Tommy: Welcome to the Recovery 2.0 online conference. I am your host, Tommy Rosen, and today, I am delighted to be speaking with Debra Silverman. Debra is a psychotherapist, teacher, and astrologer, specializing in emotional wisdom. She is a recognized expert on esoteric astrology and has developed a unique psychological spiritual model for self help based on the four elements, astrology, psychology, and various metaphysical disciplines.

For the past 33 years, Debra has practiced, traveled, and lectured internationally. She's had the pleasure of doing readings for many celebrity clients, including Sting, Madonna, Marianne Williamson, Debbie Ford, Deepak Chopra to name but a few. Debra has, also, recently put out a book called The Missing Element. I gobbled this book down like it was a piece of chocolate cake. For those of you who know how much I love chocolate cake, that should be a resounding statement that you need to go out and get this book.

Debra, I want to thank you so much for lending your voice to the Recovery 2.0 conference. Welcome.

Debra: Thank you, Tommy.

Tommy: Yes. Debra, I’m serious. I picked up your book. Now, I know you personally, and you've been a very important figure in my life, more so than the time we've had an opportunity to spend together. In a disproportionate way, you have so been a figure in our lives. May we talk about some of that stuff as we get into this. When you put out your book, I knew that I had to read it, and it was the easiest thing to read, and it was thrilling to me. I want to talk mostly about that today. Okay?

Debra: You're all in.

Tommy: Okay. Good. We're going to go through themes that jumped out at me in this book, because so many of them have to do with the disconnectedness of our society. Your book really does, for me, it answers a lot about how we got here. On any given day, I wake up, and I'm like “How did we get here? My God. What had to transpire for some of this weirdness to take place?”

The first thing I want to talk about today, Debra, is the wisdom of the elders. You speak about it in your book, and you talk about that that's one of the areas where we've gotten off track, in the way that we treat our elders. Can we start there and speak a bit about that?
Debra: It's so funny, because just a few days ago, one of my elders, who was a mentor about the four elements, just passed away. Her name was Dedda, and she was 95. She lived with the Hopi Indians. She spent many years, the only white woman to ever receive the prophecy from the Hopi Indians. She, then, transferred that ... I was very young. I was in my 20s, living in LA, going to graduate school, and she took me under her wing. She saw something in me. Here, it was, now, how many years ago, like 40 years ago, and she still is so dear to my heart, so, when you speak of elders, to see and remember her relationship with the Hopis and that they had given her a prophecy and they had talked about these dates, that there would come a time right now, which she had ...

One of the things that they said that was fascinating to me, because she was never allowed to record what she said from the Hopis or get paid for it. That was the agreement. They took her, and they lived with her for a while. They told her she could tell the prophecy, and so I sat in on many, many times for telling the prophecy, so I got downloaded. One of the things, this was back in the 80s they said, was they would know when the later days were here, because there would be this big giant spiderweb in the sky, which we had no idea what it meant. Think about spiderweb, a web around the world. It said there would be a spiderweb around the world that was going to connect us. We didn't know what it meant. Here it is now, 2016, and that was one of the signs of the later dates.

The elders were brought to me by Dedda. Just saying her name, I get the willies. She was such a wise being, and her gift was, one of the gifts that she got from the prophecy was there was this time in ... I call it her story now. It's no longer his story. We're changing it over to her story. There was a time in the story of mankind, or humankind, where we would turn around this corner, and, as we enter this corner, we would enter into this really chaotic state where we would have to dismantle what was behind us to prepare for what was in front of us. There was this huge emotional gauge, like a huge emotional ... They call it, in esoteric law, the second initiation, where the emotional body gets so distraught, which is where addiction comes in, and emotional therapy and psychology, this obsession we have with trying to figure out what's wrong. That was a sign of the later days, that the emotional pitch would reach such a large emotional pain state level of consciousness that we'd have to seek people like you and me and say "Help!"

This was the prophecy of the elders, that there would come a time when we'd reach this level where everything would look wrong, and, boy, does that ... All you got to do is watch the election, you're like "What is wrong with us?" but there's nothing wrong. It's just like the analogy I use is if you saw a woman giving birth and you never saw it before, you'd be in the room going "Are you kidding me?" First of all, what's that thing on her tummy. That's just so wrong. Now she's screaming and yelling. Everything about this is wrong. Then, she's yelling to the pitch ... We're hearing, now, mother earth yelling, but, at the end of the story, out came a miracle. We are at a critical moment in history, or her story, where the feminine principle, why it's her story, is really coming where the feminine respect for the emotions, but we are not well suited, because we have no role models. We have no elders. There's so few elders to say to us "Kids, we told you about this."

Wouldn't that be so cool, if there was some reference that we had in our zeitgeist that said "Don't worry. This will happen. Keep yourself settled into your practices," which you, Tommy, know so well. What do we do when we're upset? How do we handle stress?
That's what my book is all about. The crisis of the human condition and who has the wherewithal to say "It’s okay. Settle down. I promise you got was not playing with dice’ said Einstein.” This is not a mistake, but it sure looks like one. When you watch a guy with the hairdo and the orange skin, you’re like “Are you kidding?”

**Tommy:** Yeah. It's a weird time. It feels, especially in light of what you just said, it's important to mention, and I'm sure you realize, that we're in the middle of the largest opioid epidemic in our country's history, so painkillers, narcotics. People are taking more painkillers than ever before. More people are dying from taking painkillers than ever before. It makes perfect sense in light of your perspective on this.

