

Episode 337

Reimagining Human Connection Through Life-Centered Architecture

Tony Martignetti (Host) • Adi Cohen (Guest)

Adi Cohen: I was searching aliveness right from being at the same office, the fixed light and the fixed temperature each day. And I was kind of like powering through this because I thought, no, I want to become an architect. I want to design meaningful places, but I'm fading away. I'm losing my soul in the middle of this, and it's just not a price I'm willing to pay. So after six years of doing that work and trying to be a responsible adult, I was like, you know what? No, this is it. I'm. It's time to change. I don't know what's next. And that's scary, right? Going into this unknown thing, I don't know what's next, but I know what is not. I know what is no longer. So I'm going to let this go and go into this unknown and see what else life could be like.

Tony Martignetti: For generations, we've gathered around the campfire to share stories, build trust, and pass along what we've learned. Welcome to the Virtual Campfire. I'm Tony Martignetti. Here we go. beyond the success you see on the surface to uncover the stories of transformation behind it, the challenges, pivotal moments, and small steps that lead to big leaps. Because every journey has a story, and every story has something to teach us. Let's gather around the campfire where stories spark transformation. It is my honor and pleasure to bring you my guest today. Adi Cohen, Ali, is the thematic architect, experience designer, and founder of The New Movement, a life centered architecture and experience design studio developing concepts for projects around the world. Her work explores the relationship between place, perception and human flourishing, weaving together architecture neuroaesthetics, deep sensing, and the wisdom of living traditions through The New Movement, she develops spaces, experiences and journeys that invite people into deeper connection with themselves, others in the living world. Alongside her design work. She curates intimate pilgrimages, pilgrimage journeys, I should say, to sacred landscapes in Himalayas and beyond, including Bhutan, Tibet and Japan. These journeys explore the meeting point between inner and outer landscapes, where sacred places, living traditions and the vastness of nature become invitations to feel more alive, connected, and at home in the world. Just loving this. She's also the host of Go Out and Talk to Strangers, a podcast exploring the edges of human connection, creativity and culture, and the future of how we live together. I am truly honored and just, it's such a pleasure to invite you into this space. Welcome to the Virtual Campfire Ali.

Adi Cohen: Thank you so much, Tony. It's so good to be here. I love campfires, so I'm excited to sit around the fire with you today.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. And what I love is that, you know, here you are. We talked about all these amazing places you take people to and you and you're venturing to and you're always in some place different. We were together in Athens and now you're in China.

Adi Cohen: Yeah, we're exactly in China. Well, I'm in a city called Xining. It's right on the edge right before the Tibetan Plateau. And tomorrow morning, I'm gonna hop on a twenty four hour train to Lhasa, to Tibet, where we're going to go on a pilgrimage. So it's really an interesting point in time that we get to talk.

Tony Martignetti: I love it. It's wonderful. So thank you so much for saying yes to this. And I'm looking forward to really unpacking the journey that got you to doing this amazing work, which I think is so badly needed because a lot of us have lost the thread of what is important. And I think your work is like a reconnection to the things that are the traditions and the elements of who we are as humans. And how do we get back there? So that's what we're going to do today. Sounds fair.

Adi Cohen: Sounds good. Yeah. Thank you. It's beautiful to be back this way.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. Yeah. So the way we're going to navigate today is on the show. We usually talk about flash points. And flash points. Are the points in your journey that have ignited your gifts into the world. And so in a moment, I'll turn it over to you. And I'd love to have you share these flash points that are important to you. And along the way, we'll pause and see what shows up and we'll go from there. How's that sound?

Adi Cohen: Sounds good. Yeah. All right.

Tony Martignetti: Well, why don't you take it away, my friend?

Adi Cohen: Sure. So we're talking about, like, defining moments or moments of change. What flash points you mean?

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. By flash points, I mean, you think about it in this way, the context of, you know, what are the moments, maybe in childhood moments or even as an adult that have really had you change the way you look at the world, have created a path to a different way of showing up. I'm sure that the work you do now wasn't always on the agenda.

