

Joy on Paper 2

And yet that simple universal power of goodness lives within us all and it can still be transcended. And we can all bring it forth in an instant, every single human can bring goodness forth. (7:02-7:20)

The world in real life is more manageable than it is as viewed through a screen. In that writing, I encourage people a bit more to turn the TV off, turn the computer off, put the phone away and get out and immerse yourself in the world that's right beside you. (8:30-8:53)

Aiding community cultures, where it's safe for people to be their authentic selves, because when people are their authentic selves, that's when they shine the brightest. (12:21-12:33)

PatZi: Part two of my interview with Kevin Hancock, 48 Whispers from Pine Ridge and the Northern Plains.

Patzi: Well, your photographs are so spellbinding and so evocative, I have a feeling that people, when they look at these photographs, they go through this book and people will go through it many times. It's a type of book that you'll read once, and then you'll leave it on your table, and you'll go back to it and read it again and look at the photographs. I have a feeling people will say, "We need to go out there. We need to see it for real", for people who haven't had the experience of living in nature and really living with trees, for me, it's living with trees.

I grew up in Northern Michigan, as I said, and the minute I got your book and I realized who you were, the lumber business is very dear to my heart. My father actually had a sawmill before I was born, and this is back in the late 50s. He wanted to do a different type of logging. He loved trees so much and he wanted to preserve them, and he wanted to do what is now being called, intelligent logging, taking care of the trees, taking care of the forest. And in Northern Michigan, of course the forest and back in the fifties were still magnificent. Over the years, they've done so much damage to them, but it's coming back, I think, because people have realized the importance of it.

Unfortunately, he had a partner. My father was the one who loved trees and loved lumber and his partner was the one who loved money. His partner ran off to Alaska and in those days that was before Alaska became a state. That was where people who were bad, people ran off to Alaska. And so he lost that business and drove logging trucks, the long logging trucks and he drove those across to Seattle. I was raised around trees, around lumber, and I love the smell of lumber. And you have created a company that is exceptional. It has so many of the values of your company, even universities talk about your wonderful company.

Kevin: Well, I love your love of the forest. Yeah, our company, [Hancock Lumber](#) in Maine is one of the oldest family businesses in America. It goes back to the 1840s. And when you work with nature as we do, it keeps you literally grounded and connected to the way they work and flow. So for example, the primary species of tree that grows on our land and we've worked with is the Eastern white pine, and it takes 80-100 years to grow one. So in the 160

plus year history of our company, we've actually only seen two crop cycles. And as you say and speak about the way we harvest and talk about harvesting is when we go into an area of timber land, we will cut a few of the mature trees. We will leave most of the trees and with the space that's been created by the trees that are removed, the forest, of course, regenerates itself. And it's really a blessing to work with a material that is renewable, recyclable, and biodegradable and completely sustainable. Of all the materials on earth, I think the most environmentally healthy to work with is wood.

PatZi: It's wood! And one of my fondest memories, I was very young. My father, he had friends who were still in the timber business, and they'd say, "Al, could you go take a walk and find us some birds-eye maple?" And my father had this uncanny ability. They have a certain look that my father could walk through a forest and find a birds-eye maple. That was so exciting. Learning about trees is a wonderful way to learn geography, because he would tell me about where this wood would go and then it would be shipped to Italy, and they were going to make it into Finnair for fine furniture. I feel so sorry for the kids today who have all these electronic things that they keep busy with, instead of going out in the woods and just having so much fun.

Kevin: Right. And of course, nature in all its forms is so alluring and charming and literally grounding. But I do find it ironic that for me, growing up in the forest products industry, living in a land filled with forest in Maine, that I ended up becoming somebody that with the largely treat-less Northern Plains and again, the diversity of landscape just within our own country is so amazing. And getting out to reconnect with nature has such regenerative benefits for us all.

PatZi: The photographs in 48 Whispers really show the vastness and the emptiness of so much of the land. And 48 Whispers, I thought was just a great name for the book, because it just tells these little stories, little bits about the land, about the people, I liked particularly the one from Black Elk's great vision. It goes, "*And the oldest of the grandfathers spoke with a kind voice, 'Come right in and do not fear'. And as he spoke, all the horses of the four quarters neighed to cheer me, so I went and stood before the six and they looked older than men can ever be. Old like hills, old like stars.*" The words that you chose to go along with the photographs are really great.

Kevin: I'm so happy you read that passage, Patzi. That was beautiful. Thank you.

PatZi: All of them. I just, I love these stories and I just hope that people will get this book and appreciate what you've put into it because you have put your heart and soul into it. Your love of, I think, just goodness, you've grown up in a company that has always been more than just a company. You've been a caring company. A company that cares about your employees. And I think that's translated into your whole life, that you care and have these wonderful excerpts that go along with the photographs. I just love it.

Kevin: I'm so struck by that take on goodness and I hadn't thought about the book with that theme running through it, but it does. And I would say that really what the book is about is the power of goodness. We're in a world that seems overwhelming with at times chaos, and turmoil and loss and destruction and distrust. And yet that simple universal power of goodness lives within us all and it can still be transcended. And we can all bring it forth in an

instant, every single human can bring goodness forth. It's such a powerful tool that we all have access to.

PatZi: to. I think that your photographs will help people perhaps take that time. More and more as we went through this pandemic, I kept telling people just take time, get away from the news and electronics. Just go outside. If you have a backyard, if you don't have a backyard and if you're living in a city, there's always botanical gardens. It's so beautiful. And you can go there and take a book and sit down and calm yourself down. I think people will find that they will be happier because there's something about being out in nature that just calms your whole body. It affects your heart. It affects your mind. Perhaps when people get this book, they will say, yeah, we need that quiet time. We need that time away from all of the stresses and find some peace. And knowing that at one time when the Lakota roamed, they had all this beauty around them, it touches your heart.

Kevin: Yeah, that's lovely Patzi. And what you spoke to is one of the 48 topics that I wrote about in the book. And that essentially was this, the world in real life is more manageable than it is as viewed through a screen. In that writing, I encourage people a bit more to turn the TV off, turn the computer off, put the phone away and get out and immerse yourself in the world that's right beside you. The world on TV can feel overwhelming. The world right in front of you is almost always manageable and often regenerative and power giving. And I think we can take control again of the energy that's around us by staying localized a bit more with our time and with our energy and really looking at the world right beside us and somewhat said once, if you've read news a week, as much as someone who reads it every day. So it's not about staying aware, we need to stay aware, but we do not need to be overwhelmed by what's happening on a global basis. And this book's really a call for returning to that seventh power that lives within you and getting out into the natural world is a great way to restore that power.

PatZi: Half of my childhood was spent in a hammock tied between two birch trees. That was a glorious time.

Kevin: And, the point is really reviving the idea that giving out in nature is not an old fashion event. I think that when we think about the future of humanity, it is essential for us to re-strengthen our connectivity to the world that we're part of and through that connectivity to really see the dwelling spirit that lives within us all, that seventh power. Each of us is a manifestation of the natural world and as such, to the degree that nature is sacred and holy, so two is every individual human being.

[00:10:32] **PatZi:** I want to tell my listeners, this book is wonderful. It's called [48 Whispers from Pine Ridge and the Northern Plains](#). It's written and photographed by Kevin Hancock. And I wanted to also mention that for anyone in any business, your other book, [the Seventh Power: One CEO's Journey into the Business of Shared Leadership](#). It's a great business book, but it's also a book that explains leadership and whatever you're in, whatever business or whatever community service you do, leadership is the key. If you know how to be a leader, you can make changes and make life better for people. I love what you write. And Whisper 14, I think it is, "leadership restraint is about sharing power, not collecting it", and that's so important. And that's the theme that I think that controls your life, your businesses, this idea that a leader is someone who can share.