**Debra:** It's the same thing. I live in Colorado, where marijuana is like ... People are allowed to consider that … Not that something's wrong with the right dosage of anything, but there's such a numbness. There's such a disengaged, disheartened level of … In the Hopi prophecy, the way they described us, before the edge, they have a line in time where we once lived on the earth. The visual they had of how we look was we were a stick figure with a feather in our head and a little stick that had like a cane to the earth, so we were connected, mind and body, with the heavens and the earth. Then, the edge comes, this line drawn that shows the marker [inaudible 00:07:22] change happen. Then, we become a stick figure where the head is not connected to the body, and there's no more feather, and there's no more cane. We're just these floating things, so we cut off.

That’s what is occurring with these painkillers. We don't know how to integrate, so we try to disengage. We try to break apart. Then, you and I get to say to people “Don't worry. Be happy. Come back. It’s okay. This is just a moment in time.” Really, are we going to get ourselves so numbed out that we don't have faith anymore. One of the things I love about you, Tommy Rosen, is the level of your faith, the practice that you do in your meditation, the practice you do with your yoga. What else is there but that? I don't know how we forgot about that.

**Tommy:** Yes. What I would say, from one perspective as I look back on my own faith, I just have suffered so badly behind my own ego. I mean, I just have suffered so badly that ... Thank God, I've had teachers and mentors and other people who said "Listen, I love you, anyway," like "Yeah, you're being an asshole, but I love you, anyway." You know? I'm so blessed to be, to have somebody ... My point in saying that is to say I've come through terrible things. I've seen that it's possible to change. I've seen that it's possible to come from an enormous deficit, so it makes sense to me to have faith. Does that make sense to you?

**Debra:** Yes.

**Tommy:** In your book, you wrote “The ego is the shortest perspective.” I just loved that. I love that. Talk about that, please.

**Debra:** Well, what you just said. Pain, in my book, the words are "In the soil of pain, wisdom is growing."

**Tommy:** Yes.

**Debra:** We use … Every one of you listening and everyone that's interested in recovery, it's because you hit the pain there- … I love in the twelve step program, how you wait to get to the bottom, and that's when you trust someone will change. We don't learn without crisis.
We don't learn without pain. The ego loves to be comfortable, but it totally is full of shit. Can I swear on your [inaudible 00:09:30]?

Tommy: Sure.

Debra: So the point is your ego at some point grabs you, and it throws you against the wall and says “You will go get help. You are addicted. You are broken.” That's when the beginning happens. I hate to say this, but I celebrate pain. That's bad. In my book, crisis, there's a whole chapter on crisis. It is, as we know in Chinese, the word crisis just means opportunity. They don't have the word crisis. What do we do when we're in pain? The planet right now is so scared. It makes me scared for the millennials, these young people that are watching. How are they supposed to have faith with what happens and you do and people love you. Those were elders, and elders don't always have to be old. There are some people that you could look at you at say, “Tommy Rosen, you're so lovable even when you are all screwed up.” That's an elder. Don't get attached to elder being these little old people with ... They can show up in young people who have had lots of life times. They come and they speak truth and you are like, “Who just said that?” The people that loved you in the middle of your darkest place, that is what a really good healer does. They see your essence not your ego.

Tommy: Yes. Thank you so much for that. Absolutely. Debra, you spoke in your book about his idea, and I really like this in the context on what you are saying. The idea of being addicted to comfort or convenience that in a sense we think we think we are supposed to be comfortable all the time. What I'm hearing from you is you are giving us all permission to actually feel some pain, that that is actually a good thing.

Debra: What's the alternative? To avoid it with pain meds? To try to take your pain and kill it?

Tommy: It's what we have been told. It's what we have been told. If you are in the unfortunate position of being chronic physical and emotional pain and or then you put your faith in essentially in a medical doctor, the great percentage of whom will prescribe you a pain killer. Not because they are bad people or because they are in the on conspiracy but because that is what they know.

Debra: They haven't done the spiritual work. That's what we have brought to us. The only way to ... I always tell people the reasons why the 12 steps work is because the first step is you know you are out of control and you give your second step and you give your life over to God. What else? There is no other way out of here except to realize you are a spiritual being having a horrible experience as a human. I hate to say that. As soon as you identify with the celebration of the delight of this crazy experience then the wisdom begins. It's only through the people that have been hard warned in this school of hard knocks have graduated are the ones that carry wisdom. I love those people.

Tommy: The bulk of the people that I see really are out in the world are pretending that all is well.

Debra: That's so fake. I was like that. I remember somebody said to me one day, a good elder. She was an elder. she said, “You are so full of shit.” I answered her question and I stopped and went, "I am." She said, “She always are.” I was like, it so hurt my feelings. I'll never forget it. I walked up and I was like, "I'm so full of it. I lie to people. I pretend I am happy and I'm not.” I started getting authentic in my career as an astrologer and being able to act out all the signs.
You have probably seen my funny videos where I have given voice to human nature in the most endearing way. That’s why the subtitle of the book is “Compassion for the human condition.” We’re all screwed up. There is nobody here that doesn’t have something really seriously wrong. That’s why recovery is so exciting because you get sober or you get clean or you start your spiritual practice, did you hear that?

