



Transcript of “Amber Lyon on Psychedelic Healing and Reset.me”

Bulletproof Radio podcast #143



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Dave: Today's cool fact of the day is that dimethyltryptamine, also known as DMT, which is the psychedelic compound that you'd find in ayahuasca, the sacred herb used by the shamans in the rainforests down in South America, this chemical is released naturally by the brain during really intense experiences like birth, orgasm, and death. The rest of the time you have these receptors, and they don't really do very much.

Today's guest knows a thing or two about DMT, and her name is Amber Lyon. She is a three time Emmy award winning journalist, a filmmaker, photographer, and is pretty well known for immersion journalism, where she becomes just a part of the story. She's done amazing thing that she writes about on reset.me, including looking at cultural and social and government demonstrations and how human rights violations, sex trafficking and environmental issues are impacting the world around us. So, very, very well studied.

The reason that I wanted to invite Amber on the show today is that she's looked, and she writes a lot about, using psychedelic medicines to cure things from depression to lack of motivation in life. If you've listened to the show for a while, you've probably heard me talk about going to South America and doing ayahuasca with the shaman back around 2000-ish. Not just that, but also medicinal use of what we would call magic mushrooms and a few other plant medicines have had a significant effect on how I see the world, how I see myself, and how I perform.

I'm not advocating crazy, let's go out party, go to Disneyland while tripping kind of things at all, but for science based use of these types of medicines. That's why I wanted to have Amber on the show. Amber, welcome and thank you for coming on today.

Amber: Thanks for having me, Dave. It's a pleasure to be here.

Dave: Tell me something interesting about yourself. What's your own cool fact of the day? What would people not know about you?

Amber: They probably wouldn't know that ... I don't know. That am I'm an artist and photographer as well. I think that's something that amidst all this muckraking journalism, I really have a very creative side. I'm really just a kind, chill person who just likes to create, whether that be journalism or art.

Dave: That is super cool, but I don't think you're giving yourself enough credit, Amber. Are you not the first reporter in history to scuba dive under the deepwater Horizon oil spill, live on air?

Amber: Yes, I am. I'm sorry. Yes, that is my superhero journalism side.

Dave: You're kind of bad-ass. That is what it comes down to, right?

Amber: It was really amazing. I really wanted to report on the BP oil spill in a way that connected viewers with what was happening underneath the water because BP was kind of hiding the oil and sinking it into the water column, which is the top ten feet of the ocean, which is the most vital when it comes to biodiversity.

I was somehow able to convince CNN to throw me in a hazmat suit along with Philippe Cousteau, and we went down. We were able to show viewers, live on air, that "Look, this oil is still there. It's just disappeared from site, but we don't want it to be out of sight, out of mind. It's still in the water, and it's wreaking havoc on the ocean."

Dave: I always thought when I was a kid that the easiest thing to do was to just like push everything under the rug or under the bed instead of actually cleaning it up. Apparently, that same thing worked for BP, right?

Amber: It did. They're brilliant. That's why they spend millions on their PR campaigns. I'm sure that's what these PR companies told them to do was get that oil out of sight right away so that helicopters and news helicopters can't show it because if the photography is there, and those images are there, it's going to look really horrific to the public. So, that's what they did. They used these dispersants that broke the oil into little beads and sunk it into the water.

From a PR standpoint, like you said Dave, they were brilliant, and it worked. The BP oil spill is still causing a ton of damage in the Gulf, but it really isn't on the forefront of minds of Americans because this oil has been sunk.

Dave: Which do you think was worse for the planet, the BP spill or Fukushima?

Amber: That's a tough one. It's hard. It's trying to choose between the lesser of two horrific evils for the environment. I think Fukushima scares me the most because we still have more than 20 plants of the same design as Fukushima operating in the United States right now, and that's a flawed design the government has known since 1972, that it's been designed flawed. It's because the cooling tower is raised above the ground, so you rely on this electricity to pump water up to the cooling tower. If that electricity goes out, you have risk of a meltdown.

So, scientists knew back in 1972 and told the US government that this GE designed plant was faulty. Unfortunately, the government didn't listen. People have been screaming from the mountaintops that these plants need to be shut down and rebuilt. Unfortunately, now we have Fukushima and potentially a disaster could happen in the United States. That, to me, is kind of more terrifying than even the oil spill.