Adi Cohen: Oh no it wasn't. Yeah. Okay. So I guess first thing that comes to mind is something that I call, and I don't know if rightfully so, is like the Disney syndrome, right? So it's this feeling, I always had this feeling as a child that I look at the adults around me and they all look kind of like, you know, unhappy and burnt out and running around themselves and barely making it through the day, you know, just constantly tired. I remember thinking, I'm not going to end up like this. This hill in the city where I grew up in Israel, and I used to sit there and just look at the traffic. And I remember thinking to myself, where are we rushing? Right where all, all these people in their nice, you know, it's usually like one person per car, right? I think the statistic is one point two or something. Just seeing all these adults rushing to their lives and like, what's the point? And it actually caught me a lot of pain during my teenage years. I didn't really know, how am I going to be part of it? How am I going to belong to this? Some would say machine and what's the point, right? So you're spending all your energy making money to pay for a house you can barely spend time in because you're so busy working for all. So this rat race, right from early on, I remember looking at it and thinking, I think it's a scam. Yeah. But that didn't keep me from at some point joining it because at some point I really wanted to become an architect because I remember I had this idea Of places that have the ability to change how people feel passively. Right. So we all have this experience intuitively of going into a place and just loving it or feeling so drawn to it. And I wondered why. And my mom co-founded one of the first ecological farms in Israel, like the sustainable movement kind of thing. And I wondered what permaculture means for humans, right? So we have this idea of how plants and gardens and farms can be arranged in a way that each plant gets exactly what it needs. Like someone needs more shade and less water. And so you put them a bit like further up in the in the slope. And you have all these different techniques of how to place things. I remember thinking, how would that work for humans? What would be a human ecology like for well-being, for connectedness? How would it look like? And I didn't quite have the words for it, but I was really fascinated by this idea of yeah, how, how would that look like? So I kind of got myself into architecture school. I remember looking for the

answers there and not really finding the terminology of what does it really mean to design for, for humans to design for? Yeah. Well being actually, it took me many years to, to find it now. And now we're like, oh, it's this and that. Now we can talk more about like neuro architecture, right? How our brains and bodies respond to the built environment. But it's still not it. It's part of it. It's one aspect of it, but it sometimes we miss, you know, the hidden layer that is not measurable. I can go very.

Tony Martignetti: I just love what you shared so far because first of all, I think about like The New Movement, which was the name of your company and think about the thread of where that started. You're looking at the movement of people around as a little child and you're saying like, we've got to find a new movement, a way of moving people as opposed to this crazy hecticness. Let's slow people down. Maybe think about a new way of moving people through the world. And then the architecture piece, which, you know, I'm totally one hundred percent with you. I was going to go to architecture school that I decided to take a last minute pivot and go to bio to become a doctor. So I went pre-med and that didn't happen. But the thing about architecture is that, you know, when you start into the schooling and you start to kind of do the initial studies, some of the work is a little bit not as exciting, you know? Right. And so I'm sure you can relate to that. It's like this, oh, the drafting and like the parts that really aren't that exciting until you start to get to the more the neuroaesthetics pieces and things like that that can really get into, okay, well, maybe now we're onto something that thinking bigger. How do people feel in this space, that kind of stuff. And so from that perspective, I love that you, your evolution started to go, okay, this isn't fully it. I got to keep on evolving. I evolving. I got to keep on moving. I got to keep on thinking. What is the big thread to all this that started as a child and keeps on moving me into something bigger? I want to see what moves us and also what how can we create that human ecology, which I love how you said that, um, so beautifully said.

Adi Cohen: Yeah. And you know, it's funny because look at our cities these days. Look at look at the building, look like this city that I'm in right now. Oh my goodness, Tony. It's like the same building over and over and over and over again. And it's just so depressing and it's so depressing. I get it. It's more efficient to design this way, right? If you're a developer and you want to cut costs and you have just such a small margin and you're trying to do your best, but it's just we don't fully understand the cost and the impact on our society and our relationships. When we design places like this. And it always feels in parallel with how we're scripted to live life, right? You should do A, B, C and then you get to D and it's it's just so boring. Yeah. Efficiency. And there is no room for creativity.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. I mean, not to cut you off, but I just say I think it's interesting. You said they were efficiency. But then in your intro, this word that I love talking about is aliveness. Alive. Like we should stop talking about efficiency so much and talk more about how do we feel more alive as humans and create that sense, even if it's at the cost of efficiency?

