

Inspired Belonging: Diving into the Work of bell hooks

Dan Dissinger: [00:00:00] Alright everyone, welcome to our second episode of Inspire Belonging on Writing Remix.

I'm your host, Dan Inger, and I'm here with my friend, colleague. Everything. Cohost, Stephanie Renée Payne.

Stephanie Renée Payne: I would say my brother from another mother. Absolutely. Because we mm-hmm. We meld in so many beautiful ways and I'm happy to be here.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah, me too. And I'm happy to have this conversation. I feel like, oh yeah.

I know we were talking a bunch before this and everything, and, um, today we're diving into Inspire Belonging episode two, and it's really all about bell hooks. Mm-hmm. And, you know, there'll be information about bell hooks in the, in the show notes and just, I mean, for me, bell hooks scholar, poet. Writer, student of the world.

I mean, everything in, in terms of how I teach, how I am now, trying to also live [00:01:00] and learn my, like, you know, in man, a man in 42 years old with finally coming into understanding, um, love and love ethic and, and how to, you know, do that for oneself and, and for everyone else. But bell hooks has been such an important part.

Of my life at this point. And then we got to go to Bell Hook Symposium we did two years ago. Yeah. Um,

Stephanie Renée Payne: and I feel so privileged that I sat in the same room with her when she was at the new school where I did my undergraduate work. And it was my first, uh, creative writing teaching job. Oh, wow. Um, so she was, um, a scholar in residence and she had a series of lectures and I was able to, um, be at the lecture with her and Cornell West.

Oh. I have never seen anyone out talk Cornell West with bell hooks. She really, um, she holds her own. Um, and you said how [00:02:00] important she is to you. I feel such a personal connection with her because we have so many

intersections. We're both Buddhist practitioners, we're both lovers of Paulo Freire. We are both women who, um, think about, and for bell hooks more feminist theory mm-hmm.

But have a deep sense of caring for men. Mm-hmm. Which we'll talk about in one of her books. Yes, absolutely. Yes. And you can see, and boys, yes.

Dan Dissinger: As you can see, if you're watching this on the video in on Substack, subscribe to the writing remix Substack. Uh, you'll see that we are, we've come prepared with the, our books.

Um, and it's, you know. I feel like it is just gonna be a beautiful, casual conversation mm-hmm. About the, the work that touches us mostly, but also just like why we bring bell hooks into the things we do. And in terms of the idea of inspire belonging, how she, [00:03:00] um, in a way well inspires that idea of community and belonging and love across the board for everybody.

Right. Because it's, um, a huge challenge. Um, as well as my students saw this semester when we were teaching, I was teaching all about love. But, um, you know, I'd like to, you know, Stephanie, you would like to start also about, you know, some of the things that you feel bell hooks has left for you in her work.

Mm-hmm. Or just the work that maybe even just touches you that mostly or just has.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Mm-hmm. There's, there's so much about her work that touches me. Um, her work on community, um, with place. And Origins and being deeply rooted in understanding our ancestry. Mm-hmm. And understanding that there is a before us and there will be an after us.

Um, I feel like those elements are really important, but I'm looking at teaching to transgress, [00:04:00] which was, I have no words. I mean, it, it really did, uh, shift, or, no, actually, I'm not going to say shift. It validated who I wanted to be in the classroom, and it really gave me agency to, um, define love and put love in a s in our syllabus and, and to give it the heft that bell hooks gives it.

That it's, it's a verb that it's, that it's, it's a practice and also. Not to proselytize, but to identify myself as a Buddhist practitioner. And I like to think about education as a practice and not a means to an end. Um, yes, you know, you'll, you'll have a skill set that you can use, but it is a practice that's life long.

And I feel that, um, bell Hook's work, especially in teaching to transgress really [00:05:00] does, um, offer that, uh, conversations that evolve. Yeah. Uh, conversations that, that intersect and, and, and drift away and then come back. Um, also her ideas about theory, you know, uh, absolutely. I have to read this quote. Go ahead.

Because I, you know, uh, forgive me if I get emotional because I felt actually the same way. Um, when I, um. About. So she writes, I came to theory because I was hurting. The pain within me was so intense that I could not go on living. I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend, to grasp what was happening around and within me.

Most importantly, I wanted to make the hurt go away. I saw in theory then a location for healing, and I, I know her words are so beautiful, and [00:06:00] she also talks about how children theorize Hmm, easily because they're not set in patterns of behavior and. We don't need to set things in patterns of behavior, we can have our students theorize.

Right. Um, my, um, oldest son, we called him, um, the master of Why, because everything was why. And he'd theorize, you know, he'd think about it and he'd, he'd he'd, um, think about himself, think about his community at three years old, he's quite a soul. Oh, wow. And decide it's this. Yeah. And this is my path with that.

Yeah. And I think that's what I, I aspire or I practice in the classroom. Yeah. To give students the opportunity to see the world as they see the world. Hmm. Um, make. Calculations, look at what validates those things, what supports those [00:07:00] things, but coming outside of sort of the natural patterns that, um, certain societies build.

Yeah. So transcending those things. Yeah. Pushing against those boundaries.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. And I think that teaching the transgress is if you're out there listening to this and you are a thinking about being a teacher or studying to be a teacher or a teacher, and this book has not come across your in purview yet or in your life or, you know, has not been assigned to you.

This was a, this was something that was assigned to me in my doctoral course. Um, I was very lucky to have that, you know, um, and. It was thank, I was so thankful that that happened. I believe shout out to Dr. Harry Denny, who I believe is still at Purdue right now. Um, but this changed a lot of things for me

because it, it showed me that like, the idea to go [00:08:00] from theory to practice, right?

Like we, I mean, as a doctoral student, you're taught to theorize to think and be in the mind all day long. The thing that bell hooks does so well and is why I think in terms of the belonging thing of what, you know, idea of what we do is that like practice brings us back to the body and the spirit part.

Because like now we're together, we can theorize, we can talk about things, but in the end, we have to practice these things. Absolutely. And if we're gonna talk about, you know, all of the ideas about social justice and everything, how do you practice that? How will it be practiced in community with each other?

Mm-hmm. And that is what bell hooks does. Puts down in this book. And also in terms of also, you know, teaching to transgress, like there's so much action in terms of like, yes, you are going to have to transgress these spaces. How do you do that? Yeah. This is how we do that.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Everything in in this, in [00:09:00] her, um, theorizing in the teaching practice is actionable.

Mm-hmm. That's right. Everything. Yeah. And I think you, you made me remember about her ideas about the classroom as a place of healing. Mm-hmm. Which you don't really hear

Dan Dissinger: No.

Stephanie Renée Payne: But in having the pathway toward theorizing the world as you see it and putting it in practice with dialogue, respectful, loving dialogue.

