



Medicine Stories Podcast

Episode 56 with Owen Lindsay

Real talk on Marriage, Plants, Kids,
Business- My Husband, Owen Lindsay

September 24, 2019

[0:00:00]

(Excerpt from today's show by Owen Lindsay)

Owen: The things we wanted to do in life were really aligned.

Amber: Which we didn't even know yet at that point.

Owen: No.

Amber: At that point, it was just like one another's soul and body and mind.

Owen: You were still slinging vintage, and I was DJ'ing and playing in bands.

Amber: Yep. (both laugh)

Amber: We were young!

Owen: We needed to do plant work.

Amber: ... only six years ago and we were so young.

[Intro]

(Intro Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[0:00:25]

Amber: Hi friends! And welcome to the Medicine Stories podcast, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth.

This is Episode 56. I am Amber Magnolia Hill, and today I'm talking to my husband, Owen.

I hope that you enjoy this peek into our lives. It's unlike any previous interview; very casual of course, and I have no outline, nothing planned. We're just talking. We're just talking about how we make our life together work. We work together from home every single day, raising kids, doing the housework, and running this business. So it's an intense, intensive relationship, but it was really nice to just relax and talk for a while, and definitely the most stress-free interview I've ever done.

Even when I'm interviewing a friend or someone I feel really comfortable with, there's just a little more planning and preparation and stress involved. So this came at a good time for both of us. For me, in this podcast journey, to kind of just like relax into it and put something out there that we hope people find interesting.

Today, or this week sometime, we have released two new medicines in the Mythic Medicinals online shop. One of them is our [Extra Potent Elderberry Elixir](#), year four? Year four of selling this elixir, I believe. Many of you are familiar with it. Many of you have been waiting for it and asking me when it's coming back. So it is now up in the shop, depending on when you listen to this. The batches sell out more quickly than we can make the next batch, so no promises if you go to [MythicMedicine.love](#) that it's gonna be in stock. But if you listen to this on the day it comes out, hopefully, it will be, and we will make more. We always, always make more. So you can learn more about the extra potent elderberry elixir there at the website.

And we also have a new medicine out: this is our [Motherwort Elixir](#). So it's just a simple medicine, a one plant medicine, motherwort tincture with a little bit of honey to make it easy to just put the dropper right onto your mouth there.

And it's really interesting making and selling herbal medicine. You have to be so careful about the way you talk about what your herbal supplement does and can do. So I thought I would just share a few Instagram comments from a couple of months ago when I posted a photo of Owen and I with a HUGE motherwort harvest that we had done that day, that are the plants that are in this medicine. There are almost 200, 100-something comments on this post, and I was just blown away by people's experiences with Motherwort because it's a pretty new plant to me. I've heard of it, of course, but hadn't really worked with it one-on-one.

So I'm just gonna read a few comments here:

Motherwort has helped me in so many ways. Particularly anxiety, like when I wake up in the middle of the night just to worry, I just take a few drops of motherwort tincture, and before I know it I am relaxed and dreaming. Also great for regulating my menstrual issues.

My son just got his driver's permit, and I am not riding along without Motherwort. She calms me down in that moment if I'm feeling overwhelmed.

I love motherwort for cramps and an anxious heart. I blend it with wood betony and St. John's Wort for anxiety-easing. My mom and her friends swear by it for menopause, especially combined with black cohosh and evening primrose.

Motherwort. Heart. Like a down comforter in the cold. Snuggle up to motherwort. For me, it's very centering and grounding. Feels like a big warm hug. I harvested my crop in the summer and dried them, and now use teas.

This plant has been an ally since we lost our first child. It was there for me and helped me show up for life, literally. After I had twins last year, I took a tincture religiously. If I forgot to take it, within 24 hours adrenal fatigue and depression would creep in. As soon as I started to feel anything, I would take my tincture, and within 24 hours feel as if whatever was creeping in didn't exist. When I would be depressed or off, my husband would ask if I had taken my motherwort today.

[0:05:18]

Amber: So yeah, I could read so many more comments. Clearly, I'm not going to, but the Motherwort Elixir is in the shop now. And I don't think about when we'll sell out. I don't know. I don't know.

As Owen and I talk about in this interview, things are selling fast lately. Some of them faster than we can keep up with, so no promises, of course. Some of you are going to be listening to this months or years down the road, but just know that we plan to keep making these medicines and restocking them. So tune in!

For Patreon I'm gonna be doing a giveaway: be giving away a bottle of (one 8 oz bottle, so one of the big ones) of the Elderberry Elixir, and one bottle of motherwort elixir and those will go to the same person. So one person will win two bottles, those two bottles, of medicine.

So head over to [Patreon.com/medicinstories](https://patreon.com/medicinstories) to enter. This is open to everyone, not just patrons of the podcast. Let's see, we will close this contest on October 18th. October 18th will be the last day to enter, to comment there.

[0:06:38]

Amber: So. You know, after talking to Owen during this interview a couple of days ago I was thinking about what makes our marriage work, 'cause it does work. It's a good, solid stable happy marriage, and there's so many variable and things I could say, but I just kind of narrowed it down to three big ones, and thought I would just distill that here in the intro:

1. **For us is having this shared interest in plants:** I wouldn't have predicted that that would be such a strong glue that keeps our marriage together before it happened, before we met and fell in love, and found out one another was a plant person, but it is **so** helpful to really just have a passionate interest in common for us. And I had not had that in previous relationships. Of course, there has been some overlap.

I had one relationship with very little overlap in interest, and I remember telling him, like, "This just doesn't work for me," and he was like, "No, it's a lot of, a lot of relationships are like this, you know? We can make it work. We love each other." And it was like, "That's true, but it's just missing something for me that I can't just like, share my passions and my loves with you." So for Owen and I, it's a very foundational part of our relationship is sharing this passion for plants.

2. **Supporting one another's dreams:** I truly believe that if you are in a relationship where your partner poo-poo's your dreams that relationship is not nurturing you and therefore, it's probably not a great relationship to be in. I know people like this. My dad is like this. Just those people that are like, "Oh COME ON. that's never gonna happen" or like, "Okay, babe, good luck with that..." But man, just, you know, really supporting one another in their goals in life is just so important and doing that for each other has allowed me and Owen to continue growing, to continue growing. We've both been, we've both had projects going that took away from the family, took money, time, and energy, but we understood how important it was to the other person's growth as an individual and to their happiness. So we supported them and pushed them along on that path, and I just really can't imagine our relationship without supporting one another's dreams.
3. **Learning from our fights:** You're gonna fight. We talk about that towards the end of this interview. We fight, but man, we've just learned so much. Once the emotions have subsided, maybe the next day or the next week, we talk about what happened in the fight and what we can learn from our fighting styles and from what we were fighting about, what came up, during the fight, what each of us needs so that doesn't get triggered again in the future.

So those are just some things that work for us, and I realize that it's different for every relationship, and there's so many ways that relationships can succeed and be happy.

[0:10:10]

Amber: I also just want to give a brief timeline of our family and kids and relationship for people who are totally brand new to us, to me, to this family; just so you've got your bearings a little bit as we get into the conversation:

- So my daughter, Mycelia, who we also call "Mycie," was born in 2006.
- Owen and I met in 2007 but didn't get together until six years later in 2013.
- We got pregnant at the end of 2015.
- And then in 2016, bought a house, moved in together, had our daughter, Nixie, and got married at the end of that year.

So Mycelia is now 13 and Nixie is 3, and then around the time Nixie was born is when our business started doing well, too. It was just kind of struggling and, like, chugging along up until that point, and just all the years of hard of work and everything -- and us combining forces, for sure, the two of us combining forces -- it all just kind of came together in about 2017, and the business was just grown since then. So we're really learning and trying to catch up and do it as smart as we can and do right by our customers and podcast listeners.