Adi Cohen: Yes, I agree. Absolutely. And aliveness is, is that spark that I kept searching for. So make a very long story short. Yeah, I studied architecture. I became a partner in a firm. And then I quit everything and sold all my belongings and got a one way ticket to Japan. And I didn't do it very lightly, you know, because I spent years becoming an architect. I spent years becoming getting my license and getting to a firm that I love, and I got to become a partner. And I was kind of excited about the work that we were doing. But still, there was something in me that was asking, okay, you know, this song, is that all there is? Yes. Is that all there is? Because it's just like you look around, you're just like, okay, am I supposed to be happy with leaving the same day over and over again for the rest of my life? I want to be an architect, but maybe not that much. Yeah, maybe there's a different way of doing that. So what I ended up doing was, you know, selling or giving away all my belongings and just having this carry on suitcase and got a one way ticket and started traveling the world because I was like, okay, I was searching aliveness right from being at the same office, the fixed light and the fixed

temperature each day. And I was kind of like powering through this because I thought, no, I want to become an architect. I want to design meaningful places, but I'm fading away. I'm losing my soul in the middle of this. And it's just not a price I'm willing to pay. So after six years of doing that work and trying to be a responsible adult, I was like, you know what? This is it. I'm. It's time to change. I don't know what's next. And that's scary, right? Going into this unknown thing, I don't know what's next, but I know what is not. I know what is no longer. So I'm going to let this go and go into this unknown and see what else life could be like.

Tony Martignetti: There's something about what you're sharing.

Adi Cohen: And so I started traveling. Yeah.

Tony Martignetti: I'm sorry to keep on cutting you off, but I just, I feel like there's something about what you're sharing that a lot of people fall into this pattern. They the very thing that they want to create in the world becomes the trap of, you know, as they're designing it or as they're creating it, it becomes the trap that gets them stuck. And so they have to break that pattern. They have to like, okay, time out. Let's figure out why am I feeling so trapped by this or, you know, stuck in this situation, even though my aspiration is to create a better world, a better path for people. And so what you did is you said, okay, enough is enough. I'm just going to break the pattern, do something completely different and move on from there. And one of the things I always say, and this comes from Ken Wilber, the existential philosopher, this transcendent include is you're leaving your old world where you're starting to leave a part of you, but you're including that in the new world that you're moving into. And so, you know, architecture's always part of who you are, right? Yeah, absolutely. So please continue because I rudely interrupt you.

Adi Cohen: Yeah. Honestly, at this point of time, I gave up the idea of being an architect because I thought, okay, this one way of living as an architect, which is, you know, being in the same place in the same office every day. I'm sorry. I can't do that. And like, everyone around me was terrified. Like, especially my father. It's like. But you spent years becoming an architect. What are you doing? You're throwing your life away, right? It's. It's a scary moment. Someone you love, just say, okay, I can't do this anymore. I'm. I'm going to do something radically different. And I didn't know. I'm still going to, you know, have my own company and design projects around the world. I didn't know that this is what's going to happen, but I had to go through this shedding of identity, this painful shedding of identity, of saying, who are you? What do you do? I'm an architect. Maybe I'm not that anymore. Who am I now? Where am I now? What is it that I want to do? And it's for so long. It was my mission, right? It was like I want to become an architect. And then I am an architect, and I'm miserable. I'm miserable. I'm like, I'm crying every day because I don't know what. What's wrong with me? What's wrong with me is that I try to fit myself into something that clearly wasn't a good, a good idea. But then somehow life showed me that there is more than one way of doing that, right? So I started meeting people, asked me to design for them, and that was really unexpected. And yeah, I started to introduce myself in different places and just say, hey, I'm a, I'm an architect. If you need anything, just let me know. And people reached out and I was quite amazed by it. And it got to a point that it started to get invited to different countries to brainstorm projects or to bring different perspectives, because at this point, I had this, this memory palette, right? This DNA of so many places that I've been to, of so many different experiences that I lived through, that is just, this is true wealth to me to have that sense of place of so many places. So this is kind of like I'm trying to keep it short. Tony, I don't know if I'm doing a good job, but, uh, this, this, this, this whole it's a whole life. It's great.