Absolutely. Where you really listen, not just with your mind mm-hmm. But with your heart. Yes. And with your soul and an inside your body. Yeah. And, um, I think. The sort of embodied way. Mm-hmm. Um, and it's okay to say what's happening. I see that you're tensing up, you know, um, really engaging the full human being.

Yeah. And that's what I think is so special and what I try to bring into my classrooms, and I know we both the practice of, [00:10:00] of building a community Yeah. Where, um, we're thinking of ourselves. Mm-hmm. Um, and we're thinking of others. Mm-hmm. And we're thinking of the world that we live in. Mm. Um, bell uses the word self-actualization.

Mm-hmm. You know? Mm-hmm. That, uh, a lot and teaching mm-hmm. To transgress that as the person that's facilitating, she has to be self-actualize. Oh, yes. And she's offering that space for students to be self-actualized. Mm-hmm. And I think the most, um, validating comment that. I get from my students is I learned a lot about myself.

Dan Dissinger: Yes. That's, that's a common comment that like I get and, and this is not to say that this is easy. Mm-hmm. Like this type of pedagogy. There's nothing easy about this. You know, when I actually was starting to do this, I forgot the main part was to that I [00:11:00] also need to do this work for myself if I'm not doing the work on myself.

That's it. And because that's the failure point. And I've, it took, it's taken a very long time for me to, to be in that much more deeply. And as I was doing that, I'm like, oh, I can take different risks now. Mm-hmm. Right. Or I can like, have the class. The way I really see it in my head because I am doing this much more deeply.

Mm-hmm. And, and that's the thing I always tell when I would run workshops, especially, you know, as a teacher, USC and we're running, you know, um, community workshops and things like that. Mm-hmm. And people are like, well how do you do this? How do you do these? Have these conversations. The difficult conversations, and I've said this on the podcast before, but the main thing is like, you have to be prepared.

Absolutely. If you're not prepared, then don't do it. And it's okay. 'cause no one is, that's the thing, like bell hooks is not putting anyone on blast for not doing this. [00:12:00] She's, 'cause she knows you as a teacher have also been hurt by the institution. And so we have to like accept that part. Mm-hmm. And then.

We can move past mm-hmm. We can move into a new space. Mm-hmm. And that's why I love what she does, because she's like, see what's been, what's been done to you.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Mm-hmm.

Dan Dissinger: Work on that,

Stephanie Renée Payne: that sense of vulnerability mm-hmm. In the space. And I think that is tethered to, um, self actualization that we're sort of modeling.

Mm-hmm. I think for our students. Yeah. Uh, when we don't know, say we don't, that's interesting. We don't know. You know? That's right. I, I feel as educators, we feel that we have to stay in the domain of the known. Yeah, that's right. And we can move outside of that domain to let's discover together. That's right.

And just, you know, talking about the difficult conversations. I like to take difficult out and just say we're having conversations. Yes. [00:13:00] And not, um, offering any kind of, um, good or bad or easy. Or hard. Um, really stripping out all of the conditional pieces. That's right. And giving people a space, you know.

Mm-hmm. Or, or, uh, creating sort of the, um, the atmosphere of sharing. Yes. And I use that word a lot when I teach. Yes. Because we're sharing. Mm-hmm. And I might just say, I'm gonna share this with you. Mm-hmm. And the other piece I think is, for me, it's a sort of disappear and hand over, um, the space of conversing.

Oh, yeah. To the room. Like the remains of the day. I like to become the butler. I like to disappear in a corner. Right. Yeah. And, and some, sometimes I'll even slip out. They won't notice. Like when I hear the chatter getting really high, my always walking outta my classroom.

Dan Dissinger: Because they have to. Sometimes I'm like,

Stephanie Renée Payne: and I love coming back in and they don't notice I'm back in.

That's right. Yeah. So, so just [00:14:00] create, and I think that comes with building community, as you and I have done in some of the workshops that we've worked with, and that is touching each other's humanity.

Dan Dissinger: That is, yeah. And that's a big, I feel like the one thing that she says in teaching a transgress in the beginning, um, uh, in the chapter on engaged pedagogy and, and again, like engaged, right?

That's the word. Verb action. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. You know, she says like, um, when education is the practice of Freireedom, students are not the only ones who are asked to share, to confess. Engaged pedagogy does not seek, uh, seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow.

Absolutely. And they're empowered by the process. And that, to me as a teacher mm-hmm. Was very huge. It was like, oh, like. Not that I didn't know. I had more to learn and, and grow. But academia, you know, capital A academia [00:15:00] really does this thing. I feel like that trains you to do something and then goes, all right, now, write papers for the rest of your life.

Write this book. It's not that you have nothing left to learn, but you know everything, you know more than these people in this room. And that's not true that at all.

Stephanie Renée Payne: No, I don't, I do not believe in this. The, you know, the stage on the stage. No, no,

Dan Dissinger: no, no, no, no, no, no.

Stephanie Renée Payne: I, in, in fact, you know, I give, I try to give students back language.

Mm-hmm. I'll say, this is how I say it, as in my body, in my generation. Can someone say it better? You know? That's right. Yeah. There you go. And, and, and just, just giving them agency in, in language. Um. I see you thumbing through all about love, all about, this is my copy. You know it because you've, you've been teaching it for the last couple of years.

Mm-hmm. And, and I want to ask you about that experience. Oh.

Dan Dissinger: It's been like I first read it, um, [00:16:00] and was blown away by the book. So I never really teach anything. I have to read it, obviously, you know, sometimes there's some literature I might go, I wanna read this book and I'll throw it on my syllabus, like when I was a literature teacher, but because I was like a crazy adjunct that just wanted to like, read as much as I could.

Uh, but all about love was, um, something that I really wanted to read, especially after I read The Will to Change, which this is, if there's men out there read this book, anyone read this book? And truthfully, I I never really hear anyone talk too much about this book you and I have. We have because we, this one is great.

We came to this when

Stephanie Renée Payne: we were thinking about this episode, and I think maybe you said to me or I said to you, do you know the Will to Change? And

we were like, yes. It's such a, a prescient book that we talked about because I think, you know, um. Bell really understood a completeness in how we mm-hmm. How we learn.

Like I, I think about Carl Young, you [00:17:00] know? Mm-hmm. And the shadow and the light.

Dan Dissinger: Yes.

Stephanie Renée Payne: And if she's looking at feminism, she's looking at, um, masculinity as well. That's right. So she's always, you know, um, looking at the shadow and light parts That's right. Of what we, where our pedagogy lies. Yeah. And, and I just feel like this book is so needed in this particular time, in our history,

Dan Dissinger: that that book, the Will to Change really cracked me open as a man, and especially someone who has, and I think on this podcast, especially writing remix, but with Inspire belonging, there things that, you know, I've learned about myself that I'm, I'm open to, you know, sharing and I've shared in my classroom, and students have, you know, definitely have been very grateful.