So that's the timeline of our relationship.

[0:11:35]

Amber: So we're recording using Garage Band here and it, like, stopped recording twice, and luckily we saw it right away because we had the computer open, so I just immediately hit record and we went right back to it. But you'll hear that happen twice. We didn't take a long break in between or anything, just immediately pushed record right away.

And... yeah, that's it! Okay, this was also a very stress-free intro to record. Let's listen to this interview with my darling, sweet, wonderful husband, Owen Lindsay.

(Transitional Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[Interview]

[0:12:15]

Amber: Okay. Hey, O.

Owen: Hey.

(both laugh)

Amber: Alright. So I thought we would just start with talking about what's going on with us today and this week, and I think we're both kind of -- it's hard to kind of take the time to do this interview.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: Yeah, like, *(Amber laughs)* as much as we've been looking forward to it, we know it's going to be fun, it's hard to be like, "Yeah, we're gonna take an hour or more out of our day to sit down and not work, basically."

Owen: Yeah, and with Nixie at preschool we have -- what is it?

Amber: Four hours.

Owen: Four hours. So taking one hour is a lot...

Amber: Yeah.

Owen: ...when we're so busy, and there's so much elderberry elixir to make.

(both laugh)

Amber: Yeah, it's super intense. We share kids, a home, land, gardens, and a business. So we both work from home on the business, and we're just together constantly, just delegating tasks- "Who's doing what right now?"

And when you run your own business, the to-do list literally never ends. When you're parents the to-do list never ends, so we're tired all the time.

(both laugh)

Owen: Yeah, I've been up since 3:00.

Amber: You have?

Owen: Well, I kind of fell back asleep before Nixie woke up at 6. Yeah. That's normal, though. Parenting stuff.

Amber: Yeah, well, I slept til 8, thank you (*both laugh*), and really didn't expect it.

When she got out of bed at 6:30 I was like, "OKAY, I'm up." And then the next thing I knew it was 8:00, which is very late.

Owen: Yeah...(*both laugh*)

Amber: Almost didn't make it to preschool on time.

[0:14:00]

Amber: Umm. So we put it on Instagram for people to ask questions for us, for you, and, of course, one of the most frequently asked questions is "how did we meet?"

So why don't you tell your version, and I'll tell mine.

Owen: Okay. Well, I believe the first time we hung out was at Mycelia's 2nd birthday.

Amber: Yeah.

Owen: And so, you were new in town...

Amber: -- I think it was the first birthday, but it could've been the second. --

Owen: ... Was it? Okay.

Amber: I think so. In 2007.

Owen: Yeah, and it was at a mutual friend of ours' house, and had just a really lovely party. I met you and your partner.

Amber: You were with your girlfriend at the time.

Owen: I was?

Amber: Yeah.

Owen: I don't remember that.

Amber: Yeah, you were with Courtney.

Owen: Oh, that's right! Okay.

So, yeah, it was great meeting you guys, and (*both laugh*) in this small town we live in, you kind of -- it takes you, like, half an hour to walk a block. There's only two blocks in the town because you run into so many people you know, and we just kept crossing paths and yeah, that's where we first met.

Amber: How'd we get together?

Owen: Well, we hung out on my birthday years later at a party. (*both laugh*)

We seem to hang out at parties, I guess.

Amber: Yeah, same people's party. (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: Yeah, well, it was a different house, and I was working downtown...

Amber:-- Downtown Nevada City. --

Owen: ... Yeah, and I got a text from you, asking me if I wanted to hang out or something, or go to the national...

Amber: -- Sushi. Sushi in the Raw. --

Owen: Right, but I was working, and we decided to meet up afterwards, and then we did. (*both laugh*)

Amber: Babe, there's **so** much more to it than that.

Alright. So yeah, we first met that time, and then we were just in the same larger friend group for years. So that was in 2007.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: And I just always thought you were just such a sweetheart, such good energy, loved the energy.

Owen: Yeah, I felt the same. (*Owen laughs*)

Amber: You did? (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: Well, seeing your big smile right now, and I really remember your big smile, that energy that you always have.

Amber: Yeah, I think there was always, like, a resonance between us from the beginning.

But I didn't think about you in any sort of romantic way, until we ran into each other on your birthday, years later.

So that was 2013, and I was single for the first time in, like, a decade. I knew you through three girlfriends, and you knew me through two boyfriends, and then we just happened to cross, literally, cross paths at that backyard barbecue on your birthday.

And your most recent girlfriend, I had seen her a few months earlier, and she was telling me you guys were looking for land, and, you know, if I saw anything... So I was like, "Owen, how is it going? Did you guys find land?" And you were like, "Oh no. We broke up." So I was like, "Oh okay." So you were like, "How about you? How are you and Adam?" and I was like, "Oh, we broke up, too." And you were like, "Oh okay."

But then we just, like, went our separate ways, and I was with two friends at that party, and we were, like, drinking a little bit, and I was, like, "You guys, I'm kind of, like, feeling Owen." and both of them were like, "Me too!" (*Amber laughs*)

SO all three of us were like, "Oh, let's go sit by Owen!" and we were trying to engage you all night. And we were just joking, like, "Well, we'll give him a 'birthday present' he'll **never** forget."

(*both laugh*)

But I don't know, you were, like, I don't know. You weren't tuned into our advances, so.

Owen: No. (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: There were *other* advances that night. (*both laugh*)

Amber: You were on fire that night! (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: I know! And that's not really normal. I don't even remember who it was, now. Some girl tried to hold my hand over the table, and I think we might've held hands for like a second, and I feel like there was something else, too.

Amber: That's funny.

[0:18:14]

Amber: And then we ran into each other, like, a couple of weeks later at The National. There was some kind of show or party going on at the amazing National Hotel in Downtown Nevada City, which is under renovation right now, but was the longest continuously operating hotel, west of the Mississippi, like, you know, as a Gold Rush-era building and institution.

-- Pumpkin is looking at us. Our kitty, he's spying. He knows we both are in here, and he's like, "Let me in!" --

Umm. And then, like, a week later I was with two friends, hanging out and again, single for the first time, and I was like, "You guys, I just really, like, want to hook up with someone." And I've never, I've never been a random hook-up person **ever**. I've never, like, sought a hook-up. I always am seeking the connection and, like, the friendship and the love first.

But I was like, “You know? I’m single for the first time. I’m young still.” I’m like, “Who am I gonna hook up with? There’s no men in this town!”

And Sarah was like, “What about Owen?”

And I was like, “Oh, yeah! Yes. Totally. Owen!” And I was like, “I have his number, I think, still.”
(Amber laughs)

And I texted you, asked if you wanted to go to sushi. You were working, but you said you would meet up in The National balcony afterwards, and so we did. Had some drinks. It was magical.

Summertime in downtown Nevada City is magic.

Owen: Yeah, it really is.

Amber: And then I was like, “Do you want to come back to my place?” *(both laugh)*

And **THEN** I was bottling St. John’s Wort that week. It was the second year I had made and sold St. John’s Wort oil online. So you came into the kitchen, in the house I was renting with a friend at the time, and it was, like, the table was covered with bottles of red liquid, and you were like, “What’s this?”

You were super interested in it.

Owen: Yeah, I think you had, like, five gallons of St. John’s Wort?

Amber: Yeah, I don’t know. *(Amber laughs)*

Owen: Which, I’m just bringing that up, ‘cause, you know, we make quite a bit more.

Amber: Yeah. Yeah.

Owen: That’s where it, the business, really started; those five gallons.

Amber: Yeah, the early days.