**Tommy:** I did. I love it. Was that on cue? That’s amazing.

**Debra:** I do that all the time.

**Tommy:** I would like to ask you, I would to ask you about two terms. Compassion, which you just mentioned, and humility. I want to try to understand better those terms and how you see them and how they might relate to each other.

**Debra:** Compassion with passion. I think the question you have to ask yourselves watching this is what is your relationship with human nature. Do you look at people and judge them? Do you feel when you hear stories like, Trump is a great fit, but I love to watch Trump not from a political point but just to watch the human nature, the exaggerated version of a human who is uninhibited being his Gemini, by the way, self. Tommy and I are both Geminis. The full moon he has when he was born. Not with judgment I practice watching him from compassion and imagining what is it like to look in the mirror and blow dry your hair like that. What does that feel like as a human to just look in the mirror and then find the heartfelt feeling rather than, “Oh my God. You suck.” No, just stand still.

Compassion for me is understanding that as humans we are all, every one of us have a secret. Something is really not okay about you. You have discovered some part of yourself that you are just embarrassed by where you just found out the other day that your ego just slipped in or your dishonesty and then you have compassion. You go, “Debra Silverman, Tommy Rosen told me I was human.” It’s endearing. I’m in love with humans. I don’t know. I worked for 7 years with chronic mental patients in Los Angeles at a place called Beverlywood. I answered the phone, “Beverly would be sane if she didn’t live here.” I learned so much about people watching the extreme states of human nature at its worst and how much I love the quirky parts. The normal people who were all buttoned up really kind of annoyed me to tell the truth. [crosstalk 00:15:10] passion for that because it’s the normal people that you said say, “Hi. How are you? Fine.”

**Tommy:** Yes. I think in my own experience I think I was probably judgmental as recent as maybe 15 or 20 minutes ago. I recognize about judgment that it doesn't feel good. It doesn't feel good actually to judge others, to be in judgement.

**Debra:** You know what, Tommy. It never stops.

**Tommy:** It’s just part of it.

**Debra:** This is the question I have for you. When you catch it, this is what my book is about, “The Observer.” I watch myself judging people. I do it all day long. A guy comes to the front door and he talked like this. His pants were way too fat and big. They were falling right off. My observer was watching, but I said, “Debra. Pull back to the observer.” The whole book the missing element was about turn on your observer. Fifteen minutes ago, Tommy was judging. He's smiling and the observer is on. The observer doesn't judge. It's so nosy and curious. It's fascinated with you and all your stupid quirks.
Tommy: Yeah, it doesn't judge the way our ego judges.

Debra: Exactly. That's how you know you are there. When you are smiling. When you have neutralized and when you have compassion because you are like, “You know what, be nice.”

Tommy: Now humility.

Debra: That's a harder word. Inherent in humility is humiliation. They are cousins. To be humble, the only thing I know about humility is I am humble enough to know I don’t know much about it. I practice it. In the eyes of God or I think Goddess and God are partners team. I think they are husband and wife. There is a quality for me of being very odd and respectful at the stars and the astrology works. I have been so after ... It’s not your blurbs that said it was 33 years. It’s almost 40 years I have been doing this. I’m so humble at the presence of the powers of creation that’s where I know humility. As far as my ego, I’m not very good at that yet. Yet I look in the mirror and I’m 60 years old and I see all the lines. I recently went and did Botox. No one talks about it. I hated what happened. I had to go get it reversed. I watched my ego. I looked in the mirror and I was like, “What are doing, Debra?” My ego wasn't humble. It was totally ego. I know that humbleness in the presence of God when I am working with a client I’m on my knees. I'm looking in the mirror. I'm not still on my knees.

Tommy: Well, it’s the sacred and the profane all at once within us.

Debra: Yeah, that is such a very funny duality. I seek humility. I long to be in the presence of sacred holy land where I know how to bow my head and be sincere. When it comes it humans and being humble, I think I’m a little arrogant to tell the truth. I think it has something to do with my bloodline.

Tommy: That’s amazing. I so appreciate your humanity and just giving us permission and a safe space to explore these elements within our self. Thank you.

Debra: I think everyone has them.

Tommy: You wrote on this topic of humility. You wrote one of my favorite quotes. You at least expressed one of the favorite quotes of all time. “There are two types of people in this world. Those who are humble and those who are able to be.” I just really, really want to be in that first group.

Debra: How are you doing?

Tommy: I'm in that first group. I'm in the first group because I had my ass kicked. I'm in the first group because the worst thing that I could imagine happening happened. I walked into an institution at 22 years old as a failure, as a drug addict. All my effort and all my stuff and all my everything had come to pass in my life. All my thought, all my brilliant thinking led to this place. It was humiliating at that moment. I was humiliated but I became humble which to me means right sized. I became right sized. I started to learn about myself as a human being as a brother to many. As a father, as a son, as a lover, as a husband. I started to understand my role in this place. It wasn't me against them. Go ahead, please.

Debra: The funniest thing about your chart. You are a Scorpio rising.

Tommy: Yes I know.
Debra: What it means and here is what Scorpios do. In astrology Scorpio, regular astrology, they get the worst write up. They are negative. They are dark, they are addicted, they’re sexual, they’re promiscuous, they have a dark secret side. But an esoteric law, it’s the highest sign. Why? Because they destroy their ego for the quest of their soul. It’s the only sign that will destroy itself with the ultimate desire to seek humility, so you did the highest [road 00:20:22] of Scorpio rising, but I’ll tell you, when people call me for sections, and they want to pick a rising sign, because I get to do that for people, what a crazy job. I never give them Scorpio rising, because it’s the hardest one to get. You have to be a very old soul to want to destroy your ego in the pursuit of your soul.