Mm-hmm. But like, learning things about myself, like, you know, having BPD and mm-hmm. Like borderline personality disorder. Mm-hmm. And it sounds scary. It can, you know. Mm-hmm. But it's. This cracked me open being like, there are reasons for some of this, but there are also ways to learn about myself so that I can do the [00:18:00] other part, which is practice a loving ethic of myself.

Yes. So that I can practice a loving ethic for people around me, my partner, my parents, you know? Mm-hmm. You know, other people, even if it's from a distance. Yeah. Which it has to be sometimes.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Yeah. Yeah. And understanding that, and I, I just, I have to say, I feel so touched by that, you know, because sharing that loving practice is also modeling.

Yeah. Um, and listening and, and letting each person have their say. There's no judgment in that. There's no direction. There's just, you know. Tapping the self and understanding, um, who you are and how you move in this world and what you wanna contribute to this world.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. I think like, you know, it's one thing that, you know, contributing to the world and, and how you want to, I think with teaching all about love in the classroom, it let my students take a step back mm-hmm.

And be like, okay, but how can, what kind of, what kind [00:19:00] of life do I wanna live? Because like, even now, like I'm, I'm asking that question like, what kind of life do I wanna live? Right? Uh, how do I wanna live? You know, and you get caught up in the things that you feel like you're supposed to be doing all about Love, really, like goes, centers you.

And you know what, reading all about love and bell hooks more. You see pedagogy, do your press do the same thing? Absolutely. Because it's not so much of going, everything else around you is messed up. It's like that's messed up. But you are part of that. How will you center yourself first? Mm-hmm. Are you gonna be able to do these things?

'cause if you can't, then you can't ask

Stephanie Renée Payne: others, these other people to do that. Or have an expectation Exactly. For something that you're not in practice with,

Dan Dissinger: which is all about love. Like if you can't practice love of self mm-hmm. You want the love back. Mm-hmm. But you don't understand the action of it.

Mm-hmm. And, and she says in the intro, which is like, um, taught to believe that the mind, not the heart is the seed of learning. Many of us believe that to speak of love with any emotional [00:20:00] intensity means we will be perceived as weak and irrational. And that is purely kind of the, like when I teach this in the last couple semesters has been for students being like, oh, I've gotta pull myself outta my head.

How much am my head? Am I and replacing them. In the body and in, in the body, in the spirit, the, and even in the spirit. And I tell them like, it's however you wanna take it.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Whatever, yeah. Whatever it is. But

Dan Dissinger: just know that there's something mm-hmm. That you have to think of yourself maybe a little, that there's, there's things around you don't understand.

And it's okay to be it Yes. And be like, there's a magic in the world, however you wanna place it. Mm-hmm. That has changed a lot of students' perspective on themselves and even how they want to see their lives after graduation with Absolutely. This crop of students I've had. Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. So, yeah.

And I,

Stephanie Renée Payne: I think it also, it offers students the opportunity to understand their own humanity. Mm-hmm. And I feel like that sometimes gets pulled out [00:21:00] of, of the learning space. Oh yes. That, that your human qualities mm-hmm. And who you are and what kind of, uh, learner you are and what kind of, um, citizen that you are.

Yes. And what's important to you and why is it important to you, that sort of self query, um. That I think bringing back into the writing classroom is so valuable. Yeah. Because students are sort of, you know, thinking about, um, re and, and, and, uh, bell Hook's engagement in that space. They're so used to being, uh, repositories for other people's ideas, and they don't get synthesized within the human being that they are.

Yeah. And I love the idea of understanding with the heart because we do. Mm-hmm. We understand with the heart Yeah. What's important to us.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. I've seen a change with more, introducing more bell hooks in my class. Mm-hmm. [00:22:00] Like just bringing in all about love has changed the course dramatically. Mm-hmm. Um, sometimes I'll teach like a chapter teaching a transgress prior to doing this.

Yes. Like engage pedagogy and the intro. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Um. But when I introduced all about love, it pretty much shifted the entire course. Mm-hmm. Because everyone, we took about six weeks to read it. We read it very slowly mm-hmm. And looked at every chapter and really dug into it. Mm-hmm. And students were so

Stephanie Renée Payne: much richness that, that, yeah.

Especially thinking about Bell's idea of self-actualization that really prompts you to look in the crevices and, and all the spaces that we tend to overlook when we become that repository, you know,

Dan Dissinger: and it gives them a way to commune together. 'cause something that's weird that makes sense about a writing class is the workshops.

Yeah. And some students can be very talkative and some students, [00:23:00] you know, when they speak, sometimes get misunderstood in the way they're speaking with their colleagues. Mm-hmm. What I'm starting to see is, like in the last couple semesters with this book, um. And then I coupled this with Exile Pride by Eli Claire, which everyone should read.

Great book. Amazing book. Eli Claire is an unbelievable writer and poet as well. Mm-hmm. Um, and this book, and that book gave students like a pause when they were in workshops with each other. 'cause some people are very talkative. Mm-hmm. So sometimes students in the past, I felt like the other students became very apprehensive to be in workshops with mm-hmm.

With those students. But what's happening is like these books have been showing students like, oh, that's just who they are. Exactly. And they're not doing anything other than trying to help me. Mm-hmm. And they also want to be seen. Mm-hmm. And they want to be heard. Mm-hmm. And so like it's, it made the classroom.

Easy. Like it just gave a re like [00:24:00] an ease and students felt that they'd walk in. We weren't afraid to say how we were feeling. Mm-hmm. Like that was one of the rules in my class. Like, if we ask how you're feeling, you need to tell us the truth. Yeah. And they would do that and we would be like, okay, let's, let's talk about that.

Mm-hmm. See, bell hooks is like just having her work in the classroom already starts to com community building. It really does. Yeah.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Because that space of vulnerability, and I think we both have the practice of. Beginning with checking in with one another in an, in an honest, sincere way. Mm-hmm. Um, and that builds community.

If I'm exhausted right now. Yes. Which I'm sure you hear that sort of starts this, um, uh, engagement. Yeah. But I think what's really been important to me is to not be the all, you know, knowing or or [00:25:00] wrong, wrong language. I think, um, having. I wanna have more transparency in my own sense of how I ebb and flow as a human being.

I'm a very optimistic person, as you probably know, but I have my down points too. Oh, yeah. And, and I, I, and what's appropriate, you know, have begun to, to be more open with my students. Mm. Oh yeah. And to help them to see that I'm a human being just like they are. Mm-hmm. Um, in ways that tie into the, the literature that we're sharing with them.

