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DR. KEESHA EWERS: Welcome to the Woman's Vitality Summit, this is Dr. Keesha Ewers, your host, and I'm very happy and excited and honored to be interviewing John Perkins today, who is the founder and board member of Dream Change and The Pachamama Alliance, which are nonprofit organizations devoted to establishing a world future generations will want to inherit.

He's lectured at Harvard, Oxford, and more than 50 other universities around the world. He's the author of books on indigenous cultures and transformation, including *Shapeshifting*, *The World As You Dream It*, *Psychonavigation*, *Spirit of the Shuar*, and *Stress Free Habit*.

He's been featured on multiple news outlets as well as in numerous documentaries. He was awarded the Lennon Ono Grant for Peace in 2012, and the Rainforest Action Network Challenging Business As Usual Award in 2006.

John's also the author of *The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* and has written nine books that have been on the New York Times Bestseller list for more than 70 weeks and have been translated into more than 30 languages. Welcome to the Summit John.

JOHN PERKINS: Thank you Keesha. It's such an honor to be part of this. I really, really appreciate you inviting me.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I love what you're going to bring to the discussion. I've had the honor of interviewing 48 experts in different fields of body, mind, spirit, heart, and I love what you bring to this world with your wisdom. The topic that we're going to be talking about today is how to break the limits of your mind to live your dreams.

The way I always start - because this is the Woman's Vitality Summit - is asking my experts that I'm interviewing what they see as the largest drainer of vitality for women and men in our country today. How would you answer that?

JOHN PERKINS: That's a very interesting question, not one I often get. I guess I'd have to say that it's all the things that get in our way of really dealing with what's important.

I lived in the Amazon rainforest as a Peace Corps volunteer with the Shuar people back in the late 1960s after I got out of business school. It was a long time ago, and the Shuar people were very much hunters and gatherers at the time, a very remote tribe

One of the things they first taught me to do was how to walk. They said they noticed that 'gringos' would walk watching our feet and pushing away the bushes and everything. They said "Don't look at your feet. Your feet are boring. We always walk by looking all around."

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A man carries an eight foot long blowgun and looks up into the trees for birds, monkeys, things to take home to his wife to put into his cooking pot. The women walk into the forest with a basket tied around their head across their shoulders, and they're always looking for plants: medicinal plants, nutritious plants, and so on and so forth. Nobody looks at their feet. They say "Your feet are boring. Your feet know where to go. You've got peripheral vision, just focus on the world around you." I think that's a great metaphor for life these days, that we're always looking at our feet.

What was said at the Democratic Convention last night: "What's the stock market doing? What's our favorite baseball team doing? What's going on in Syria and Iraq right now? How many people were killed by drones?" We're not really looking at the bigger issues.

We get distracted all the time with television shows, news shows, all this stuff that's going on, and I think that's a huge drain on our energy. In a way, I think it's planned. The status quo - what I call the corporate talkers - the people that really run the politics and economics of the world want us to be distracted. They want us to look at our feet all the time.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Well, you know, feet are analogous to the iPhone too, right? That's what I see - everyone walking around staring at the tiny screen in their hand.

JOHN PERKINS: You know, I live on an island off the coast of Seattle and I was in Seattle for dinner last night. I came back on the ferry. It was an incredibly beautiful evening. A gorgeous sunset, riding on across Puget Sound, the Olympic mountains were ahead of me, behind me were the Cascades, the city of Seattle. I looked around and everybody was on their iPhone! A couple of other people who, probably tourists, were standing out there gawking at the beautiful scenery, but most people were just on their iPhone. It's amazing.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: It really is. It's becoming interesting, because I take groups over to Africa, I take groups to Peru, I take groups over to India, Bali, and I'm starting to see - and this didn't used to be true - but I'm starting to see that now in India. I've got pictures of Tibetan monks on bicycles looking at their phone instead of riding and watching where they're riding their bicycle.

