

# TIS Ep:56 Shifting Mindsets on Sustainability with Stacey Alvarez de la Campa

## **SPEAKERS**

Sharon Hurley Hall (she/her), Lisa Hurley (she/they), Stacey Alvarez de la Campa (she/her)

### **Sharon Hurley Hall 00:06**

Welcome to the introvert sisters, the podcast by introverts for introverts hosted by Sharon and Lisa to INFJs with a lot to say. Hi, I'm Sharon and together with the introvert sisters. Welcome to our podcast. We are so excited to welcome a special guest, fellow introvert and dear sister friend, Stacey Alvarez de la Campa.

### **Lisa Hurley 00:24**

And I'm Lisa

### **Sharon Hurley Hall 00:38**

She is the founder of worldwide sustainability warriors, an educational consultant at One Ocean hub, University of Strathclyde and the anti money laundering administrator at Lex Caribbean Attorneys at Law. Today we're going to be talking about something that I know is very dear to Stacey's heart. We're talking about climate change and sustainability. As global citizens, as Island dwellers, this is a subject that is really important to us to level set. Let's start by referencing the recent speech made by Barbados Prime Minister, the Honorable Mia Motley, at the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. And she said, climate finance the front line, small island, developing states declined by 25% in 2019. Failure to provide this critical finance and that of loss and damage is measured in lives and livelihoods being lost in our communities. It is immoral and unjust. Okay, so with that, Stacey, our first question to you is, what is your reaction to Prime Minister Motley's statements? And you know, your thoughts and opinions? Do you agree, disagree?

### **Stacey Alvarez 01:54**

Well, I'm really glad that she made that statement. I'm glad she's a force to be reckoned with in the arena of climate change, because she made a crucial distinction between lives and livelihoods. So often we think of ways to, you know, after the disaster, how do we save the lives, but people's livelihoods are usually completely destroyed by you know, extreme weather events and some of the other horrible effects of climate change. So without those livelihoods, you can't rebuild a life. So your life may have been spared. But you know, the infrastructure of your livelihood may be gone. If you're a farmer, you're working someone in the agricultural sector, you know, your crop may be gone, you know, in terms of how well farmers and smallholders have access to insurance, that may be non existent. So your livelihood is gone. So you have a life, but where do you go from there? And I think I'm really happy that she made the distinction. And she talked about the lack of appropriate financing, because financing is key to building everything else we need.

**Lisa Hurley** 02:54

That's crucial. Okay.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 02:57

So you are the founder of Worldwide Sustainability Warrior. Stacey, can you tell us more about that, and also about your role as an educational consultant? at One Ocean hub University of Strathclyde?

**Stacey Alvarez** 03:09

Well, worldwide sustainability warriors came out of a passion that I've had since I was a little girl. And I've always been concerned about not just the planet, but how do we live on the planet? And that cohesive and what I think should be a reciprocal relationship between us and Mother Nature? How can we, you know, live in a way that's sustainable? Meaning, what legacy are we leaving for future generations? It's not just about us? How are we sustaining not just for existence, but are we to thrive, with nature and as people as a collective human race, so Worldwide Sustainability Warriors was about the way that we can feel that we don't have the power to do that. And we fail to recognize sometimes the smallest things we do, the smallest acts that we do, can lead towards a collective big picture of making a difference. So the main thing about Worldwide Sustainability Warriors is educating people that everything you do can make a difference. And when we all feel that way, we will change will change the world will change the future. So that was mainly what my meeting was there. Yeah.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 04:11

Okay. So tell us a little more about about the organization. Okay, so you're saying small acts can make a difference?

**Stacey Alvarez** 04:18

Yes, small acts

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 04:19

And how, how have you been putting that into practice? So far? I've been putting into practice definitely one thing we need in small island developing states, how do we deal with waste management and recycling? So when we when we do have the beach cleanups? Where does that that which the beach?

**Lisa Hurley** 04:36

Oh my gosh, you know, because I actually I have wondered to say that, yeah, I have it, which is I suspect, you know, I'm just going to you know, just say it openly. I actually have not wondering that, you know, you see a beach cleanup happening and you think, this is a great initiative and everything we're going to and I feel like if there are a lot of people that hadn't, you know, taken that next step.