Yeah.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. And how's that changed your writing, the writing projects? Because even in time, in terms of pedagogy, right? Mm-hmm. Yes. We can talk about books, we can talk about this like exactly how, you know, do opening. This, opening the classroom up in that space of vulnerability. Mm-hmm. How, what kind of impact [00:26:00] has it had on your writing projects or the students even approach to writing?

Right. Mm-hmm. Because like it's, it's very difficult to get students to want to do it.

What kind of Yeah. 'cause

Stephanie Renée Payne: it's, it's, it's, it's intimate. Yeah. And, and it feels private and maybe they don't know how to get there. Mm. But I think the word engagement has been really important in Bill's work. That what, what we read, uh, re's work, what we read, um, and practice. Yes. I tell them I've been writing for 30 plus years and I'm still practicing.

Oh

Dan Dissinger: yeah.

Stephanie Renée Payne: And I tell them I have no. Um, expectation for you to master this practice in this three months, this 15 weeks. So I want you to understand we are practicing together. Yes. And I tell them that the most important space that I'm going to see is how they view their practice. Hmm. So [00:27:00] after each project, they have to write their own self-evaluation.

And it is amazing, Dan, how it is connected to my assessment of their work. Hmm. They see. Um, their practice, they see where it needs to grow. They see where it's, it's beginning to blossom. And I tell them that's, I'm looking at, what I really wanna see is, is your practice not necessarily the finished product, although that's important, but your practice is what's really important.

And that sort of takes the pressure off of, I've gotta have this. That's right. Perfect product. Right. And many of them have told me, I never thought of writing as a practice. You know, I always thought of it as getting this product done. Wow. And if it wasn't perfect, I went through this whole thing of anxiety.

And so it just took that kind of pressure that you had to present this perfect product and, and. What has been happening is they've become more invested in their own writing. Oh, wow. That their writing is more [00:28:00] polished, you know? Yeah. Um, and that they're, they're, they're, and they're engaging deeply in their own ideas.

Oh, wow. 'cause I think that piece of it has really been important when you are working on self-actualization that, um, bill Hooks really, you know, talks about so much and, um, and teaching to transgress, which I share with them, and they understand that I wanna be a better person. Yeah. I'm okay with how I think.

Yeah. One student just said to me, I never thought that the way I thought was important enough to put in a paper.

Dan Dissinger: Wow. Okay. So the practice part, right? Mm-hmm. And what your students said goes so hand in hand with how, you know, in the first chapter of all about love. Mm-hmm. Gee, you know, bell Hook starts talking about.

We have to find definition. Yes. So she goes to Eric Fromm and she goes to m Scott Peck's book The Road Less Traveled. And you know, that book [00:29:00] changed my life. That's a book that's on my list. I have not read that book yet. I've read that book

Stephanie Renée Payne: as a, as a, as a girl I have to read. And it changed my life. I have to read it.

Mm-hmm.

Dan Dissinger: But, um, yeah, so, and, and she uses that and she all references Eric from a lot. Mm-hmm. And I have his book as well. Mm-hmm. Um, but one thing that was interesting about what you said and what your students said and what my students. I've seen what with my students is that how she goes into this idea how, um, Eric from Echoes, you know how Scot works, he echoes Eric from, and he defines will, uh, the will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own and another spiritual growth.

That's love, right? And then he goes further and says, love is as love does, love is an act of will, namely both in intention and in action. So, you know, he's like, we choose to love. We don't have to love and see, this is interesting because students are, in a way, obviously in USC, they're forced into [00:30:00] writing one 50, right?

Three 40. Right? They don't really get a choice of taking it. But if I, if I can accept that part, right? And I have accepted that all 1 0 1 classes or whatever are these GEs. So how can I then go into that space and go. What kind of choices can they have?

Stephanie Renée Payne: Yes. That's it. Right? That's it. And they, how can we enrich this experience for our students?

And I'm sure you get the same comments. Many students tell me that this was much more than what they thought it was going to be. Yes. And that many say like, this was the best experience I've had in a classroom. Yes. Um, at USC. Yes. Um, because I think being intentional about, um, acceptance, as you said first, that mm-hmm.

They're forced into this space, but how can we enrich that? That's for them. And I, I feel like the guidance of bell hooks has really been, um, just really vital. I, I, [00:31:00] um. I think when I started teaching at USC, after, you know, many sort of teaching adjunct gigs on the East coast as we, we both had that experience, huge experience.

Um, it felt like settling a little bit for me mm-hmm. To be at, at that, in, at the institution that we both are at now. And that's when I had to come back to Mm. Um, teaching to transgress because I really understood, yeah. I need to enrich their experience. That's right. I, I have to give them something that they can take with them and continue a practice.

Yeah. And continue to grow and continue, like to not just seed as we do for students, but to get them to self seeded. That's right. And make that a practice.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. And I think sometimes, like, I know Dr. Kynard Dr. Carmen Kynard, I had her on the podcast early on. Mm-hmm. Um. Actually funny, amazing professor. Amazing [00:32:00] professor in person.

I don't dunno her changed my life. Her, she changed, changed my life, introduced me to Elaine Richardson's work. Mm-hmm. And then I saw Elaine Richardson at Seas. He did a workshop and we'll have her, I'll have her on the podcast soon. I, I feel like it's gonna happen. 'cause I talked to her about it and it will happen since then.

It's been difficult. We'll affirm,

Stephanie Renée Payne: you know,

Dan Dissinger: um, but manifesting, but she can, Dr. Kynard said something in the episode I did with her, um, when she's like, I asked her, I'm like, you know, students ask me this. They're like, how? Or other professors, or we deal with this idea of like, our class is the way we run it.

We run it this way. Um, what happens when I go into another student class, professor's class and they don't do it this way, and nar Dr. Kynard is, like, it's not my job to, to prepare you to be abused, basically. That's like kind of what she was getting at. And she basically said that I don't have to, and also you don't have to take classes with those teachers.

Mm-hmm. Choice again with bell hooks is [00:33:00] that this, these are choices. Like these are intentional moments that like, and, and telling my students like, you can make choices. These are your choices. You're an adult. You get to choose this. So if you want to have, uh, as, as loving, as a, as an experience at USC and in your education as you want, then you can do that.

It might take a little longer than the four years. Well, who cares? Then you do that as long as you leave and you feel nourished and fulfilled. Mm-hmm. You know, and, and that is, was something that they never thought about that could happen

Stephanie Renée Payne: again. You know, not here in the heart space, but here in the mind space that you could have different experiences and that they have choice and they have agency.

Yeah. And I think that's really important too. Yeah. I, I think, um, bell Hook's connection to Paulo Freire's work. Mm-hmm. Uh, in that sense of agency. Has really opened my students, at [00:34:00] least I've had that experience to their own sensibility about their learning process. Yeah. Uh, what they're learning, how they want to learn.