Tony Martignetti: And one of the things I wanted to pause here a second on is, you know, there's a lot of qualities that it takes. It's a skills it takes to be the kind of person who does this, who gets out in

the world and connects with people in different arenas. And a couple of them come to mind. But I'd love to hear your thoughts about what is it about you that you discovered the skills that you, that you discovered about yourself, the qualities, not necessarily skills that you feel made it possible for you to do things the way you did them? Does that make sense?

Adi Cohen: Yeah. So my podcast is called Go Out and Talk to Strangers. Yeah. Because this, this is the best life advice that I have, right? So go to places you don't normally go to and start talking to people and see what happened. So I guess it's curiosity. And I don't think it's something special about me. Right. But it's being curious and also saying yes to scary things. When I met my first clients in Japan, it was really scary to say yes to a project in Japan. Yeah. But I thought, what's the worst that can happen, right? It's like, let's see, let's play. And for some reason, these people wanted to work with me and I didn't know why. I didn't even have a website at this point. I just, I love it. This is so random. So I guess it is curiosity and openness and, you know, just saying yes to things as they come. I think I'm much more scared to do the same thing over and over again than to try something new. Yeah, maybe that's something that we can adopt.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah, that was just a masterclass right there. And just everything you just answered, it was exactly what I expected you were going to say. And not that, you know, I was kind to lead the witness, but the curiosity and the courage and just that, the ability to say like, look, I know what I don't want. And if I'm going to be stuck in this box any longer, that is what I need to avoid. I need to get out and learn more through even failing. That's okay, I can. Failure is okay because staying stuck in this place is not going to serve me. That's failure. To me. That's like the ultimate failure doing nothing or doing the same thing. I shouldn't say that's not really nothing, but, you know, not taking any risk in that path.

Adi Cohen: And it is important for me to say for some people, it's perfect. You know, I have some friends, they love routine, but if you have that something bubbling inside of you and you keep suppressing it. So I describe it sometimes that I had this feeling that I'm living on, on ten percent of my potential. I just wanted to know how it might feel like to be closer to one hundred, right? Like just what is it like to be more alive, more in my body, more like in the world not behind this, you know, glass wall with a fixed temperature and the fixed schedule is just like, I guess I'm not wired this way, but some people are, and that's okay. And there's a term called openness to experiences, right? So it's how likely are you to, to try a new food or to go to a place where you don't speak the language. And, you know, some people love it to have the same salad every lunch. And that's okay. If you need variety, that's also okay. It's just we're in different places on this scope and that's totally fine. So because sometimes people feel just because someone is doing something that way, it means they also have to. And it's just, it's important for me to say that this is not. And again, that's the beauty of variety, that there is no one size fits all. Also in architecture and also in life, we should explore, you know, little experiment called human body. What is it that we want to do this time, this season, this year? And it keeps changing, right?

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. I mean, I kind of think about it from the perspective of like, why do we share the stories we do? It's giving people options and possibilities. Not to say that they have to choose the path that any one of us have chosen, but we're trying to give them a view, a bigger aperture of life and, and ways of navigating. Not to say you have to choose any one of these, but we want to give them a view of what's possible. So yeah, I want to get back into a little bit of like what you're doing now. And what is that really opened up for you? Because I find what you're doing is really fascinating. And I'm sure there's always a new chapter that's always on the horizon. And, you know, things that are always opening up in different ways, but like, what got you landed in this particular area of work? Make sense?

Adi Cohen: Are we talking about architecture or about the pilgrimage journeys, pilgrimage, the pilgrimages. Yeah. Okay. So again, I'm experimenting with the edges. So seven years I traveled the world and lived off this tiny, tiny carry on, big passion and big mission for this, you know, architecture and the built environment and how what we design designs us back and everything. So I was so passionate about my business that I was always online, I was always working and I was always. And that's beautiful because I didn't care if it was a weekend or a weekday. If I'm in the middle of a project, I just want to go for it. But then after a while, I started to experiment with taking time offline, right? So again, these edges, I explore this rhythm between, you know, being in very, uh, highly stimulated environment, like, you know, New York or London or like big cities and very rural, quiet places. And there's something that happens in the edges that is really interesting for, for innovative thinking, for creativity, for shedding old stories. And then I realized that I don't take it all the way, right? Like, let me ask you this. When was the last time you spent time offline since going online? And for how long was it since going online? The last time was offline.