And so we grabbed a bottle and went up to my room. *(Amber laughs)* And you were a drummer the time, and you were like, “Ugh, my arms are so sore.” And I was like, “Oh, let me just rub some of this St. John’s Wort oil...” *(both laugh)*

Owen: Yeah, I remember it was a pretty oily evening *(both continuing laughing)*.

[0:20:45]

Amber: It’s so funny that that was the bridge to intimacy for us for that first night.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: And put us, of course, in such a relaxed, open, happy space together.

Owen: Mhmm. Yeah, I think the dress you wore that night really helped stoke that fire. (*Amber laughs*) It was, like, white -- I want to say lace?

Amber: It was crochet.

Owen: Crochet, yeah.

Amber: Yeah, I had it over a slip. I still have that thing. I love it.

And so then we just had an amazing night. It was almost like we were just in love from that night on.

Owen: Yeah, it was never, like, difficult, or, like, one of us was chasing the other one. It was just, from the beginning, it was just -- it felt right. You know?

I always think of it as, like, it wasn't the craziest, you know, "This love is crazy!" (*both laugh*), like I'm really working for it. It was always just very easy, and I feel like the things we wanted to do in life were really aligned.

Amber: Which we didn't even know yet at that point.

Owen: No.

Amber: At that point, it was just like one another's soul and body and mind.

Owen: You were still slinging vintage, and I was DJ'ing and playing in bands.

Amber: Yep. (*both laugh*)

Amber: We were young!

Owen: We needed to do plant work.

Amber: ... only six years ago and we were so young.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: And I -- Mycelia, my oldest, was just about to turn seven at the time. I remember she was coming back to me from being with her dad for a couple of days at, like, 8:30. And so we had to get up early, 'cause we wanted you to not be there when she got there, you know? Because that would be weird.

But I remember you came downstairs, and you were like, "I'm gonna make you breakfast next time."

And I was like, "Oh my God," (*Owen laughs*) "I love you."

And then I -- she came back with me for a day or two -- and then I went out of town for four days for a death midwifery and home funerals training in Sebastopol.

Owen: That's right.

Amber: And then, even though we had that amazing night, we didn't talk about what we wanted from it. So I was feeling very unsure of what you wanted, you know. And I kept thinking, like, "He better want to do that again. He **better** want to do that again."

And I didn't have reception there. I was, like, deep in the woods on the coast there in Sebastopol, but if I walked out into the road I could get it, and we had a few flirty texts, and I was like, "Okay good. Good."

And then when I got back, it was, like, late at night that I picked you up, and you came over. And you had a box with food in it. You brought chicken to cook up and a bunch of veggies, and you were like, "I grew these in my garden, and I'm gonna cook you dinner."

Owen: Oh yeah. I remember that.

Amber: (*Amber laughs*) And I was like, "WHAT? Who are you?!"

[0:23:45]

Amber: So I had no idea you were a plant person until that night when you brought all these amazing garden produce over.

Owen: Right.

Amber: And then, yeah, we just kind of slowly started to realize that we both wanted a future with plants in our lives.

Owen: Yeah, and I think at some point when we were talking about the oils you were making, I said, "I could see myself growing herbs for your business."

Amber: Yeah. That was a couple more weeks into it, you said, "I could see myself growing herbs for your tinctures and medicines for the rest of my life."

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: And I remember after you went home, I called my mom, and I was like, "Oh my God! Guess what he just said!"

And she was like, "Keep him," (*Owen laughs*) and I was like, "No, I know. I'm going to."

And yeah, that's what's happened.

Owen: It's funny. I'm stoked cooking breakfast and growing herbs (*audio is a little unclear*)... (*both laugh*) and all those things.

[0:24:41]

Amber: Another piece of it though was for the first three weeks (which felt like an eternity at the time), we kept - we did keep saying to each other, "This is just for fun. This is just sex, basically." Because we were both single again for the first time in a very long time...

Owen: -- We were both in very long relationships, yeah. --

Amber: And we were both like, "I just need to do me." And, you know? So we just kept saying that every time we -- as we were falling deeper in love -- we were also saying, "No, we're not falling deeper in love."

And then there was that day where I'd had a rough night the night before because I had catered a farm-to-table event and a lot of tequila shots happened.

Owen: Yeah, I had to pick you up.

Amber: And he had to pick us up (*Amber laughs*).

Owen: Yeah, you went all out that night.

Amber: Yeah, and so the next morning I was not feeling great. So I was in that sort of dreamy, hazy state where I was like, "What am I talking about? I'm totally in love with him. I'm done doing this. This is in a relationship-thing."

And you took me out to breakfast, you were just really nurturing my hangover. We walked through town, holding hands, and I was just like, "I want to be with him." But I was afraid to say something.
A

And then when we got back home and we were laying in bed, and you said, "Do you love me yet?" And I was like, "Yes! I do love you. I just realized today that I love you!"

Owen: (*Owen laughs*) I forgot about that!

Amber: (*Amber laughs*) And you were like, "Okay, I love you, too." And we were like, "Okay. Good. We're doing this. No more pretending."

And then Mycie's birthday was a few days after that, and so we decided you would hang out with us for a little bit on that day.

Owen: Oh, yeah.

Amber: And we did. We took her to the toy store. (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: That's right.

Amber: So you could pick a toy out that you could buy for her. So it was a great introduction to mom's new boyfriend.

Owen: Yeah. (*both laugh*) I remember that. Oh man.

[0:26:27]

Owen: Yeah, I mean, prior to that I hadn't been around kids much. I was very much, you know, I was very, like, trying to make the bands happen, trying to make the coolest parties DJ'ing, you know? I wasn't thinking about family dynamics or anything like that. SO I remember buying that toy for Mycie and feeling totally out of my element. You know? But wanting it to go good, of course.

Amber: Yeah.

Owen: And so much has changed since then, becoming a dad.

Amber: Well, yeah. What else happened was that you were a cigarette smoker when we got together which was really hard for me.

Owen: Oh yeah...

Amber: But I was willing to see if you would quit.

Owen: I can't even believe you wanted to hang with me then.

Amber: I know. It was (*Owen laughs and audio unclear*)... kissing you that really speaks to how much I was attracted to you, but you were like, "I'm gonna quit by her birthday."

So this is like a few days before that we committed to each other and you were like, "Okay if I'm committing to you, and you have this child, I'm not gonna smoke cigarettes anymore."

Owen: I didn't want to smoke them.

Amber: And you did!

Owen: Yeah, I didn't want to smoke in front of her.

Amber: Yeah, you quit smoking cigarettes! I still think about how amazing that is that you did that.

Owen: Yeah I know. I'd been smoking since I was 16, too, so. It's been a while.

Amber: Yeah it's so crazy.

The other thing that happened on her birthday that year was-- so you worked this job in the afternoon, so you slept until, like, noon, when we got together. And you were gonna have to get to our house at, like, 11:00 to make the timing work. Something like that. So the day before you were like, "Okay, so I'll get there at 11:00 and we'll take her to the toy store." And I was like, "Great!" But I didn't want to tell her in case it didn't work out for some reason.

So then the next morning, it's like, 10:15-10:30, I hadn't heard from you, and I was like, "He can't do it! It's too much for him. He can't deal with the fact that I have a child!" And this is how in love

with you I already was. And I just laid on the bed and I started crying, and Mycie came up to me and she was like, “Mom, what’s wrong?”

Owen: Oh no...

Amber: I was like, “Nothing, nothing. I’m fine. IT’s just one of those emotional things.” You know?

And for some reason I was living to Elvis, “Can’t help falling in love with you?” Like it came on or I just thought of it, and I was like, “That’s the song I need to cry to right now.”