Mm-hmm.

Dan Dissinger: Mm-hmm. Yeah. They, you know, bell hooks said, she says in all about love, like, basically she says like, you, there's no, you can't be abused and be loved. There's no love in abuse. Like those two things. She's like, they don't go together, so don't, and, and so like when students saw that, I thought it would've been a moment where they'd be like, oh yeah, that's, uh, I get that.

But that actually to them was very mind blowing.

Stephanie Renée Payne: That's so interesting

Dan Dissinger: because, and I get it now because I think we get very, we consent to a certain level of abuse. Mm-hmm. And, you know, even in teaching a transgress, she says in the beginning about, you know, the, the way in which the, um. The professors are, are seen as these objects by the institution to be abused.

Mm-hmm. Or that their [00:35:00] mental health and their physical health, their emotional health does not matter. Mm-hmm. As long as you can go into that classroom and you could perform your job, we don't care. And so like we've consent, you know, at a certain level, you know, sometimes consent to a certain level of abuse, so then we will consent to other levels of abuse.

Right. From governments, from mm-hmm. You know, from partners, from friendships. Yes. From, from anything. From ourselves. Yeah. And I know that's when I was finally able to open my eyes that there were certain things I was doing to myself that I was like, I. I can't do this, I can't. Mm-hmm. I, what am I doing?

Mm-hmm. You know, and so, you know, she says that, you know, the idea of the, um, intellectual questing for Union of Mind, body, and Spirit had been replaced with notions that being smart meant that one was inherently emotionally unstable, and that the best in one's self emerged in one's academic work. And then she goes on to kind of talk about Right.

What academics can like mm-hmm. The ter [00:36:00] the level of mm-hmm. What, you know, um, I don't even know word I'm looking for, but like abuse that they can give and take. Exactly. It doesn't really matter Exactly. As long as you, you perform this factory like Job and Hooks really opens you up to that and goes, she

Stephanie Renée Payne: really does.

You gotta look at this. Does. And I think it, it, it reminds me, uh, again, in the opening of the book that we are so featuring today. That's so wonderful. I know it's just beautiful. But, um, pat. The classroom can be a place of healing. Mm-hmm. That healing is a part of the, the experience of, of, of learning as we're learning self and we're learning the information Yes.

Uh, around the self and, and we're in the writing space. So that's a rich space to sort of tap and I think the vulnerability mm-hmm. To, to display your humanity.

And I don't mean like coming into the classroom telling all of your private business. No, but just, but [00:37:00] just being, because that could be abuse,

Dan Dissinger: that could be triggering as well.

That's its own abuse. Absolutely. But to

Stephanie Renée Payne: be a human being in the classroom, that's really the thing. Um, you know, uh, I teach, uh, a food thematic and we, we do a little bit of work with sustainability and Wendell Berry has been a, a, a big scholar in our writing space and who, um, I think he's still alive. He's, he's probably in his late eighties or nineties, but is a poet and, um, a Lance Stewart and writes beautifully.

And, um, I let myself tear up when I read his poetry out loud to students because it touches me and. I remember early in my career, some 20 years ago, it's been a while, you know, trying to like figure out how to hide that part of myself and just being able to let my students see without any [00:38:00] sense of, of, of, um, offering any explanation for it.

That's right. That, that poetry touches me. That's right. And I've noticed that, again, it's modeling that, that students have felt open to have their own appropriate, I say appropriate because, you know, I feel like, I feel like the classroom is, is, is a sacred space, which Bell also says Absolutely. And, but I also feel like we wanna make sure everyone feels safe.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. Yeah. Um, that's, and I think that's like, making sure that you speak about that in the beginning is always imperative. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. But I think also. Knowing that all those students are going through life, like they're Absolutely, they're individuals living lives. Yes. That you are not living. Yes. And you're living your life.

Mm-hmm. And showing that allows us to have leeway with each other. Mm-hmm. And to see each other's humanity. Mm-hmm. Like, it is not, [00:39:00] that's the difficult part I feel like, especially with higher ed, is that like seeing both student and teacher each other as human beings, they see me as something and I see them as something before we even talk.

Right. And then getting to that point where like we trust each other is very much the goal.

Stephanie Renée Payne: That's the building, that's a community building. I had a student write to me in their final reflection that they felt. They would be safe in the classroom because I send them as we all do a, a note. Mm-hmm.

Introducing myself, but I also send them, uh, a wellbeing, um, uh, survey. Just, just understand, you know, where they are in their own sense of their, their wellness, emotionally, spiritually, bodily. Mm-hmm. You know, and he said that told me you were going to be a human being

Dan Dissinger: just because you cared about the someone's wellbeing.

Stephanie Renée Payne: But, you know, but it [00:40:00] was so simple, you know? And I wasn't expecting that, you know, it's like, oh, she's a person.

Dan Dissinger: And that's the thing. I think people think it's like this huge, I don't wanna say trick, a big gesture. Yeah. I don't think, uh, it's not like that some of these pedagogical things like pedagogy sounds like it's this gigantic thing that you gotta try and figure out.

There's no puzzle. It it, it's like your person. Their person. Exactly. What would you, what? Just, it, it reminds me

Stephanie Renée Payne: of, of Parker Palmer, and I don't know if, if you know his work, um, but he talks about the teachers and undergraduate that really touched him. He said, I don't even remember what they taught me. I, I, you know, he's an older gentleman now and, and I may not even remember the subject, but I know how they made me feel and they made me feel seen.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah.

Stephanie Renée Payne: And they made me feel validated for what I had to say. And, um, I think I've always wanted to [00:41:00] try my best to be that in the classroom, to validate, to see, uh, to hold the space for someone to be vulnerable enough to speak whatever their truth is. Yeah. Uh, mind and heart.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. Yeah. Because I think we. I mean, she says it in all about love in the chapter, but, um, values living by love ethic.

Mm-hmm. Which that chapter really hit. Mm. A lot of students. Great. Yeah. One student in particular who after class came up to me was very emotional and was like finally realizing that when they. That she didn't feel like what she was

studying in, in her major was a love, at a love, a loving place. That there was no love ethic.

Mm-hmm. There was no core of love there. Mm-hmm. And then when she left, she wanted to work in a place that had that, and she saw that it's okay to do that. Like bell hooks taught. Like if you wanna work in a place that have an, an ethic of love, a love ethic, a practice, then it's your prerogative to do that.

Mm-hmm. You don't [00:42:00] have to work and be abused in your work mm-hmm. And feel like you're suffering. Mm-hmm. Or go to a graduate school that's gonna make you suffer. And there's no point. And, and I feel, you know, she talks a lot. I think bell hooks does one thing really well too, is and um, she talks about it in the Will to change, um, about calling out.