Tony Martignetti: Oh, that's a good question because even sometimes when we think we're offline, we're online. So completely offline. Gosh, the last time was probably two years ago when I was in Kilimanjaro climbing the mountain, and that was nine days without internet.

Adi Cohen: Wow. That's great. Yeah. Without a phone. Yeah. That's amazing. Yeah. So I guess for most people it's longer than that. Maybe it's before we had cell phones. And there's something incredible that happens when we spend time offline. So I decided to do this again. Self-experiment and I went forty five days offline. And, you know, going to that was actually in China and Tibet and going to different sacred places and visiting mountains and temples and just walking very mindfully. And I remember I had this rule for myself. I didn't want to I didn't allow myself to think any of my normal thoughts like, like strategy or, oh, I should do this and that, because you know what? You're having your own business that you're excited about. You always have something you want to, there's always something brewing. And I was like, you know what? I just want to take a break from this break from being a nomad, break from being an architect, break from being a person who grew up in Israel, a woman or a daughter on all this context. And I was just, what if I'll just be, just be for a moment without all these different labels and narratives that I carry? What would then who will I be? What will we remain Beyond all this, and it was absolutely blissful, you know? So I started inviting people of my close circle to join me on these journeys. And then I started opening it more and more to others, because I've seen the impact of just fooling, being in a place, especially in environments that are a bit foreign to us. And I really love Buddhist places, just as a, you know, there's something about the kindness, the mirroring of love that reminds us of what is it like to really be human again?

Tony Martignetti: Oh, I, I agree. Yeah. Yeah. I love what you shared because it's, you know, there's so many things about that, you know, even just stepping away from your computer for a few moments, you start to realize like, oh my God, I was staring at my computer for so long. My eyes felt like they were so drained and strained. And so, you know, just a few moments away can help you feel more alive. And I think that's what we are always aiming for, is just like feeling that sense of, okay, how do I just detach from that world? But, you know, one of the concepts that you got me thinking about is I always, I'm an artist at heart. So I always think about how can we get back to the blank canvas and just be okay with the blank canvas? And in the world of AI, I think it's hard for people. Is that like, there's always a prompt, you can just go in and be like, oh, tell me what I should do today. Or like, what is the thing? Or, you know, like the prompt can make it so easy for us to not have a blank canvas. But I think we need to suffer a little bit with the blank canvas. Be okay with just being. And I love that that invitation that you brought in is to say, we have all these identities. And, you know, that's one of the things that I do with my work is help people to explore, you know, sideline parts of who they are. But it's also great to not have an identity and just let go of all that. So you can be a

blank canvas and see what you want to bring. Invite back in when you come back from all of that. What do you think?

Adi Cohen: And it's so scary, right? We don't allow ourselves. We don't get bored anymore. We don't daydream. No. One of the reasons that I live in Norway is because, well, after many, many years of traveling, somehow Norway became my home. And one of the reasons I really love it there is because the best thing you can do, like the ultimate luxury, is to go to a cabin that has no running water and sometimes no electricity, and spend and spend time there. And this is part of Scandinavian culture, just being in nature, being offline, often with loved ones, but maybe with a book or maybe going hiking or skiing, or you're just sitting there and being part of. It's beautiful. In Norwegian, they don't say you go out to nature, you go into nature in the language? So you're basically this is when you're inside and when you're in a building, you're outside, you're outside of the world. When you're back in nature, you're inside. And I feel like we're losing the ability, this ability, this muscle to just to be, to not know, to stay with something, to allow it to this uncomfortable feeling that, oh, maybe I should watch something. Maybe I should eat something yummy. That restlessness. What? What is beyond that restlessness? If we just allow ourselves to be brave enough to. To feel it. What is there? Oh my gosh.

