



Loving Cohousing

February 19

9am-3pm Pac 12-6pm East

Love in the Age of Covid Transcript

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By joining, and and also by Oh, volunteering you can.

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I think you can knock the price down a little bit, and, moreover, the price includes a lot.

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So I think it might be a real respectable price for what you get if you come, and I hope you'll come.

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Come see my place. you a key organizer, Jenna.

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No, not at all you're a great ambassador and but i'm a booster we've got 4 cohousings here, and I think it's it's just such a great town people think

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we're fly over land. and I want to encourage you East and West coasters to come on in prices are cheap compared to you guys.

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Excellent thanks Janet that's a I think helpful for folks who haven't thought too much about traveling it in in the days of Covid I'm. figuring out if we can do a sleep robust from

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Boston, visiting Ithaca and other communities on the way.

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And of course there's also the train so you can , change.

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Actually it's very reasonable train's fun all right well, we're at 15, after whichever hour you happen to be that.

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So with welcome to our next session. Love in the age of Covid, with Doctorate and Chuck, with Katie Mcchammad, introduced the concept of cohousing to the United States with their seminal book

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cohousing a contemporary approach to housing ourselves.

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Chuck has written several other books on cohousing, and he and his team at the Cohousing Company have designed more than 50 co housing communities in the United States and around the world, including Mirror Commons in Davis called California, the First

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co housing community in North America. Welcome, and I will turn things over to you and appreciate the joining us, hey?

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Thank you very much, Scott, hey? i'm so happy to be here, because this is a topic that is near and dear to my heart.

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You know I often say about co housing, and I said it many times.

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My last book, which is, you know, the The key to success in co housing, and you know it when you have created, is is that people know each other?

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Rins. I don't know what's going on but maybe you'll get to share the screen.

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I see screen sharing has started, but that's where it's.

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I started early. Stand by. Oh, maybe they have to load it, or something.

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I think what I have to do is stop the presentation and then start. That's always the trick I see.

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So should I just continue I'll continue i'll catch up in just a moment.

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Okay, cool. Well, anyway. you know, as I mentioned a lot in the new book.

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You know what makes co- housing work is people getting to know each other, getting to care about each other, supporting each other and then growing to love each other, and i'm.

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I argue a lot that doesn't happen accidentally not even remotely, accidentally.

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It's a very much an engineered reality largely because, you know, village life in America is not does not come natural to us.

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We have to consciously create the villages that used to happen.

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The Dane said that from the very beginning you have to consciously create the high-functioning neighborhoods that used to happen, and the communities that have used to happen.

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It was a it was a deliberate act. Luckily they had put a lot of money and skill into what they called cultural workers and other kind of sociologists, so that when they started co- housing they could know what factors

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make a difference. For example, they are you heartily that don't do more than 50 people in 50 adults in your co housing, because it's a hard to get consensus above 50 and if you try to run a Co.

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Housing without consensus. That alone will create some acrimony that we have enough in our life around politics, and all the best.

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But but try to get as many adults as you can up to 50, because the main reason is is, if you have 50 adults in there, every adult will probably gravitate towards you know 5 to 10 adults that really become good friends that

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you can really depend on when you have a bad cold, and will bring you a bowl of chicken soup, I mean where I live.

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I feel like you can ask anybody to do that but There's There's 5 to 10 people that will volunteer for just about every different individual and and so they really work the math on that like nobody else I've ever seen you

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know. Basically, they are constantly figuring out, How do we get people to know?

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Care, support, and love each other. For example, you know where I, where where I lived in for 6 months.

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In Denmark There was a co housing community at dinner in the Common House 7 nights a week, largely because they felt that common dinner was the number one way.

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Breaking bread was the number one way to break the ice, of course, but more importantly, foster deep and meaningful relationships with people just like you would have dinner in a family, you know if it's a priority and

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a family at dinner time, and lots of families. We moved in here with 37 kids and they, many of them, were growing towards a very centered dinner.

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For the first time. just didn't have it previously it was more like catches catch Kent.

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But anyway, they took it so seriously that One night a month the dinner committee would break up the households into 4 or 5 households, and they would meet in one household for dinner as opposed to every house as opposed to the common house

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1 one family would make dinner for 4 or 5 other families and the dinner club made sure that these were people who were normally not talking to each other or not talking to each other much.

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So there's a There was a constant attempt and more than attempt much success in helping people grow closer together, and you know, as far as they were concerned, as far as i'm concerned, that's the beginning at least the beginning, if not the

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beginning the middle and the end fostering love among among residents.

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So i'm a big believer in it the whole 5 to 6 people that has to do.

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You know people that care about each other more than just co-hosts, but real, close friends.

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It all reminds me of high school. I hate to say it, but where everybody wanted to be included, everybody wanted to be accepted and welcome, and and wanted to be welcome, and I wish I could say that I really felt like we get past that

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But i'm not sure that we do and I think all the way to our dying day.

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We want to be appreciated. Welcome! accepted, and all the rest.

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You know we moved in with no people of of color, and now we have 10.

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That patience, of course, but also very active behavior on terms of recruiting people, etc.

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I recommend it, and and I think all of those folks feel like they have as much love as anybody else.

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I feel like there is an immense amount of love to go around here.

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However, the only one that I feel like doesn't get enough love. And this is, you know, you know, at least my next campaign in our community is people with neurological diversity partially because you know we have the ultra responsables

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who live here. People who you know who You know would not accept a regular neighborhood built their own neighborhood.

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They're very can do people and we just don't know how to deal with people who have a diminished Iq or some some neurological disability.

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But I think we're on the road to getting better at that. So you know, of course, it takes a little bit of activism to make that real.