Scorpio, the animal, will sting itself to kill itself before someone else comes to kill it. It can’t stand the thought of losing face. I love the image of a scorpion stinging before its predator comes to get it. That’s the worst part of Scorpio. So you did a good job.

Tommy: Thank you. I’ve seen both sides of that scenario, but it does bring to light this idea that pain is a doorway, as you wrote, pain is a doorway to humility. Right?

Debra: I made that up. It is such a bad … I keep calling them, the 1-800 number. They never answer. They see me, and they don’t even answer. Excuse me, why did you use pain as the doorway to compassion? Couldn’t you just send a memo, like a little not. Like, Tommy, you’re addicted, could you stop. Sorry, sorry, sorry. But no, they hit it like …

Tommy: Yes. This is the thing, you make us ask a question in your book, many questions, but one of the questions that jumped out at me was, and we’re on this topic, so where am I not living in integrity? Let me tell you why I think that’s such a critically important question for every human being, but in particular for people on a path of recovery from addiction.

I truly believe that integrity, living out of integrity is the precursor to relapse. I think that’s what does it, more than any other thing. If you trace it back, you trace it back, you were engaged in an activity, in a behavior, in a thought process, in a belief system that was out of integrity with who you actually are, and you rode it, your sense of well-being. At some point later down the line, it became overwhelming, and you ended up relapsing into an older behavior to try to take care of that pain. What a powerful question, you have asked us to ask.

The second question … so, first question, where am I not living in integrity? Second question, can I answer this question without judging myself? Please talk about that.

Debra: It makes me want to cry. This happened to me last time you interviewed me, you always touched my heart. I think the first question, where am I living out of integrity, to be honest enough to say, whether it’s your diet, or it’s exercise, or it’s sugar, or it’s … whatever the thing is that you know you go to. Now, who is perfect? Good luck with that. But to be able to enter to the question like, you know what, I’m in a relationship that doesn’t really work but I [inaudible 00:23:10]. Or, I’m in a job where I really don’t like it, but I’m too scared to take the rest. Or, I’m living in a city where I have no energy here, I want … it’s done, but I’m too scared to leave. You know where you’re out of integrity, because you’ve lost your faith.
My definition of lack of integrity is somewhere you're not staying true to taking the risk of really being harsh with yourself, you've gone soft, and you're finding out some way to sneak up behind it and things cave in.

[inaudible, dropped audio 00:23:38] have a backbone, and they tell the truth. It doesn't have to be just, so if you know that you're overweight, and you're out of integrity about your diet, how [inaudible 00:23:45], and they're eating junk food, they can't stop. That's okay to say out loud, there's no judgment. You go, you know what? I haven't found the motivation yet. It doesn't have to be justified, it has to be articulated without judgment. Yes, I'm overweight. I don't eat well, and I don't have motivation.

That's when therapy begins. As a therapist, when someone tells me the truth? When they tell me they're out of integrity, I get excited.

**Tommy:** Let's see. You are asking us in this book, Deborah, to assume or cultivate the observer's position. Witness mind, if you will, and become aware of the elements within me. Can you speak a little bit about that?

**Debra:** Let's do it right now. Pixelate it, pixelate it. You're skinny. Pick your little ear, because I love that you've got those in your ... So the observer comes on and looks at you. Pretend, right now, you guys, you've got a camera in your room, and you can see your little computer you're looking at, or your phone, and you can see what you're wearing. Put the camera on, you can see your little outfit you're wearing today. Your observer's just noticing, it's not interpreting. It's just going, "Look, she has her earrings on,“ "Look, he has things hanging from his ears and he's got this little cute face”, and you start to just observe.

When the observer can be present with you, in the middle of a crisis, instead of reacting, and being impulsive, and getting scared, you suddenly take a breath. Turn on your observer, you go, "Oh my god, this is the weirdest thing I've ever seen. I'm in the middle of a breakup, my heart is breaking, and I am about to find myself in so much pain." The observer just reports, neutral, and when you can practice that, you become this kind of free base ... it's the freedom of being able to not judge, not interrupt, not react, but just witness, and there is the wisdom.

Because when those people, think about the people in your world, that you know and you tell the scariest thing to, your best friend. When you tell them, they just listen. They're not fixing you, they're not talking at you, they're just observing. Those are the wisdom-givers, so I suggest people practice turning the observer on. Let's do it again. The camera's on, I'm looking at Deborah, she's moving her hands. There's little Tommy, we're on a computer, we're on Skype, we're in the middle of 2016 talking about what? That's right, recovery. Then suddenly my awareness gets a little bigger, and it gets wider, and I'm much more present.

If you can practice ... the hardest thing in the world is to do that when you're upset, or when you're on a broken record, or when you're finding yourself going off to do the thing that you know you shouldn't do, and the observer goes, "What are you doing?” Then you get free will, because at that moment, you can say, "Well, I want the candy bar.” Then your observer goes, "Just checking.” Then you go, "I don't really want the candy bar.”

**Tommy:** I love it. I love it. When I ask you about, specifically, about the four elements? Could we start with water?
Debra: This is a great bridge between the observer and the four elements, because the book helps you start noticing. Do you know what element you are, Tommy?