We work with these indigenous tribes in Kenya that come down from the plains and the mountains, wherever they are. My friend over there runs a conservancy. She was raised in the bush and she's an anthropologist and has brokered a lot of peace agreements between these tribes, so they all really honor and respect her. They come when she calls to visit with us, and lo and behold, what they really want is to get photos of all of the group with their iPhones! It just cracks me up. It's ubiquitous now all throughout the world, no matter where you go, people staring at their phones.



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JOHN PERKINS: Yeah. And you know, it offers a tremendous opportunity for us to communicate better with each other. I'm leaving for the Amazon the day after tomorrow. I'm going up to the Achagua people.

When I was with the Shuar back in the late '60s, the Achagua were officially uncontacted - they were a very remote tribe. Now we have a partnership, we work with them. We helped them get satellites and cell phones, that they don't use quite the way we use ours, but it helps them to be able to communicate and organize to keep oil companies off their lands and do other things that are really beneficial.

It used to be that it might take a day or two to run between villages to get people to connect, to get organized. Now you can do it that way. It can be a very helpful tool, but we've become totally distracted by it.

If we used it that way, to just do things that were important, it would be a phenomenal tool, but we don't. We're constantly looking at it, and I have to say, I make the same mistake.

Sometimes talking with someone, the question will come up "Who was in that movie 10 years ago?" And you just hold up your iPhone and you speak to Siri, and you say "Hey, who was in such-and-such movie?" Who needs that, really? But, it's a fascinating time we're in because this form of communication opens up so much.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I agree, and I wouldn't go backwards for the world on so many different levels, particularly as a woman, for obvious reasons, but I think it's finding that balance.

Every generation has had to find a way to find balance, whatever the nature of balance is, and for us it seems to be making sure that we pencil in time to be with the planet in our day. Would you say that's accurate?

JOHN PERKINS: Yes, and if we would use our iPhones to look at the birds in the trees and the plants in the forest instead of our feet - to use that metaphor – it would be phenomenal.

I'd like to share with you a little story from maybe 30 years ago. There was a very wise Quechua woman shaman, whose name is - a great name - Maria Juana Yamberla. She was from Otavalo area of Ecuador, up in the mountains. I was there with a group of people many years ago, as I sat in translating, and she said "There's a web that connects shamans around the world." She says "I can pull on a string of this web here in the Andes and a shaman in Africa knows that I'm doing it. We can communicate that way." She said "I think in your lifetime, that web is going to express itself in a much more physical form that everybody will have access to it in some other form."



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I think that's what we've got now. We've truly got a web - an Internet web, a phone web - that allows us to communicate around the world. This technology you and I are using right now, it's phenomenal, and we've also become totally preoccupied with; it's become an obsession.

Tobacco's a great plant, but when tobacco became an obsession and totally commercialized, it became extremely harmful. It was misused, it was abused. We can say the same thing, I think, about some of these modern technologies. They have tremendous potential, but they've been terribly commercialized, and used and misused.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I'm thinking about a female shaman in the Andes that I've worked with, her name is Mama [Iregne? 09:42], and she says you can fly. It's the limitations of your own mind that bind you down. She told me "Any bird, be any bird - you're already there and you're flying" and I think that's true of everybody. We have that within us. What gets in our way of being able to soar and to live the dreams that we have inside of us that seem so faint and so far away that we can't possibly attain them? What happens there?

JOHN PERKINS: It's our perception. I've been trained as a shaman in many different cultures, starting with the Shuar in the Amazon back in the late 1960s, and also in Iran, in Egypt, Indonesia, and other Latin American cultures.

Every one of these shamanic trainings basically is teaching us about the difference of the true basic realities: the objective reality - these computers, these microphones we're talking through right now, it's an objective reality, and the perceived reality - the things we're talking about.

As far as we know, human beings are the only life forms that are so strongly influenced by perceived reality and our whole world is molded by that. There are no countries, except as we perceive them, and then codify them into laws, corporations, the economy; everything that impacts us is basically a perception that we then give energy to.