Tony Martignetti: You know, it's one of those things that you just said. It's just really kind of stay with me for days upon days is this idea that like, that was our home right now, that our home was nature and yet here we are. We've spent so many years and years or centuries, you know, going inside, building homes and then living inside of them so long that we've lost the fact that nature was our home. That's where going inside was actually outside. If you know what I mean. So I love how you framed. That was beautiful.

Adi Cohen: Yes, yes, yes. And you know the data. The data says that, you know, most people in the Western world spend ninety percent of their time indoors. Ninety percent. Yes. That's insane. That's a lot. And and, you know, we we could have well, speaking now, all this white light and everything, but it's like we don't design the buildings that we deserve as human beings. We don't have the environment that nourishes us. We don't have enough like the yeah, the light temperature and the materials around us. And we're not intentional enough about those places that shape us. They shape our relationships. It shapes us. Mental and physical well-being is impacted by that. And it's all together, right? So it's the it's the a container, but it's also the behavior. How do we want to live and what kind of invitation, what kind of you know, we say it a lot in commercial real estate nudges, right? What nudges is does the environment produce for us to, to behave in a certain way. And we can be more intentional about it. What kind of nudges do we create in our own life? Maybe my nudges, you know, once a month to go four days offline just to remember that everything is okay just the way it is.

Tony Martignetti: That's such a great invitation. And so, you know, for those who are listening and that, you know, that's the scariest thing you can do, and it takes a lot of courage to do this is to try that, that practice of going four days offline and, you know, try it over a weekend, which I think is probably even harder than doing it during the week because over the weekend, you're probably so used to like, well, what do I, how do I fill my weekend? Well, usually it's like reading news or, you know, doing something, playing games, playing online games or something. Four days of being offline. That's a lot. But it's something that's worth trying and see how you feel.

Adi Cohen: You know, we can start with five minutes. Like the next time you feel like it, it's like, oh, I don't know what to do now. Grab the phone, scroll through something. Maybe I just look at the clouds, see what shapes they have, you know, today what is like or I remember looking at the ceiling or at the, the floor tiles. Where I grew up, we had a lot of different shapes and I would find different

characters there and then try to refine them in different areas of the house. So we have all these wonderful imaginary ways of being. And now it's more important than ever because, you know, with AI, it's just first of all, it's like Paradise for creators. Like I can think of something and create it in a few hours. It's insane. It's beautiful and it's scary. We have to be so intentional about what we're creating because it's just appears so quickly. So what is it that I want to create? Why am I doing this? What is the best way to approach it? We have to be better in asking questions, and we cannot access it if we don't know how to sit with ourselves.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah, yeah. You know, one of the things that you had me thinking about is like, what do we do back in the days when we didn't have all these tools? And, and again, I love, I love all the AI and all the things that are out there. I use them daily and I'm loving what's possible now. But back when we didn't have all the things we played with physical objects, we played outside, we did all these things. We had more interconnection. And I think that's what we need to return to, is some of the things that we forgot about when we didn't have all those other tools. How do we fill our time? How do we fill our days, and how do we find enjoyment without all of the tools that the technical tools that have now filled our world? And I think that's what the invitation here is. How do we return to that element of who we are?