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It also takes a little bit of patience i'm not going to say that it happens organically, because it doesn't it has to be a deliberate actor.

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We have to make it conscious and then choose to move forward on that line.

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Item and You know we've had people with dementia here who I didn't feel like we're getting as much love as they could.

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We had one teenage kid who had an iq of 58.

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I didn't. feel like he was getting as much love as he could, and there are a few people that made a conscious effort to do something about it.

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But I think that's that's our growth curve in the future.

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Okay, let me start these slides. i'm ready for a slide switching whatever you are.

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Yeah, i'm ready, thank you you know this is you know we have a village kids committee.

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I'm astounded by how often they organize something for the kids. i'm astounded how many parents want to come and voyeur, and just see the love frankly I really really do love it and and I think the

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kids are different human beings when they leave here. As a result of it.

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You know so much acceptance, so much nurturing, so much cultivation.

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My daughter grew up part half in this coh housing and half in another country housing.

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We moved in when she was one years old. now she and all of our kids.

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When they are out of high school a couple of years seem to have a unique take on life, and that unique take on.

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Life seems to be that i'm gonna get further and we're all gonna get further.

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If we can know how to cooperate. You know the shortest poem in the English language is many.

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We which means, and the most common interpretation is that i'll never reach my potential unless we reach our potential as a society.

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They work that way Jesse's been out of 200 high school now for 20, I mean i'm sorry. 12 years since then she's worked for the Un for 4 years work for 2 different Congress people been the assistant to

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the Ambassador of Laos and works at the Department of State right now around issues of human trafficking, trafficking.

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And you know I constantly argue that of course she got a good looks from her mom.

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Her height from me, but her smarts from her co- housing There's so much nurturing and cultivation that happens here.

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Go ahead, friends, and thank you for doing this. You know, Titchy, not Han, who just died literally a couple weeks ago, at 99.

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I think he was, and this was his most famous saying and as people have put his his various memorials on Tv.

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This is the most common thing that said this. This man was mostly known for this, and for those of us who live in cohousing.

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I think we feel strongly about this, you know, when we need something saved at some level.

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My one year old is screaming all night, and I need 200 I need an earake medicine.

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We all know to turn to our community first, and foremost and our community, in fact, solves our problems more likely than the government, more likely than the family who lives across country, and and if I yell at if i'm lying in bed, yelling oh, God you

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know. Take this headache away i'm better off if I if I hit the Google machine and say in search of Tylenol, and i'll have 2 or 3 bottles of Tylenol at my Doorstep within

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an hour. So I think a lot of people who live in cohousing know this to be the case and at some basic level. I feel like our job is to grow this concept You know that's why I think the Madison conference is so.

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Important. If you really do believe in love, and we really do believe in co housing, then it's a it's a marriage made in heaven next.

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And of course, you know, when you give in co housing one of the things you learn is that there's not always quick pro quo, and and Karma is an interesting term.

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I mean it takes too much time to talk about Karma here.

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But but There's a lot of love to go around There's enough love to go around that You do not need to depend on somebody paying you back.

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Go ahead. this is something that one of my employers. my own. My employees decided to put it in here.

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I think it's true next whoops that's 90 degrees you don't have to change it Sorry about that.

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But you know, i'm always astounded by when we get stone.

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2 weeks ago we got a couple of fetus snow 22 inches, and you know we just know that there's enough people around who have a hard time getting around.

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So by 8 o'clock in the morning it was this overnight snow.

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By 8 o'clock in the morning there were 10 people out there, shoveling snow in shoveling 2 feet of snow.

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Not like this little dusting right here, and it really surprised me.

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Then later that day I walked downtown in town.

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I live in, and none of the sidewalks were were shoveled 0.

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Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and thousands of feet of sidewalks.

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Nobody had sold their subway, and you know so I know for a fact that it requires the right kind of setting to foster love where it's obvious that that we're going to care about each other.

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And support each other. Not just something that we say because it's always amazing to me.

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When we got this project approved, 2,003 how many people are saying, Chuck! We already have a community.

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We don't need your co- housing and well maybe but there's so much rhetoric around that term community, and I think there's a lot to be measured like like plowing the sidewalks and

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taking it. How many people can you depend on for a cup of soup, and how many people?

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Hours week in the common house There's a lot to be measured as to whether it's really a functioning community, and therefore you can depend on the love there.

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Next. You know Rumi has so much, so much to say about it, and I always appreciate everything he says.

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And you know, if somebody asks you what is love dissolving the will?

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You know I have learned from my own self if I could also say dissolving the ego, I've learned from my own self when I'm sitting in a common meeting with 45 other adults, and we're trying to figure out

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cut the tree down don't cut the tree down and i'm sure that i'm right i'm sure that i'm and i'm certain that i'm correct in my decision, and and I see things going the other

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direction. I'm: infinitely surprised. how often my ego dissolves. and I just feel like well, you know that's what they want to do.

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Okay, i'm on i'm fine i'll help i'll help next.

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This one is an interesting, too, and I think the one on the left the I think it's a little counterintuitive for cohousers, but not if you've lived in co housing for a long

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time you get comfortable with the fact that love will not come automatic.

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It's not like you know it's not like you're concubine, or something.

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You actually have have to play a role in and wrestling the the reality of love.

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In this case to the to the at the table. and you have to be comfortable with wrestling 100.

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If you're completely conflicted verse you won't do that wrestling, and you'll have a hard time finding the love in my view that you need to and that you can give because you know it's not

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always obvious what is beneficial to all and and to individuals, and without the discussion.

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So being able to dialogue, you know, and weigh the pros and the cons of every line on them.

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Really, in my case, view really presents itself as the way the road to getting to the the most loving answer, especially when you dissolve the will.