The shamans will tell you that you can have a perception, and you give it energy, it becomes a reality, an objective reality. Our perceptions are molded by this very Newtonian concept of reality and it keeps us from flying. It keeps us from doing the things shamans do. It's all about perception.

Of course, psychologists, psychotherapists, know this very well; it's what they deal with, it's perception, but they usually deal with perception within the context of sort of our Newtonian vision of the world. That's changing. Quantum physics is absolutely changing that, but we're still very stuck in that past concept that we can't fly, that we're very restricted.

We're restricted to an economic system that's based on maximizing profits. We're restricted to the kind of political systems that, right now, are totally dominating the time in the United States in these presidential elections. We don't see beyond our feet. We don't see the forest around us.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Perceptions are what I draw on a diagram as a patient comes into my office and sits across from me and says "I have a hormone imbalance." I draw this little picture of a head and I write the word "perceptions" above it. Then I draw the brain, the thyroid, the adrenal gland, the pancreas, and the ovaries, and I say "All these glands or organs have a hormone attached to them, and they're all regulated, or instigated, by your perceptions, by what you believe to be true, in any given moment. Those are the messenger chemicals that then get sent from the brain to tell the body what to do next."

I think the way that you describe it, this Newtonian way of thinking about things - there's a symptom that then needs to be treated - is the way that we think about things in Western medicine. Instead of where we actually start everything with the way that we experience our world, and our body just shows up in agreement with whatever that is.

JOHN PERKINS: Yeah. I mentioned getting apprenticed to a shaman back in the late 1960s - a Shuar deep in the Amazon - and what happened was I was very, very sick. After I'd been there several weeks, I got so sick, I lost a tremendous amount of weight, and in very few days, I was dying. I couldn't get out. It was a two day walk through a very dense jungle and then another two days in a rickety old bus - if I could find one - up to the nearest medical facility. I was resigned to dying, and a Shuar shaman, saved my life.

That night took me on a classic shamanic journey, and what I saw in that journey is that I'd been raised to be very hygienic. I was raised in over 300 years of Yankee Calvinists in New Hampshire and Vermont to be very hygienic and eat very bland foods. Then suddenly I'm living with people who have no soap and they eat very strange foods.

As you probably know, most Amazonian people don't drink water because the rivers contain organic matter and they know that they can't drink it. They drink something called chicha - a kind of beer that's made by women chewing manioc root and spitting it out. It ferments, then you can add water to it. You have to drink a lot of this stuff because you've got to rehydrate in that rainforest.

So I'm drinking a lot of spit-beer because there's nothing else to drink - there's no Perrier - and I'm eating a lot of squirming white grubs and other foods that I think are just gross - there are no Cliff Bars. But on this shamanic journey, I saw that every time I ate or drank these things, I could hear a voice saying "It'll kill you." It was probably my mother.

At the same time I saw how incredibly healthy the Shuar are because they eat these foods. The men are all built like Tarzan, the women - well, I was in my early 20s - then women were looking very good! People live to be very old if they're not killed in hunting accidents or something like that.



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So, that one night, I saw that what was killing me was not the food or drink, it was my perception. I was perceiving, just like you said, that hormonal thing.

What I've learned since is even when we look at a food, our hormonal system starts to react with something that is a message that's sent just by looking at and smelling the foods. It impacts us before we even eat it. Our digestive system starts to prepare for that.

By changing my attitude, by realizing that this food was healthy, that this chicha, this beer, was good stuff - it was fermenting, it was killing any bacteria that was in it - it changed everything for me. I was healthy the next morning and lived for the next three years there, never got sick again, and trained with the shaman.

It was all about perception, Keesha, and I think that's where we're at. It is all about perception. I think today we talk about a woman's role and what's distracting to women, what's distracting to men and so on, and we have this very, very strong perception in our culture of the roles of men and women. It was ingrained in us from past times and it's changing and it needs to change a lot more, and a lot faster.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I have a similar story. When I was 10 years old, I was sexually abused by a person in authority at my elementary school. I remember being in Florida at the time and sitting out on the balcony of our home, just very upset. Being the age of 10, I told my parents, I told the teachers, I told people in the way that a 10 year old can express, which means no context, not a very good vocabulary to say it, and this nagging feeling that I was doing something wrong that was making this happen; that I was bad somehow.