(Owen laughs)

So I put that on repeat, laid in bed and cried. And then at, like, 10:45 you texted, “On my way!”

(both laugh)

I was like, “Oh, he was just getting ready that whole time.” *(Amber laughs)*

Owen: Yeah, yeah. There’s just a whole other level of planning when you’re a parent, that I had no idea about. For me, it was just like, oh I’ll just show up within a half an hour of the time you said. You know? *(Owen laughs)* It was just how I was usually meeting up with people.

[0:29:16]

Owen: But scheduling is a real thing when you’re a parent, and it’s something that, you know, I wasn’t a parent until I was 40. So not being a very planned out person, that’s been one of the most difficult things about parenting, is planning things ahead of time, being punctual and all that stuff.

Amber: Yeah, I remember you being like, “I just... I really like sleeping in and taking my time.”

And I was like, “Yeah, no, me too! Everyone does!” *(Owen laughs)* Like, when you’re a parent you just don’t get to do that anymore.

Owen: It’s pretty brutal.

Amber: And I was a parent 10 years before you were, so I was already used to the brutality. *(Amber laughs)*

Owen: Yeah. Yeah, well three years later I’m a little more used it.

Amber: Yeah, you’ve been great. You’ve been amazing. You’ve just adjusted so well to becoming a stepparent and then a parent. Like, your life was just -- you were on a **completely** different path.

Owen: Well, luckily I had you. You know? Because you’re a professional parent. *(both laugh)*

You were always one step ahead of everything, and it’s made the transition a lot easier for me.

Amber: Yeah. And there's so much to be said about becoming a parent later in life, too, in middle-age. There's a lot to be said for doing it young, and a lot to be said for doing it older. Just being at a more stable point in life, hopefully.

[0:30:43]

Amber: And yeah, then you kind of just started slowly getting integrated into my business. The next growing season, I was like, "Do you want to harvest St. John's Wort with me? Do you want to learn how I even make the oils?" And you did.

Owen: Yeah, a couple years of learning the harvesting techniques and the preparation techniques, and then I was helping with all of that. But still had a lot of questions. At this point, I don't really. *(Owen laughs)*

Amber: Yeah, well you've pretty much taken over those aspects.

Owen: yeah, we've had to take on different aspects of the business.

Amber: Yeah, so let's talk about that because that's a question that came in a lot:

How do you run the business? Who takes on what roles?

Owen: Do you want to talk about your role?

Amber: Sure. *(both laugh)*

Well, obviously I do the podcast, which, I've wanted to do, I've talked about, since 2006.

And when I really got serious about it two years ago, in Fall 2017, we were kind of hesitant to take something else on. We had a one-year-old and an eleven-year-old, but it was just, like, this is so in my heart to do this, and it has been for a long time, and I just feel like it's what needs to happen for the family, for the business, for people out there who are gonna find it and love it.

You were really supportive even though it was hard and it took me away a lot while I was in the "figure it out" process. And that was before I had set up the Patreon, too, so we just, like, *(Amber laughs)* it was taking time and money away from the family at that point.

But I'm so glad we're doing that.

I run the website, the Instagram, of course, is me. Basically, anything you're interfacing with online, I'm putting out there, except for Owen's Instagram page. And then I do all the stupid, hard business stuff: the bureaucratic stuff, the paperwork, the taxes, the LLC; just all...

I say stupid because I hate doing it **so** much: the bookkeeping, the profit and loss statements, all that stuff. That is not my zone of genius; not my natural strength in any way, but it has to get done. So over the years, I've just kind of cobbled it together and taught myself how to do it and reached out to people who could help. And, of course, we pay people like the tax lady to help, and I do that for our family, too. I manage the finances for our family: do the budgeting, make sure everything gets paid, and that takes a lot of mental energy and time.

Owen: All the invisible work that is brain-soul crushing.

Amber: Yes, thank you. Invisible work (*Amber laughs*)

And I have formulated all of the medicines, and come up with the copy for the website and the labels, and work with the graphic designer on getting them out there, and place the orders for bottles and boxes, shipping supplies, and all that kind of stuff.

That covers my roles.

Owen: Yeah, so that's a lot. (*both laugh*) That's a whole lot.

[0:34:12]

Owen: At this point in our business, we've been trying to grow more of the herbs that we use and steer away from wildcrafting. So I've been... we still wildcraft, but not as much. I think I grew about two-thirds of the medicines this year. We have friends that let us harvest on their properties and other wild areas that we harvest from. So I do all of that.

I do all the -- we just moved into a place that has a challenging soil type, so I've been building soil and creating gardens for that. I do the harvesting, and I do the medicine making at this point. I usually, if it's an edible medicine, I usually have you, Amber, taste it just to make sure. And all of the recipes, like you said, are yours, besides the mushroom recipe was kind of a collaboration.

Amber: No, that was really you. The lion's mane and the reishi, you figured out ratios and best extraction methods.

Owen: Yeah. But I feel like you brought some really key books to look at.

Amber: That's my role in life: bringing the key books.

Owen: Yeah. (*both laugh*)

So we also have someone working for us now.

Amber: Yeah, so she does bottling, labeling, shipping, which is amazing.

Owen: Right, yeah.

Amber: 'Cause we really got to a point in the business where we could not carry all the roles anymore.

Owen: Yeah, so that's my role in the business is medicine-making and harvesting, doing the gardening, and I also do the cooking and the kitchen-work and the... I do, like, a lot of the physical stuff, basically, and you do most of the mental stuff.

Amber: Yeah, Owen cooks almost every single meal, does most of the cleaning in the kitchen, and then you do, like, you like the manly work. You do the heavy-lifting stuff. You can fix things. You're really handy. You can build things.

Owen: Yep.

Amber: So nice having that.

Parenting duties are pretty evenly split. I sleep with Nixie because Owen snores. *(both laugh)*

Owen: And you sleep with a sound machine.

Amber: And I need a white noise machine.

Owen: Both of those things keep us up.

Amber: Yeah, we're just incompatible sleepers. So sleeping with Nixie all night is not always easy. She's getting better at sleeping, but she still wakes me up, like, once or twice a night, but then Owen lets me sleep in in the morning if that's needed.

Owen: Yeah, Nixie is usually up between 6:00 and 7:00, so then I get up and we hang out for an hour to three, depending. Usually, like, an hour or two.

Amber: And then I do most of the parenting for Mycie, of course, because she's a teenager now. *(Amber laughs)* She's my daughter. So I take her to most of her things. I take her to school every morning, and I'm just, yeah, parenting a teenager.

[0:37:27]

Amber: We have a 13-year-old and three-year-old, so both not the easiest ages.

Owen: Yeah, and it's not just you parenting Mycie.

Amber: No.

Owen: You do do most of it, but I'll pick her up, too, from dance or school, depending. And I'm with Nixie if you're doing that.

Amber: Yeah. Yeah.

Owen: We try to make it as even as we can with our skillsets. I feel like -- I love how you stick to it, and your drive to make it happen, and it just feels good to be in a partnership with someone who has that, you know.

(both laugh)

Amber: Yeah. Kids.

So I think everyone who's a parent knows this, and, especially, business owners know this, and the overlap of people who are parents and business owners, like I said earlier, constant task management and delegation. Like, all we're doing is planning and communicating who's doing what when. What needs to get done today? Who's gonna do it? How's the timing gonna work?

Owen: Usually with a three-year-old talking over us.

Amber: Yeah. (*both laugh*)

It's just a lot. It's really overwhelming, and having an older daughter, ten years older, I got through, like, the difficult baby-toddler-preschool age, and then she was in her older-kid stage, which is really pretty chill for most kids at least.

Owen: Yeah. It was pretty awesome.

Amber: Yeah, it was really chill with her.