Dave: Wow. My grandmother is a nuclear engineer, or at least she was until she retired. That's kind of unusual for someone at her age, but she met my father on the Manhattan Project. She's been saying as long as I can remember since the 80s that reactor designs were completely primitive and we needed pebble bed reactors. We could do it safely. She finally said, "They're never going to do it." She went off and did her own thing. It's shocking.

That's not the main thing I wanted to interview you about. It's just, what an amazing story. You actually dove under that, and you know something about this. What I wanted to get with you is how did you get to the point of wanting to start reset.me? Tell me a little bit more about what made you go from being this Emmy award winning journalist to this new site. How did reset.me come about?

Amber: I was just at a time of my life where I had just seen too much in my career, Dave. You know, once too many oil spills. I also covered conflict zones, child sex trafficking. Unfortunately, I thought I had a big shield up surrounding me, protecting me from what I was witnessing. I always pretended to be very strong. At the end of the day, many of us, especially as journalists, are absorbing the trauma we're witnessing.

I just got to the tipping point where I was starting to have symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. I was having trouble sleeping. I was always hyper-aroused. If I heard a loud noise, like a door slam or a helicopter, I'd start to freak out, maybe see tunnel vision. My mind was racing so quickly that I noticed I was having trouble. I was working on a book at that time, and I was having trouble even sitting down and putting together sentences that made any sense.

At that point, I knew that I needed some type of help. I didn't want to go the prescription drug route just because I have always been one who believes that mother nature has a cure for all of our ailments. I had reported on the negative side effects of prescription medications throughout my career. I started researching natural medicines, and a friend of mine had suggested psychedelics, and the ayahuasca. I was thinking I had grouped all psychedelics.

Because I grew up in middle America where I was fed all the propaganda. I drank all the Kool-Aid, so I thought all psychedelics were these evil drugs like crack cocaine. Unfortunately, a lot of them behave more like medicines than drugs. They've been unfairly grouped in this Schedule I grouping by the US government. So, when I researched ayahuasca, and I started reading anecdote after anecdote of people being healed from mental health disorders, including PTSD, that's when I knew. I just felt a calling, Dave. It was like ayahuasca was calling me down to the jungle and saying that I could be helped.

Dave: That's remarkable. So, you went down. You didn't just do ayahuasca. You talked about it, which is becoming more popular since Steve Jobs talked about LSD and Bono – I still don't know how to say his name properly, my apologies. I am a U2 fan, I just never knew how to pronounce that. They've all talked about how hallucinogens, particularly

ayahuasca or similar things have changed the way they view the world and all. For you it sounds like they helped you with PTSD. You used them medicinally, not recreationally. Did someone help you do that or did you do this yourself?

Amber: I definitely went, and I'm like you, I highly recommend if you're going to take these substances doing it in either a ceremonial setting or in a very safe, comfortable setting surrounded by people who can not only watch out for you but also have experience with these substances. For me, I went down to [Ikitos 09:28] and went to a ceremony with about 14 other people and a shaman, also known as a healer.

We were in almost a yurt like structure, and all sat there together for really beautiful ceremonies where we all consumed the ayahuasca at the same time and took our journeys at the same time. Finished around the same time and then were able to discuss the journeys together the next day to really integrate what we'd learned. It was a beautiful process and extremely healing for me.

I had been caught in this box of style of thinking, this western mindset for my entire life. The ayahuasca, within 20 seconds just blew that to pieces and showed me that there's so much more to the universe than we are experiencing right now living in these boxes, driving around in these cars and living this consumerist lifestyle.

It also allowed me to process a lot of the trauma that I had stored up in my body. There was even one time during the ceremony where I felt this presence in front of me just sucking something out of my body, and these dark forms of energy just started flying out of my body one by one in the shape of faces I'd interviewed over the years. One of them was the face of a 13-year-old sex trafficking victim whom I'd done a documentary on. Another huge ball of energy was in the shape of all these animals I'd seen covered in oil during the oil spill. On and on and on until all of the trauma that I'd been carrying of others had left my body.

Then I was also able to go back, while under the influence of ayahuasca, watch a movie of my life and really see where the trauma in my life had

started, and that was in my childhood. My parents had had a pretty tumultuous divorce. Many of us don't realize this, but we're carrying around childhood trauma that takes the driver's seat for our entire lives. For me, that had caused, just witnessing that as a young child, A, it caused me to question authority which is really good for journalism, but B, it had caused me a bit of anxiety.

I was able to go back and relive the fighting as a four-year-old but objectively this time, without the fear involved, the fear of abandonment. Instead, I was able to watch it and say goodbye to my four-year-old self and let her go on and be a child again and reprocess those memories, taking it from the fear and anxiety folder in my brain to the safe folder. I noticed, especially the weeks after my ayahuasca ceremonies, a tremendous reduction in my anxiety symptoms.

Dave: Are you familiar with Stan Grof and his work with psychedelics?

Amber: Yes, I am, very familiar.

Dave: For people listening, Stan Grof is one of the fathers of modern psychedelic research. He did his work with LSD in the 50s. He treated 10,000 people as a psychiatrist in Czechoslovakia back then and realized that there were recurring patterns. What you're describing very much matches the sort of thing that he describes in his patients. You might say, "Well, this guy was clearly a madman. Besides, it was Czechoslovakia. What did they know?"

I've met Stan. I've actually done holotropic breathing, which is a way of hallucinating without using psychedelics, which he invented after psychedelics became largely illegal. I'm an entrepreneur. I'm a pretty successful guy. I've done the western walk very well. At the same time, just like you, Amber, I realized when I was about 30 that I had all sorts of programming in me that wasn't mine.

It all came from earlier childhood stuff. In my case, there was a lot that came from the way I was born. I was born with the cord wrapped around my neck. When that happens, you come into the world ready to fight, and you don't really know that that happened because you've

always ... It's been like that since you were born. So, you end up pushing against authority and doing things like you did as well.

The many paths to see that programming inside you. There's meditation. There's awareness. There's things like EMDR, which is another kind of therapy. There's ayahuasca. There's DMT. Some people used ecstasy. Some people use many, many years of therapy. I've had the most success with neurofeedback, although psychedelics are as important to my own path as neurofeedback.

How many of those different things did you try before you arrived at ayahuasca or did it just call to you and you went?

Amber: I hadn't tried really anything. I tried yoga and meditation, but my mind was moving so quickly it was nearly impossible to quiet it. I remember reading somewhere – it's probably Grof's research as well – that psychedelics aren't the be-all and end-all, but often for many people that are in the state I was in, they're the key to unlock the door to healing.

For some people that have tried everything, it's really their only option. For me, meditation and these other natural therapies, they just weren't working. My gut was telling me, "You need something more powerful." Why not the most powerful psychedelic on earth?

Dave: Now, I don't want to dismiss meditation, because meditation and particularly breathing techniques have been really helpful for me, but they're the Tylenol. They're not the codeine. Let's just put it that way.

Amber: Exactly.

Dave: There are faster paths. If you have a mission in your life, and you end up spending two thirds of your life dealing with childhood trauma that put a pattern that's very hard to discern into the way you interact with the world, why would you spend all of your time and energy using low powered techniques when there is an opportunity to choose from an array of faster, certainly scarier, even more risk prone techniques, but ones that get you to the point where, "Okay, now I see my programming. Now I can rewrite the code so that now I'm in charge of my biology, and

I'm in charge of how I interact with the world instead of letting primitive defense systems pick that for me."

Amber: That's a beautiful way to describe it. That's what I felt like. I felt like I'm only on this planet for a short amount of time, and I've got a lot of work to do. I just need to get better as quickly as possible. I was able to ... It would have been decades to go through all of this therapy and process had I not gone the psychedelic route. I know that 100%.

Dave: To me, it seems like a sin to waste this life on all of it, "I just have to heal my trauma, and eventually I'll stop being a victim, and I'll feel better." The first half of my life I was more like, "You know what? I'll just ignore all that crap, and I'll just kick ass, and I'll be invincible and invulnerable." I was really damned successful. I just wasn't happy. Slight little problem there. The mind is racing all the time. There's fear, but you never show it and all that.

It is though just almost unimaginable for a lot of people to say, "You know, I have my life and my job and maybe my family. I'm going to disappear to South America, use some plant medicines and come back a week or two later. Maybe I'll be different." Were you worried that you might not like what happened or what you would be when you came back from such an intense experience?