Uh, patriarchy and really using the word patriarchy, much like the way Freire uses the word oppressed, oppressor. Right? Like, she's like, we can't just say language mis matters. Misogyny is part of it, but she's like patriarchy, right? Is the system s it's structure, right? Yeah. That's

Stephanie Renée Payne: the, the, that's the systemic part of it.

Yeah. And we have to acknowledge what the structures are. Um, so

Dan Dissinger: she goes into it and she's like, you know, since individuals committed to advancing patriarchy or producing most of the images we see, they have an investment in providing us with representations that reflect their values and the social institutions they wish to uphold.

So she continues patriarchy. Like any system of domination, for example, racism relies on socializing everyone to believe that in all human relations there is an [00:43:00] inferior and a superior party, right. One person is strong, the other weak. Mm-hmm. And that it is therefore natural for the powerful to rule over the powerless.

And that is so big because yet it's, so when you look at how, in my opinion, classrooms mm-hmm. That are abusive, do that. And, and really, and it's not here to like blame anyone in that situation. The socializing part Right. Is the thing that creates that situation. It

Stephanie Renée Payne: creates the hierarchy. Exactly. It creates the stratified system.

Yeah. And, and so many, um, um, subtle ways. Mm-hmm. Uh, and we talk about that, you know, how do you, how we show up. Mm-hmm. One student said to me, I show up with a little iPad and I watched everybody in the room with their fancy max and I felt that I didn't belong. Mm. I mean, just the way that class [00:44:00] and, um, gender and Yes.

Systems of patriarchal, um, um. Dominance. Yeah. I'm gonna try to use language intentionally to, uh, shapes the kind of experiences that our students have. Yes. And I think it's really important for us to sort of break down those barriers. Yeah. And, and again, sort of transcending or transgressing mm-hmm. Um, who we are or where we come from, or what we have or what we don't have.

Our gender identities, they exist. Mm-hmm. We can acknowledge them, but we can also transcend them. That's right. It doesn't mean that we're there to break down the system where there to see each other

Dan Dissinger: That's right.

Stephanie Renée Payne: In that space. That's right. In this moment. Mm-hmm. And be as real and open as we can be

Dan Dissinger: because, and that's the thing, I think, and you, you pair Freire with hooks mm-hmm.

And you [00:45:00] get the humanity part. Mm-hmm. Because a person. That is hurt, hurt. Someone else was hurt. Absolutely. How did what hurt them to get them to a point mm-hmm. Where they're gonna hurt you. And that is, and I tell my students this is the challenge of, of true liberation. True liberation and love is that, and love is to see to people to Yeah.

Are

Stephanie Renée Payne: whatever it is. Exactly. Yeah.

Dan Dissinger: They're wanting that not to blame

Stephanie Renée Payne: anybody for, for having more No. Or having less. Mm-hmm.

Dan Dissinger: But to

Stephanie Renée Payne: just seeing their humanity. You know, you, you talked about, um, how hooks, especially in, uh, all about love brings the, the, uh, the heart into the intellectual space. And I think that when we see one another.

It breaks down those barriers. Yeah. And that's really sort of the choice mm-hmm. That you talked about in deciding that I can love this [00:46:00] human being. They're different from me. Mm-hmm. They have other things mm-hmm. That, that maybe I don't have or I do have mm-hmm. Or whatever it is.

Dan Dissinger: Mm-hmm.

Stephanie Renée Payne: But I can see through that.

Mm-hmm. And I can see their humanity and I can see where, um, where they come from mm-hmm. And how they're formed. Yeah. But I think the most important thing that at least I try to do in my own, you know, little human body and, and to, to sort of, um, model that for students. To understand my own self Yes. And to understand where I come from.

Oh yeah. And to understand my ancestors. That's right. And to understand place. You know, I'm an Angelino who is got the spirit of a New Yorker because I spent most of my adult life there. Um, and understanding how all those things are synthesized together and they create who I am and having acceptance about that.

Yeah. And that practice, that sort of self-actualization that, uh, bell hooks talks about in teaching to transgress, gives students [00:47:00] the opportunity to do the same. That's right. To understand all aspects of who they are and why they are. And I think that's where we began to sort of

Dan Dissinger: Yeah.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Theorize and think about things and, and see things in a more, um, enlightened way.

Yeah.

Dan Dissinger: She, you know, she says something really amazing in the mutuality chapter, the Heart of Love, where she goes, um, the practice of love offers no place of safety. We risk loss her. That's one of my favorite quotes. Yes. We risk being acted upon by forces outside our control. And that, when I

read that, because you read all this other stuff in all about love up to them, and you're like, oh, wow.

And then she, she hits you with that, right? And you're just like, that goes back to the beginning of choice, right? It's like, okay, so if I choose to do this, I have to understand that this is a risk. Like I will be hurt in some way. Either I'll find something out about myself that will hurt, I might hurt someone else in the process.

They might hurt me. And in this process, as I'm [00:48:00] choosing and continually choosing to try to figure this out and create a practice of love, this is a risk I'm gonna take. Mm-hmm. It's a risk you take. It's a risk I take every semester in my class. Yes. Yeah. And it will work, or not work, but, and someone might not like it and, and or, uh, you know, or.

I don't know. Other people might not understand mm-hmm. Why we do this. Mm-hmm. But,

Stephanie Renée Payne: but can I say this, Dan? 'cause I think you really open something up that's really huge. You know, we often say as educators, you can make mistakes. Mm-hmm. But as human beings, we can take risk. Yeah. When we make a mistake, we learn from it and we're better.

Mm. When we take a risk and we're hurt from it, we learn from it. Mm-hmm. And we're better. Yeah. I think the underlying, um, foundation in all of this is, is taking a risk and being hurt. Is not the end of, of everything. No, no. It's, it's, it's a piece of growth that, that it's okay. Yeah. We don't have to hold ourselves so rigidly Yeah.

And so [00:49:00] safely that we don't experience the world. Yeah. Yeah. And we don't experience, you know, the myriad colors of what it means to be a human being. And it means taking risk and being hurt. Yeah.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. And sometimes, yeah. What you

Stephanie Renée Payne: get on the other side of that is so beautiful.

Dan Dissinger: Oh, it is. Because it's even about taking a risk to live your life the way you've wanted to.

Mm-hmm. And I say it that way because I've done a lot of living, um, thinking I'm supposed to be living a certain way. Mm-hmm. Or I'm supposed to be acting

a certain way. Mm-hmm. Or I didn't want to face things, you know, you don't want to face things, you know. And, um, I've done a lot of stuff to, to try and sques all that.