Owen: She's the best kid.

Amber: She **is** the best kid. So (*Amber laughs*) yeah, I'm just looking forward to a couple of years from now, when, hopefully, both girls mellow a little bit, you know. Nixie's an older kid. Mycie's an older teenager.

And maybe it's wishful thinking, but hopefully, at that stage, they're not going through so much tumultuous brain growth phases that they're both going through right now.

And it's not even that bad; it could be so much worse with both of them. They're both really good kids.

Owen: Yeah. Yeah, Mycie, 13-year-old, she basically wants to be left alone. She wants a lot of, like, time in her room. Where, our three-year-old daughter, Nixie, wants all of your time, everything, you know, (*Owen laughs*) and it kind of works out in that area of it, of like, one's like "Don't even look at me." and the other one's like, "But I'm playing with this magnet!" (*both laugh*) You know? "Check it out! Come play with me."

[0:40:12]

Amber: Yeah. (*both laugh*) And it's hard to find family activities that work for both of those ages. It's really hard.

Owen: It is. Yeah.

Amber: There's, like, no board game that will keep them both entertained. Going on walks, like, teenagers don't want to do that.

Her teacher said the best thing at the beginning of the school year, she's like, "At this age, they're less interested in nature and more interested in culture," and that's exactly where she's at. You know she wants to do the music and the movies and the TV shows.

(Audio pauses)

-- Okay, we just had a little glitchy thing happen but. --

So now I'm looking at the questions that people submitted, and one that's coming up is "How do we make our marriage a priority amongst business and kids?"

And we're kinda talking about that right now, but.

Owen: Yeah. *(Owen laughs)*

Amber: *(Amber laughs)* Are we, like, doing our marriage a priority?

Owen: Yeah, I mean. A lot of things get -- I don't want to say prioritized, but -- you know. We just bought a house. We've got to make payments, you know? Our kids come first, you know? I think we both kind of know we're in a real, like, sacrifice of space in our life where we're just kinda working a lot and trying to give our kids the best life we can and set ourselves up for later in life, too.

Amber: Yeah, we're definitely long-term thinkers with what we're doing. Like what we're doing right now, we're in the middle of getting our trust and will set up.

Owen: I feel like our love for each other is strong, and we know that and there's no, like, we're just talking about how we feel really satisfied, and it's not often that we get time even to just talk to each other.

As we're holding our free time, we're like, we're really hustling. And when the kids are around it's all about them.

Amber: I'm thinking that we kind of got, like, turned on, or, like, in a lovey-dovey state the other day after a meeting with our mortgage broker to refinance our house. *(both laugh)* Because it was like sitting in a room, looking at each other, spending time with each other for an hour, talking about our lives, and then also it was exciting to get your name on the house 'cause right now your name isn't on the house.

Owen: Right.

Amber: Because when we bought it three years ago, my dad needed to co-sign.

Owen: I didn't even qualify at that point.

Amber: Yeah, and now you do, and so I was just laughing, like, this is now what's exciting to us? *(Amber laughs)* This is what bonds us and brings us closer together? This adult bullshit, like, refinancing a house.

Owen: Yeah. *(both continue to laugh)*

It's like, for me, what I've always wanted so it's exciting, you know?

Amber: To be a homeowner?

Owen: To be a homeowner.

Amber: And like, you always wanted land because you love gardening and, like, working out on the land. That's what you spend most of your day doing: being outside.

Owen: And that is what makes me happy. I hate -- I don't really like being inside too much. I'm just more comfortable outside.

Amber: But as far as prioritizing the marriage, yeah, I don't... I don't think we necessarily do the best job of that. Like, we don't talk about how are we gonna prioritize. I think we've gone on one date. Just one? Two. Both of our wedding anniversaries.

But we do, every night after Nixie's asleep, we try to hang out. And sometimes it's like, "No, I'm gonna do my own thing," and we're both happy doing our own things 'cause that's important, too. We don't get alone time during the day, but I guess it's the weeks that Mycelia is with us that we all, the three of us all, hang out once Nixie's asleep every night. And I love that.

Owen: Me too.

Amber: I love those nights.

Owen: I do, too.

Amber: And we try to relax in the afternoon when we can; put on some records, maybe we'll have a beer. If not, we'll have kombucha or tea or just try to be like, "Now we're relaxing together as a family."

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: But sometimes we have to still stay in work mode late into the afternoon, and be like, "Okay, you're with Nixie while cooking dinner, and I'm down here, finishing orders," and you know there's those days, too.

Owen: Yeah.

[0:44:35]

Amber: Let's tell the story of our marriage since that just got mentioned 'cause that's a funny one, too.

So we were just, when we were -- the first few years we were together, we were really trying to take it slowly, partially because of Mycie and having this child and just being like, let's not rush into it in case it does not work out, and let's just be totally sure before we move in together, and all that stuff.

And then two and a half years into the relationship, my mom died in a car accident, and you were so there. You were the first person I called -- well, I called my sister first, but she didn't answer for a couple hours. That's a whole story that I've yet to tell on this podcast, -- but I called you, and you were up early, which you weren't usually still at that point, but we were going to go look for a car for you that day. So you got up early, and you came over, and you were just so amazing. You were so amazing through the whole experience and the first few weeks and months and grief and getting through what had happened.

We... okay, now I don't want. I want to save the whole story of Nixie's conception for another podcast when I tell the whole story of my mom's death, but what happened was we conceived Nixie three weeks after my mom died.

Do you remember how you felt when I told you? I remember I texted you because we were living separately still: I was living with Mycie. You were living where you were, and I was like, "Hey! Come over!" *(both laugh)*

Owen: Yeah, I very much remember that. *(both continue laughing)*

Amber: Because up until that point we had always said we weren't gonna have kids.

Owen: Yeah, yeah.

Amber: But just a month before we had, the conversation had slowly shifted towards, well, maybe we would have a baby. So that door had just slightly opened.

Owen: Yeah, I remember saying, "Yeah, I could see myself having a kid with you." But it was like, just one conversation, you know? *(Owen laughs)* It wasn't like...

Amber: We weren't trying or anything.

Owen: No, we weren't.

Amber: We were trying **not** to.

Owen: Yeah, and back to the conversation we had when you told me you were pregnant:

I remember sitting on your bed, and umm, just knowing that, like, we were gonna have this kid. Like it wasn't like we weren't going to or that that was even an option.

Amber: Yeah.

Owen: Not for, like, I feel like not for any reason or anything. It was just.... It just, to me, it just was something we were going to do.

Amber: Yeah, for sure.

Owen: Yeah, I remember you, like, crying, saying, "It's going to be so hard. You don't even know how hard." *(Amber laughs)*

And I had no idea how hard it was going to be. I was like, “Aw, babe, I can’t wait to, like, be super burnt out and tired, you know? And be living that life with you.”

(Amber laughs)

And I didn’t realize that’s most days, for years, when you have kids the burn out is real. It’s really intense.

But yeah, like I said earlier, I had never really thought much about family dynamics or family life or how hard it was. I had only, like, before we had Nixie, I had only held one, two kids, and one was ten years before, and the other one was like two weeks before. *(Owen laughs)* You know?

I had only held two babies.

So yeah, it just wasn’t really in my sphere at all: people with kids or any of that.

Amber: Yeah, but you were happy. I have a picture of you holding the pregnancy test with a huge smile on your face. *(Amber laughs)*

Owen: Oh yeah! I was SO happy! I just didn’t know what I was getting into. *(Owen laughs)*

Amber: I remember sobbing for hours after that pregnancy test. I was so happy.

