here? Well, I'll speak more to that in the final episode of the series, but the short answer is it's way less work. This podcast is a labor of love solo project and this gal needs a break.

And so if 'cult'ure series content has been speaking to you, and you don't want it to end. Especially if you're a current or former Org affiliate who enjoys hearing stories and engaging in critical inquiry around what puts the cult in wellness culture, please consider checking out the Deconstructing [01:14:00] Dogma bonus series at [patreon.com/thedeeperpulse](https://patreon.com/thedeeperpulse).

All right, friends. I'll see you back here next week. Thanks for tuning in and bye for now.