As I've been opening myself up to going, no, I actually enjoy having this lived my life in the way, in this way and, and mm-hmm. It's okay to do that. It's okay to, you know, not partake in [00:50:00] things that, you know, I thought I was supposed to, or like certain things I'm supposed to like, or it didn't bring me joy.

Mm-hmm. It didn't bring me the, the love that I want. But that was a, this is, but that's a risk, right? It's a risk to take, to go. To live life fully the way you always wanted to. Mm-hmm. And be okay with that. Mm-hmm. Because people are also not gonna understand that. Right. You know, and

Stephanie Renée Payne: that that's okay. Yeah.

Not everyone's gonna take your, your journey with you. Yeah. And you know, I, not everyone's meant to take this journey with you. No. Some are, some will walk with you and some are not able to walk with you. Yes. And I think for me, and it's just like making me feel a little emotional, but I wanna tell this story.

Um, I understood that I was this deeply compassionate little girl and, um. Our school, it might've been kindergarten, it might've been first grade. We were taking a, a trip to the aquarium here in Los Angeles. As I said, I'm an Angeleno and it was a [00:51:00] cold, you know, early spring day, and there was a homeless person on the bench right before we pulled into the aquarium using newspapers to sort of keep warm.

And, you know, the bus had slowed down, so everybody was like up at the window. And I saw this man, and it just, I just cried for him. But I noticed that all of the other students were laughing and right away, you know, when you're young, you tuck that back in, you know? So I tried to like hide all of that compassion.

And it's okay to be compassionate. It's, it's okay to feel, you know, and I think. I think just learning that who I am at my core is okay. Mm-hmm. Yeah. You know, and, and that means that when you feel a lot, you know, it takes you down sometimes and you have to sort of go to quiet places. And I think I'm just learning how to be okay with that.

Yeah. [00:52:00] Instead of like putting up walls. Yeah. So I'm trying, you know, to break those walls down. And I hope that my students can see that it's

okay to be exactly who you are, a little quirky, a little this, a little that, or whatever it is that we can step fully in our humanity and we can take those risks, like you

Dan Dissinger: said.

Yeah. Yeah. It's, it's, um, and I think it's something too, I've watched my, um, male students like mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. That has been very difficult because they. Masculinity. It's patriarchy is

Stephanie Renée Payne: patri. The patriarchal is very, um, ideal of, of manhood, you know? Yeah.

Dan Dissinger: I mean, we've read a lot from other books, but I just wanna share this one.

Mm-hmm. This quote from, from the Will to Change, which is Please, yeah. On page 37, if you have the book, um, there use of the word tradition belies the reality that the patriarchal culture, which has socialized almost everyone in our nation to dismiss the emotional life of [00:53:00] boys is entrenched social and is an entrenched social and political system, nor is it an accident of nature.

So the, there's something to be said about the purposeful stripping of emotion and the ability to have emotions, and it'd be okay to have emotions mm-hmm. Um, from young boys Absolutely. Into manhood. Mm-hmm. And I've watched. My friends and I have this journey together. Mm-hmm. Where, you know, they might not see it as much as me 'cause I'm so now like entrenched in studying and looking at it.

Mm-hmm. But they do feel it. Mm-hmm. Um, that in here we are in our forties, like in our early forties. Mm-hmm. And most of us are finally coming to this point where we're just like, you know, it's okay to feel these things. I'm not, I'm not [00:54:00] supposed to be destroying myself at work. Mm-hmm. And, and doing and, and living emotionless and mm-hmm.

You know, it's okay for me to take a break. And I think especially patriarchy chills men, it's like you break when you retire and then you die. That's you, that is your, your purpose on this planet. Mm-hmm. Um. And it's hard because like you want to not face all that and it's very lonely and it can feel like that.

But I'm hopeful now because like I am with the friends that I have, and I'm gonna say it this way, the friends that I have left, the ones that I speak to, those

are the ones we're all there. We have conversations. Sometimes I'll have dinners when I go to New York with people, with some of them. And you know, we have deeper conversations and we can, you can see how both of, we're both like coming to that point.

'cause it hurts. I think *The Will to Change* is one of those books that is, that all men really need that the need to read [00:55:00] it several times to truly see that what you're feeling is valid. But it doesn't have to be permanent. Mm-hmm. And, and it's also, it's not that, right.

Stephanie Renée Payne: You can move through feelings that our emotions are fluid.

It's not that you're

Dan Dissinger: blameless. No. But there's no one to blame. And it's, everyone's been socialized with patriarchy, women and men. And because patriarchy is, is a socialized system, it's a socialization system. Everyone needs to figure out how to like, move out of it. Mm-hmm. Because if we don't, we're just constantly re inscribed through it.

Right. But it's been, um, one of the most important books. I'm that I'm read by her. I'm so happy.

Stephanie Renée Payne: But the only thing I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll say, you said every man should read this. Every man and everybody else should read this. No. Yeah. Everyone, everybody. Because, but, but you know, if you are in the identity of, of male.

Mm-hmm. I, I just think it's the most, especially now important book to sort of [00:56:00] Yeah. Um. Um,

Dan Dissinger: yeah, I mean, I, you open up to every page. I mean, she's like, you know, patriarchy is a system, is denied males access to full emotional wellbeing. Mm-hmm. I mean, she really like sees it and she tells, and the thing about bell hooks, and I'll say this and as an academic writer or someone trying to figure what does my academic voice look like or my scholastic voice, I wanna model it much more after, as I read bell hooks, is because she shares.

Mm-hmm. And she teaches and, and she uses that auto autoethnographic like process. Absolutely. And I love it. And I think it's

Stephanie Renée Payne: important, you know, thinking about our academic voices. Mm-hmm. And I think when I write in that scholarly space. It's disconnected until I build an audience and say, who am I writing this for?

Yes. And who am I writing this to? Then it begins to shift, and then I can bring myself in and then I can bring storytelling in because I think those things are important. Mm-hmm. And I think that, um, [00:57:00] we are reshaping that academic space. At least I see it in other countries, like in the UK and Australia.

And, you know, my scholarship is deeply rooted in indigenous methodologies and that our human self is so much a part how we know Yes. Is as important as what we know. Yeah, absolutely. And, and embracing that. And again, sort of, um, what Bell says about being rooted in the ancestors Ah, yes. And, and in our places of origin.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. And, and that's important. She, that ancestry part. I've had students who, I had one student one year, um. I don't know if I was teaching all about love at that point, but we were talking about, um, something and, and we were, I was also teaching, um, all they would call you by, uh, Tim Hernandez, which if you never read that book, read it.

Tim Hernandez, shout out Tim Hernandez. He's been on the writing remix several times. Amazing. But, um, [00:58:00] he was a white student who was like, I don't know what anything about my ancestry. And I was like, so do your project, you can look it up. Mm-hmm. And just figure out, like talk to people in your family. And I feel like, and for people not watching it as a white male, mean ancestry is not, we, it's not spoken about in the same, in that way of your ancestors or ancestry.