I remember, after I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis when I was 30, sitting with that idea that I'm killing myself; this is autoimmunity, that means I'm going after me. What is going on that I would go after me?

So I sat in meditation and I journeyed back to this 10 year old part of me and I remembered sitting out on that little balcony and saying "This world is just a really unsafe place. I can't figure it out. People are unpredictable. I can't figure out the formula that keeps me safe and keeps me loved, and this isn't making sense to me. I think I'd really like to leave." And so I saw in my cells that I'd made this decision and this agreement with my being that if stuff got too hard, I could just exit out.

JOHN PERKINS: Wow!

DR. KEESHA EWERS: So, at age 30, I now have four children and I don't really want to exit out, and I said "Oh my goodness, this is an agreement that is 20 years old that's still in place in my cells."



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Well, I went to the Andes later on in that year and had a medicine experience with my shamanic teacher, and what I was shown was this great, big grid of light that kind of enveloped the universe. It was holding it together, so to speak, in the way that I viewed it. Each of us was a bar in that grid.

It was like this big kaleidoscope geometrical pattern, and we each took a place in one of those bars. That was us, and wherever somebody felt that they were less than, not deserving, or wanted to exit out, that light was dim. The whole pattern was shapeshifting, so to speak, depending on how people were showing up.

In that moment, I got really clear that we are each important. We're part of a light that holds the entire life force - this energy that keeps this planet stable - alive, we're part of it. We aren't separate. We're not each individuals, we're just part of this gigantic life force and energy, and I changed the agreement with my cells.

It was interesting, because within a week, all my rheumatoid arthritis was gone. It's never been back, I've never had autoimmunity again. It was this perception that life wasn't safe when I was 10 that caused that to happen.

Isn't that fascinating, how it affects us from so early on, and we take this stuff forward until we make a decision to change it?

JOHN PERKINS: Yes. That's so powerful. Incredible. Thank you for sharing that. That is the correctness of it. Shamans throughout history have known this, and as I said earlier, it really is. Psychotherapy understands this, but psychotherapy is usually done within the context of some fairly restrictive boundaries that are ingrained in our culture.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Well, I think that psychotherapy is the Western way of really allowing ourselves to be free of those beliefs, but not every psychotherapist, of course, is the same, so finding one that matches up with that is a really important piece.

But yes, those belief systems, they get created when we're really small. By the time we're 26 years old, our brain has formed, we can start going back and sifting through them and seeing which ones we want to keep, and which ones aren't serving us very well.

You're a founder of The Pachamama Alliance, and of course, in Peru - I guess in all of South America – Pachamama is the earth; Mother Earth.

I love that the tradition is before you take a bite of food, when you're in the Andes, you drip some off into the earth. Or whatever you're drinking, whether it's chicha, or whatever else, you dribble it into the earth a little bit and say thank you for it.

What are some rituals that you've run across in your travels all over this world that you think would be helpful for women to incorporate into their families that would bring us more into alliance with the environment we live in, rather than being so disconnected and separate? We're finding out through science that so much addiction is caused by feeling disconnected.

JOHN PERKINS: I think for a mother or father - and we're talking about women, particularly the mother who is so close to children from the very beginning, from the time when they're nursing at the breast – to help children just really be in contact with the sensual experience of eating; feeling the food go down, of honoring that. Not just gulping it down, not just getting it into your system. Truly honoring it and where it comes from.

In many Amazonian cultures, including the Shuar and the Achagua who I've mentioned, and the Shipibo, who I know you know of, when the women dig up the manioc root, which is a very vital part of life throughout most of the Amazon - it is used to make chicha, but it's also served as a food, it's a starch, it's a root, like a potato - but, you dig up this plant and you take the root off, and then you put the rest of the plant back in the ground and it reproduces itself.