Tommy: Earth.

Debra: Is it Capricorn moon you have?

Tommy: No, I don't think so. Pisces, Pisces. I think so.

Debra: What year were you born, can you tell the public?


Debra: 1967. So your Saturn's in Virgo. Funny enough, you're actually primarily air, just so you know.

Tommy: I'm not surprised.

Debra: Listen to you. You think and you talk and you're such a good writer, I love reading your emails. Honest to God, and I wouldn't just say that, I love reading your emails. You talk in such a conversational way that has meaning. Let's do the four elements. Ready?

Tommy: Okay.

Debra: Put your observer on, you water people, you whiners. That wasn't a judgment, that was just a perception. The water people whine, and they feel a lot, and they cry, and they're sensitive, and they're highly emotional, and they're mushy, and if your moon's in Pisces, which I wonder if that's true, that means you're double water. You're super sensitive. They get their feelings hurt, they have this incredible empathic ability. They want to feel ... That's right, you have a grand [00:27:44] in water! That's right, you do, I remember, I see it.

Water is the element of people who are incredibly tender. They have an incredible need for touch, for contact, for being close, and they love their animals and their best friend, and that's about it. They don't want a lot of people at their house, they want quiet, they want to be still, they don't want to go to the party, and they really love when the music's on and they're having their lovely atmosphere, and they are closely related to the addict, because they just love that feeling of ... can we go off-planet? That's why they're meditators. The upside of water, once they get over their addiction, is meditation and yoga and practicing spirituality.

So water is the sensitive, and they don't like to talk. They want to be feeling, they want to be quiet, and they're internal.

Tommy: Obviously, a lot of that is not me. Especially the talk part.

Debra: Well, that's your air, that's what I said. The water element doesn't like to talk. They write poetry and music, and they love to cook, and they play house. Next element, air. By the way, that's Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces, by element, but in the book, we don't use astrology, we just talk about the elements, because I didn't want to turn off people that didn't believe in astrology.
Air. Air is the talker, the thinker, the funny little witty one, the pixelator. They use funny words, they say funny things, they make up things all day long. They are the captain of MSU, it's a school we went to, Tommy and I, it's called making stuff up. There's a lot of stuff, we can talk about it, and you think that we know what we're talking about. Super funny, witty, thinking and reading and writing and arithmetic. Forget where they're ... airheads. They forget where they're going, the little water one's like, "Why are you talking so much? I want you to be quiet," and the air one's like, "What's wrong with you? What did you do to me?" And the water one's like, "Shh. Please be quiet."

The air people just want to hear every thought you're having. They're codependent, they can't live without partnership. I got them. That's how you know the observer's on, when you start laughing, because you're not judging, you're just like, "Got me."

**Tommy:** Right.

**Debra:** Air. Talking, thinking, reading, writing, major intellects, and constantly being stimulated, and they eat books. I love when I came to Tommy's house, and he opened up my book, and he'd highlighted it. It was so fun. He had little markers and the things ... that's very air. They read things and they eat it, they eat books, they study, they think, and they're all about people and codependency.

Third element, observer kicks in Earth, oh ... Now, this is our sweet girl [Kia 00:30:08], now I want to make the food all perfect and I'm going to clean all the dishes and I'm going to go get organic food and I'm going to make a little list. [Inaudible 00:30:16]. Then I'm going to clean up again and I want to make sure all the money is in order. Do we have enough money? Then I want to make sure there's Windex. I love my Windex. Oh, don't put the silverware away like that. Do it like this.

They have to put the ... Those Earth people are a little bit fixated. It's done their way. They are very highly organized. They're very driven. They're very disciplined and they have a great goal orientation. Everything is about getting ... Their ego is related to accomplishments and how much money they've made and their mortgage payments and their insurance and their taxes. They love that stuff. Welcome to Earth. Those Earth people's gift is manifestation. Bells are going off. We're not even going to think about this. Their challenge is the perfectionist. They never think they're getting enough done.

The last category, bells are going off, is Fire. My favorite. I should never say it's my favorite [Allen 00:31:09], but it is. These are the people who are loud and funny and boisterous and they drink too much and they eat too much and AAA meetings are full of ... 12-Step people love Fire because they tell you their story and they tell you their story again, what happened to them. They want you to be inspired by them. Then they tell you how they went to jail and they got out of jail and you're like, whoa.

Everything is a little dramatic. Everything is a little bit more excitable. They work out all the time. They play tennis until their heads swell up. They can't stop working out because they have to move energy. They're very sexual and they're very loud and they have no volume now, so they talk too loud and they play too hard and they really do have ... Addiction is a problem as does Water. Water is a secret user and Fire is like, let's have another one. There's not off button. Fire never runs lukewarm. It's only hot. There's no medium hot.
**Tommy:** Certainly for most people, I think they can see aspects of themselves in all the elements.

**Debra:** Well, that's the goal. If you think of it as four wheels in a car and one wheel's down, the car's not going to ... You have to have Water, Air, Earth, and Fire to live. Think about it. You can't live without water everyday. You can't live without breath. You can't live without food and you can't live without the fire, the sun, the heartbeat, the blood.