Be like, this is your family, but we are not gonna talk really about where you come from that much and who you are. You know, whatever. It, it's not something. It is not rooted so much in it, but like as I've been growing, as I've been like growing up more and more and like getting older and I'm just like, I wanna know.

Mm-hmm. And I think it, it really is a journey that people need to, you know, go on. And I feel like in terms of when we, when I think of bell hooks and I think of what she talks about in terms of race and gender and everything, in my class we talk about whiteness and also how whiteness has like really done something to like [00:59:00] separate so many people from their roots.

Not so much in a way of like violently, but their in a different types of violence and a different violence. And I've had students go on that journey and be like. Yeah. Who am I? Where was my language? Exactly? Where is that? Where, because we, that it's, if it's not there, it was taken or dropped for a reason.

Mm-hmm. And you have to figure it out and remember it out. Yeah.

Stephanie Renée Payne: I think you and I do a similar project where we mm-hmm. We, we, we use language in the language of, of, of ancestors. Mm-hmm. To, to. To help students to, um, come back to themselves. And that self-actualization Oh yeah. Is really rooted in that ancestry.

Absolutely. You know, oh, you know, I, I never thought about it, but, you know, my mom, uh, was from Appalachian and Appalachian. She used certain words or, you know, Yiddish words would fly into my, my, my, my household. Mm-hmm. Or, or Dutch words. Mm-hmm. You know, or, or, and, and sort of having a deeper sense of [01:00:00] connectivity to the self.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. Which allows for that like, larger network of belonging. Right. Exactly. If I belong to this, then like's networks of belonging for to other people and other cultures. Absolutely. It doesn't have to just even stay within that culture. Mm-hmm. I mean, part of my background is Sicilian, which means mm-hmm.

I'm part of a very like, worldly network. Like when we look at that like it's, and everyone is, so it's interesting to kind of think how we, what bell hooks opens up. Absolute. Absolutely. It's so much wider than just like, it's connecting, isn't it?

Stephanie Renée Payne: Yeah. It, I, I think when we sort of are rooted in those spaces and connected in those spaces, we see how, you know, how many beautiful threads we all come from.

Mm-hmm. But we also see if we, if I think about my classrooms and I think about all the different threats when we do the identity and language project, um, they cross over. Oh yeah. And it's such a beautiful, I I almost say to [01:01:00] them, think of it as a tap through look where all these crossovers are, are, um, and it just brings us back to, to seeing each other.

Dan Dissinger: Yeah. She, she does something interesting. And one of my students said, um, they were so appreciative that at the end of all about love, that she left it in this magical space, this space of spirituality like angels. She,

that's the last chapter of all about love. She talks about angels and my students, like I've never seen an academic.

Book or an academic or scholar land their book and end it in a place like that. They weren't, and it was weird. It was interesting because she said something in the way of like, you don't see scholars speak too much about spirituality and, and other things that can't be proven. Mm-hmm. In the way in which we understand academia, capital a academia works.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. And you know, the, I mean, she even said in the last paragraph, I mean the [01:02:00] last sentence or two, she's like, when angels speak of love, they tell us it is. Only by loving that we enter in earthly paradise. They tell us Paradise is our home and love our true destiny. There. There hasn't, I've read Bourdieu, I've read Foucault, I've read.

They're not ending in a place like that.

Stephanie Renée Payne: A place of promise.

Dan Dissinger: Exactly. And love and not even, and, and also like humanity. And humanity. That's a human way of like leaving, being like a model

Stephanie Renée Payne: because we are all of those things. Yeah. And I think that's what's really important to give. I feel like sharing back to students that you are not just this education.

Yeah. There's so much more to you that, that you layer this mm-hmm. Uh, with all of the other things that you are. Mm-hmm. Absolutely. And with that layering comes this spectacular, um, work in progress Hmm. That I'm still engaging in. Hmm.

Dan Dissinger: Excellent. Wow. So I think [01:03:00] we can like, almost like stop it there for now.

I mean that was, uh, I mean everyone, I think you could see the excitement that bell hooks gives, you know, uh, any conversation. Mm-hmm. And, um. I encourage everyone to read as much bell hooks as you can possibly read. And you know, um, I wish they had the Bell Hook Symposium. I know there was like things in terms Yeah.

There were some funding issues. Some funding issues to honor

Stephanie Renée Payne: her memory. Yeah. But

Dan Dissinger: I am so grateful to have been there. Mm-hmm. When we were able to go there. It was lovely. Believe it was two years ago. I can't believe it was like two summer ago. I can't,

Stephanie Renée Payne: it was such a, um, beautiful spiritual Yes. Edifying, yeah.

Space.

Dan Dissinger: And the university was one of the most, it was gorgeous. Beautiful. It a beautiful Kentucky, you know, it was a beautiful landscape. Diversity. Yeah. Yeah.

I encourage everyone to read any bell hooks. Mm-hmm. She's written poetry, she's had memoirs. She's had mm-hmm. You know, all these academic books. She's done I think, what, [01:04:00] three books on Love? I think it was, she has like, it was like a series. I don't even

Stephanie Renée Payne: wanna say because I feel like I'll miss something. I know.

I'll, she, she was a prolific writer. Absolutely. Um, so many, many things and interviews. I mean, you can catch

Dan Dissinger: everything she's done. Yeah. She's, she was amazing. And, um. Yeah. Well, thank you for teaching this, Stan. Oh, I'm looking forward to next semester teaching it. I cannot wait. Um, but everyone, thank you so much for listening to the second episode of Inspire Belonging on Writing Remix.

Um, check out the notes. There's gonna be some notes here, uh, in this episode, the books that we've talked about, special quotes from the episode. Um, follow writing remix across social media at Writing Remix Pod. And, um, you should follow writing remix on Substack because there'll be some extra content.

This video if you're listening. Um, and if you want to see the full video, you can check out the video on Substack and there'll be the. Note and, um, special, uh, episode specific reflection questions, which [01:05:00] you'll also get on Substack and Medium as well. Um, and check out our workshop.

Stephanie Renée Payne: Yes,

Dan Dissinger: yes. Our Inspire Belonging Workshop, which is amazing.

And if I, you know, do say so myself, but you can, you know, check it out. The link would be right here at the bottom in the notes, and, uh, you can reach out to us. Um, there'll be contact information to book us for any sort of workshop situation. Um, large groups, small groups, virtual. Mm-hmm. I mean, we, you know, we carry this message with us, like, and we are absolutely dedicated to bringing people into these spaces.

Mm-hmm. Yeah. So everyone, thank you so much. Thank you. And we'll see you on the next Inspire Belonging episode. Thank you.