Amber: I was in such a state where I knew I had hit rock bottom, so I knew I could only go up from there. I did have a bit of a fear because I'd read some accounts online of people having horrific experiences that they couldn't process. Sometimes that's the case with ayahuasca. Not every experience is pleasant. That's why it's key to make sure to go down there for ten days or more if you need intensive healing, because one night might be the night from hell, then the next night is the most beautiful ceremony where your heart just opens up, and you're filled with love and this understanding of the universe and spirituality.

You never know what you're going to get, so you have to make sure to really, really give it a chance. Like I said earlier, my gut just told me that this would be a medicine that could help me. As I get older, I'm learning to finally trust that little voice inside your head that gives you amazing

advice that you don't always listen to. I'm really glad that that time I had trust in my instincts.

Dave: You were very fortunate that you had both awareness of your instinct and your trust in it. I grew up in a very science oriented family where it's all very core rationalist stuff. There's value to examining double blind studies and to examining the rational perspective on things. I'd actually learned inadvertently to not trust my intuition because no one else could validate my intuition.

For me, there was a time of learning to do that. Now I listen to my intuition, and I actually train my intuition with feedback and all, where you can learn to become more aware of what your body is telling you. Even though the body will sometimes betray you, other times it's got knowledge you don't have because it's more wired to your environment than you conscious brain.

When you're using a plant medicine, I can think of four variables that really come into play. There's the medicine itself. There's you. There's the healer you're working with. There's the set and setting and all of that. A lot of times people ascribe the power to the medicine. In your experience, how important is the medicine itself versus the interaction of the healer and the medicine and you? It seems like the healer's the variable that doesn't get as much attention, but it's pretty important.

Amber: Especially with ayahuasca, it's vital that you go to a reliable shaman because there's a lot of other factors at play. So, A, you need to make sure your shaman has the right intentions, because the medicine, just like everything in life, can be used for a lot of good, but it can also used to harm or take advantage of the individual. The healer is of utmost importance when trying ayahuasca. Also the setting is vital too. These aren't medicines ... Ayahuasca isn't something to order and put in your refrigerator and drink with friends in your kitchen.

Dave: That's going to be messy.

Amber: It's vital. I hear people ordering this thing, Dave, called pharmahuasca or some kind of ayahuasca analog online. You're losing everything. The

whole point of the ayahuasca is to ingest these plants and then get knowledge from these plants while you're on the ayahuasca from their spirits. I know that sounds so hippie. Just a reminder, I am a serious investigative journalist, but I've seen not all of this can be explained by science.

There's a lot of spirituality and spirits and mysticism involved in this healing. It really makes a difference to be in the jungle where ayahuasca came from, drinking this ayahuasca that's been growing for a thousand years, that has a thousand years of energy in it. Really, to just be in that natural setting. It's not vital. A lot of people are finding therapeutic healing from ayahuasca in Brooklyn or here in LA, but if you are able to get all of those factors: a good healer, in the jungle, in a ceremonial setting, with the right mindset, too.

You have to really focus on what do you want from this medicine? What are you trying to heal? Really ask for that, and think of that clearly in your mind before you ingest the ayahuasca, then you're going to have an amazing ceremony if you get all those factors right.

Dave: Very, very well said. The way you say, "I'm a hardcore investigative journalist." You're a smart, intelligent, accomplished, award winning, rational human being that's probably performed at a level beyond what most humans have, to be perfectly honest. I like to think the same things about myself, not that I'm award winning. Everything else there, I would like to sign up for anyway.

Amber: [crosstalk 21:53] fantastic.

Dave: Thank you. It's one of those things where it's a bit scary to come out and say, "Yeah, there's a spiritual aspect to all of this." When you just flat out admit that that other people who are high performers who have the same experience but don't talk about it will come forth and share the same thing.

Along time ago when Linked In first started, I put yoga and meditation in my keywords. I'm a computer hacker, cloud security guru kind of guy from my background. In fact, I quit my job in January of this year or

December of last year, whatever, and went full-time Bullet Proof. All that time, I would say maybe one in five people who'd seen my profile would be like, "Hey, I noticed you have this in there. I also have this spiritual side to my life, but I don't talk about it because I want to maintain my credibility."