**Tommy:** There's things that you've talked about. In addiction, in recovery, we're going to come up against shame. Shame, coming from these disowned parts of our self or if you knew what I was really like, you couldn't possibly love me. You couldn't love me and not only could you not love me, you couldn't like me, and I'd be ostracized and the worst things are going to happen and da, da, da, da, da. So many of us on this path of recovery are dealing with that. I want you to please speak about the movement beyond shame. It's such an important concept for people.

**Debra:** I think it's only recovery people. My sweetheart as you know, is 26 years sober, so I go to lots of meetings. I really love ... I wished sometimes I was an alcoholic or I had a drug addiction to be in the club, but I was co-dependent. I'm slightly in the club. Let's see. Shame. It has to become a friend because once you begin the recovery process, as you know, one of the steps is turning back and reviewing. When you review, it's embarrassing. Who was I? Why did I not consider you? Why was I so self-centered? Why was my pain so much? I always think of addiction as the means to protect your pain. You're hurting so much that you're using whatever you can to make that pain go away.

The shame is, what is it that doesn't allow me to stay straight up? I'm sad, I'm scared, I'm lonely. I don't understand. I don't want to be alone. It's a big one. Once you can say it out loud and this is the value of good therapy and what I love about my work, is shame goes away when you're being held in the presence of an elder who hears your problem, your mistake, and says, "I understand." Then you're like, "You do?" Furthermore, I love what you said, "And I still love you. In fact, I love you more for disarming and disclosing that human dimension." Then suddenly, we're real. You really do feel love in the presence of people that can see through your shame.

Shame is like pain. You were saying it earlier, it's so Scorpio. You have to go straight through the pain and straight through the shame, and that's why people that are in recovery have a higher road of spiritual evolution. Did you read Billy Fingers, that book?

**Tommy:** Hmm-mmm (negative).

**Debra:** Oh Tommy.

**Tommy:** Yes.

**Debra:** The Afterlife of Billy Fingers. Go get it when we're done. This is one of the most enlightened books and it starts off with he went to recovery so many times and he couldn't get sober. Then as he goes to the other side, his sister begins to speak through him or he speaks through his sister. You find out that it was the addiction is the source of wisdom. Who would think? You're so heartbroken. You're so disappointed. You're so shamed at the human, but if you can find the high road, that book will help, and do recovery and then become an example, you're doing what you came here to do. [We all 00:35:15] do that.
Tommy: The Afterlife of Billy Fingers.

Debra: Oh by God Tommy, you could text me when we're done. We're friends, you text me.

Tommy: It'll be my next book. Thank you.

Debra: Oh boy.

Tommy: There are no normal people.

Debra: Except for you.

Tommy: Let's hope not.

Debra: Or me. No, no, no, no, No, Gemini. Normal is a setting on the dryer. That's it.

Tommy: Perfect, thank you. That right there gives people permission. How about this concept, which you bring up in the book of playing good. How does that turn out for people?

Debra: Yeah. Well you know, we're so fake. I once was teaching at Esalen and I taught for many years there and this was the very beginning, I had a group of elders. There were a lot of older people that came to study with me, which I found so funny at the time. Now I understand because I have some wisdom that I've cultivated. Anyways, we're sitting a circle and I say, "Today we're going to talk about, we're all going to go around the circle everyone is going to tell us where they're really F'd up." The man that was like 70 sitting next to me said, "Debra, so inappropriate." I said, "Okay, let's start again. Raise your hand if you're F'd up. For those of you that didn't raise your hand, you're really F'd up. How can you not admit, somebody living inside of you that's so embarrassed by some stupid quality you have that's completely shamed?" If you can't say that out loud, you don't get to be in the respected category called wisdom.

Tommy: Yes, yes. Well, that's really stifling these natural parts of ourselves. Natural is the key word there.

Debra: Exactly. It's human. By design, look at us. By design. We have two parts of our brain and they don't get along. They do not connect very easily. Your intuition says one thing and your logic disagrees. Your intuition says one thing and then finally you just decide who's going to ... You lean over to your right brain if you're doing intuition or your left. You have to master this life. It's a marriage. We all know this in relationship. How do I listen to you? How do I actually have enough honesty to say, "I'm a little confused. You look a little confused," but no judgment.

If only we could take a love drug. I wish we all had an addiction to a love drug that everybody would just have compassion. Well, I don't understand why they didn't put that in the design. Like a little serum comes out. I think that's what happens when you give birth. That feeling of, I love everyone. I remember that after I gave birth, calling my mother who was really not easy to get along with and suddenly I was in love with her and I hung up and I was like, what was that? That was called hormones. I wish sometimes we could have a dose of that inserted where we suddenly had tremendous compassion for everyone like half an hour everyday.
Tommy: Well that's what we're all working toward on this path. That's what we understand was achieved by people like the Buddha, Jesus Christ, and many, many, many, many other avatars. They got to that place of understanding compassion toward all. I'm at a great many number of light years from that place, but we're working towards it.

Debra: You don't really know. You don't really know because that's what you'll find out in that book, The Afterlife of Billy Fingers. Your quest, this life, look what you're doing. Look at us right now. Everyone is watching this video with your inspiration to say to us, "I was in so much pain. All I want to do is help." That is a very avatar like thing to do. We have concepts of the avatar being perfectly in love. No. It's when we make mistakes. When we can turn to our partner and go, "I had the weirdest thought today. I just got to say it out loud." Then your partner goes, "I love you Tommy." You're like, "I love you [Kia 00:38:38]." That's enlightenment.