**Stacey Alvarez** 05:00

So that's what I that's my main goal was sustainability. Whereas the bigger picture is, I'll start by raising awareness, you then need to see well, how can you engage multiple stakeholders on the wave of that awareness to then actually look at creating informed policies, which will take much more I think inter-regional collaboration, right, small agencies, because another issue with waste management is

sometimes scale. We actually ironically, sometimes we say we actually don't produce enough right there to be the necessary investment or the necessary collaboration. But we have to take things bit by bit. So that's the main thing. Yeah. And what about your role at the University of Strathclyde? I know you've been doing great things there. I know you've participated in conferences and presentations. So tell us a little bit about that. Well, that started with my dream again, it's I feel so blessed to be living a dream, but one of my dreams was we need to change or educational system, right, through all levels, you know, now we know that their degrees in sustainability and climate change and awareness, but what about putting that in a curriculum from much younger? So the work with One Ocean has to do with creating curricula here in this part of the world where we are kind of collaborating with islands in different parts of the world and having school children mainly from the ages of nine onwards, you know, before the dreaded 11 Plus? Yeah, think about, you know, ocean plastics, think about sustainability, think about the environment, and just putting in a few lessons in each year level that helped to help children want to ask those questions, want to know more. And figure out more

**Lisa Hurley** 06:34

That's fantastic

**Stacey Alvarez** 06:34

Yeah. And it was in that so you know, we're creating curriculum, we have some going right now, the Solomon Islands, we have plans for St. Lucia. So that's, that's mainly how we're, you know, I want to make a difference there.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 06:45

That is wonderful. And so leading on from that, then how do you put that into practice in your own personal daily life?

**Stacey Alvarez** 06:54

Yeah. And that's, that's, that's that. Therein lies the rub, as they say, how are you going to live sustainably? So first of all, the awareness of definitely, at all levels, whether it's to do with sustainability and food waste, whether it's to do with, you know, your shopping, whether, you know, it leads back to how do we look at planning or lives and planning, you know, who we support in terms of, you know, smallholder farmers do you take the extra effort to, you know, seek someone who may, you know, have a vegetable or fruit and vegetable stall, as opposed to a big conglomerate, which will remain nameless, but who you choose to support and supporting that small person, that personal choice that you make, I mean, it was, let's face it, it's convenient, sometimes it's convenient. But you know, take the time, once in a while to support the smallholder farmer, the person who you know, maybe selling the fruits and veg somewhere else outside of you know, that those parameters of big business to see well in supporting them, you know, you support the network of people around you, because we're all in this together. That's something else remember.

**Lisa Hurley** 07:58

Speaking of the network of people around you, have you experienced any pushback, either in your immediate circle? Circle or your wider circle? For our listeners, Stacey is already laughing. So we're gonna take that as a yes. So, so over to you.

**Stacey Alvarez** 08:18

Well, I think, again, the pushback is that they're ironically there ways in which sometimes a way to prove that you're successful and prove who you are as how much stuff can you buy?

08:31

Why not, you know, why not? You know, to me reuse, recycle, re-gift, you know,

**Lisa Hurley** 08:38

oh my gosh, yeah.

**Stacey Alvarez** 08:38

Oh, seriously, but there's that idea that when you don't do that,

**Lisa Hurley** 08:41

When you re-gift, repackage and all of that yes.

**Stacey Alvarez** 08:48

So we have to see break out of that identity that we need to prove that we are either affluent, we need to prove that somehow we we can afford to get this and that and it's that level you're talking about. that's that's that pushback that you know, well, where are you Where are you buying that? Or were you not getting this? Or you know, what? Why are we carpooling? So there's that there's that societal mindset that we, you know, we need to prove that we are worthy, and we need to prove that we can afford X, Y, Z as opposed to a hobby we want to live in a way that's sustainable. Yes. Yes.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 09:19

Right

**Lisa Hurley** 09:45

So, um, my question is, are there or is there a difference between the climate concerns for small island developing states versus those of developing countries?