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Go ahead. Brains thank you darn it there's another one sideways.

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I don't mind Didn't come out Sideways but anyway, you know that one's interesting to me that happens to be a project we finished recently in in Durham, North Carolina, and it's an all all

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Lgbtq community, and you know some people this is during Covid, and some people do want to be in the common house, and some people don't want to be in the common house.

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So it's interesting to me how much ingenuity always plays a role where I live, too, you know, and that has to.

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That requires enough love for everybody. So, for example, some people want to sit outside.

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So the tables are outside. Some people want to sit inside, so the tables are inside, but we all want to be together.

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So you know, we open up the big doors, and we gang the tables through the through the double doors 2 and make it work next

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This happens to be port, towns and Co. housing, I mean.

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They wrestled a project together ton of work as they were because they're 45 very opinionated people.

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They wrestled a project together quite successfully and now that they live there.

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I can't say that I know of another 45 people that are having more fun than they are mean er and these are people who've had very tough times.

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The woman in the in the back there with the white shirt. 21 year old Kid was killed in a fire, and he was a forest fire worker.

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That guy in the right of her you know, Got to terrible disease.

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Hands fell off his fees. His feet were you know, severely damaged.

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And yet they found each other in this setting, and that setting is pretty sure forward I'm.

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Walking by this front porch, I see my neighbors having a good conversation.

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I'm gonna join them, and everybody's welcome next you know during Covid.

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We had a lot of our common dinners. and in this happens to be a common lunch outside, and at 7 o'clock every night, because some people were very much in their house at 7 o'clock every night here We brought

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out about 12 drums, a couple of picolos, a bunch of chimes, and drawn to other kinds of drums.

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We probably had 10 different instruments 20 people every night at 7 o'clock, and the whole note, nature.

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The whole notion was that you know the people get to say good evening.

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Good night to each other, and especially for the singles in the single households to say hello to each other again through the day, and it really made a huge difference in everybody feeling connected the 7 o'clock music the meetings.

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That we had out in the parking lot with, you know, quite a quite a distance from each other.

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So the mantra in our Co housing community during the pandemic was was that we are socially distanced.

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Only people who lived in the same households were at each table.

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We are socially distanced, but we are not socially isolated.

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Next, you know I come back to the food a lot there's hardly any better way to express your love than giving your neighbor a hearty dinner.

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I happen to be having dinner at the Common House down the road from us a couple miles, that the senior co housing and somebody put this plate in front of me.

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This is for 3 people, and there's another one at the end of the table also for 3 people, and I just looked at that, and I said to myself, how much love is that I mean all of that work.

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You know, 2 or 3 people, and you know, very centripetal looking each other, talking to each other through the day, and then chopping all of these vegetables, etc.

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The and and everybody in that common room felt like Well, we've got This is a perfect dinner for my health, and for my emotional well-being, because it's obvious.

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That somebody loves me at home, and what gives you more of a charge and better emotional, well-being than feeling like, Oh, somebody definitely loves me. next.

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This is back to corporate village in the state of Washington I'm always amazed when i'm visiting there.

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I'm going there next month. how many people are visiting other people during Covid, you know these people on the left are all vaccinated.

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Person on the right is not fully vaccinated, but they still visited them.

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Next the person on their front porch next. And, by the way, in that cohousing community now senior car housing 45 adults, not one single person has gotten Covid, not one not even Omicron which is so catchy They

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are. In fact, I bet those people on the left were not only vaccinated.

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They were obviously boosted and probably took a test, you know.

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Maybe that day I mean they're they're so adamant about nobody catching it.

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That's their that's their mark of success next the metric our common house now that most people are vaccinated, you know where we've started having dinner again had a lovely dinner last night and especially when the

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weather's halfway decent, I was surprised last night in February there not.

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This was not last night, but there were 2 tables outside, and 2 tables inside, and extremely there's a lot of will in our community to make sure that dinners are provided, and during the covid 19 we cook dinner a

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lot of people cook dinner for the seniors. I cook dinner every Wednesday night. The seniors and a lot of other people cooked in or other nights.

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They seniors, and deliver the the meal to their house next.

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You know. There we grew into a lot of new outdoor games during Covid, many of which will probably carry over.

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I'm not saying that covid turned out to be a big plus in any way, shape or form, because it also detracted a lot of our previous rituals and goals, but we we got one with bache ball

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for example, and we played a lot of games outdoors next, and I only put this up there because you know, countywide, and I mentioned earlier how nobody was.

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You know ? shoveling their their there's. No?

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Well, you know, we spend county wide. We spend about a \$1,000,000 a year taking seniors to and from the doctor to the store to their friend's house to the pharmacy just goes on and on, and and and we ran short last

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year, and that turned out to be a real tragedy in town, because there was too many seniors and not enough people.

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Otherwise delivering stuff to them in the county and I think about how in now 18 years and 22 seniors living here. We've never had one of these buses show up at our co housing.

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You know, if if Meg, who just died 3 weeks before her, you 99 per her before her hundredth birthday, if she wanted to ride to the store, or if she wanted a ride, anywhere, it was almost a competition but amongst

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the neighbors to figure out who could take her who would take her.

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We have a lot of people here who need rise one way or the other, who never had a pair of transits.

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Show up to give them a lift, and so you know I feel really good about where this could take Co.

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Housing, because i'm working on a project right now in Plaster County, where they realize they they have so many services for seniors that they can't afford anymore.

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And they're really realizing and families and parents and kids after school music lessons.

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You name it that they can't really afford anymore and therefore they're actually looks like they're gonna give the Co.

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Housing company 4 and a half acres site, so that we can make a model neighborhood in their town, so that you know, and this model neighborhood will model, and because there's no cohousing in the hall county in plaster, county so that this

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neighborhood will model how neighborhoods can, in fact, do a lot on their own.

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You know I hate to say it because it's not very politically accepted.

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But you know I did a tour of the neighborhood associations, and Cuba and I was astounding by how much the neighbors took care of.

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The seniors took care of the kids, etc. and they had they.

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Of course, had to do that for necessity. We have to do it for necessity, but it also meant a lot to the seniors to have people next door taking care of them instead of people.

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You know, who drive a bus to their neighborhood, embarrass them a little bit, and then and then drive them back.

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An hour later. Next, in my view, it all starts here, you know, in the context of making a neighborhood together.

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You know, this 70 year old guy in the upper left and this and that. this case 25 year old woman in the bottom right?

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The you know, growing that's where the love grows and this four-day workshop.

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In my opinion, there are 2 different communities before the workshop and after the workshop, because there's so much integration their values and experiences and appreciations for each other, and what that looks like in the context of a new

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neighborhood. What is how that neighborhood will be infinitely different than just about anything any of them had lived in previously because they had spent the time working with each other, talking to each other, and growing to understand each other that got them to that place and now

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It's a 33 unit very high functioning community next, and I think you can see it in the eyes of a lot of people who, you know now live in Co. housing.

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This was an LGBT community in Durham.

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Again, and I can't tell you how interesting it was when they were telling me why it was so important that they live with LGBT community.

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Because that was the only group of people that understood their history.

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That was the only group of people that understood that what they went through as a kid.

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What they went through is they were coming out. How big of a decision that was!

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You know they are opening it up to allies now, but they needed to plan.

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It with people who, they who would understand them, and 2 through their dialogue.

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And and actually they started opening it up to its Lgbtq and allies, and and understanding is just the root to community and to love.

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In my opinion, I mean going to be pounding the drum a lot about diversity and co-, housing in the coming months and years, because feel like we have so far to go there from an understanding point of view.

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And when we do understand, and the only use qualifications I have for pounding that drum is.

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I spent a life in my youth, and a lot of different populations, including at 16 years old.

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I went to Africa a by myself first time. I was there on an airplane and worked with Africans for a year.

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I, You know I worked with a crew of about 150 Africans.

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I was the only white guy. but anyway, I had lots of experiences like that, and a kid as a kid, including living in an all-white, you know, world.

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And I realize how much the the white population has to move to get move that to the next.

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That square along next the love again I mean it's so interesting to me.

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The the woman on the left there julie hunt when we're planning that project.

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She that site plan. Actually, she says, I want a site plan where it's easy for me to go next door and borrow a cube of butter.

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So when I was walking through this community one day, and I saw her next door neighbor coming to her house to borrow a cube of butter, I thought, Wow, these these chickens have really come home to roost, but I asked

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Julie. so turns out they were gonna be borrowing, borrowing, borrowing from you.

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And she laughed. Next, holding child. By the way, you know for me that on the left there, this this slide means so much that that that 13 year old kid right next to my on my left she was having her thirteenth birthday I happen

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to be in the hot tub reading, and I started. I I asked her if I could read out loud, and I did.

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And look at these kids. it's just blows my mind how much they're paying attention.

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But i'm reading about the the parliamentary member of Afghanistan, who is of the first female.

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She was 34 years old, and all the amazing adversary that adversary that she went through And it was just quite an evening of reading interesting stories.

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And these kids really wanting to hear about it next, you know.

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1 one morning I was walking through the common house about 10 o'clock, and older people were teaching younger people how to knit I don't see anybody from their own family here. but they were teaching younger Kid from other families how to knit and I walked back through the common house

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of 4 P. M. 6 h later, and they were still knitting So that's that's something to me.

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Next. I think you know common dinner is so much more than sustenance, hey?

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I'm i'm going cross country skiing this weekend?

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Do you want to go, hey? i'm going to take my kids to the Zoo?

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This weekend. Can I take yours blah blah blah so many activities stems from this key activity next.

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And you know, like when I cook dinner. I never i'm never averse to making fresh bread. If it's requested of me.

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This is for common dinner and that's a lot of love i'm, just telling you to make 3 or 4 5 loaves of bread for 30 or 40 people next This woman in the middle.

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She was that 25 year old at in Chile now she's starting her own community in Vancouver Washington.

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In this slide she's 29 here, and she had to move professionally from Chile Act, which was 50 miles east of Vancouver to She had to work in Vancouver, now 29 years old. She was a physical.

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Therapist. A high 100% of her patients were infants and toddlers who were brain damaged by their own parents.

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Sheker babies, and so she put it out. there, she said, Look

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I need a lot of love when I come home. I mean I am exhausted emotionally, and Therefore I want to make a cohousing, and it's amazing to me how she was able to muster that group into buying

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a very expensive piece of property, very complicated because we were rezoning a single family house to 31 unit cohousing, I mean, in a single family house neighborhood.

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You can imagine what the neighbors. they came out of the woodwork to fight her. but this group made such a compelling story.

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The keynote speaker at the at the city Council and that's a big deal in there in Vancouver.

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Was a young mom immigrant from the Philippines, who said, I need I need a village to help me raise my child.

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My young girl, and everybody made a compelling case, and the City Council did something.

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They almost never do which is overturned The planning commission in Vancouver next.

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Hey? Is there any questions yet? I wanted to not just be a monologue? any questions yet. I also want to make sure everybody's there anybody there?

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Lots of people here. Okay, everybody's there and yeah if if people want to just say, drop questions into the chat as you go.

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Feel free that okay, i'll continue and so out you can just interrupt me. if somebody throws a question in there. But it might happen.

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I'm almost done, and it might happen that that question's answer could come up.

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So maybe i'll just hustle through this and and then open it up.

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How about that either way? Hey, range? Once you take me to the next one.

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Parentsing, you know. the biggest complaint I get about co- housing is, you know I can't tell you how often 3 or 4 parents are sitting around.

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In this case there's 5 3 for and then a guy to the far left there Kentucky often in co housing.

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There's parents sitting around talking about parenting you know while they ignore their kids.

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But the biggest complaint I get in co housing now is how many parents say?

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I sure wish my kids would have had what these kids have when I was in a kid next, you know, for months I would go to the common house to get my laundry and find it all folded up like this and I couldn't figure out

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who was doing it couldn't figure it out and finally I found out who was doing it.

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85 year old, Gloria and I confronted, I think, plenty.

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What are you doing? You have enough to do in your life.

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Why are you folding my laundry she says well, Chuck, you're the only one who listens to me when I talk about my grandkids who don't live in the co-host, so I mean love

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manifests itself in so many ways in co housing that I can only only give me goosebumps to think about it.

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Next one of our common meetings, I mean. we still have to manage the ranch, and we do it outside.

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During Covid we haven't had a meeting inside yet. but we've had.

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We have course, lots of zoom meetings but whenever the weather's even halfway decent.

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We need outside next, and we have a You know these are.

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This is a party for all the parents and the teachers. We moved in with 13 school teachers.

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We. We knew that the parents and the teachers had had so much adversity over these last 2 years.

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So we everybody else hosted. We had as many more hosts you know.

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I clean tables, clean dishes baby. Set the kids and everybody did something for these.

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The parents and the teachers next here's the kids by the way being babysat, while their parents are all being honored and lavished with love.

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Next. we have a lot of things with the cross crossing with the kids, and that and adults who are not their parents because there's so many things you know, like we had one kid who really wanted to go fishing but his dad didn't

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fish. So when fishing with other people, we another kid. this fit this kid with the 58 lq.

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Only only one adult in the whole place resonated with him.

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So we finally got those guys connected because he had a motorcycle in this 50.

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This teenager really loved motorcycles. Next we do.

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A lot of art shows in our co- housing this was during Covid and i'm surprised we don't have masks on right here.

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Tell you the truth. Next, the kids you just can't underestimate the kids in terms of their ability to love each other.

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It blows my mind how much I feel like they can depend on each other in this setting.

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Next, not just for playmates, but for everything. dinners.

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I mentioned the dinners. i'll keep mentioning them no masks because it's dinner time. We actually have had dinners inside.

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Now that you think about it, we have had some dinners inside it.

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This is just a few. A couple months ago next this this slide speaks for itself.

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They're they're not related. next this slide speaks for itself. They're not related that kid getting homework help from another adult to mentioned that a lot of parents we're not related to the kids helping each other that is especially

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a true around homework. somebody you know, you just get a rapport with somebody who knows how to review your essays. and you know you don't necessarily want Mom and dad also correcting your papers.

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I know that from my kid and you don't want necessarily mom or Dad teaching you math because they don't resonate.

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But there's somebody in that community who does resonate next, and i'm really gonna hustle now.

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Oh, and this is the last slide, and I just have to finish by saying, I'm astounded by how many rituals we're growing into.

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We have, you know, a solstice ritual, where you know everybody comes in and brings a candle, and we spend a couple of hours and silent meditation with each other.

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And you know, you know I was talking to a guy who is one of the 20 people who still lives in his co- housing, and 20 people, originally 20 people, that adults and 2 of them meditated when they first moved in and

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now 18 of the 20 meditate. They just taught each other that.

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And this is a guy who died up at Copper Village.

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We have. we've had 7 people dying our co- housing community.

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A lot of people moved in over 80 years old, and you know our our death rituals.

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Just get more and more lavish every time and I mean it's not just for those who have lost, and it's partially, I assume, because you know, 18 years you you grow really connected.

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But also for the people that they're leaving behind knowing that they are still loved.

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They're the decision is very loved and and it comes right from the heart.

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I mean God, you know I when I those different 7 people, you know we have a we have a procession, and one thing after another, with candles and all the rest, and I mean the longer I know them the more I appreciate them.

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And that is a big part of love, you know. Somebody just analyzed the Co.

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Housing in downtown Sacramento. At fifth and tea their first household moved out.

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Their first of 25 households moved out after 12 years that's 1, 40, third of the normal neighborhood turnover, and it's hard to garner love at at 43 times the turnover but when you have

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stability in your community. it's actually you know life being what it is.

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A series of tasks and and and disappointment enjoys

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It's easy to grow that love if you have stability and thank you guys, and i'm ready for any questions.

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Thanks so much. Chuck a couple questions in chat, the first one from Angela asking how many senior co housing communities are there down the Us.

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Oh, it depends a little bit on how you count them but there's about a dozen Now, there's about a dozen and expecting a lot more. and there's a funny thing is like the santa cruz

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co housing the new one at Walnut and Cedar.

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You know I was the architect, that that they never wanted to call themselves senior cohousing.

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They never wanted to be senior Co housing but only seniors moved in. So I think there's more and more co housing like that, especially in a place like the Bay area, where you know older people have accumulated

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the wealth that the younger people have and not yet accumulated So that's another reason that this project in Plastic County is trying to be very affordable, so that it's not a senior Co.

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Housing. Thanks, Mabel also wanted to know what community you live in, and so are you an original resident, or did you move in after? Yeah, I'm.

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Not only original resident. I I bought the land and sold it to the group because I didn't want to wait.

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I was the project manager, and I was the architect and I'm.

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A resident. So I had 4 hats and you're still there, and i'm still here.

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Yeah, Yeah, I and what we have said and what Oh, it's Nevada City Coal.

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I'm sorry, thank you. Yeah. hey? hey? mabel How are you?

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I'm doing well. Yep. good to see you great partners I can't hear you, Scott, you're on Yeah, Yeah, that's amazing how that works.

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Yeah, Lynn, If people have questions and they want to voice them, feel free, and just stick your hand up using the little raise hand.

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But but Linda wanted to ask for tips about reaching out to other cultural groups to increase diversity.

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Sounds like you've had some success there. yeah you know, when we were in the bay area, we would.

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But put flyers at different locations, especially in schools where we knew there were a lot of people of color in that school, and and churches.

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Of course. I I routinely gave talks in Oakland, California, at churches after church, you know.

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If you hand a couple of flyers to, or a book, loan a book to a pastor and say, Hey, I would like to have a presentation after church here.

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This is when we were young, and you know really just trying to populate our various co housing communities, and and sometimes we were accepted as sometimes we weren't.

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You know it's tricky you have to go about it because you're, you know, by you're not proselytizing, and and you have to go about it in a way that Respects a very much respects their culture which is not

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always obvious and easy, but you have to have guts on, you know, for better or worse to reach out at that level.

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And and I you know it's if you've if you get into a routine.

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It actually gets to be fun. And the bookstores in those neighborhoods, too.

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You know, Books, stars are. They can play a big role in culture change, and I would often loan them a book creating co-

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Housing and on consignment and say i'll come back in a month, and if it's still here, i'll just pick it up if it's not you know we'll split it 50 over 50, or something like

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that, and they were good for that, and I would I would put flyers of the next presentation I was doing in the book, you know, so that more and more different people would come to the you know a lot of guerrilla

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marketing. You got to, you know, just in the trenches.

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Thanks. I kathy's interested in more generally what turnover rates are for coizing communities.

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If You've got neat data on that yeah I mean you know Sacramento is the extreme and it's great you know Berkeley Cohousing is also pretty low, except for there's been a number of

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deaths there. of course, and partially, it's because they have a cap on equity.

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So you're not gonna sell something there and be able to buy something else at the same price.

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But but but you know people live there because they want to live there.

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I I know that's lower than the regular and in America.

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When we first started the average house, the average household in America moved every 7 years.

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Now it's every 6 years so we seem to be increasingly becoming a more and more mobile society.

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And you know if I had to guess here. the probably you know we've had 7 people die, so they don't really count, but otherwise, because they just timed out they like to say i'm timing out we I have a good friend who lives here

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who's got 3 diseases now and he's just say i'm about rate at timeout, anyway.

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If I had to guess it was like every dozen years or so.

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I'm gonna do the math here, because i'm not really sure I should know if I had to guess, though around the country.

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It's about every dozen years. but that said you know I still think we have a long ways to go to to make it easier for Americans to live in Co. housing.

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I think we have a long ways to go and and I do believe that.

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You know I do believe in the cap on equity.

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I, You know I think Berkeley cohousing is a model in that way.

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You know. I mean we had a problem. We had a in 2,008 when we had the financial crash in this country.

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Co- housing really held its value, and, in fact appreciate it when nothing else in town was appreciating.

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And so there are people who moved out of here in that year.

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Era because they needed the money. They lost their job, and they needed the money.

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And first of all, I kind of believe that you know we were keeping them employed one way or the other through our connections, or literally, you know, I had one guy who was he was a handyman traditionally, So we had him

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you know, painting our this and painting are that, and fixing this and fixing that.

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But anyway, they decided then they just decided and legitimately that they were going to put both daughters through college.

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So anyway. they moved out right then, and and they almost doubled their money, because that is a problem in co-.

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Housing. now is that the appreciation can be relatively high it's not high everywhere, but it's high know clearly high functional communities.

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It's pretty high here. it's very high the appreciation has been ridiculous.

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And Burke in Nevada and Emoryville cohousing, where we moved out of.

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I think, Katie and I bought our unit for 200,000, 250,000, 225,000, and we heard from the person who sold it that it sold for over a 1,000,000.

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So that's in the bay area. of course, but I think that's another line item that we've got to work on in this country is how to you know and how to foster stability by by fostering

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affordability that follows on, and janet I haven't missed your question. but I think the question from was such camus comments about, say, the model used in Denver, where the land is being leased? and How does that fit into an

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affordable housing model. Well, that and in auburn which I spoke about earlier. we're probably we don't have it tied down yet, but we're probably gonna lease that land at a dollar a year and

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that's because in this particular case, some fairly enlightened bureaucrats.

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Decided that they want to high function you know they Placer County is known for one ridiculous suburb after another.

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I mean it's the epitome of sprawl It's the epitome of bad growth, and they've got some new bureaucrats in Now, who have a sense of you know what a functioning town looks

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like, and and towns and county, and they also realize that the county costs are getting too high, because nobody takes care of anybody in any of the neighborhoods, and the county has to step in everywhere whether it's

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You know dementia you name it. They are having to play a huge role, and you know, in Denmark.

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They figured that out a long time ago. The county is buying a lot of sites and selling them, holding them, selling them to co- housing groups at a very small increase in the cost, and I hope and but there has to be an

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agreement that there will be a limited equity resale.

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And so you know, unfortunately, the days are 2030 years ahead of us, and but i'm doing we're doing everything we can to continue that evolution, and I think we have a long way to go thanks and rains put a note, in the

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chat with more detail on limited equity I see a lot of questions.

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So i'm gonna move along since we've only got 10 notes left, but Janet was asking about a hi group cohesion in covid 19, where they're seeing reducing restrictions and some people who are more concerned about

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spread of Kovat getting very hostile about, say, and expecting stricter lockdowns because of Omicron? or what have you?

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And so have you seen that sort of thing in in other co housing communities?

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Yeah and in Port Townsend. I mean I haven't seen anybody stricter than them.

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They've had cases, but they have tolerance too.

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I mean if you I think everybody there when you come out of your house, you're expected to wear a mask, etc.

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I don't don't know how they enforce tolerance.

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I would be interesting How that works mean you Could you could argue, you know, if you've had much experience in a real village before, you know, like I have your living a year in Africa and like I did as a kid living in a

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small town of 325. You know how a culture works.

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Basically the culture doesn't need written rules that has mors and norms and 100 and all the rest.

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And for better or worse, when I was I mean, you know, when I was a kid living in that town there was a lot of growing tolerance because of the hippies.

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People had to get used. to the hippies and then the loggers, and the miners didn't want to get used to the hippies.

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But anyway, we finally everybody finally got used to the hippies.

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So, so where I live? I would argue first of all I know for for sure you could just do the people hours, you know, before Covid had about 450 people hours a week in the common house, and that's a Metric

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that is like the key metric for co housing is how many people hours a week in the common common areas?

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Because community. I lived in Denmark. It was about 750 people hours, but they they had after school.

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They had many, many programs that, that we don't have and since Covid is probably it's closer to 125, or something like that.

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And you know, before Covid if I went into a Co-azzi community, I could tell it was less than a 100.

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I would always assume that's not a very high function co-author.

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But, anyway, luckily we had 15 years of 450 people hours a week in the common house, because that's what grew us together, so that we would to do 2 things we knew as soon as the first lockdown happened that we had

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to be there for each other, You know whether it's you need medicine or tests, or whatever you need.

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We're gonna be there for each other all the time and The second thing that happened which I think is just as critical is we got really tolerant and different than poor towns.

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And we had 3 people would not get vaccinated we had one person who would not wear a mask, and we just asked her not to go in the common house, so she wouldn't at least she wouldn't do that but so and

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you know I still love you know ingrid and and colleen, even though they've insisted on not getting backsmated, and not and one of them not wearing a mask.

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But you know we stay away from them basically. So a lot of people stay away from not everybody.

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But a lot of people do, and we tolerate them.

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So I mean, I think that's just been essential in this community.

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I think it was, there was more it was more toleration than I expected, but we stepped up and we made room for those those that variety that we might not have otherwise done.

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They didn't do it in poor towns they just said Nope. I don't know how they enforced it, though that's a that'd be an interesting study I mean How do they coalesce as a more

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cohesive community for each other basically you know I don't want to get back to vaccinated.

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But Janet really wants me to get that accident, so I will get vaccinated.

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Jana, who I appreciate and love won't talk to me unless I get vaccinated.

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So, therefore I will get taxed. that vaccinated you know the I mean, I've always approached cohousing from a very anthropological point of view.

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What are these values? What are these experiences, and try to manifest that in the third dimension?

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But Covid has presented a different problem. We that said people ask me all the time, Chuck, how would you design cohousing differently now with Covid?

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And I argue all the things that we did previously to stitch communities together and co-consciously, you know, like my door handle is 12 26 feet from the door hand all across from me in other words, and we've

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learned in the last 2 years that I can sit on my front porch and make and sit on their front porch, and we can have a very functional kind, and people do for hours on it in fact, there's like 4 or

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5 community households in my pod we can all be on the front porch at the same time, and have a cohesive conversation.

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But i've i've i've really learned that i'm gonna make it even tighter in the future.

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Not just for the covid times. What I really want is people to become to love each other in the good times.

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So when the bad times hit like covid we're there for each other.

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And you know. so that's my future in the in the architecture side of things which I delineate in great detail in the book.

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Community and hands design. So I want to put that out there because this whole presentation was going to be based on that book, but it wasn't based on that much on the book.

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Thanks. another affordable co- housing question looking at especially the Pacific Northwest.

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What's possible. Given That given the market affordability wise yeah well, I got to tell you i'm very happy about what what I think is how possible.

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I'm not happy about the fact that you know Co Housing has this reputation is not being not affordable, because there are projects, you know we did 4 in that when we did Berkeley cohousing the average house price of a

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house in Berkeley At that time 1,995 was 500,000.

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We had to get 5 people in there for 130,000 first time.

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Homebuyers. 4 of them were single moms.

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One of them was an elderly and and we managed to do it.

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But you never hear about Berkeley cohousing being advertised, or emerald Co housing, where we got people in there at 130,002.

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We also got people in there a couple of units, 430,000.

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We bought our first unit there for a 155,000 in the Bay area, and then we bought our second unit.

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I think it was 225. But anyway, the point is that you know you want to get into an affordable project.

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The key thing is to be in early make your needs known and and design around that my whole mo is whoever is at the table. That's who we're designing a project for but most people these days must because

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they've heard about how expensive co- housing is they scare themselves out of the project, and you have to have a very entrepreneurial spirit to say damn it.

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I'm gonna move into a co housing community that I can afford. and that's the incredible the important thing, and honestly, the number.

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One thing that makes projects affordable. 200 is people who plan to live there who can't afford it any higher?

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That's the number. One thing if you come to the table and everybody's responsive.

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Then the number. One thing is that you need affordable coefficients. if you think you're gonna buy a co housing community after market, second and third on the market that's affordable very unlikely.

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But if you're in there from the day one it's very likely you know.

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Still water Oklahoma. We had 6 people who couldn't afford a house more than a 150,000.

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That was virtually impossible, but it turned out to be very possible, and it was, and for me, the architect.

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It was very easy. The project was a lot easier because I was able to say to people all the time, if we do that Maryland can't move in, and everybody had ground to love Maryland, and the other 5 people who could not afford

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so we're not we can't do that I didn't I rarely said it.

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That way. I usually said it in the context. Okay, we have to prioritize these 15 amenities and get it down to 5, so that everybody can afford all the people that we care about and love who are in this group can afford to move in

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It was very deliberate to very conscious act to, you know. Make sure.

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Everybody moved in. all. 6 of those households moved in that could only afford \$150,000.

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Excellent, all right. The new book i've got 18 case studies about very affordable projects that you never hear about 18 different ways; that 18 different groups made their project affordable.

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You never hear about them, because people have affordable coizing they don't have to advertise the ones that have to advertise all the time.

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Are those, you know. We have a 3 bedroom for 750,000.

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They're the ones who have to advertise incessantly.

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So those are the only ones you ever hear about makes sense.

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Yeah, all right. Well, our time is pretty much up very thankful for all of the people who put demographic information about moving to and from, and births and deaths.

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I think that'll make for an interesting study just on its own, and I that was 450 h for 450 person hours per week.

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Right? Correct? Yeah, not per month. Yeah. Yeah. probably. So thanks.

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So much, Charles. This was really really interesting we're out of time.

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So we're back to the ballroom now for closing comments and takeaways, and then there's some time for open discussion.

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Sessions, and those will be coordinated from the ballroom.

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So can you tell me how to get into the ballroom I'll drop the link into the chat in just the second?

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Thanks you, Scott, and thank you chuck and scott and reminder to all that great Go back to open house days is coming up in April, and a great opportunity to find ways to carefully reopen from covid whether it's

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virtual or carefully orchestrated in-person gatherings that helps everybody feel safe, show up love.

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And here we've been muted. yeah very much looking forward to that being in Canada, we don't have a National Co. Housing day yet.

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But what we'll work on we can include some international options in our Us.

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Listings we've in the past we'll be we have some resistance on that. But I think there's enough.

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How many? leader yourself that all right, i'll follow up on that then all right, link in the for the ballroom, and see all there shortly.

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Thanks so much. So it's in the chat huh? that wears the chat, the chats, and more. Yes, Yeah, Okay, good.

Chat & Links

03:28:25 Raines:Just tilt our heads 90 degrees to the right

03:49:18 Angela Hunkler,Phoenix commons: how many senior cohousing are there now in US

03:55:07 Wasatch Commons: We like the theme of love. Thanks for highlighting love today.

03:55:44 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): What community does Chuck live in - was he an original resident?

03:56:16 Linda Kruus: Any tips for reaching out to other cultural groups to draw in the diversity?

03:57:12 KathyO: Interested in turnover rates for cohousing communities more broadly

03:57:35 Janet M - Arboretum Cohousing Madison WI: Cohousing has been a great place to live during Covid. As a community we have done very well until recently. As we reduce Covid restrictions the more "fearful" individuals are getting hostile, expecting even more strict lockdown measures. Have you seen groups decompensating?

03:57:44 Wasatch Commons: What about this model that is being used in Denver whee the land will be leased. Maybe this is the future to help cohousing affordable. What do you think?

04:00:23 Raines:Here at Berkeley Cohousing, half the founders are still here after 28 years. We have had 5 deaths and 5 births, all at home (except for the last one in an ambulance in the parking lot)

04:01:08 Sherry: My apology for late arrival. Chuck, where is the hope for affordable cohousing? The market right now is daunting in the PNW.

04:01:36 Marilyn Kakudo: What do you mean by a cap on equity?

04:02:20 Raines:Berkeley Cohousing got a deal with the city to waive condo conversion fees (\$34k per unit) in exchange for becoming a "limited-equity condo" for 30 years with caps on income of buyers and inflation-linked purchase prices

04:03:23 Janet M - Arboretum Cohousing Madison WI: Arbco has 40 units. Half have turned over in 14 years. Five deaths, about a dozen births.

04:03:30 Raines: As a result homes here can sell for well below market prices, but as the arrangement expires we are looking at Community Land Trust partnerships and other innovations to preserve affordability for those who want to (and who can afford to, some who have borrowed a lot to expand their homes may be relying on a market sale eventually to fund retirement or kids college)

04:05:10 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): Cornerstone in Cambridge MA has 32 units. About half are owned by original community residents (one has moved to a different unit, 2 other households have moved to a different unit.). For years I've been saying we average about 1 sale per year, although we got 5 new households one year.

04:06:48 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): We've had 7 deaths. One of those was a mother who moved in with her daughter while her home needed extensive renovations. I'll have to count the births

04:09:02 Pat (she/her) Ravens Crossing Sidney BC: Was that 450 hours/month or per week?

04:11:26 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): I count 14 births and 3 adoptions, but I probably missed some, since some families have moved on.

04:13:57 Janet M - Arboretum Cohousing Madison WI: Cohousing may generally be market rate (unless you have gov't supported income restricted homes, etc.) but it's VERY affordable to live in.

04:14:56 Raines: My wife Betsy Morris and I were the first ones to buy into Berkeley Cohousing without already renting here... our regional group East Bay Cohousing includes lots of folks who want to follow in our footsteps.

04:15:02 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): Per week - wow!

04:15:23 Mabel Liang (Cornerstone Village Coho, Cambridge, MA): Thanks, Chuck!

04:16:05 R4 host: Scott Drennan - Treehouse Village:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5598042920?pwd=RGNoS2FsY2hBak9NaDJHNDNyT253QT0>

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04:16:20 Bob Leigh: Scott, please do not apologize for that. ;-)