

Wynne Leon (00:00)

What does it mean to lead through service and to place our shared humanity at the heart of every courageous choice?

Welcome to the Life of Try Podcast. I'm Wynne Leon, and today I'm joined by Yasmine Sherif, human rights lawyer, Longtime UN humanitarian leader and author of Unleash Your Humanity. In this inspiring conversation with a dynamic leader, Yasmine shares how faith, persistence, courage, and a deep trust in our shared humanity.

carried her from a childhood shaped by two cultures to the front lines of conflict and a life devoted to service. Together we explore what it means to turn adversity into awakening, choose authenticity over fear, and meet life with joy, creativity, and purpose. Yasmine's story is a powerful reminder that courage grows through practice and that each of us can help move the world toward greater humanity.

I'm so glad you're here. Let's dive in.

Wynne Leon (01:08)

Hi Yasmine!

Yasmine Sherif (01:09)

Hello Wynne, it's lovely seeing you.

Wynne Leon (01:12)

It's so lovely to see you. And I love your energy. I love what you bring. So I want to introduce our audience to both you and your book. So I'm going to read a little bit of a bio about you. Unleash Your Humanity which is your latest book, is both a riveting memoir and a call to live. The story of one woman that's you who refuses to stand on the sidelines of life. A senior UN humanitarian leader, human rights lawyer, a global

Advocate and a change maker, you have spent over three decades not only navigating war zones, but transforming them and yourself. With courage forged through conflict, loss, and awakening, you show that true power comes from choosing humanity over fear. And your journey illuminates a universal truth. Transformation begins the moment we dare to live authentically.

So I love that introduction because it says so much about your incredible history. But I wanna start at the beginning. You born to a Swedish mom and an Egyptian dad. They divorced when you were young, but there's so many pivot points that are so interesting. the one that I want to ask you about is when you applied to law school and it was your second application.

Yasmine Sherif (02:31)

Yeah.

Wynne Leon (02:32)

And you made a pact with God. Can you tell us that story?

Yasmine Sherif (02:36)

Well, let me say this, that that though my parents divorced, I never doubted the love.

they were really loving parents, they loved their children. And even though my father was far away, whenever I met him, I knew I could feel that love and belief. So

Wynne Leon (02:50)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (02:54)

one thing I was taught was never to give up, but perseverance.

Just keep going

Wynne Leon (02:56)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (02:58)

because this if this is who you are, what you are meant to be doing, you'll feel it here, here. Okay. So when I

Wynne Leon (03:05)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (03:05)

applied to law school,

And I wanted to do human rights law because I wanted to stand up for justice, I wanted to

Wynne Leon (03:11)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:12)

empower people, I wanted to contribute to the world.

Wynne Leon (03:16)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:17)

I had been.

brought up you can actually have a dialogue with whether you call it God the universe

Wynne Leon (03:24)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (03:25)

the light universal

Wynne Leon (03:26)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:28)

whatever it's an energy

you can only feel it really it's

Wynne Leon (03:31)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:32)

not something you explain with the head. Scientists like Einstein the way things are ordered is a proof of the existen

However,

Wynne Leon (03:42)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:43)

you have to feel it at the end of the day. so I was so used to speak to God or the light, and

Wynne Leon (03:50)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (03:51)

I know that prayer works, meditation works, silence works, dreams works, manifestation works. I knew that. So

Wynne Leon (03:56)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (04:00)

I bent down and I prayed. And I said, I promise you, I promise, if you let me in to law school this second time, please.

Please if you do. I promise

Wynne Leon (04:11)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (04:12)
you I will dedicate my life to serve humanity. And

Wynne Leon (04:17)
That's amazing.

Yasmine Sherif (04:18)
yeah, and it was such a promise that I felt like I can never betray this promise. And then

Wynne Leon (04:24)
Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (04:26)
I took the subway and I learned that I had been accepted.

