

AJR Julie Wignall Transcript

0:00:01 - Ann cr

Julie Ryan, noted psychic and medical intuitive, is ready to answer your personal questions, even those you never knew you could ask. For more than 25 years, as she developed and refined her intuitive skills, Julie used her knowledge as a successful inventor and businesswoman to help others. Now she wants to help you to grow, heal and get the answers you've been longing to hear. Do you have a question for someone who's transitioned? Do you have a medical issue? What about your pet's health or behavior? Perhaps you have a loved one who's close to death and you'd like to know what's happening? Are you on the path to fulfill your life's purpose, no matter where you are in the world? Take a journey to the other side and ask Julie Ryan Hi everybody, welcome to the Ask Julie Ryan Show.

0:00:46 - Julie R

It's where we blend spirituality and practicality to help you live a life of purpose and joy. We have Julie Wignall with us on the show today. Julie's a visionary whose remarkable career spans international business, the arts, national politics and environmental conservation. She's a firm believer in the power of one person to ignite meaningful change. As an executive at Mirage Resorts, Julie imagined, designed and led the creation of the Dolphin Habitat and Secret Garden, home to Siegfried and Roy's iconic white tigers. I'll be asking Julie how she used her intuition to bring these visions to life, whether we all have the power to shape our destinies and how to recognize when we're being divinely guided. Please remember to subscribe, leave a comment and share this episode with your family and friends. Now let's go chat with Julie. Julie, welcome to the show. I've been so excited to meet you and talk with you. Well, I have to tell you.

0:01:56 - Wignall

It's an honor to be here because I'm a huge fan of yours.

0:02:01 - Julie R

By the way, before we get started, I love your name Right back at you. Thanks, are you a Julie Ann? I'm a Julie Beth, Julie Beth. Well, I haven't heard that one, wow.

0:02:14 - Wignall

Yeah, it's a Julie Beth. I have a daughter, though, who I use the Ann for her middle name.

0:02:21 - Julie R

Oh, I'm named after my Meemaw, so I'm Julie. She was Julia Ann. I'm Julie Ann. Oh, I'm named after my Meemaw, so I'm Julie. She was Julia Ann. I'm Julie Ann. Oh, that's fun, yeah, yeah. