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In Conversation with Natasha Silver Bell: Healing and Nature

NATASHA SILVER BELL IS THE FOUNDER AND CEO OF SILVERBELL, A RECOVERY AND MENTAL WELLNESS COMPANY PROVIDING PRIVATE CONCIERGE CARE, RECOVERY COACHING, IMMERSIVE COMPANIONS, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF DISCRETION AND INTEGRITY TO CLIENTS WORLDWIDE.

I've always been most at ease in the natural world. Teenage summers were spent riding bareback, sometimes even barefoot, across our family's historic Pioneer Ranch in Paradise Valley, Montana, a working ranch homesteaded by our ancestors generations ago in 1862 and still in our family to this day. Early morning before sunrise is a special time spent in quiet contemplation before allowing the sun's healing energy to warm and inspire me.

As I move forward in my life's journey, the power of *human* connection feels just as potent. The relationships we

nurture with others can be as healing and transformative as time spent in nature. Combine the two, and something magical happens: when we ground ourselves in the transcendent energy of the land, we can share that energy with others. We connect to the land, and the land connects us to each other.

That's how I came to be here on the stunning grounds of The Falcon at Castle Ashby in the breathtaking Northamptonshire countryside. Tracy, Lady Northampton and I have invited experts worldwide to join us for a specially curated curriculum at East Meets West, an exclusive week-long wellness and mental health retreat.





Robbin Mooney, Natasha Silver Bell, Sheila Shilati, Lady Tracy Northampton

With a Master's in Integrative Psychotherapy and Humanistic Counselling and over thirty years of experience in mental health as a Clinical Supervisor and Training Therapist, Tracy, Lady Northampton understands the importance of fostering deep connections. When she suggested Castle Ashby, the ancestral home of her husband Lord Northampton, the 7th Marquess of Northampton, as the perfect setting for East Meets West, she couldn't have been more right.

Castle Ashby is known for its energy vortexes, which mysteriously twist the trees dotting its green hills. What better setting to immerse oneself in the wisdom and wonder of heart, mind, and body from best-in-class practitioners and leaders in Trauma-Informed Healing, Somatic Movement, Pain Management, Polyvagal Theory, and Mental Wellness and Health such as Deb Dana, Dr. Wayne and Laura Kampers, Dr. Gauri Seth, Lou Lebentz, Maria Kratsios, Dr. Abilash Mallikarjun, Guru Dharam, Josh Dickson, Helen Jane Ridgeway, Ester Cohen and more.

Here on this sacred land (boasting possibly the oldest weeping willow in the UK), I feel the earth itself begging me to drop in and let go of everything I think I know. When I'm fully present and connected energetically, I'm able to listen to my body. I become open and available to what is offered: the beauty and brilliance of other people, the peace and grace this land asks of me.

I tune into the words of Polyvagal Theory Institute co-founder and author Deb Dana. Deb is a master at translating the complex

science behind Polyvagal Theory into easily digestible practices and concepts. Deb and Stephen Porges, Ph.D created the Polyvagal map to chart how the Ventral Vagal (social engagement, safety, and connection), Sympathetic (fight or flight), and Dorsal Vagal (shut down or freeze) nervous systems help us self-regulate. Before Deb and Dr. Porges, no one had translated the three areas of the nervous system into *feelings* by documenting their distinct emotional states.

Thanks to Deb's work, we know how to shift an agitated nervous system toward connection and safety, with what Deb describes as "glimmers" acting as feel-good signposts along the way. Somatic movement, emotional touchstones, breathwork, and visualization are some of the ways we can partner with our nervous systems to create rich, meaningful, co-regulated lives empowered by healthy relationships with ourselves and others. Many of us already incorporate practices like these in our daily lives.



When we feel safe, others do, too. Deb calls the active, ongoing use of regulated energy in service of healing *beaming benevolence*. This is what Polyvagal Theory is all about, why it's known as *the science of feeling safe*. Now, among the ancient trees of Castle Ashby and the open hearts and bright minds of East Meets West, Deb catches my eye and smiles, her eyes twinkling. Together, we beam benevolence to one another, to everyone in this room, to friends, family, and strangers, out into the world and beyond.



SilverBell CEO and founder Natasha Silver Bell is a driving force in transforming the recovery landscape. An established expert in substance use disorder and recovery for over a decade, Natasha is on the board of the National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD) and serves as an Ambassador for Partnership to End Addiction. Drawing upon her mastery of transformative treatment, Natasha recently co-founded Inservice Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization funding concierge-level recovery plans for beneficiaries without access to customized treatment models proven effective for long-term, sustained recovery. Natasha is a proud mother to her three children Sarah, Sam, and Ben.