Wynne Leon (04:29)
Yeah, but

not only that. you write about this. The road was not smooth. I stumbled, I doubted, I fell, but the fire did not die. At nineteen, my second try applying to law school cut through the barrier. My application climbed the waiting list as eleven candidates before me withdrew.
A

Yasmine Sherif (04:48)
Yeah, yeah.

Wynne Leon (04:49)
coincidence? Or maybe my prayer had been heard. The universe conspiring in my favor. I love that.

Yasmine Sherif (04:56)
Yes. I mean it's up to the the reader to believe what they want. I have my belief and I do believe.

Wynne Leon (04:59)
Yeah right. Mm-hmm.

You finished law school, at twenty three, you were one of the youngest graduates.

Yasmine Sherif (05:05)

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Wynne Leon (05:08)

At twenty four you found yourselves in Geneva walking through the United Nations. But that also is an incredible story. that's part

your trajectory, but your also your persistence and your resilience. tell the story of writing to Jan Mortensen.

Yasmine Sherif (05:23)

I'd been in the summer in France to study French. My mother had advised

Wynne Leon (05:25)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (05:27)

me, which I is one of the best advice because I my my French when I went to school I was you know, the the grammar was tough and my mom she spoke fluent French. So I said, okay, let let me really give this a good try because it's beautiful language and then I I took a bus over to Geneva and they told me to write a letter to the UN in Geneva and ask for an internship.

many many people that I knew back home in Sweden they said you can't go to the UN like that. You need to work

Wynne Leon (05:55)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (05:56)

with the foreign ministry for at least 20 years, you

Wynne Leon (05:58)

my.

Yasmine Sherif (05:59)

need to build a career, you need to do this, then you can come into the UN. And

Wynne Leon (06:03)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (06:04)

that's something that I I think I was taught from child. Never take no for an answer. It was

Wynne Leon (06:09)

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (06:11)

and I have to say, my mother was an incredibly strong woman. I mean, that she she wouldn't

Wynne Leon (06:15)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (06:16)

take no

For an answer, if she knew, if she knew something could happen, and her intuition was

Wynne Leon (06:21)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (06:21)

very strong. So I tried, I wrote letters, but I got no response. And sometimes when you're in silence, especially when you walk,

suddenly something else hits you. And it you just feel again in your stomach that

Wynne Leon (06:37)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (06:38)

something is being told to me, do this, or it's just an intuition.

Wynne Leon (06:41)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (06:43)

So when I bought a newspaper and I saw his name and he was Swedish,

I just came up with this bizarre plan. As like okay,

Wynne Leon (06:51)

Ha ha ha.

Yasmine Sherif (06:52)

I know what to do now. It just hit me. If I write it in Swedish

I think by that time we had just gotten electronic typewriters. I write it in Swedish on my electronic typewriter. I put it in a brown envelope so it looks very official. And then

Wynne Leon (07:11)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (07:11)

I I send it to him in Geneva and anyone in his front office most likely will not know how to read Swedish because

Wynne Leon (07:22)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (07:23)

not very few people speak Swedish, what it nine or

Wynne Leon (07:25)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (07:25)

ten million. So

So but I I just felt I need to do this and I did. And then

Wynne Leon (07:31)

Yeah. Because you knew that it would get

to him. I mean it was cut with a way of cutting through the Trusted. Trust it. That's a good way to put it. Yeah. Right.

Yasmine Sherif (07:37)

I didn't know, I just trusted. I trusted. I f I felt. And and you know you have nothing to lose. So why not try?

Wynne Leon (07:48)

Yeah. I mean, but it's remarkable. You were twenty three, twenty four years old and you're following your I've made a pact with

a higher power to serve and I'm gonna figure out a way to do it and remarkable. But and so then you start your you you do your internship, you start working with the UN and

associated agencies. there's a lot of of different agencies that you've worked for for all those years, right?

Yasmine Sherif (08:13)

Yes, yes.

Wynne Leon (08:16)

And you tell the story of helping repatriate

Refugees after the Dayton Accord.

nineteen ninety five, you're

Yasmine Sherif (08:24)

Mm.

Wynne Leon (08:25)

on you're part of a convoy, you're stopped at the Bosnian border, a soldier enters the bus with the refugees, and I'm and I'm gonna read a a little bit from your book, and 'cause your steadfast courage is stunning. Let me

Yasmine Sherif (08:37)

Mm.

Wynne Leon (08:37)

I'll just read a second. And it was then when I sensed what was about to unfold with the weight of dozens of lives hanging in the balance.

That I felt a surge of defiance, the declaration that if they touched the refugees, they would have to touch me too. If they killed them, they would have to kill me as well. In that moment, I was no longer just a UN staff member. I was a shield. I mean, that is remarkable. you brought all of your rebellious, stubborn, unstoppable self to your job.

And then you describe that it meets with that greater force, a force greater than yourself. Can you talk about how people can unlock their full human potential, especially through adversity?

Yasmine Sherif (09:27)

Yeah, first of all,

a lot has been written on this by by great authors and statespersons and philosophers and people in conflicts and wars have also taught me a lot about it. But it's also been a red thread throughout my life. to chisel me into an alchemic sort of transformation of whatever I experienced. But because I

Had been, a little bit of a rebel, there is something that always stands about me, and that's our humanity and that incredible force, the force of the universe. That's

Wynne Leon (10:07)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:08)

where humility matters, but with that humility comes trust. You trust. And when you trust, because you believe so much in other human beings and in what is right versus what is wrong.

you you gather a lot of courage.

Wynne Leon (10:26)

Mm. Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:26)

That's where courage comes from.

but you have to do it repeatedly. It's not gonna the first time or

Wynne Leon (10:32)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:32)

the second time. Everything in life is about developing habits and and

Wynne Leon (10:36)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:37)

sort of rewire our minds as we go along until one day it just become a reflex. But I

Wynne Leon (10:44)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:44)

remember that day so well. I had been seven years with the UN and this was

huge repatriation and

Wynne Leon (10:52)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:53)

I started the hãm repatriation in the Balkans afton

Wynne Leon (10:58)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (10:58)

which was brokered by Richard Holbrook and

the paper is great, the fact that he managed to end the war is fantastic. But we on the ground now have to translate that into reality.

Wynne Leon (11:11)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:14)

We can't walk around and think that this this agreement alone is gonna hold the lines. So

Wynne Leon (11:19)

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:22)

when we went and we had about 35-40 refugees that have gathered to go

Wynne Leon (11:26)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:26)

back to little enclave called Gorashta.

where which was not far away from Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina where they had done a genocide just a few weeks earlier that summer but Gorash they had not been attacked

Wynne Leon (11:43)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:43)

and now there was a peace agreement and everybody wanted to go home. And I

Wynne Leon (11:47)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:48)

think it's important to stress that many refugees want to go home. It's not as if they

Wynne Leon (11:51)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:53)

they want to stay refugees all their life.

And we

Wynne Leon (11:55)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (11:56)

were sitting there, and I knew that there might be challenges. I mean, I met many armed men, militia, military warlords with whom I had to

Wynne Leon (12:03)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:05)

negotiate. And then again, my instinct told me when they stopped the bus, they want to see our paperwork

Wynne Leon (12:10)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:11)

because obviously we are not crossing an international border from Montenegro into Bosnia Montenegro was still part

Wynne Leon (12:17)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:17)

of Serbia then, and

I sense danger.

Wynne Leon (12:20)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:21)

danger becomes your friend when you learn to be street smart in life. You know? You learn a lot.

Wynne Leon (12:26)

Mm-hmm. Say more say

that again. Danger becomes your friend. D mm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:32)

Yeah, or I the antennas for danger becomes your friend and your shield because you develop antennas.

Wynne Leon (12:39)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:39)

And intuition

is very important and I could sense it. I could sense what was happening. It was instinct. It was I didn't

Wynne Leon (12:41)

Mm. Mm hmm. Right. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:47)

think, I didn't write down, I didn't calculate. It was just a feeling that hit me. So I stepped

Wynne Leon (12:52)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (12:53)

out and after the paperwork was done, the soldier stepped on the bus with his gun and and I I've also had guns pointed at my chest many times, and and it may not look intentional, but it's very menacing.

I think the word indignation is what I felt. It became so strong in me because I knew it was so wrong. He's toying

Wynne Leon (13:11)

Hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:14)

with their lives. They have fled this border crossing and they fled murder, rape, executions

Wynne Leon (13:21)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:22)
by the same army. So

Wynne Leon (13:24)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:26)
when he stepped on the bus, I cannot leave them alone on that bus. They need to know I'm there with them. And they

Wynne Leon (13:31)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:32)
need to know I'm chained to them. If anything happens to them.

Wynne Leon (13:34)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:35)
They will have to hurt me as well. Because I am

Wynne Leon (13:36)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:38)
here to protect you. This is my job, it's my mission, it's my cause in life, and it's my

Wynne Leon (13:43)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:43)
professional obligation, but it's also my instinct. I step

Wynne Leon (13:46)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (13:47)
onto the bus. Arguing with the soldier is not gonna take us anywhere.

I just used my presence. I just went up and stood next to him,

Wynne Leon (13:54)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (13:58)
and there was this strength.

Coming it just exuded from me, but I didn't know where it came from. It just came from inside me because I had decided not to be afraid. But that I had decided through habit. And

Wynne Leon (14:09)
Mm-hmm. Yeah. Well

Yasmine Sherif (14:14)
and and I think what made him lower his gun and let us pass was a presence that I represented.

Wynne Leon (14:23)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (14:25)
But was it me who was like this much shorter than him? No gun, you know, thirty

Wynne Leon (14:29)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (14:33)
thirty-three or thirty two years old or whatever I was,

Wynne Leon (14:35)
Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (14:35)
thirty. I went back when he let us pass and I sat in the car and I was thinking in the vehicle, the U and I was wondering what just happened?

And I I couldn't put my finger on it except that there was a feeling of indignation that was so powerful. and there is a great philosopher called Goethe and he said he said once when you make a commitment, the universe conspires to assist you. And I felt it. There was something there.

s stronger and bigger than me that kept me stand tall with courage and

Wynne Leon (15:18)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (15:20)
not knowing why or how it was just intuitive

Wynne Leon (15:25)
Right. Right.

Well you kinda gave the formula just a a moment before this story, trust leads to courage and it's becomes a habit.

Yasmine Sherif (15:35)
Mm.

Wynne Leon (15:35)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (15:36)
what is important when you write a memoir and a manifesto is that you make it universal so that every human being who reads it can relate to it. Because

Wynne Leon (15:45)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (15:45)
No human being walks through life without any trials and tribulations. We all life is not linear. This is clear. And if it were linear it would be very boring and we would never

Wynne Leon (15:57)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (15:57)
Grow. We would never grow.

We don't grow in the comfort zone. We just enjoy

Wynne Leon (16:01)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:02)
it for a while. But then if we want to grow and evolve, we need to

Wynne Leon (16:05)

Mm, mm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:06)

sometimes step out of it. And if we don't want to step out of it, something else kicks us out of it. Okay?

And then you

Wynne Leon (16:14)

Mm-hmm. Right.

Yasmine Sherif (16:15)

just learn to fly as you go along. But

Wynne Leon (16:17)

Right.

Yasmine Sherif (16:18)

I think all of us experience this.

Wynne Leon (16:20)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:21)

And with Unleash Your Humanity

where personal awakening becomes collective change,

Wynne Leon (16:28)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (16:29)

it brings the personal, you, me, everyone around us, with all our different scenarios of life that leads to similar feelings and thoughts and fears.

Wynne Leon (16:43)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:44)

By using humanity as the northern star as the one

Wynne Leon (16:48)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:49)

that can really empower you and create your alchemic journey and make you

Wynne Leon (16:53)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (16:54)

overcome everything and thrive, I think humanity is the strongest, strongest force.

Wynne Leon (16:59)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (17:00)

And with that comes love, of course, it comes empathy, it comes

Wynne Leon (17:02)

Mm-hmm. Okay.

Yasmine Sherif (17:05)

so much else comes with that. But I think humanity defines both you and me and the eight billion of

Wynne Leon (17:12)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (17:12)

on earth but it also represents that flame inside us for

humanity. So I think it's a connection. Once we make that connection big things starts happening.

Wynne Leon (17:21)

Mm-hmm. Well, and you and

and and I love that you brought that back to the personal and listener level for this, because we could all say, Great, Yasmine, that was your job. you worked for the UN and amazing experiences, but what does that have to do with me? Right? And you're you're sort of making that connection for us, and you write about this in your book when you talk about alchemy.

And authenticity. You write, when we choose authenticity over performance and humanity over hardness, we can step into the greatest transformation of our time, the shift from mere survival to conscious awakening.

Yasmine Sherif (18:01)
Hmm.

Wynne Leon (18:02)
By unleashing our own humanity, we can all become alchemists and magnetic leaders. So

Yasmine Sherif (18:08)
Mm. Mm.

Wynne Leon (18:10)
can you say more about conscious awakening?

Yasmine Sherif (18:14)
first of all, by telling my story it's just to give

the readers and understanding how I reached where I reached in my

Wynne Leon (18:23)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (18:23)
my own evolution, and clearly there are many parts of my own story that many people can identify with,

So I don't think that is unique in any way. Then that

Wynne Leon (18:34)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (18:35)
I took a path to work internationally in war zones might be different, but to be honest

Wynne Leon (18:39)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (18:40)
with you, you find harshness, violence,

Wynne Leon (18:45)
Sure.

Yasmine Sherif (18:45)
brutal

experiences,

tragedies.

in every home or ever

Wynne Leon (18:52)

Right.

Yasmine Sherif (18:52)

family or ever community. So it is universal. It applies to all of

Wynne Leon (18:55)

Mm. Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (18:58)

us. It it's we just live different lives so I

Wynne Leon (19:00)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:01)

I'm trying to share an universal general path

Wynne Leon (19:05)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:06)

to awakening and how that awakening eventually also impact our own community.

Wynne Leon (19:13)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:14)

And

if it if it impacts just one human being, I think you're leaving behind yourself a great legacy.
So it's

Wynne Leon (19:20)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:21)

not about the quantity of people, it is

Wynne Leon (19:23)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:24)
every human life matters. So we should not

Wynne Leon (19:26)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:27)
measure that. And and two, I do believe that we are all born with the same potential to become alchemists.

Wynne Leon (19:35)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:38)
Awakening.

by no means will say that I'm an awakened guru because I'm not.

Wynne Leon (19:44)
Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (19:45)
But I've always been fascinating by the spiritual and by the human potential and human nature.

Maslov's hierarchy of needs is so important

Wynne Leon (19:55)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (19:55)
to me because he came up with the whole concept of the human potential. And and

Wynne Leon (20:00)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:01)
most of the time we are happy to be somewhere in the at the base of the pyramid or in the middle, whereas

Wynne Leon (20:05)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:08)
whereas I'm saying, no, no, no, we can reach the peak.

Wynne Leon (20:12)
Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (20:12)
And and we can bring but we can bring others with us, and we need to bring others with

Wynne Leon (20:15)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:16)
us because we are not isolated. We all we are one humanity. And the more

Wynne Leon (20:21)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:21)
The more people you bring with you, the more likely you are to get there. Because e

Wynne Leon (20:24)
Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (20:27)
human beings are the most important asset that we have in this world. And it's not to say I don't

Wynne Leon (20:30)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:32)
love my two cats, but I

Wynne Leon (20:34)
Ha ha ha.

Yasmine Sherif (20:36)
I I I I think it's not structures or machines. They can be useful

Wynne Leon (20:39)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:42)
tools for us, but it's the human soul,

Wynne Leon (20:44)
Rightly.

Yasmine Sherif (20:45)
the human heart and the mind

Wynne Leon (20:46)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:47)
coming together in harmony. And I think

Wynne Leon (20:50)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:50)
the the the search is long. We don't get awareness overnight like this and it doesn't come easily.

Wynne Leon (20:58)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (20:59)
First of all you need to have motivation to want to get there. And

Wynne Leon (21:01)
Right. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (21:03)
sometimes it's pain that drives you.

It's not just curiosity, it's also pain.

Wynne Leon (21:06)
Mm-hmm. Right.

Yasmine Sherif (21:09)
I'm very happy to see young people searching early in life today,

but often that kind of search starts later in life for human beings, not for everyone.

Wynne Leon (21:16)

Mm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Right.

Yasmine Sherif (21:19)

You take someone like Tony Robbins who endorsed my book with a beautiful endorsement.

Wynne Leon (21:23)

Mm. Right. A wonderful blurb. Get can you d give

us Tony Robbins blurb off the back there?

Yasmine Sherif (21:29)

Absolutely. In a word that often feels divided, unleash your humanity, transports us back to what unites us: resilience, creativity, empathy, and unstoppable human spirit.

Yasmin's story is a call to rise together, to serve one another and to remember that our own humanity is our greatest power.

This this is Tony's words. And

Wynne Leon (22:08)

Amazing.

Yasmine Sherif (22:09)

he he lives by it.

Wynne Leon (22:11)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (22:12)

And he certainly has helped millions, if not billions. And I'm just

Wynne Leon (22:16)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (22:17)

fortunate to be one of those. And he didn't know that he had helped me until I met him 40 years later. It's incredible

Wynne Leon (22:23)

Mm-hmm. Wow.

Yasmine Sherif (22:26)

how much we help others without knowing it.

Wynne Leon (22:27)

Yep. Right. Right.

And that's such a great point. I you talk about this is just helping ourselves rise by cultivating our human spirit. By by

Yasmine Sherif (22:38)

Yes.

Wynne Leon (22:39)

by making ourselves unstoppable, we will affect others. And and I love that that point there. But

your perspective on this is so good because you bring it from such a joyful place. And and you write that you've learned that humanity rises less through obligation a

Yasmine Sherif (22:58)

Hmm.

Wynne Leon (22:59)

and more through willingness. it's

Yasmine Sherif (23:01)

Mm.

Wynne Leon (23:01)

it's it's about being persistent, present, showing up with aw awareness. not from obligation, but from desire and joy. I mean, and

Yasmine Sherif (23:09)

Mm.

Wynne Leon (23:09)

that's what I love about

reading your book is that it just brings out that the light and the desire and the joy and like I yeah, we can do big things. We can rise to the top of that pyramid. So can you talk about how to stoke our willingness?

Yasmine Sherif (23:26)

one of the greatest opening lines I've seen in the book was by Scott Peck, The Roadless Traveled. And

Wynne Leon (23:31)
Mm, mm.

Yasmine Sherif (23:33)
his opening line is most people live a life of quiet desperation. That was the opening line.
Ps ingenious, ingenious, ingenious.

Wynne Leon (23:41)
That is amazing. I love that book. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (23:45)
I think it's true. I think people

not everyone. of course I see many

Wynne Leon (23:50)
Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (23:50)
great people here, living in New York. just incredible human beings, but I see them everywhere. And I have to give

Wynne Leon (23:55)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (23:56)
huge credit also to children and mothers and men,

innocent civilians that I met in conflicts, who really don't live

Wynne Leon (24:03)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:04)
in a comfort zone. They live in a conflict zone and who

Wynne Leon (24:07)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:07)
still

Pursue things with joy and meaning because

Wynne Leon (24:11)

Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:12)

they realize they have this resilience. And I think resilience

Wynne Leon (24:16)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (24:16)

is key to that. it's also about the mindset that we have. If we choose

Wynne Leon (24:21)

Mm, mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:23)

to live in desperation, well, we're gonna create a life in desperation. But if

Wynne Leon (24:28)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:28)

we make a conscious choice to live

Wynne Leon (24:31)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:32)

with joy and curiosity and creativity and

Wanting to learn, wanting to search, wanting to find why

Wynne Leon (24:39)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:40)

I am here, my purpose, and to do it with love and humanity and excitement,

Wynne Leon (24:44)

Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:46)
we can. And we can then better

Wynne Leon (24:48)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:49)
also manage challenges when they come our way. So instead of being

Wynne Leon (24:54)
Mm, mm, mm.

Yasmine Sherif (24:55)
broken by the challenges, we take them and we quickly recognize an opportunity. Or eventually

Wynne Leon (25:02)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (25:03)
recognize it. It depends what it is. Sometimes it takes longer.

Wynne Leon (25:06)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (25:06)
Sometimes you can do it fast. And you turn it into an opportunity. Steve Jobs once said, that you cannot connect the dots forward, but you connect them backwards. That's when you start seeing the meaning. now I see why that happened. Yes, and that's why

Wynne Leon (25:16)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (25:22)
I took that approach and so on. But I think if

Wynne Leon (25:24)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (25:24)
one walks through life, training the mind to choose.

To alchemize whatever comes our way. That's

Wynne Leon (25:36)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (25:37)
one way, but I will say something very important. And I think we are trained in various ways to constrain ourselves. Don't step out of the box.

Wynne Leon (25:54)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (25:55)
Don't feel too much.

Wynne Leon (25:58)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (25:58)
And

I think it's time for us to say this is my life.

Wynne Leon (26:05)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:06)
And as long as I don't hurt anyone, I will live it the way I want to live it. I will define

Wynne Leon (26:12)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:13)
my relationship to universe.

You're free to think, free to speak, free to dance, free to do this, free to write,

Wynne Leon (26:17)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:20)
free to be, free to cry.

I think also to focus on our heart more. You know the heart is a much bigger muscle with about forty thousand neurons going towards the mind every day.

Wynne Leon (26:30)
Mm-hmm. Right.

Yasmine Sherif (26:36)
Where the mind does not deliver that

Many neurons or information back to the to the heart. So the heart is a much stronger

Wynne Leon (26:40)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:44)
muscle. The mind is a tool, but the heart is the sacred that helps us move forward that
feeling that intuition that instinct and the ability

Wynne Leon (26:55)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:56)
to forgive to move on

Wynne Leon (26:58)
Mm.

Yasmine Sherif (26:59)
to persevere.

To love, to

Wynne Leon (27:01)
Right.

Yasmine Sherif (27:02)
feel joy, empathy. It's all in the heart. The

Wynne Leon (27:06)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (27:07)
mind can be very cruel.

But the soft

Wynne Leon (27:09)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (27:10)
heart, it's impossible to be cruel. So softening

Wynne Leon (27:13)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (27:14)
our heart is very important. It's done through meditation, it's done through just stillness
and thinking of our heart. Because the thing is,

Wynne Leon (27:22)
Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (27:24)
the mind dies,

You can just be on life support. The heart stops. That's the end of the story for this time.

Wynne Leon (27:25)
Yeah. Yeah. Right. Yeah.

Right. Right. Well, I love all that you put all the heart that you put in your book, Unleash
Your Humanity. I think you've it's such a great call to action to living with joy and creativity
and purpose and standing up for humanity in it wherever we are.

So with that said, I'd like you to tell us where people can connect with you and find where
you are.

Yasmine Sherif (28:01)
Unleash your humanity is available

Wynne Leon (28:02)
Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (28:03)
wordwide. Until its release, it was only available for pre-order in the US, but now it's
available wordwide

Wynne Leon (28:09)
Mm. World one. Okay.

Yasmine Sherif (28:13)

on Amazon.

what the book does is instead of you reading ten different books, one on psychology, one on philosophy, one memoir, one on alchemy, one on

Growth or

humanity or

quantum physics this book connects all the dots and establish the pattern because that's what I love to do and I always done since I was young connecting

Wynne Leon (28:34)

Mm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (28:37)

dots and see patterns

I would say ninety nine of percent of all online bookstores from Barnes and Nobles to Bookshop

and slowly we are gradually moving, towards the bookshops also for hard copy sale.

Wynne Leon (28:53)

Yes.

Yasmine Sherif (28:54)

I should also say to all everyone: if you just write a book and then disappear, well that's nice, but if you make it your life course, after all you have seen and and share whatever because you know that others might get inspired.

There is also a movement and a brand that

Wynne Leon (29:15)

Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (29:15)

is being built around it. Whereby en certain percent gås to teens who I think have the greatest opportunity to develop their resilience into alchemy rather than losing themselves.

But to help them get on to that alchemic journey and reach

Wynne Leon (29:34)

Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (29:36)

their potential as early as possible. And then there are a couple of entrepreneurs to fund all of this

Wynne Leon (29:44)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (29:44)

concepts in place, including making a movie.

Wynne Leon (29:50)

wow.

Wonderful. Wonderful. And your website is yasminesherif dot com, right? And

Yasmine Sherif (29:57)

Correct.

Wynne Leon (29:58)

okay. And you have a second website, unleash your humanity dot com. Is that good. All right. Yeah. For all of your incredible

Yasmine Sherif (30:02)

Yes. They're true. One is for the book only and the other one is is more broadly, yeah.

Wynne Leon (30:10)

work. Yasmine, it's such a delight to talk to you. Thank you so much for your time. I love love

Yasmine Sherif (30:17)

Well I

Wynne Leon (30:17)

it.

Yasmine Sherif (30:18)

I I tell you I love talking with you first of all because you read a book. That's so wonderful. because I I do get a lot of calls and texts from people who who

Wynne Leon (30:28)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (30:29)

and emails who have read it and and they they are telling me their life has changed. And and these

Wynne Leon (30:33)

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Yasmine Sherif (30:35)

are are human beings who who who have not lived what I lived

Wynne Leon (30:39)

Right.

Yasmine Sherif (30:40)

because I did not make this a me book, I made it our book. It's not

Wynne Leon (30:44)

Yeah. Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (30:46)

About me, it's about us. And

Wynne Leon (30:49)

Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (30:49)

if I can in my lifetime move that little chain towards a better world, my little piece of that chain can be

Wynne Leon (30:55)

Yeah. Yeah.

Yasmine Sherif (30:58)

a step forward for all of us, then I have done my contribution. And if all of us can do it, we actually will change the world.

Wynne Leon (31:07)

Right. I

I totally believe it and I love that call to action. What a what a wonderful wonderful way to end. Thank you.

Yasmine Sherif (31:13)

Thank thank you, Vin.

Thank you, Wynne. Wonderful. Thanks to you.

Wynne Leon (31:20)

Thank you so much for joining me for this inspiring conversation with Yasmine Sherif. I hope her stories of courage, service, and choosing humanity have encouraged you to trust your own path And to remember the difference one person can make by showing up.

with heart and purpose. If this conversation resonated with you, listen next to The Way Will Open: How to Trust Life's Timing, another thoughtful episode about moving forward with faith, patience, and openness when the path ahead is not clear. and if you enjoyed today's episode, please subscribe to The Life of Try so you never miss a conversation about courage, curiosity, and what becomes possible when we keep trying.

Until next time, take good care.