**Stacey Alvarez** 09:59

We have huge concerns. And I think in the case of some small island developing states in the Caribbean region, that concerns you know, the threats are much more insidious, we tend to view, you know, shocking scenes of sea level rise and smaller Pacific islands as, as you know, being so evocative in terms of the emotions that they create. Yeah, I see it. I mean, we had the example of, I think it was a minister in Tuvalu. He gave his cop speech, his speech at the conference, the climate change conference, virtually, and he was standing Shin deep in water, because at that spot, he was at the lectern. And that spot had been land. But by this point, yeah, he was standing doing the lecture. Yeah. So that was a really stark, yes, yeah. So you know, we have for us in small island. In the Caribbean, we face the idea of Okay, right now, we have issues with the use of fossil fuels. And the fact that we import so much of our food, that food prices are rising, because the price of fossil fuels is rising. So we need to shift away from non renewable energy sources to transport such food. That's the one one point and

then build our agricultural sectors so that we have better food security, that is absolutely crucial. Because again, the food that we import, sometimes it's it's non native, there are times in which by the time it sits in the container for how long and in refrigerator, there's less nutritional value in it. And again, it's something that you you also raise future generations with this mindset that what is good comes from a week. And that's what we need to try to get. Yeah. And I think that's something that yeah, we face that threat in an awareness of, you know, food security, rising cost of non renewable fuel. And, again, from a policy energy perspective, we need to look at how do we boost the renewable energy sector? That's something, how do we even create that sector.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 11:53

So if you had a magic wand, right, how would you solve the climate crisis, particularly in the Caribbean? In the Caribbean?

**Stacey Alvarez** 12:07

It would be for us as a region, the one would be make us collaborate regionally, we have to break down the silo thinking. Again, mindset, it comes down to mindset break down the silo thinking of well, oh, we haven't pretty good, because we're, you know, we're better off smaller and developed. Well, there are other reasons that have, you know, much better, you know, in terms of their agricultural sector in terms of their the policies regarding smallholder farmers, what can we learn from each other as a region? And how can we collaborate? That would be my magic wand. For sure.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 12:39

Yes, yeah. But it's not just, you know, it's not just what the Caribbean needs as a whole for everything? Not just for, not as issues of climate change, because we are small, but we have the power to be mighty, we have the power to be mighty and we have, then we have to be mighty, we have to display you know, as you know, nobody's coming to save us.

**Sharon** 13:01

So nobody is coming. Who you know, they really many of them do not care. You know, while they are hemming and hawing about all their climate actions, the sea levels are rising and you know, 166 square miles could become another 100 square miles very quickly.

**Stacey Alvarez** 13:17

There we go. And there's a saltwater intrusion.

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 13:19

Yes, exactly. I was I was having a conversation with someone the other day, you know, when, before I lived in Barbados, when I used to, you know, we used to come here on holiday, and you walk along the beaches, and they were shells, and they were sea urchins and all kinds of things. You know, they were it's really hard to see them now. Yeah. So, you know, that is, you know, in a few decades, just one way in which things change in a very obvious yet another very obvious way that the negative impact on biodiversity. I was gonna ask you, because what I hear a lot about is about, you know, the coral reefs.

**Stacey Alvarez** 13:55

Yeah, definitely, we have to think about even with mangrove. Mangrove ecosystems provide a natural barrier and a natural defense against, you know, if it's storm surges and that kind of thing, right. So and that's where we have to look at the same financing. We talked about financing going towards not just climate change mitigation, but adaptation and the climate change adaptation is what tends to people see as draining the finances, how do we, you know, conserve the mangrove swamps? How do we build infrastructure that can adapt to what's happening with climate change, but also undermine that climate change altogether? How do we hold it? How do we as best we can contain it?

**Lisa Hurley** 14:31

Yeah. Another question for you. I hope it's not a stupid question. So we're sort of still in the midst of, you know, COVID, and all of this that's that's going on. Has that added any layers of complexity or had any impact into you know, the whole sustainability question?

**Stacey Alvarez** 14:52

Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

**Lisa Hurley** 14:53

Oh, can you share how?

**Stacey Alvarez** 14:56

Yeah, well, I think I think I always call it the silver lining of the COVID cloud.

**Lisa Hurley** 15:00

Interesting!