I'm like, "Well, my credibility is just going to be based on my accomplishments. If I'm able to do those accomplishments with a spiritual side to what I do, if you're not going to like me or you're going to think I'm a crackpot for that, I guess I'll just take the hit, and it's okay."

Do you find that more people, now that you've just kind of really become open with reset.me, do more people approach you about that? Are you attracting them to you or are these people who would have always had these practices, but just never felt safe talking about them?

Amber: A little bit of both. People are really scared to say the "G" word, God. I just published a story on reset.me about a young man who says that psychedelics helped him find God and reconnect with a sense of spirituality. I got a little bit of criticism, like, "Don't use the word 'God'. You're going to scare people away and freak people out." I've noticed that I think a lot of people have been kind of disappointed or their spirituality has been harmed by the concept of organized religion or they've just been really let down by their traditional concept of spirituality.

So, a lot of people are just floating around right now, searching for something. They don't know what that is. Maybe they're fulfilling that need with other things like addictions or depression or anxiety. Psychedelics offer people a tremendous amount of spirituality. You're giving me the courage to admit it here, but it's true. For me, I had lost all faith in an afterlife and in God.

Dave: You just used the "F" word and the "G" word. That would be "faith".

Amber: I know. (laughter) I had. I had lost faith in a higher power. Especially with the ayahuasca, I had a tremendously powerful ayahuasca

experience where I was shown that death doesn't exist. I was alive outside of my body as the real me, which is not this organic spacesuit that allows the real me to survive on earth, but really this vibration, this soul that will continue on forever and ever, whether this spacesuit survives or not. That as so powerful and left such an imprint on my mind that I have completely lost all of my fear of death.

Not only that, I've connected with a deep sense of spirituality which is like a fire in my belly that gets me excited to wake up each day and smell fresh air and look at nature and just makes me excited to be alive again. It was such a beautiful experience, and that's what these psychedelics gave me. It was this gift, not only from ayahuasca, but also psilocybin mushrooms.

Dave: For me, the understanding that I am not this bag of meat. I'm not even responsible for all the feelings or sensations or thoughts that it interjects in my head, has been powerful. To learn to discern when I'm actually getting information from the environment or some old program is changing things for me, has been a practice.

For me, computers have helped a lot, because if you have a lie detector you're like, "Wait. Am I deceiving myself or not?" I found out I am really good at self-deception. We all are. Having a computer to flash a red light every time I'm deceiving myself in a neuro-feedback chamber, for me helped me to understand something that really first came to me from holotropic breathing, which is very related to psychedelics and isn't. That was actually after I had done ayahuasca, so I started a lot of this path with ayahuasca, and then I ended up doing that. It's that idea that this body is relatively temporary.

For me to come there from the way I thought the world was, they're as far removed from each other as I could imagine. Even if I'm totally wrong, and I am just a bag of meat, I'm way happier thinking this bag of meat is not me. I'm okay with that. Are you concerned about teenagers doing psychedelics?

Amber: If you look at native cultures, especially with psilocybin mushroom use and [wahaka 26:54] and in the Amazon with ayahuasca, they give

children psychedelic medicines in a therapeutic settings. So, as long as it's done correctly, I am not concerned.

What I am concerned about is teenagers A, potentially buying MDMA on the street or at concerts. Most MDMA is not real MDMA. It's some mixture of who knows what. It's essential that they get a test kit. Also, a lot of teenagers will take these substances at a party or in a friend's house at a party in a setting they're not comfortable in. Maybe it makes them have a bad experience or have a lot of anxiety and paranoia.

My biggest concern isn't teenagers using these medicines, because naturally they've been used by individuals of these ages for hundreds if not thousands of years, but it's just doing it incorrectly which is another reason I created reset.me, to really promote harm reduction journalism to really kind of take that jump and say, "Okay, we're not advocating for people to do these, but if you are going to, here's how to be safe." To try to prevent people from having accidents.

Dave: It's so important. I'm not opposed to the idea of a teenager with a shaman or even a therapist using one of these things. For god's sake, how many teenagers are on Ritalin or Adderall or one of the other methamphetamines or coffee or alcohol or nicotine. Mind altering substances are just part of being human.