As they dig it up, before they start to dig up, and while they're digging, they're singing a song. In Shuar, the equivalent of Pachamama - Mother Earth or Mother Universe - is Nunqui, a goddess of the earth. The women sing this beautiful song to Nunqui, always honoring before they dig up, while they're digging, and then as they're replanting.

The children are present for this when they're younger, and when chicha's served, or when any form of yuca is served, it's served with this great sense of honoring their food and the earth that provides it. So I think in a way a parent can do that - a mother can do that beginning at the very early stages - of helping a child just really be in touch with eating, and the connection that that has to the world itself, wherever the food comes from.

Walking, everything we do, if we can be in touch with that central aspect of ourselves.

Keesha, I would just say that I learned a long time ago that in writing, people are very tempted to write about what they see, the visual side: the mountains in the distance, the lake there. But readers want all the senses to be included, maybe the visuals a little more emphasized. They want to feel the sun on their back and the wind against their face. They want to hear the sounds of the birds in the forest. They want to smell the wood smoke coming from the distance to them.

We really are sensual beings. Another problem with iPhones too, that we talked about earlier, is that iPhones takes us away from that sensuality. We want to feel our senses, all of them. I think for women to teach their children the importance of that and recognizing that, that is our contact with Pachamama, or Nunqui, whatever word we want to use for the Mother Earth, Mother Heavens, all of this.

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DR. KEESHA EWERS: In India, they chant the Mahamitryunjaya Mantra when they plant and harvest and cook. It's the same idea - that you're giving gratitude. Gratitude and appreciation, and connecting to the source of where your nutrients are coming from as you're preparing them. Whether it's digging them from the ground, or going to the grocery store and picking them out and putting them in your cart - that tones up that parasympathetic nervous system. That's not the one sending cortisol and creating the idea that you're a zebra being chased by a lion. It's the one that we call the rest and digest, or the feed and breed system.

Of course, gratitude and appreciation is pre-digestive, so teaching your children how to digest properly is ultimately the healthiest you can be in your whole world because digestion is the root of everything.

So that's great advice and wonderful wisdom for us to not only teach our children, but to mirror it and role model it too. Not eating in the car on the run, or mindlessly in front of the computer, or quickly before you get out on the soccer field, but taking just that moment that it takes to have appreciation and gratitude, and that's pre-digestive. As you say that, that's what I'm realizing.

JOHN PERKINS: Yeah. It's such an important thing for us to really feel our connection.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Yeah. You talk about senses. I think women - and this is probably true of men too, but I'm only speaking from a woman's perspective - can bring themselves and get connected better into all of their energy centers in their body when they are integrating all five of their senses.

I think women are sensual beings. That's why they love color, fabric, texture, and all of those pieces that go with shopping. Shopping is a poor substitute for actually taking the few moments that it takes for self-care: putting a lovely, delicious smelling, natural oil on your skin after you get out of the shower, and then really feeling a nice fabric against your skin. Not rushing through everything, but being mindful and present with every breath and every moment of how it all feels to you as you're going.

That's going to bring you into that natural sensuality that you're born with, and so often women get cut off from due to trauma in their past. I think it's a great healing thing too, to get in touch with your senses.

JOHN PERKINS: It's a really wonderful thing to say, and I suspect that one of the reasons that male hierarchical societies have tended to put women down - whether it's the Catholic Church, or the Buddhist hierarchy, or the Muslims - is because, I think, men are somewhat fearful of that deep sensuality and also very jealous of it.

Men want to exert themselves in other ways because they see how in touch women are in just the connection with the moon, with the cycle, with their body, the hormonal cycles, something

magnificent. I think, on some level, men are envious of that, and it's subconscious for the most part.

I also think that's why men who go off the deep end – being abusive of women, rapists, whatever. This is no generic answer, and I'm generalizing in a way without getting myself into trouble here, because there are obviously lots of different reasons for things to happen.