Adi Cohen: Yeah. Yes. Yes, exactly. And, you know, one of the things that I really love about the pilgrimage journey is, is that actually part of it is really walking. I was volunteering in this Zen temple, and I think I told you that when we met, and one afternoon my task was for three hours to brush through grass that the nuns planted, and I needed to pick all the non grass things for three hours. But the thing is that you're supposed to do only that, right? So I'm brushing through the grass and I'm like, I wonder what's for lunch today? Mhm. No, no. Just brush through the grass and then keep brushing the grass. I'm like, oh, what will I do tomorrow? Mhm. Grass. So at some point your mind kind of gives up. Yeah. And you just go back to this present moment and you're just there's. And it's, I have to tell you, like, Spoiler alert it's full of bliss and joy just to be in the present moment. And it's it's funny because I'm so ambitious, right? I have all these ideas and all these things I want to accomplish and all these things we should do architecture like this and like that and all these different concepts. And I'm a geek. I love reading studies and research and connecting with different scientists. It's like, but then it just comes back to grass and being there and okay, maybe I'm perfectly happy just where I am. Is this even possible? Shocker, right? No way. Yeah. And, and I find it through walking. And that's also something that the listeners can experiment with. Just walk. And every time your mind goes somewhere else, just go like, okay, like left, right, left, right. And that's all there is really so many great messages and I just love what you've shared so far. I want to give you an opportunity to. Maybe before we get to the last, last question, what is something you want to share that you haven't shared already? That will leave people with something to maybe put into practice, or just to think about anything you want to share? Yeah. So in the Buddhist tradition, very often they refer to something called emptiness and emptiness. It's not the lack of something. It's actually the potential of everything that was ever existed comes from this space. And I find that especially for creators or for business leaders or, you know, the people who want to bring something new, we have to be able to connect to this point, to at least aspire to get to know it. And we cannot do it if there is constant noise around. So this idea of emptiness. And I think I also shared with you in September, I'm curating a pilgrimage to Bhutan, and it's following this something called a treasury filler. There's a character called Pema Lingpa, who was a treasure revealer, which means in the Buddhist tradition, you had this incredible. People would know how to go to a certain place, often a landscape, a valley in the Himalaya, extract teachings that were hidden there. But this is through connecting to deep being and emptiness. And I find that in our daily life and in our way of creating new things in the world, we're doing something similar because we have to be able to in order to reach those treasures, we have to

come and, you know, perform some rituals and allow enough space for these new things to emerge. And we have to be really intentional about it, because there are great forces these days that are trying to capture our attention, some evil and some just because it's just the way we do things nowadays. But we have to kind of like, I really want to invite our listeners to try and take some of this power back of allowing emptiness and having just a bit less noise for a moment.

Tony Martignetti: It is so beautiful, and it will bring so much beauty and richness into everything they do. I guess that's my final message. I love this, I love what you shared because it's really, it's, it's so important that we remember that we have more power over our lives. The agency to decide hour by hour or minute by minute what comes into our lives. And I think the key thing is it's about emptying yourself of the things that are not serving you and bringing in and inviting in the things that you want. And don't let other outside forces be the ones who dictate that. Be the author, not the reporter of your days. So. so wonderful. You share this. So now we're going to take a slight detour into another area. What are one or two books that have had an impact on you and why? And feel free to have to go off script, break rules, break, break patterns, whatever you'd like to share. Please go ahead.

Adi Cohen: Um, okay. First pattern to break is, uh. I was going to be a good girl, you know? But I'm like, you know what? Let's do it. Okay, I'll share two things. One is, let's start with a book. Do you know the Tao Te Ching? Lao Tzu? Yes. It's a wonderful book, and I think it maybe I read it when I was seventeen. The first time I remember we had this group of friends. We had this ritual to just open in, you know, some random page and see what we get, like the poem of the day. And I remember you can read the same text twice and get totally different things. And I love that about this book. So I think it really opened something up in my way of thinking.

Tony Martignetti: At seventeen years old, that's a lot. It's also very forward thinking of you to say, okay, I want to go deeper into how things work so wonderful.

Adi Cohen: Yeah. Thank you. And the second thing is actually a podcast that I listen to. It's an Israeli podcast. So unfortunately, I don't know if many of the listeners can follow, but it had a guest and she shared this exercise that she does with her clients. And it really helped me. It was right at this point where I felt this bubbling of, oh, it's time for me to leave everything behind, but I don't know what's next. And she kind of invited me or the listeners to envision the perfect day or their ideal week, because maybe we don't want to have the same day over and over again. And I remember thinking, how extraordinary is that? What would I want to do? Right? So I'm like, at this point, I was doing some jewelry design. Like I was working four days in an architect that one day I was in a studio because I was missing like materials and touching textures and doing things physically. And I was like, oh, actually, I don't want to start my day with people or screens. I just want to be like around materials. So I started traveling my, some of the rituals that I did was to get lost on purpose in the mornings, you know, just go and be in input mode. So I don't know. I'm useless in the mornings. I'm like, I'm great, but I'm like, it's not a time for me to, to think big thoughts or reply to emails. I need to be somewhere outside in the world and engage with it. So just to allow ourselves to think, to imagine what are these patterns that serve us in the way we structure our days or our week? I remember thinking it was so beautiful, and I stayed weeks with that and months with that and years with that. And I still do do it from time to time. Right? What is the formula that that fits best now? So just to allow ourselves to, to even, you know, for a while I thought, oh, I'm this nomadic architect, I'm traveling the world. I'm working from my laptop. So good for me. But that also changes because I don't want to be online all the time. I don't want to be in movement all the time. I'm allowed to change.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah. Yeah. I first of all, that's, I just their share was so wonderful because it's the question like that, that like invites people to think differently. But also it's a scary thing for a lot of