[0:49:02]

Amber: So then, also, because around the same time I was like, you know, my mom, I had inherited some money from her retirement account. She had been a blackjack and roulette dealer for 40 years at Harrah’s Lake Tahoe and started in the seventies when people gave good retirement account matches.

So I’d inherited some money from that. I was like, “Does this mean I can buy a house?” So I started really looking into that possibility, which is not really something I ever envisioned for myself. I’d been such a broke single mom for so many years; never ever thought I’d be a homeowner. And I did have enough money for a down payment but didn’t make enough money to qualify for a loan. And so, called my dad, and I had asked him before to co-sign a loan for me. My mom had asked him also, and he’d always said, “No, no, no,” but I think because Mom had died -- they were divorced at this point -- he was like, “Okay, I’ll do it.”

So basically, the whole pregnancy was like this hellacious effort at owning a home. It was just, like, so complicated, so many moving parts, so much stress, so much adulting while I was pregnant. I really did not have a nice and relaxing and nourishing pregnancy looking back on it because I was so focused on it. I knew if I don’t, if we don’t, buy this house now, it’s never going to happen for me. It’s now or never. Prices are going up. Everything is aligning right now even though it’s super difficult. So many phone calls, so many tears, so much stress, and it worked out and we go this place, and we still love it so much. It’s such a dream. We’ve been here three years now.

So we only moved in together a month before Nixie was born. I was, like, super pregnant. *(Amber laughs)*

Owen: It wasn't even a month. I think it was three weeks.

Amber: Yeah, the height of summer, August.

Owen: Yeah, it just worked out.

Amber: And we were having a home birth so I was like, super focused on getting the house ready to give birth in and just, like, managing you. "Do this. Do that. Do this. Do that." And you were exhausted. WE were, like, definitely at each other's throats.

Owen: You called in your sister and she, like, (*Amber laughs*) throwing boxes around, organizing, she's a crazy organizer. (*Owen laughs*)

Amber: Yeah, Lacey made it happen! She really did. She came and stayed with us, basically, the last few weeks of my pregnancy and got the house together and was there the night Nixie was born.

Owen: Yep.

Amber: And my friend, Jenn, was there, too, and amazing midwives. Just so special that Nix was born in this house that we love so much.

Owen: And Pumpkin-man.

Amber: And Pumpkin was there, too! (*both laugh*) And our two amazing midwives and wonderful photographer, Jolene.

And so we still weren't married at this point, and we hadn't even really considered being married.

Owen: No, it wasn't...

Amber: It wasn't a priority for us.

Owen: It wasn't something that was, like, important to us.

Amber: But then, come December, I was thinking about having to file taxes for the year. We had gotten official for the business. We weren't an LLC but we were registered sole proprietor. And I called the tax lady and was like, "How am I ... how are Owen and I going to file taxes together? He's running the business with me. There's no other source of income, his name isn't on the business." And she was like, "Yeah, you need to get married if you want it to be easy."

I was like, "That's what I was thinking, too." So literally, dropped Mycie off at school that morning, came back home and was like, "Let's get married once we pick her up from school today. Let's go down to the courthouse and do it."

Owen: Yeah. (*Owen laughs*)

Amber: And you were like, "Okay!" (*Amber laughs*) Nixie was two months old. I spent, like, three hours tearing the house apart looking for my grandma's diamond ring and never found it, and

Lacey later found it at her house in Tahoe, so it was never there at all. But I had another ring. You had a ring. I had a white dress that still fit me. Still very post-partum plump at that point, and we called some friends together and we got married down at the government building, and it was so sweet.

Owen: Yeah, it was. Everyone we invited came, and it felt so good that our friends were supporting.

Amber: Yeah, and their kids there.

[0:53:05]

Owen: I didn't really realize how important being married would be to me until we kinda did it for business reasons. You know?

Amber: Yep. Tax purposes (*both laugh*).

Owen: But I'm proud to be married to you and love being married to you. It just, it feels good to be, like, homeowners, business owners, married together, in this life together with someone. Having a kid together.

Amber: Yeah, I feel the same way. I love being married. Never thought I would be married or wanted to be married.

Owen: Right. And I feel like our skins or things that we can do really align with, like, your weak points and my strong points, or your strong point and my weak points are really balanced in a way that works for us.

Amber: Yeah, for sure.

And going back, too, we were basically middle-aged. I was in my late thirties. You were, too. I was in my mid-thirties. You were in your late. Anyway, now I'm 38 and you're 43. We've been together six years, and I just think there's something so sweet about committing to a relationship after you've gone through many relationships; you've had a lot of life experience. I definitely think the younger you are when you get married, the more likely you are to divorce. It's really, really hard.

Owen: I feel like you're missing out on something.

Amber: Like what? Sowing your wild oats type thing?

Owen: Yeah, or like, I don't know. So many things come up in marriage and kids that's different from when you're young and think you're going to be the next David Bowie. You know? Or something. (*Owen laughs*)

Amber: (*Amber laughs*) Speaking for yourself... (*Owen laughs*)

Because I was kind of a young parent. I was 25. I mean, you know, I don't know. I guess -- I'm just saying, when people ask, "Your marriage seems so healthy. Why? What do you do to make it work?" I think a part of it is that we came to it later in life. I don't know if it would've worked out if we were younger.

Owen: Right.

Amber: And I think that people who get married young face a lot of challenges. Not that it doesn't work out for some people, but I definitely think it's harder, especially if you have kids. I guess I'm mostly speaking about people who have kids right away.

Owen: Yeah, some things are easier, like, having the energy for having kids.

Amber: Right. Yes. (*Amber laughs*)

[0:55:40]

Amber: So a question that someone asked is "What are we growing in our gardens?"

Owen: Oh boy. I'm probably going to leave some things out.

(*Recording stops briefly*)

Amber: Yeah, I know, it's been glitchy the whole time, but I think it's recording.

Owen: Okay.

Amber: It does this.

Owen: Well, we're growing mugwort, yarrow, motherwort, lemon balm, umm...

Amber: Elder trees.

Owen: Elder trees.

Amber: Nettle, calendula, (*Amber laughs*) I know we can just name so many plants right now.

Owen: Lots of herbs.

Amber: Lots of herbs. A lot of them for the business and medicines we make.

Owen: I'm trying to grow a lot of berries for the kids. It's just nice to plant something, you plant something one time instead of, like, with vegetables, planting every year. So we're working on that, and what else do we got? Angelica.

Amber: Datura.

Owen: Datura. (*both laugh*)

Amber: Past guest, Mariee Sioux, gave us a couple of datura plants. Oh, and then we have the food garden: tomatoes, basil.

Owen: Rosemary, thyme, oregano.

Amber: We have a pumpkin. (*Amber laughs*) Seeded itself.

Owen: There's more: there's burdock and ashwagandha... There's kind of experimental gardens that are just kind of wild.

Amber: So we've got three enclosed garden spaces 'cause we've definitely got deer. We have bears, quail, all sorts of animals coming through. And then there's just things that Owen has just put around the property that they're not likely to eat, like, mugwort and lemon balm.

Owen: And it's been three years here. So it takes time to figure out what's going to work where, what's going to grow on its own, what needs irrigation. What I've heard is it usually takes about five years to set up your farm and feeling that this third year. Every year I've had some success and a lot of failure, but it kind of builds up. The success builds over time, and then you have something that's providing for your business and your family.

Amber: Yeah, I love that we are pivoting away from wildcrafting out of just a concern of overharvesting as people become more aware of the medicinal herbs growing in their landscape, and we've always practiced really mindful wildcrafting and leaving a huge percentage of what we're wildcrafting behind.

Owen: All the spot that we've wildcrafted from for years, for six years now, they only get bigger and better because we tend them. We both practice plant connection, earth connection.