But a woman's sensuality is something that I deeply, deeply appreciate, and I think men have so much to learn from that, and to recognize that we men have a feminine side within us too, that we just need to express more, and to be freer with letting it out.

I also think there's also a danger here that when women get into positions of power, when they become executives of big corporations, or high up in politics, there's this terrible tendency to suppress those aspects of themselves because that is our perception of what it means to be a strong executive, a strong president, or whatever.

I think we're seeing Hillary Clinton having to face some of these issues now of how to balance the deep feminine side - the nurturing side - against the perception that the leader needs to be strong and not bring out those things. It's a very, very interesting time.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I just wrote about this not too long ago. We were recently in Bali, it was my first time being there, and I attended a ceremony for a pregnant woman to have a safe birth, to bring this baby into the world with as little effort as possible. She and her husband and first child were present at the ceremony, and the priest was doing this really lovely holding space, and doing the ritual that they do in Bali, and I got this feeling of softness.

I've traveled in India and Sri Lanka, and now Bali, and I was comparing the feeling of how women are in that culture. It wasn't a feeling of oppression at all, because the priest's wife was present also, doing part of the ritual. They were sharing space doing this.

I later got to attend some teachings with them and I just saw that there's a lot of shared spiritual power inside of the culture itself that I haven't seen present in some of the temples in India and Sri Lanka, and I thought "Wow, there's a softness here that we've lost in the United States."

As women have had to struggle and fight to get to vote and to do the things that, like I said, I'd never go backwards for, it feels that we're at a place now where we can stop trying to be men. We can now assume our femininity and be in a place of our natural power. Not trying to show we're powerful, but just naturally drop into the core of power that we bring to the table anyway without having to tell anyone about it, and have that softness be present at the same time. It felt like in this generation, we could do this. It's time. It's time to bring the softness back.



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I appreciate what you just said, and I don't think you're going to get into trouble, and if you do, it's okay.

JOHN PERKINS: I'm used to getting into trouble Keesha.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Me too, me too. It's one of the things I really wanted to talk about on the Summit, and you've given me the opportunity to just really say that: for women to be able to be soft and powerful, and that those two things are not against each other; they're not mutually exclusive. That is a feminine way of being powerful.

JOHN PERKINS: And it's where we're moving. In my latest book *The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, I talk extensively about how we need to move from a death economy to a life economy.

I define a death economy as an economy that's based on militarization, to a large degree, and also destroying the earth; ravaging the earth, digging out, destroying the very resources upon which the economy depends. That's a death economy.

A life economy is one that cleans up pollution. It puts people to work cleaning up pollution, regenerating destroyed environments, and coming up with new approaches and technologies that recycle totally. It means we don't have to dig up anymore, that all the resources are right here in technologies, in energy, in communications, and transportation, and the list goes on and on.

Really what we're talking about there, to a large degree, is moving from what we might call a very male economy - the aggressive, the work economy, the digging economy - to a more female economy - which is a nurturing economy, one that's based on supporting and nurturing.

It often reminds me of some of the meetings I've had where men and women from our culture - from the United States, from Europe, from what we might call Northern cultures, although that's a misnomer - have met with indigenous people, let's say in the Amazon and the Andes.

I'm particularly relating to a meeting two years ago with the Shuar people in the Amazon, and the question was "With Shuar people, what's the difference between men and women?" And the answer, summarized, is that they said "Well, men and women are equal, but they have very different roles.

The men's role is to cut trees when we need more wood for fire, to build a bigger house, or dugout canoe, to kill animals when we need protein, birds to bring home for the stew pot, and if there's a war, to kill other men.

The women's role is to raise the yuca, to raise all the plants, take care of the plants, take care of the children, it's a nurturing role. The women have one other very important function, and that's

to tell the men to stop." They said "We know men will just keep cutting trees and killing more birds unless we tell them to stop and say we've got enough protein, the house is big enough. Stop cutting more trees, because it's the nature of men to do that." This is what they said.