Tommy: I'm taking it under advisement. I'm taking it under advisement.

Debra: Yes. That's how I met Tommy was, I love working with couples, when they're in that really thick soup, where they forget they like each other and they're like rrr, rrr. Then I get to remind them they're in love and by the end of the ... I love that feeling at the end of the session. I look at them and I go, oh they just remembered their soul's agreement. One of the things in the book that I love is the question, what did your soul sign up for in this life? Because you didn't get pushed on the bus.

Tommy and I agreed to come in 2016, here we are, saying we wanted to share our ... We really did. Both of us. Look at us. We're both nuts about sharing our wisdom. What did you sign up for? I'm going to ask that to those of you watching this, so just stop for a minute and ask the question, what did you soul sign up for? What were you trying to teach yourself this life? Because based on your storyline, they're still trying to teach you.

Tommy: Yes. I really want to say to people who are watching this, if your answer to that question is, I must have come here to suffer, that is an incomplete and incorrect perception of the situation. Debra, you wrote, and I love this, your crisis is here to serve you. Your could is trying to get your attention. You are being stalked to pay attention to life's teachings.

Debra: Isn't that intense?

Tommy: It plays out as true. Certainly I get it.

Debra: It happened to you. I read your book. They were stuck. Stalking you, baby. Life is stalking everyone right now. Your soul is desperate to get your attention. That's the good news. The bad news is your ego is in total war, it doesn't want to get its attention. It's going to fight, then when your soul finally gets you and you get into those meetings, or you find yourself finding your spiritual path, it's like, I knew. You know my big joke, Tommy, have you heard this, that I'm the president of the Jews for Joy club and I have no members? You can begin that. There's just so few Jews that know how to be happy. It's not just Jews. We're not gullible to being happy. I don't know why that is, but the soul doesn't really care what the crisis is. All it does is it wants your attention.

Tommy: This of course goes all the way back to childhood. You said to me, in the hilarious conversation, you said, you arrive, you're born. Here comes the wound. That we carry the imprint of that wound, we carry the imprint of our childhood, and then we carry a story based on that.
Debra: That's the whole book, you got it. You arrived, many of you get here, they hand you a story. It's a script, it's a movie, it's a characterization of your sweet personality, Tommy Rosen, with your host of characters. If you can wake up inside the dream and become an elder, which you are, Tommy, with or without the grey hair, then you change the storyline. As soon as you're awake, you get to re-write the story.

I look back when I was sleepy and when I was victimized, when my story, I had such a hard, like you, had such a hard childhood story with all those Twinkies and Frosted Flakes and sugar-coated Pop Tarts. I had an ulcer at the age of like, 15. Then when I found health food, for example, I was like, what? Wait a minute, you're telling me it doesn't have to hurt every meal? Who knew? Those moments in life when we woke up, and those of you watching today, some of you are just about to wake up. Some of you are elders and have been awake, and some of you are just in between that tortured spot where you fall asleep and you wake up. Fall asleep and you wake up.

Tommy: I want to talk with you a little bit about story, storytelling and the stories that we carry, what drives our behavior. You wrote, you cannot change your nature, but you can re-write the story. One of my favorite lines from your book, such a great line, it's important that the story be told, but not so that we cement it into reality and wear it like a badge. Now, I know too many people on the path of recovery, on the spiritual path in general, who have held onto a story from their path. It could be the oldest story, or it could be even a new story that needs to change yet again. That constant evolution of story, can you speak about that?

Debra: Yeah. Isn't it interesting, some people repeat themselves a lot and they find themselves stuck in time. You can't judge them, here's the observer. Think of someone you know who's been stuck in time, they had this broken relationship, they had a heartbreak and they never got into a relationship again, that's a clue. They got divorced and they keep telling that story, the guy really broke their heart. You want to set an alarm clock like, hello? That was 1962. They are stuck in time. You must be compassionate, because you have no idea. Some souls, like you and I, have this motor. Kind of got the extra battery pack in the back. Me, can't wait to wake up in the morning and see what we can learn today. Some people are like, ugh. What am I doing again? You know those people. By the way, they tend to be at their worst, water or earth people, they tend to get a little sleepier, and then they need help. It's not your job.

Those of you who are in recovery, you stay with the people that are waking up. Keep your flashlights out of the eyes of the ones that have their sleepy face looking because they are going to get mad at you. It's not good when you get that sharp bright light. The story does get cemented and worn as a badge by some, and then you, Tommy, while you're watching this is you remind us, like, are you done yet? Sometimes I tell people I'm putting on a diet, and you can't talk about that anymore to anybody. They're like, what a relief.

I put them on a diet. Hmm. Then they have a week of not telling their story. They go, you know what? It felt so good to be done. Then you've got to say something, now what're you going to talk about? What's the new story?

Tommy: I love it. Thank you so much. Of course on the other side of the coin, after healing, what happens to wounded people when they heal? What do they become? What happens to students when they heal? What is the upside of doing this work, which is obviously so challenging of trying to pay attention to learn and grow, where do we get to go with this?
Debra: We call that the wounded healer turns into the healed wound. When you become, it's like, that's why it's so wonderful being in recovery. Then you tell others and you become the healer. You can sit with anyone, this is my greatest love of my work. When someone comes to me and I’ve had so many, as you know it, the [inaudible 00:45:28] when I did the keynote, I don't want to go into detail, but I've heard some horrific stories where I'm in such dismay. Then I realized, you know what? These people that have been wounded, once they get healed and you hear them tell the story as the victor, from the other side of the story and you see the human that has emerged as a gifted hero or heroine, they're my favorite people.