We always check in with the plants, and one of the answers that I get from the plants when I ask, "What can I do for you?" is almost always my eyes will go right towards, like, a plant that's coming in and taking over their patch, like, blackberry or scotch broom. Usually something invasive. And so I'll do a little bit of weeding when I'm there or I like to seed scatter while I'm there, too.

Amber: Seed scatter with seeds from the plant that you're harvesting?

Owen: Yeah, I do that if there's seeds. When I'm collecting seeds, I'll usually do that. It's a token of appreciation, like, "Here, I'll sprinkle seeds for you."

Amber: You propagate them.

Owen: Yeah (*Owen laughs*). Yeah I just, ethical harvesting, harvesting the right way where the plants don't die and actually, a lot of times produce more seed and more crops and whatever and just do better.

Now you get the stand. (*Owen laughs*)

[1:00:21]

Amber: And speaking on that: Owen taught a class out here on our property, I guess it was in the springtime so a few months ago; a nice rainy day, a plant communication class. It was so sweet 'cause it was part of the vision we always had of teaching plant skills out here on the land and our home. And it was so cool because it was Owen's first time teaching a class, and it was a rousing success.

Owen: Yeah, it was really nice. And it was funny 'cause most everyone that came had already had some sort of plant connection in their life. And I wasn't expecting that. I was expecting people to, like, want to get into it and learn about it, but it was people that already had experienced it that came. And that was neat.

Amber: Yeah, and that was great.

Owen: It was, yeah. Plant communication has been kind of a bummer lately for me. It's not a bummer, but it's just been really, really sad.

Like, where we live is on a serpentine gabbro outcropping...

Amber: That's the type of soil.

Owen: It's a rare soil type. It's basically void of any nutrient and really high in magnesium, and so the plants that grow here have to be pretty hardy or be pretty strong.

It's 1.5% of California's soil types and about 80% of California's rare endemic plants grow in this soil type. So there's not a lot of it, but there's a lot of our rare plants that live in it.

Amber: And we didn't know this when we bought the house and moved in.

Owen: No. That was part of the adventure of moving out here. So that is really special to live on it, in a place like this. But our town, with funding from our California government and with our amazing fire organizations there.

Amber: -- 'cause we're right in the middle of wildfire country. --

Owen: Yeah, we're in the middle of California. They're clearing about 2000 acres of this land.

Amber: Around our house.

Owen: Around our house. So.

And no one asked the plants if that's okay. There's no asking the animals that live here if that was okay, and so it's just heavy 'cause last week, about every day, I was out communing with the plants and just taking on that grief.

It's not really something we do in our society. We don't. There are things for us. There are things for the people, and there's other living beings on this planet, and we can't, we shouldn't take without asking, and when I harvest for the business I always ask, and sometimes I get a "No." And that could be for a number of reasons. Maybe someone sprayed it, or I don't know.

To... being sensitive to that and being in tune with that energy, it's been hard out here with the clearing that's been going on. And uh. Yeah. Sometimes it's hard. It's not always awesome being able to communicate with plants.

Amber: Mhmm. I so appreciate the awareness that you've been bringing around that issue, Owen. That this project to clear the underbrush, you know, makes sense in some ways. Wildfire's less likely to spread quickly, immediately after it's cleared, but as you pointed out, people heading this project, they're not planning on maintaining the clearance. It's all going to grow back.

Owen: That's what... that's what happened in Paradise with the big Paradise fire.

Amber: The "Camp Fire."

Owen: The "Camp Fire," yeah.

It was a thinning project through the forest there, and about four years after that thinning process, all the understory had grown back, but not enough to stop the winds that blew through there so fast that there wasn't time to evacuate.

So that's basically what they're creating out here is, like, through a really sensitive area, a fire break that they're not really going to maintain. Not that I'd want them to maintain it, or they should maintain it, and not that I'm against the fire break either. It just shouldn't be here.

The reason that it is here is because there's an old fire road that was already there. It's on the city, the edge of the city, and it's where the grasslands meet the chaparral; the kind of more like shrubs and bushes before you hit the bigger trees, the conifers, here.

So they're trying to clear out the chaparral of the shrubs and stuff, but it's all gonna grow back.

Amber: Yeah, it's short-sighted, very human plan to come in and dominate nature, but it's so short-sighted.

Owen: Yeah.

[1:06:03]

Amber: Umm. While you've been educating about that and advocating for that, I so appreciate you going out and communicating with the trees, and I mean the plants who are going to be affected by this and all the wildlife.

Owen: Yeah, I wish there were more people doing it. I wish there was, like, something in our culture that was like, "Sometimes these projects have to happen..."

Amber: "Let's hold ceremony."

Owen: Yeah! Let's just let them know that it's coming at least. I feel like. I'm taking the brunt of that. I don't know anyone else doing it. Everyone else is like, "Yay! A firebreak!" You know? (*both laugh*) "It's gonna save our town!" But I don't know.

As far as where people's land meets wildlife land, too, it's just a difficult situation. I don't think it's all going to be bad. I think some things will do bad. Some things will be bad. I was talking with a botanist friend of mine. He was saying, "Yeah, you know there's probably going to be a lot of weeds that come in. Just like plants that aren't typically on that soil."

Amber: Nature will regenerate in some way. (*Amber laughs*)

Owen: In some way. It's just such a special area.

[1:07:23]

Amber: So you've been doing that. How do you feel about the education and advocacy work that I've been doing around mandated vaccines?

Owen: Oh yeah. I'm very proud that you're taking that on and all the risks that come along with that, and all the, like, trolls that have been coming after you online, and the awareness that you're bringing to people is amazing. It's scary for me sometimes, too, 'cause it's through our business side. You know?

Amber: Yeah, it is scary.

Owen: But I'm really proud of you, and I'm glad you're using your platform to make change and to protest. Like, that's all we've got right now is civil disobedience. Everything, the reason why shit is so fucked up is 'cause all of our systems are collapsing right now:

Our environment is getting trashed. Our corporations are being super greedy 'cause they're losing their foothold. Our medical system - totally fucked.

All these systems are falling apart, and they're squeezing it out of us. They're trying to get every last drop out of us, and that's the whole thing with this. This -- whatever side you stand on with vaccinations, it's like they want mandatory vaccinations for everyone, and they've already taken religious freedoms. They just took our medical freedoms here in California, and now they've already introduced bills for, like, awareness for adults to be vaccinated.

Amber: It's a resolution. It's not a bill yet, but it's paving the way for a future bill for mandated vaccines for all adults in California, and it's coming to the rest of the country in the next few years.

Owen: Yeah, and it's just another example of, like, the medical business, pharmaceutical companies trying to get more money out of us and not caring you, about the effects.

Amber: Who gets hurt.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: You're so right on the environmental front, climate change, Pharma, greedy corporations on every level, it's like civil uprising is the only, the last stand, and it's happening.

Owen: Yeah, you've got to break the law.

Amber: It's happening on all those fronts.

Owen: Through protest.

Amber: Yeah, I mean, you can break the law. You don't have to necessarily break the law to be part of like a civil uprising.

Owen: I'm not talking, like, you know, "Kill the CEO of Exxon Mobil," or something. (*Amber laughs*) That's not the way to do it, but there's civil disobedience you can do in groups, where if you do end up getting in trouble, you might end up going to jail for the night.

Amber: Yeah, well what happened at the capital was people volunteered to be arrested. You know? Like, I think you know this person doesn't want to be arrested, she's gotta go back and nurse her baby. Although two nursing mothers did volunteer to be arrested at the Capital last week which was amazing.

So yeah, there's the civil uprising, and then there's the education piece which is what I'm really engaged in on Instagram. There's going to be some upcoming podcasts, too, but I just really appreciate your support, because it's taken a toll on me. It's taken a toll on us, and it hasn't taken a toll on the business, yet, but that could happen.