I am gravely concerned about inducing more trauma by taking these things, or even introducing chemical harm to the brain at a time when the prefrontal cortex isn't even formed. You and I talk about early childhood things that form traumatic behaviors that are totally invisible to rational, high performance humans. The behaviors are there, but they're masked.

Before about 23, 24 your prefrontal cortex isn't formed, and you start doing this stuff without the things that come from having a healer work with you or a therapist work with you or just without the conscious use of these things, I think the risks are much higher because you haven't finished wiring your behaviors in. If you jack things up, you could really, really harm yourself.

I would not as a bio-hacker say it's reversible, because I don't think there's much you can't reverse in your bag of meat if you have enough technology and knowledge and understanding of the system. Someone who's had 300 pounds or someone who's weighed 300 pounds, someone who had arthritis at age 14 and all these health problems and overcome them, it's an enormous amount of time and money and work and focus. Maybe if you could just do it right the first time, you'll have a lot more energy and time to do other good stuff in life.

So, if you're listening to this, and you're thinking, "Oh, now I want to go do ayahuasca." Number one, it's not a party drug. You're going to throw up. It's not actually fun. It may be absolutely terrifying. It may be absolutely spiritual and uplifting. It may be healing. It can also not be healing if you think you're going to take it at a party. Don't mess around. Go with someone who has done it before. I say that not because I am old. I say that because I've made mistakes myself.

Amber: I agree with you 100%. That's another reason why it's always safer to go with the plant medicines and the more natural substances when you know if you're getting on a plane and going down to Peru what you're drinking is ayahuasca or if you go to a mushroom ceremony, you know what you're eating is a mushroom. Versus some of these other synthetic substances that you don't necessarily know what you're getting.

When teenagers do use these substances in these natural cultures, they are always doing it in a ceremonial setting. They're never just sitting on a street corner drinking ayahuasca. It's always with a trained healer. Which would be like you said, Dave, that would be pretty horrific. Ayahuasca is abortive, so people are throwing up out of both ends, sometimes simultaneously. It's not pleasant.

Dave: Yeah. In fact, one of the things that will make you more human is confronting death. Traditional cultures had ways to do this, lots of ways. Knowing with some degree of certainty what it feels like to die or believing you're going to die will cause beneficial changes because you lose the innate fear of dying. That's something you mentioned. It's something I've experienced as well.

When you're sure you're going to die and you don't, and you face that fear, it loses the edge. You stop making small, little, unconscious decisions that you're doing because you were so afraid of dying. "All right. Maybe I'm going to die. Maybe I'm not. I'm going to do what I'm going to do." That inner calmness can make you a better CEO, a better investigative journalist, just a better person.

It's not just about your job. It can make you a better non-profit person or just a better mom, whatever. That said, if you think you're going to face death at a party, the idea is just wrong. On the street corner is hilarious.

Amber: It may be. Some might and have this horrific experience, then it turns out being beneficial. You never know. It helps to have someone with you the next day, a trained healer who can explain what you've just witnessed and really guide you through that process so that you can ...

The key to psychedelics is not just taking the psychedelic and going through the experience. It's how you integrate it after the experience and knowledge and the incredible insights you've been given. What do you do with those afterward? That's why it's great to have a trained healer or trained individual who knows a lot about the medicines with you so they can help you come up with your plan of action after you've had these experiences.

For me, just as a journalist, I had a fear of death because I'd witnessed people killed and friends, and friends in prison. I didn't realize how much that was in the driver's seat of my life causing me so much anxiety and fear. Now that I've been able to overcome that, just like you said, Dave, I do have a great sense of calmness. People notice it about me. They're like, "Wow. You're just glowing." You're so relaxed all the time. I definitely this way before. Definitely, my friends and family and ex-boyfriends can attest to that.

Now I just have this inner peace. Look at how many of us, our lives are just totally controlled by this fear of death. We don't take risks. We don't make new moves. We're just constantly, "Oh my gosh. That person's going to kill me." We don't connect with our neighbors. We don't love

because we have such an intense fear. That's what's really beautiful about these substances and allowing people to just shed that, which unveils this beautiful human being that can peacefully enjoy their time on earth.

Dave: After you've had these remarkable experiences, [inaudible 34:07] what changed in your life? How do you define success now compared to what you did before?