When some of these people came to the United States and looked around, they said "What's happened to the women? Why do you have all these huge buildings? Why are you destroying the resources? Why are the oil companies going in and destroying the rainforest?" It's a very male thing. When are the women going to tell the men to stop, that houses are big enough, we don't need any more?

I find that a very interesting perspective, and I think it relates to this idea of moving from an old economic system that's obviously proving now to be a failure - a death economy that's consuming itself into extinction - into a life economy, which is one that actually is a self-sustaining and a regenerating economic system.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I love that. We need to tell people to stop. We have enough. That is a great way of summarizing the nurturing that can change what's happening out there right now.

JOHN PERKINS: The Shuar and the Achagua are warrior nations. One of the reasons they used to go to war was one of their gods told them that if they allowed their population to get too big, they were encouraged by this god to practice ways of keeping population down. Birth control, essentially. If that doesn't happen, populations get too big and they start destroying the forests and the animals. The message is that they have to weed their own gardens. Just like if you're growing yuca, women have to weed some of the yuca plants in order for the other ones to be healthy and in order to not take over everything else. That's when men go to war.

I think that's been true in indigenous cultures throughout the world, historically, that a lot of these wars occurred because the populations were exceeding the ability of their local environment to handle them. Now we've reached a very different aspect of what that all means. We've created a situation where a very large part of our economy is based on war, or the materials that go into war, the industry around war, which is a very, very different concept. It shows that terrible imbalance also. It's time to move into a more deeply loving economy.

We also know that wars do not get rid of violence, they make violence worse. We've seen that in places where the United States has been made to bring more violence against various groups in the Middle East and elsewhere. The violence increases.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: When I was in Australia many years ago, I did a walkabout with the Kuku Yulanji tribe, which is an aboriginal group that's in the northern Daintree Rainforest area. I was talking to them about coming of age rituals that they have and what makes a child an adult their culture.

I was studying some of those around the world, and I said "Tell me about methods of birth control, what happens here for your community?" They just laughed and said that from their ancestors onward, what happened was everyone would wake up after having dreamtime in the night. They would come together and have a community meeting every morning. If a couple expressed the desire to have a child, they would bring that to the community and say it had come to them in their dreamtime and they were ready.

The community would look at the resources that surrounded them in their environment that they were moving in, because they were nomadic, and say "Can our environment, can our resources actually support this new being?" And I thought that was a great way to communicate the needs of the humans along with what's going on in the environment. To be interrelated and interdependent as a web of life instead of everybody just kind of doing their thing and winding up with a problem later that has to be dealt with.

There isn't this 'I' way of thinking, it's a 'we' way of thinking about things. They didn't even have a word for 'I' - it was all 'we.' It just made a lot of sense to me, and it was a brand new perspective for me in those days. I'd never run into anything like that, being raised here. I thought that was a lovely birth control method.

JOHN PERKINS: That's beautiful, the 'we' thing. I think so many indigenous cultures around the world that I've known have maintained their ancient traditions, to a certain degree. At least it's all about 'us' and 'we'. They don't have this concept of the rugged individual: Be yourself, be you. This emphasis that we have on the individual just doesn't exist in cultures like that.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Well we've got some things that we can integrate into our culture here because, of course, this entire discussion isn't meaning to throw the baby out with the bathwater; that we should all be tribal and chew our food and spit it out and ferment it, and only have that and don't drink water.

What we're really saying is there are things that we can learn and we can integrate into our modern world, and some of these are, as a recap, teaching our children to be very connected to the planet and to each other, and teaching them about the 'we' environment instead of just the 'I'. That would go a long way to helping us not drop bombs on each other in another generation, don't you agree?

JOHN PERKINS: Yeah, I do. It's traditionally been the role of the feminine in so many different species; the vision of the mother duck with all the little ones following behind her. I grew up in rural New Hampshire and there's a lake where you'd see them out swimming like this.

