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**How do you use that garden space? That outdoor space?**

A good question. I'm mostly sitting around when the weather is nice. Finding stuff, barbecues… we have a dog and a cat that they use the garden a lot to go to toilet and things yeah. And then me and my toddler who's 2 1/2. We go out there and practice a bit on the bike or the scooter especially. She was really small. Yeah, not like we won't go in the street, but it's sometimes it's just easier. And otherwise, like planting things by a seed, especially like with her something good to do. And also we had. There was like loads of plants in the garden, noises like a giant palm really, yeah, like it's quite consuming sort of thing. It's great, but it's just massive. And then there's a weekend like we had this one, this succulent that has like. Long, thin, sticky up leaves, but they kind of have like a sawtooth edge, right? So it's really like if you brush against it. Sort of like cut you know? Yeah yeah. Scratch you up. So we pulled that out a few weeks ago so you know gardening stuff. Yeah, we have a little think lethal about it, so there was a an initiative that while ago about like making insect houses and stuff right? So we made in my we made a bughouse which is like you take it a baked bean can, cut both ends off and shove it full of sticks. Yeah, don't see many in there, but we did that.

**Well, maybe maybe it's more about the process of doing it rather than**

yeah for sure, and I think like you know it, potentially it's tiny little insects and you just never see them. You know you don't sit there watching you. Don't expect anything fantastical from it, so it's just. Yeah, it's a basic thing to do. Yeah, it's a little house for bugs, but then we don't have like we don't bother with like things for birds and stuff is right bit risky. With the cat and you know then getting chased by the dog and stuff so we don't have a birdhouse, right?

**Yeah, yeah, right right, right and brilliant. Thank you. That's interesting. This is this is a really broad big question, but it's probably. You know that kind of at the heart of what this research project is about. So what does the word nature mean for you, and how do you kind of see nature on a day to day basis?**

Oh, good question. I think off the cuff. Nothing you have to say. Nature as opposed to natural right? Again, what's the distinction? Because I think nature, I take that more as. Off the cuff, I think I take that more as like instinct. Should we say mindset but also like design so predictable plants grow in a certain plants grow in a certain way in certain conditions? Yeah, and then we talk about. Until that's like, I think it's far with plants as far as you get in terms of nature as an intention Thorne and right you have to talk about animals is bit more complicated because you've got instinct up against kind of like. Chance the environment and conditioning and so on, right? So they kind of like got two things were going against each other, then with humans that bit more complicated. And then I guess it depends how deeply believe in like you know human nature or or so that people are born with a certain mentality and dispositions and so on, right?

So I think like that sort of like my my natural response to like nature I think of it more in like the. The verb be way, you know, yeah, right. So it's not. Sorry, can't go ahead OK and then like natural is like more I guess I think more like natural environment and I think when you think of those things you just think generally very bucolic. You know I couldn't really greenspaces reasonably airy light this week and that's kind of condition. You know reasonably warm and wet now and again. Condition isn't plants and most life flourish, yeah?

**Yeah. It's interesting and so in terms of your day-to-day experiences of of nature and the natural. I, uh, those kind of interwoven into your life or how? How did you experience that?**

I think I think like especially living in London, I think having a garden really counts, right? The difference. So for example, you can say like within reason. You can tell I step out into a natural environment as opposed to your house in your building and so on. Yeah, but if you just live in a flat and stuff you don't really have anywhere like that and it's hard to grow things. Conscious of that, with so many people I know, and even for balcony. Great limited stuff. Yeah, and in the house 'cause you need to have like enough like through the apertures and also. Interactions with that in question interactions? Yeah, yeah, so, it’s just nice to go out and step into the garden, even if it's like pissing it down. It's just nice to be out there. Breath of fresh air.

And otherwise, like we take the dog to the park, my daughter loves going to the playground but also to the park in general. And park. We have Daubeney Fields literally kind of round the back of our house, right? Yeah, we can go on there and she can run around in the trees and stuff and she's quite into climbing trees, right? But it's hard to find the right kind of ones that she can get into, yeah?

**That's interesting, so like so they got the garden and that Parkland kind of represent those natural landscapes.**

Yeah, yeah. And then we don't really like. We don't really venture that much further. Like we don't go off too. I forgot the name of it, the massive. The massive park like Forest, Epping, sorry we don't right? Yeah, not much like it's really. I tried it in the past and it's actually quite hard, specially weekends. 'cause yeah all the parking gets taken up there once parking side of the road so I would even say it's stressful, it's just rubbish. You can't necessarily get in there, so that's kind of challenging. And then also we've got the marhses and things like that and we've taken walks around there along by the Lee Navigation, the river? Yeah, so there's the canal.

But then you can actually go and get like a bit more good and lost, alongside the water- there's this weird thing called Wick Woodland, which is like a triangle and it's cut off by like the A 12. Yeah green stuff and that's actually really cool. Little bit of forest to go off and just wander around in. It's great yeah. And that's an interesting one, because it's like you could say it's just cut off by roads and the canal. But it's a really nice self, contained little bit of forest.

Yeah I’ve spent many a happy hour down there. So I mean, you know you saying about going into Wick Woodland or, you know, along the Lee, whoever and what are the benefits to spending time in in those environments for you and your family?

We're just naturally inclined to say like oh, it's a healthy nice thing to do, but it's actually quite different words, right? Yeah. Seeing. For myself, I guess it's like literally the breath of fresh air thing and it yeah, and you're away from screen for example, and there aren't. Is there an actual distractions that really warrant your attention? Not necessarily at risk and stuff. You're not looking for bears and things like that. So yeah, you can go and you can kind of forget about a lot of things and responsibilities and stuff and you don't have to pick up your phone or be on your phone necessarily, yeah. Anne. He yeah in some respects you kind of immersing yourself in a slightly alien landscape is more like you have less control, but there's less obligation on you for writing staff to interact with like. That sounds really weird. This, like you know, putting the kettle on our opening window. There's nothing like mechanical that is like designed around your input and your engagement and so on. At the same time, if you wanna like. Open yourself up there. There's lots to listen to, especially you can't see so good. You know 'cause it's like, yeah, there's a great line in the Fargo TV remake, Claire Guy. He's like a serial killer. Yeah, yeah, this Riddle. You seen it. And it's like there. The color humans are most optimised to see is shades of Green's because of predators and so on. So like when you're out there, it's it's. You know I'm always struck by how easy is that? Lose rabbits or birds and stuff like you kind of see them and you can't see them. Really really well. So I think that density and depth of color range basically going like greens and Browns, bit of yellow, not much else. Yeah, I probably like a few, you know standard things. It makes all of it kind of, say me, but I think like you can hear loads of stuff.

There's nice kind of like just listen to that and you can hear if you pay attention like quick would. For example, you could hear people coming, not that you have to be on your guard, it just if you listen you can hear. The movement of humans is quite loud yeah, and then you can sort of like imagine where they're coming from or what, what where they're going and things. So yeah, there's that sort of like it's a different kind of oral and sensory. Yeah, it's like sensory immersion. Also, deprivation if you know what I mean, right? Yeah, stimulate and then in terms of with my daughter. You just associate it with healthiness. Which isn't necessarily the case in the city because you know you was kind of walled off by roads somehow, but interacting there and she usually finds loads of things that are really fun and interesting and easy to engage with and she gets a lot out of it. A lot of enjoyment, a lot of interest and it, yeah, feathers.

She loves chasing pigeons. I'll get freaked out by it. And then I like the micro level. It's really good because like you know you can sit there with a leaf, with them and look at like you get like a ghostly… it's all like died off or become semi transparent and so it's kind of a stained glass window. You can get things like that with them and look it's really interesting. It's really intricate, nice patterns, but at the same time you can just you can ignore those things and you can feel more complentative. , you know and just go off in the wrong direction yeah?

A good example of it. There was like we're in the garden on time which you just went digging for 'cause she has like a insect finding kit with a little box and a magnifying glass. Yeah, I was just digging for insects and you sound like a really tiny little like Gold Centipede that was pretty cool just to avoid pulled out the ground.. All those things and I think what's interesting with that, is it some I forget the term, where we look for patterns. Yeah that's when children are developing one of the first things are looking for is face facial expressions website. Is it correct? Are they happy with you? And that's like around attachment through without. Just like assessing how the person presents themselves. Yeah, looking for these kind of patterns is one of the first things they do so in nature. You know being patterns or run the progression of natural design. You like flourishing, aren't grows into itself, said speak.

I did philosophy at Uni, so I think it's called like teleological like yeah design yeah, when you see those things coming into their own, so just be. It's a really. It's a technical thing. You can say this is a good example of a roses had not seen alive one and anyone, but I mean, I think the emergence. Of those things is really interesting, kind of like metaphor. I like development and growth in life and things in general, and obviously doing the whole seed thing with them is really good as well. And really productive. Yeah is that it's so thinking about that. Of about what you have, what those those things represent, a change over time is that is, that is that more I mean is is that just with children and young people do you think or is that that's something that everyone can reflect on and that has some kind of resonance with? You know you are you like on surgical understanding of. What the world is. Yeah, yeah, maybe I don't know if older people think that walking through the park, you know, yeah, one day I'll be a leaf. I know it's not your saying sorry, I just I know I don't know like that.

Yeah, I think I think with children just from things on. Reading about looking at the moment, I think with Children's really interesting because you see them come into themselves and develop and so on. And they're just growing. Yeah, it's partly. Yes, this is what you put into it and how you raise them and treat them and so on so. Yeah, I just think like the design stuff with plants. Is it really? You know, just gives you a really easy, straightforward kind of metaphor for the right things. It's just like a key into that more complex. Djimon idea, yeah? Yeah, it's perhaps. Yeah, that's a nice way to put it. It's like it's perhaps a way to approach it like a schema of thought. That, like, gives you a bit of context and friends and stuff, and you know, you don't spend all these all your time. Think about these things in that like really exacting sense, but you think about it in general, is my kid OK? Are they developing alright? Are they happy? And so on. So on, you know, I don't think like I'm not like a hippie. Some plants and you do have like seedlings and stuff and it's this whole thing about like you have to pluck out the ones that are doing badly.

Yeah, sort of slow down the one that's doing well in there. Yeah, I think that's necessary like a you know, so you can apply it like a social model. But it is interesting in terms of. How will they do? How to work steadily flourish or not? And so like, yeah, it's kind of make way for them and they don't make it to see. Yeah, weird,

**That's interesting. We've talked about the garden space and about those more open landscapes. What about the areas in between in between those, or you know if you're walking to Daubeney Fields say?**

You you do a lot of like back and forth. I'm not the only become very routine, and so yeah, but. We you know we see stuff on the way birds especially yeah. And then sometimes you looking up for birds or a plane, just like. And then trees you know, 'cause like loads of them in like these kind of streets there the roots start to push up the tarmacs you got these like actual like bumps. Yeah with the prom and stuff and when they're small they're kind of like toddling over like it's a bit of a not used to things not being level and flat. Yeah they can fall over. The trees and stuff and then like you have that interesting thing where people's gardens become even overgrown, but they just don't choose to trim them back.

Yeah, you've got like a Bush or something that makes the walkway narrower and she can walk under it she supports. But yeah, that kind of thing is weird because some. It's not like the rewilding inline encroaching and stuff, but yeah, you have interactions with those things. But I think apartment looking at Peoples Gardens. You know different down, so we have like really nice front gardens, yeah? Some people have nothing, so we have like it's all like their rubbish that's been spilled out. Yeah, been there for months so it's kind of like, you know got mold and stuff on it, but it's not going anywhere, yeah? Yeah, the streets themselves are pretty devoid.

I mean we had the scheme of like there was like a community garden or something and they raise some money and blah blah blah and they were saying people like let's green up the streets and stuff and have like little boxes and it's all cool and nice. But some of it was really. So it wasn't so great where it was like there's a tree and they put like a box around it. They made these like quite shoddy boxes, and then the Council, like we're gonna have to take the box off because all the soil you packed around the base of the tree. Eventually it will cause it to rot. But yeah, rising. I wouldn't expect that, but it's just it was that kind of height and that kind of debt. So you know those kind of things are a bit like there be forced in a bit. Claim alright, where is there was other stuff that's like business state that has a fence around it and like the corner of the. The corner of the fence is kind of cut off in the term in terms it's not a right angle. It's like it. He's got like. So like if you were to like take a corner and then like chop it off here. OK right? Yeah I think they put like a corner box. There is a big copper planter and that's people you know. Just tuck it in. Yeah it didn't do so well. 'cause it's like no ones will be responsible for watering it.

It's a bit like the LTN things. Yeah, they're really cool, like big planter boxes, and these guys have to come round with a, you know, like a little truck to water them all summer. It's nice they do it, but it's like Oh my God. Like the like, the kind of confectedness of it all, the kind of artificiality that yeah, yeah, and just the demand for maintenance because normal people. You know, I'm a stay at home Dad and I'm home most of the time but I'm not really going to go out my way to go and get watering cans and walk around the corner and water that box all summer when it's really hot, I just have nothing in my mind. It is like I have my own garden to water.

But yeah, just the idea of like that. The community gardener and I was just sort of like, Who and why are they paying this person? And apart from watering them, what do they actually do? Right, I'm responsible for re greening the streets, but loads will still have their boxes. You know they will. I come almost like shoeshine boxes.

**Thank you. I just notice we are over that 20 minutes but I mean I'm happy to go on if you if you have a few more minutes.**

Yeah let's go yes.

**OK. I mean the kind of elephant in the room about around this whole thing is obviously the pandemic. Do you feel like you're thinking has changed over the past year or so or the way that you've looked at things?**

We couldn't go anywhere. There wasn't anywhere to go, but we made a point of getting out, so yeah. When they locked up the part with the padlock and stuff, you can come over the fence, yeah? We were trying to be careful and not go there 'cause we touch everything and then maybe someone else will climb over the fence. Or if there's another kid there. Yeah, kind of asking for it. You're kind of. Yeah you part the problem. So yeah, so I just left it didn't go in. And I didn't see. I saw hardly anyone going over, even though you can get in if you want.

We just went to the park itself and wandered around and went around the trees and stuff and we saw people and we have like a long distance chat. You know, right? So yeah, not really. But I guess the thing was there wasn't really anywhere to go.