Amber: Well, everything changed. My life has been turned right-side-up, as I like to say. I used to be really more concerned about money. I was always worried about if I was going to go broke or "I can't make that decision because I need to instead do a job that has more security and be more on this traditional, linear path." Which was never really traditional for me, but I did constantly have that fear.

Now, what has changed dramatically in my life is that I have completely surrendered, which in my surrender has given me so much freedom because now I have trust in the universe that everything is going to work out. For example, with this site I created, [reset.me](https://www.reset.me), some people told me I was crazy because I didn't have a business plan, and I didn't have investors. What I did have was my insight and my gut and this vision, "If you build it, they will come."

What I did, was I just built it. I got rid of all the fear and the resistance and all the nay saying, and, "Oh, you're going to be criticized for promoting these medicines and these alternative forms of healing." I just let that go, and I surrendered. I said, "I'm going to trust in the universe that this will work out." It has. We had almost a million people on the site last month.

Dave: Congratulations. That's huge.

Amber: Thank you. Thanks. It's just like things are falling in place, because when you follow your gut, and you follow that passion, and surrender to the universe which these medicines have shown me to do, things just fall into place. We've had people contact us for advertising and other positive things that just have fallen magically into place for us. Had I had

such fear that the psychedelics dissolve, but had I had that fear, I don't think I would have started on this new journey. I would have lost out on a lot in life for letting fear rule my life.

Dave: A lot of that sounds entirely irrational and unscientific. "The universe will take care of you." "Things will happen the way they're supposed to happen." How do you address critics who say, "Come on. You drank the Kool-Aid, pretty much literally, and now you believe all these magic fairytales. It's all coming to an end soon." How do you address that?

Amber: Normally I just ask them, "Are you happy? Are you happy working in your cubicle? Working from nine to five? Do you want to be an opera singer or a ballroom dancer?" Each of us is on this planet down a certain path for a reason. We have a destined path, but so many of us are unhappy and depressed and anxious because we're not following that path because we constantly sit in our cubicle ignoring that voice in our head that says, "You should be doing this. This is what you're passionate about."

That's what I usually ask them – if they're happy. Nine times out of ten, the naysayers aren't. I'm trying to hopefully advocate for them to follow their passions as well, because when you're passionate about something, you're going to be doing that better than 90% of people doing it, because you're being driven not just by money, but you're being driven by heart and soul and this intensity that's going to surpass the others. Yeah, maybe it's a risk making ballroom dancing a career, but if you are passionate, you're going to be the best damned ballroom dancing coach in your city, and everyone is going to want to come to you, which will then bring money and success.

Dave: It takes an enormous amount of courage to leap off and do that. I started BulletProof the same way. I had a perfectly good job for a big company. Able to take care of my family, but the cubical life, even though I managed to get work from home, but the cubicle life still doesn't bring value to me anyway. I finally did go full-time with BulletProof, like I was mentioning.

I started the blog without a business plan, without investors, same sort of thing. I said, “I’ll take a little bit of my salary, and I’ll cover costs.” I just want to help a few people because some of the things I’ve come across matter. Like you, a million people? That’s incredible. Even this podcast – it’s number one ranked much of the time in “Health and Fitness” on iTunes. More than a human lifetime of people have downloaded it. I look at 7 million downloads times about an hour. That’s more than a life.

So, I like to make sure that we don’t waste people’s time listening to it, because that would be like killing somebody. That’s not okay.

Amber: Did you just have this instinct that told you about putting the butter in the coffee and the oils? What was it in you? I imagine it’s similar to my path. It’s something that’s just so untraditional. Thankfully, you followed that. It’s brilliant. How many people out there ... If you had told someone, I’m sure they probably said, if you had said to them, “I’m going to show people to put butter in their coffee,” people might have thought you were insane.

Dave: They still do.

Amber: Yeah. But, so many people love it, including myself. It’s really amazing that you followed that gut instinct to create this product regardless of what anyone else thought because that was your path. That’s your destined path, and your passion. You followed it, and look at all the success you’re having because of it.

Dave: You talk about having intuition and following your calling. I read an article about Mt. Kailash. Mt. Kailash is the headwaters of the Ganges and Indus rivers. For the Hindu and Buddhist religions, where the gods live. It’s a very holy place. Few westerners go there. It’s five days of driving on dirt roads to get there. Then you walk for 26 miles at high altitude over rough terrain in a circle around this. I thought, “This sounds like the coolest thing ever.” I thought, “I don’t know if I’ll ever have the chance to do it.”

Events just sort of came together when I was traveling in Southeast Asia for a few months – I’m taking some time off – and I had a chance to go there. The right traveling companion manifested themselves, and I ended up going. At that high altitude, where I drank yak butter tea for the first time. I’ve done high altitude mountaineering in South America, in Ecuador and in Peru. I always feel like crap.

So, I’m drinking this weird concoction, and I’m feeling amazing. I just remember thinking, “Why would these nomadic people who have to carry all this stuff when they move, with yaks a third of the population there, why do they carry big butter churns and why do they have blenders?” They have little generators and batteries and blenders. It was to make yak butter tea.

I tried to replicate it, and I played with that idea when I came back. Of course, I’d always been a coffee guy. I’d known about the mold problem a little bit in coffee, but I hadn’t understood how big of an impact it was having on my immune system and all. Bringing together, that stuff just happened. I put it out there. Here’s how to find coffee that’s probably lower than average, and here’s how to mix butter and this other oil and all into it after iterative tries.

For me, I just want to feel good all the time, because I never did my whole life. I was always struggling against a lack of energy and just being tired and having brain fog. Like you said, not necessarily even remembering what’s going on because you’re trying to write a coherent sentence, but your nervous system is all over the place. I was like that too. I found that I got this feeling from it. Then when I did a study of people’s cognitive function, it was there. That’s how it came.

It was intuition and science blended together and just a sincere desire to make people feel like their brain is turned on all the way. My experience is that if I’m going to manage my biology fully, then I want my brain working to do that. My brain never worked that well on its own. It worked in some domains remarkably well as an entrepreneur, but in other domains not so well. It was bringing that all together.

That's kind of a long answer to your question, but it's an interesting thing that I wouldn't have predicted that that was the number one thing people would talk about on the blog. I would have thought that the diet info-graphic roadmap, which is the topic of the book that's coming out, which has hundreds of references in it, that that would be the amazing thing. It is, but it's number two after the coffee.

Amber: That's great. It's just another example of following your passion and trusting that inner voice. It may be a lonely path walking alone for a bit, but others will join you especially if you're doing something that you truly know deep down in your soul that is right and effective.

Dave: That is very, very well said. We are coming up on the end of the show, and there's a question that I've asked every guest, and one I'd like to ask you. Given all the things you've learned, not just as an investigative journalist, not just on your path using psychedelics for healing, but as a human being, the three most important pieces of advice you'd offer people who want to perform better. I don't mean perform better in sports or their job. I mean perform better as human beings. Top three?

Amber: I'd say you have to purge your trauma, because often for many of us - in your case and my case and probably the majority of humans on this planet - that often gets in the driver's seat and can potentially take you down a path that is not your true path in life. So, I'd say purge your trauma.

You need to get rid of your fear. Fear stands in the way of your dreams. Fear is resistance to being your highest self. I've seen fear ruin lives. You're only on this planet for a short time, so if you're going to let fear run your life, then fear is going to ruin your life.

Also, as I said earlier, follow your passion. Go with what makes you happy. Life is so short to be spending your days doing something that you don't enjoy. If you do follow your passion, you're going to be doing that job better than 90 plus percent of people in that industry. Because of that, success will follow. Look at all of the most successful people on this planet. They're successful because they're doing what they love. How amazing is that to be able to do something everyday that is

something you love, and just have that enrichment and nourishment to go through life knowing you are on your soul's true path.

Dave: Powerful words. Amber, where can people learn more about your work? Where can they find you online?

Amber: I made reset.me is the website covering all these natural medicines and therapies. My twitter handle is @amberlyon. I'm also on Facebook. We are resetmepage and amberlyonfanpage. Pretty much using the three of those, you begin to figure out what I'm up to these days, which is often a little bit of muckraking and trying to show peace and change, a lot of love.

Dave: Thanks for being so honest and courageous and just upfront on the show and in life. I appreciate and admire that. Have an awesome day.

Amber: All right. Thank you.

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