Just last summer, I came across a mother bear in the forest of New Hampshire. I have a house that my grandfather built a hundred years ago that I go to. She had her two cubs. The male goes off on his own, and it's up to the mother to teach the cubs, to teach the ducklings, the kittens that

grow up suckling at their mother's nipples. This is the feminine role that, I think, to a very large degree, we've lost touch with.

Our school system is part of the problem. At younger and younger ages now, kids go to school and they come home with tons of homework, which I just think is outrageous. They don't get a chance to really relate to the world around them, or to their mothers, and that's so different from indigenous cultures where the children are with the other children and with their mothers.

The boys go out hunting with their dads, but they come back to the home where the mother is in charge. We've lost that. It's part of our problem. Your question is how do we regain that?

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I think we can. Dr. Elisa Song is somebody I interviewed for this Summit, she's an integrated medicine pediatrician. I asked her the same question I asked you about vitality for children. She was saying the same thing that you said about looking at your feet and not looking up, except she said it with the screens, the screen time that kids are spending so much time on.

What she said was very profound and affected me a lot. She said it's getting rid of the ability to imagine. These video games take you through these levels and you just follow them along, and it's getting you out of the ability to actually create from your own imagination. I thought "Wow!"

As a child I was highly creative. I was raised with no television even, so I'm still very imaginative, very creative, and I respond really well to journeying and being able to create out of nothing but what's around me.

I thought "Is that being lost in these children?" I don't know. My children are grown now and they're very creative and imaginative, but that would be very sad if our right brains are completely getting annihilated because of this.

JOHN PERKINS: Well, we have to guard against that. I think books tend to open us up to creativity. We read and we imagine while we're reading. We're reading a description of a place and we're imagining it, whereas television, movies and video games don't leave a lot of room for that.

I think there are ways around that too, and we really need to explore that. These are extremely important issues for us to look at because, let's face it, technology's here and we've got it. How do we use it in imaginative ways, ways that can bring us forward into deeper and higher consciousness? That possibility is there.

Most indigenous culture - in fact every indigenous culture that I've known and lived with - has a prophecy; like the prophecy of the eagle and the condor of the Andes the year 2012, and the Himalayan prophecy of the 14th Dalai Lama, and so on. We have entered a time with the



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opportunity to rise above, to rise to higher levels of consciousness, to move past patterns. This is the challenge before us now. It's an exciting time.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: For those that have never heard these prophecies: in the Andes they have carvings of the puma that is asleep, which is North America, and the puma that is awake and guarding consciousness, which is in South America; the way that they see it and they dream it. They say "Our time has come to wake up" and that's what we're about right now, is waking up. And I can feel it; it feels good. A lot of people are waking up.

JOHN PERKINS: I travel around the world a lot - Europe, China and Latin America - and I speak at conferences of corporate executives, consumer groups, rock concerts, and everything in between. I really find everywhere people are totally waking up to the fact we live on a fragile space station: the earth, without any pedals, you can't get off.

We've got to something. We've got to relate to it differently. People really are waking up, and now it's just a question of what actions do we take?

I've got to mention that I've only got another 10 minutes at the most, then I'm going to have to get off, so I just wanted to let you know.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: I was just going to say, we're out of time just now. So I think we've given several different ideas for actions that we can take, and I really appreciate the wisdom that you've shared for the Summit and what you're up to in the world John, thank you so much.

JOHN PERKINS: My pleasure, thank you. And I would like to encourage people to go to my website: johnperkins.org and sign up for my newsletter which goes into a lot more of these. It's very exciting.

My hat's off to you Keesha, and my hand's on my heart right now, bowing to you. Thank you for doing all of this, for bringing this out into the world. Really, really appreciate it.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Well, thanks for assisting me. You have a speaker's page on the website so people can find you and click on your link to get your newsletter and anything else that you offer, and follow you, so thank you again.

JOHN PERKINS: Wonderful.

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Remember everybody, to live, love, laugh, keep learning and have a fantastic day.