people because they're like, I've never thought like that. I'm never it's, it's always been just the pattern that I go, get up, go to work, come home, relax and go to sleep. And it's just like rinse, wash, repeat, rinse, wash, repeat. And they never think about what if I took control of that? What if I did things differently? And that's breaking the pattern. And I think that's a wonderful way to think about it. And so thank you for sharing that.

Adi Cohen: And it's so simple, Tony, isn't it? It's like, it's embarrassingly simple. Like, why did it take me, I don't know, twenty eight, thirty years to allow myself seriously to think that to question, oh, how would I my ideal day would look like. Not because of external. What success looks like patterns and ideas of how my life should look like. But actually, what do I really want? Do I want to have a firm with one hundred employees? Hell no. That's not what success is like for me.

Tony Martignetti: Yeah, I think there's so many elements of this. We have to, I call it presence engineering, where we have to engineer the elements of what we want our presence to look like. And it takes some effort, but we first have to dream and we have to think about what does it look like first, um, in our mind so that we can put it into action in real life. So wow. I'm just going to start by saying thank you for such a wonderful conversation and such lovely insights taking us through your stories. I think we could continue on. There's so many things to cover. But thank you for coming on the show. It's been a pleasure.

Adi Cohen: It's. You're such a wonderful host. I can talk with you for hours. So that's it's really been great. And thank you for inviting me. And I hope that someone benefit from a little bit of my adventures.

Tony Martignetti: Yes, I'm sure of that. And before I let you go, one last thing I want to do is ask. Where can people find out more about you and your work?

Adi Cohen: Yeah. Of course. Um, so we have there's The New Movement website. It's thenewmv.com. Yeah. You can check out what we do there. There's the podcast there and there are also the upcoming journeys. So if you feel called to go on a pilgrimage, let me know and let's connect and explore that further. Yeah, there's also LinkedIn. I'm pretty easy to find there and Insta. Yeah, I'm active on and off on Insta. And now I'm sharing a bit more from this journey in China. So if you want to follow. It's [@nomadarchitectme](https://www.instagram.com/nomadarchitectme) on Insta and uh, yeah, I think that covers pretty much it.

Tony Martignetti: Well, I think you're probably going to get a lot of people reaching out. So be ready for some more pilgrimage coming your way. Thank you so much again, and thanks to listeners for coming on the journey and you know where to find Ali. Sorry, can you say your name correctly here at the end? That's a wrap. And we are going to go from here.

Adi Cohen: Thank you. Wonderful. Thanks, Ronnie. Bye, everyone.

Tony Martignetti: Before you go, I want to leave you with one final thought from today's conversation. In a world that's constantly asking us to do more, move faster, and fill every moment, perhaps one of the most powerful things we can do is create a little space to simply be. As Ali reminds us, sometimes it's in those quiet moments when we step away from the noise and the expectations that we rediscover what truly makes us feel alive. If today's conversation resonated with you, I encourage you to share it with someone who might need that reminder. And if you haven't already, please subscribe to the Virtual Campfire. Leave us a review and explore more inspiring conversations at tonymspeaks.com. A special thank you to Adi Cohen for sharing her journey, her wisdom, and her wonderful perspective on the world. The Virtual Campfire is proudly produced by. It

THE VIRTUAL CAMPFIRE / EPISODE 337

All Works. Until next time, stay curious, stay connected, and remember that sometimes the most meaningful journey begins when we give ourselves permission to slow down.