Kevin: Yeah, I'm so glad you spoke to that. Absolutely. That's become really my mission at work, to help people understand that leadership is about giving power to others. It's about strengthening the voices of others. It's not about collecting power to the center and putting all the voices in the hands of a few. That may be the old action historic model, but in the Aquarian age, that's not where we're trying to add. Leadership is about making other people's voices stronger and making it safe. Aiding community cultures, where it's safe for people to be their authentic selves, because when people are their authentic selves, that's when they shine the brightest. And that's when they give the most to the world around them.

PatZi: In a company, that's when they're the best employees, when they feel that the boss is there for them and not just for themselves, it's a different kind of work environment.

Kevin: That's such an important point to make. Historically, spirituality and the place of work lived in separate corners. But I'm really trying to break down that stereotype and really bring spirit, bring sacredness back into the plates of work and use the place of work to honor and celebrate the individual human spirit. Not for the purpose of improving corporate performance, corporate performance will improve when people make that culture shift, but that's really the outcome of a higher calling. Work really needs to be a place where adults feel safe to self-actualize to their own voice. So we've really got to look, I believe, at business through a different lens and start to see its higher potential mission and purpose in the 21st century.

[00:13:36] **PatZi:** Thank you so much for being on Joy on Paper. 48 Whispers it's available, I know, on Amazon and Barnes noble, is there a website?

Kevin: There is a website called Thebusinessofsharedleadership.com and both books are available there. That show will live there with all kinds of other resources.

PatZi: It's just so important that people calm down. People need to reach into nature, and they can do it with 48 Whispers because it is an inspiring book.

Kevin: I'm so happy Patzi, that opportunity to be on your show at night for what you do that helps strengthen the voices of others, so many others, myself included. I appreciate you.

PatZi: And the minute I heard there was a lumber man. Yeah, because when you grow up around lumberjacks, as I did, they're special people. I thought, well, this was meant to be. As I said, it's so funny that my book, which is a historical book, the main character is a Lakota young woman who ends up going to England after the Civil War. Exactly what's in your book. I knew these stories because I had been doing this research for quite a few years. So between the Lakota and the lumber, doesn't it smell so good?

Kevin: It sure does. We have coffee cups in our office that say, I love the smell of sawdust in the morning.

PatZi: Oh I need one of those cups!

Kevin: I can get you one. Cause I'm also just so struck by all these pieces we have in common in our upbringing, our love of forests, and then our connection to writing about the Lakota and just our connection there.

Patzi: You know, where I was raised was near Hancock, Michigan. So also when I saw your name Hancock, I mean, I probably would have invited anyone named Hancock on the program. Another connection that we have!

Kevin: There's a lie from the movie, [Jerry Maguire](#). "I had you at hello," Patzi.

Patzi: Well, it's just, it's been a thrill to talk to you. If I ever get up to Maine, I need to come there. The smell of sawdust. Of course, it reminds me of my father. And so I know that it's a special love that people who are around trees and around lumber have for nature.

Kevin: Yeah, I'm really captured too, but your affinity for your other, your upbringing and your memories. 48 Whispers really speaks to that as well as does my time at Pine Ridge. And the point is simply this, we all have a past and that past wears on us, in both loving and at times challenging ways, but our past it's something we always need to reconcile on the way to the future. And again, 48 Whispers is about taking that time to calm down, to be comfortable by yourself, to learn to listen to your own inner voice and to come to understand how doing so embedded, in nature, can really accelerate the power that lives within you.

[00:16:54] **Patzi:** So well said. Well, Kevin Hancock, thank you again for being on Joy on Paper. It has been an absolute joy to talk to you.

Kevin: Thank you Patzi, I loved it.

Patzi: Okay. Bye-bye now. Take care, bye. Wow, what a guy, isn't that fantastic? 48 Whispers is wonderful. I get lost sometimes, I'm looking at the photographs, and I'm looking, and it brings back memories. Bye- bye everyone. Have a great day.