So yeah, just thank you, always, for your support in everything.

Owen: Of course! I'm so proud of you. Like, you're making me proud when I'm home with Nixie, and you're down at the Capital protesting. You're there for both of us.

Amber: Yeah. Yeah, thanks, Owen. I hope you feel just as supported by me.

Owen: I do.

[1:11:24]

Owen: Yeah, you know, with the plant communication thing: this has been going on for twenty years for me, and so, the fact that I can talk about it and you practice it, too, and I have someone who's like-minded.

For twenty years I didn't have anyone who had these connections with plants. I thought I was on my own. I thought maybe I was going crazy. It was something I was afraid to talk about with people. Nowadays there's all kinds of people teaching plant communication classes for connection; all kinds of stuff. And that was what inspired me to start teaching. I was like, "Oh. I'm not the only one."

Amber: Yeah, this is not abnormal at all. This is basic human practice that all of our ancestors were engaged in and people just need to be shown the way to remember.

Owen: It is so out of step with how we live today that sometimes it's painful, like with this clearing. 'Cause we don't have that connection. It's all heart connection. So when we reopen that heart connection with the earth, and you see what we're doing to the earth -- or to the plants. The earth will be fine -- (*Owen laughs*) but the plants and the other living beings on this planet and living a normal American life, it's hard. It's really out of step, and I feel like there needs to be some kind of change or we're just going to destroy everything.

Amber: Yeah. It's hard having kids. It's so hard having kids right now. I don't think maybe people without children understand how much everyone I know who's a parent thinks every day like, "What is the future for my children? Are they... like, how far is this all going to go? Do they even have a future?"

Okay. We had a little glitch, there, again, but we're back just to say goodbye. Gotta get back to our lives. I need to find and print our home insurance declarations page?

Owen: Oh that's nice.

Amber: And then you or me need to meet up with our guy later today to submit all those papers.

Owen: Right.

Amber: We need to come up with the money to pay for all this. *(Amber laughs)* So we've got to get back to real life.

But thanks, Owen, I'm glad we finally did this. I've always wanted to have you be a guest, and I know other people have wanted to, too. I think we covered most people's questions just during our conversation, so that's why I didn't really read them all out.

Owen: Yeah. Cool. It's really nice to have some time with you! *(Owen laughs)*

Amber: I know - converse for an hour straight, literally, hasn't happened I think.

Owen: We should do this again, but not record it.

Amber: *(Amber laughs)* What's the point of that? *(both laugh)*

Okay. I was just gonna say I think the only other time we've done this was when we were fighting; talked for an hour straight. *(both laugh)* So I just wanted to make it clear that we **do** sometimes fight, too.

Owen: Yeah, I'm always right, though.

Amber: Pssh... *(both laugh)* No, overall, it's a really solid marriage. And most of the fights happened when Nixie was younger when we were just getting used to parenting.

Owen: Yeah, and I gotta say, most fights were kind of like a misunderstanding of the other person's feelings. It wasn't like you did something super lame. It was a lot of times just getting heard or misunderstanding what the other person was saying.

Amber: And being so tired and overwhelmed, I always tell first-time parents, "Be prepared to fight like you've never fought before," because literally every person, mom I've talked to has said that happened to them in the first year of their baby's life.

Owen: Yeah, it's like getting a lot of energy out, too, sometimes.

Amber: Yeah, but we did the smartest thing you can do and learned from every fight. And now, I don't remember the last time we fought, actually. We get annoyed.

Owen: I don't even want to think about it. *(both laugh)*

Amber: We get annoyed and like I don't know, *pssh - pssh*. We have our little tense moments, but we're good at getting through them.

Owen: And we just know each other so well now that we can kind of just figure out what's triggering someone or how far we want to take this thing or maybe when is a good time to talk.

Amber: Yeah, that's an important one is not just fighting in the moment because you feel angry at something, but waiting until an appropriate time.

Owen: Yeah, don't fight when you're angry. *(Owen laughs)*

[1:16:15]

Amber: Okay, and then one more question I was wanting to ask you is like what do you envision for the future? What are your goals? For the family, for the business?

Owen: OH man. I don't know. I guess I'm just so focused on right now in the present with everything, and everything is unfolding in a great way; just keeping on with the gardens and the growing, and expanding the business.

Amber: Yeah, you're really land-focused: seeing how you want the land to unfold and the plants, and what's where, and making sure we have enough to harvest for the medicines we make that people have come to rely on.

Owen: Yeah.

Amber: Well, I want to keep doing the podcast. I just feel so grateful that even when I'm feeling so burnt out from life, I never feel like stopping the podcast. I love doing it so much.

Owen: Yeah, it's great. I listen to it all the time.

Amber: *(Amber laughs)*

And, yeah, keep -- I mean, yeah, the medicine business is getting hard to keep up. With. And like, we are going to sell out of St. John's Wort oil soon. I think probably by Christmas the way things are going, which is crazy 'cause last year it didn't sell out until June. We make it again in July, basically.

So, like, the medicine making is really growing, or the medicine selling is really growing in a way that I don't know if we're going to be able to keep up with (or even want to keep up with) because it does put pressure on the plant population, even if we're growing it ourselves. Like, we don't have the endless capacity to keep making this medicine, even with the help of our wonderful employee.

So we'll... I want to be on a kind of steady growth path with the medicine making. Maybe more St. John's Wort oils in the future, if we can find healthy stands to harvest from sustainably.

Owen: If anybody has any tips on growing St. John's Wort, I've had the hardest time with it.

Amber: Yeah, well in Kami's class, there's a whole thing on it. I don't know if you've watched the module yet, her oil-making class. I mean, my long-time, big goal is always, my entire life is to write books so I really want to do that.

Owen: Mhmm. I want you to do that, too.

Amber: There's literally no time for it now, and I figure, like, doing the podcast is sort of laying the foundation for writing a book. It gives me connections to people who could help with that. It gives me ideas of things to write about.

And then to just keep growing super healthy children to give them a solid foundation for life -- what every parent wants to do -- and keep advocating on the behalf of children everywhere and children's health. (*Amber laughs*)

Okay. I need to use the bathroom and drink some water.

Owen: Okay.

Amber: I love you, Owen.

Owen: I love you.

(Exit Music: acoustic guitar folk song "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)

[Closing]

[1:19:19]

Amber: Thank you for taking these Medicine Stories in. I hope they inspire you to keep walking the mythic path of your own unfolding self. I love sharing information and will always put any relevant links in the show notes. You can find past episodes, my blog, handmade herbal medicines, and a lot more at [MythicMedicine.love](https://www.mythicmedicine.com). We've got reishi, lion's mane, elderberry, mugwort, yarrow, redwood, body oils, an amazing sleep medicine, heart medicine, earth essences, so much more. More than I can list there. [MythicMedicine.love](https://www.mythicmedicine.com).

While you're there, check out my quiz "[Which Healing Herb is your Spirit Medicine?](#)" It's a fun and lighthearted quiz, but the results are really in-depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with the medicine you are in need of and the medicine that you already carry that you can bring to others.

If you love this show, please consider supporting my work at [Patreon.com/MedicineStories](https://www.patreon.com/MedicineStories). It is so worth your while. There are dozens and dozens of killer rewards there, and I've been told by many

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And please subscribe in whatever app you use, just click that little subscribe button and review on iTunes. It's so helpful, and if you do that you just may be featured in a listener spotlight in the future.

The music that opens and closes the show is Mariee Sioux. It's from her beautiful song "Wild Eyes."
Thank you, Mariee.

And thanks to you all. I look forward to next time!