I love listening. I think the reason why God made us, said Eli Wiesel, because she loves stories. I love listening to stories, every single one of you listening to this, you have a story. Then us as healers, we get to listen to you. Well, if we interrupt, and we keep laying our stories onto you, it's a difficult thing. To actually listen. I have a tattoo, and the words listen and silent have the same letters. To really listen, you have to stop talking. The healed person who doesn't need to talk because they've healed, they know how to sit in silence. Those that have gone through it come out the other side and they're these wise beings. You can tell by looking in their eyes. I love those people, that's why I'm telling you, I swear. I go, it's like with my sweetheart to the 12-step program just to look at those people and hear them tell their story, yes, they can get stuck, but the healed wounds, the ones that have gone to the other side, they become the victors. They prove to life that this life is worth living and evolution is real, and the soul continues to grow wisdom and to be able to share the fruit.

There's nothing more fun in this life to me than sharing the fruit and watching everybody go, mmm, it tastes so good.

Tommy: You wrote something, another incredible thing that you wrote was this beautiful thing about well, I want this to be my calling card. People ask me, what do you do? I'm going to answer hi, I specialize in enabling wisdom to be harvested from pain. What do you do?

Debra: It's not going to go over.

Tommy: It’s amazing, though. Enabling wisdom to be harvested from pain.

Debra: That's what I do. People come to see me, they tell me their sad story, and then I turn it into a beautiful, beautiful saga. Then they finish, they graduate, and I say now you’re done with your story. Now what are you going to do? There's nothing juicier in the slight, that's why we're here. We take on pain. You know that to be born, you know this, that when you're born, you have to go through this unbelievable pain while you come out crying. The mother comes right close to death, it's a very vicarious, vulnerable moment, and then you come into birth from pain. I mean, I think dying could be a lot easier. My prayer this life, so funny, my good friend just passed. I know she died well, is to die well. Is to walk into death consciously with my eyes open and not have the pain. Yes, to have people in my room who are crying because they love me, but to have the sweetness of that transition to the other side. That's what you learn about in that [Billy Fingers book 00:48:31]. My prayer is to have a beautiful death, does that sound weird?

Tommy: No, that sounds amazing. I love it.

Debra: You’re such a Scorpio.
Tommy: I love that. Debra, I just want a couple of final things here for our time today. The peacock story, will you share it?

Debra: Yes. I don't know if people know this. If you look at a peacock, you'll see fluorescent color. It's the most unusual colors you've ever seen on a creature. How did it get to those colors? It eats poison. The peacock goes to the trees and eats off the fungus, the dead, ugly, pain stuff that can't be eaten, like the mushrooms that you can't eat. It transmutes them into shiny color. The point of that story is there is poison to be eaten, and any shaman knows this. You eat your poison, you eat your story, you transmute the hardship of your life into wisdom, and then you share with others, you put out your flower, your, I love when those peacocks show up and show off. You go, there's God, right there in front of me. How did it get that way? Eating poison. It's a very poignant point, Tom.

Tommy: Thank you so much. Debra, the last point that I want to cover today, it's just a simple statement: life has my back. You wrote that.

Debra: It's the truth. I didn't write that, I just heard it. They talked to me.

Tommy: Who will use their pain as a doorway to wisdom? This is the question you're asking. If you don't feel life has your back, that's a difficult proposition.

Debra: Exactly. That's where we begin: does life have your back? That's the beginning conversation. If you don't know that life has your back, you have some work to do, that's why you're here, and that is the nature of spirituality is to find out that God's not playing with dice, you did not get pushed on the bus, you volunteered for this job. As soon as you discover who you are, that's what astrology does, that's the beginning of you remembering why you're here.

Tommy: Debra, I love you.

Debra: I love you, I miss you. You're so cute. I miss Key and I just texted her.

Tommy: Thank you so much for your love and your support over these years. Thank you for lending your wisdom and your voice to Recovery 2.0. I'd like to know, people would like to know how can they connect with you?

Debra: I have a school starting in the middle of September, so if anyones interested in learning astrology, there is a Debra Silverman, D-e-b-r-a Silverman astrology dot com. You click on learn, and you'll see I've got an apprenticeship program to teach yoga teachers and all kinds of people astrology. You just go to my website and there's ways to get readings, I have videos that come out every other day that tell you, today is a fire day today by the way, the sun and moon are in fire today. I'm so hot, actually. They turned off the air conditioning. Yeah, that's how you'll find me. Debra Silverman. The funniest thing you can do to make yourself laugh is you go to YouTube and you put in Debra Silverman and then your sign, like Gemini, and a little 5-minute video will come up that's going to make you laugh.

Tommy: Yeah, so the website once again DebraSilvermanAstrology.com, okay you guys? For those of you who are already inspired and get this, get what this woman has to offer, come get it. For those of you that are put off by the word astrology, put aside that thought and go check into this woman's teaching.
She has truly, truly made a big difference in my life, personally in Key's life, personally in countless others. There you go. Sending you love, Debra, thank you again.

**Debra:** Thank you, Tommy.

**Tommy:** Signing off.

**Debra:** [inaudible 00:52:13].