**Stacey Alvarez** 15:01

We're more aware of just how we're connected. When it was that we became isolated, you use certain bigger pictures came into focus, again, our connection to nature, the way people wish that they could head back to the beach in Barbados, when there was a beach lockdowns where there was a curfew when you couldn't, you know, take that sunset stroll along the beach, when you can connect with nature in a way that was meaningful, right, we suddenly began to realize exactly what nature really meant to us. And I think that's something that and you become awareness, you know, the existential questions of well, what is my place? Or what am I actually meant to do? Are you meant to stay on that treadmill and just keep earning a living? Are you meant to see how can you pursue your passion? Because people again, began to think well, what does this job mean to me that I'm doing? What is it that I actually want to pursue? So I think that's the the added, it's a complexity in a good way. I think COVID made us ask some very difficult questions and confront some essential aspects of who are we as part of a bigger picture? And how can we make sure that we're resilient moving forward, right.

**Lisa Hurley** 16:03

Did you, did either of you happen to see I wish I could remember the name of the documentary, I think it's on Netflix. But basically, it was shot in the middle of the pandemic. And it was about how nature started to reassert herself. Yes. I don't I don't know. I don't if I don't know it to be but but I've seen, but

I've seen pictures in places where people were gone for three months. Yeah. You know, trees and grasses.

**Stacey Alvarez 16:33**

Tigers, tigers, wandering around. Yes. And it's quite amazing.

**Sharon Hurley Hall 16:39**

We're not as far removed from nature. Sometimes we think that's the thing. Yeah. Right. Yeah. I thought that was beautiful. And actually, it doesn't mean trouble. But it does give you hope that they're, you know, they're still there, you know, there's still room for recovery. I watched a lot of David Attenborough documentaries over the years. And you know, the most recent ones were the Blue Planet and A Life on Our Planet, I think was tracking the decline in biodiversity on the planet was talking about sustainability and plastics and things like that. And I thought, you know, we've done so much damage as a species to the planet. But there's still time to recover,

**Sharon 17:18**

time,

**Stacey Alvarez 17:19**

and you have to have hope. And I think what I like about hope, I think it's good to be aware. But I think we have to watch that kind of negative kind of disaster mindset. Because a lot of the time too, you think, Well, bad news gains a bit more of an audience, right. So sometimes they'll say, you know, structures that are reporting this bad news, you know, keep me you got to be held captive, as opposed to hope to me will read action, I think up if you build a platform for that you want to act on right. Whereas as you say, the idea of a disaster mindset, you're more resigned to okay, it's gonna happen, and there's always something you can do.

**Sharon Hurley Hall 17:54**

And so that leads in very nicely to is there any message that you would like to leave our listeners with in relation to this whole climate crisis, climate change issue.

**Stacey Alvarez 18:03**

I would like to leave the message that there's always something you can do, and no act or thought or positive intention is too small, or is too meaningless, because that will plant the seed to wider action and awareness. So don't think you're powerless, you have more to contribute and to give than you think. So that's, that's my message has fantastic.

**Lisa Hurley 18:26**

Okay, so last question is, what is next? I mean, often when Sharon and I have an episode I ask her, wagwan? What's upcoming, what is happening? What can your fans and followers look forward to? Where do you want them to connect with you? Just let us know.

**Stacey Alvarez 18:45**

I have my website, there's that I'm building and then we can put that in the show notes as well. I'm going to be encouraging some more interaction with my followers in terms of any guest blog, there'll be, you know, creating my content, but also reaching out to see because we're all in this together on this journey. So you know, who can I how can I highlight to as I call the heroes of sustainability, in your own small way, who are the unsung heroes of sustainability that are making this world a better place? That's what I'm, that's what you want. That's what I want to highlight.

**Lisa Hurley** 19:12

Oh, that is wonderful. I will be following your LinkedIn and your site and your blog and all of your endeavors very closely. Of course. So thank you again, for educating for taking the time. I actually learned a lot you know,

**Sharon Hurley Hall** 19:31

yes, so really really educational. I know our listeners will enjoy it just as much as we have being here. So that's it for another episode of the introvert sisters with our guest Stacy Alvarez de la Campa, talking all things sustainability and climate change. Again, Stacy, and thank you for having me. The way the internet sisters, thank you for listening and we'll catch you on the next episode. Bye You've been listening to the introvert sisters loved what you heard. You can catch all our episodes on Apple podcasts, Spotify, SoundCloud, and all other major platforms. Subscribe rate and write a review. Find us online at the introvert sisters.com or follow us on Instagram and Facebook at the introverts sisters. See you next time. Peace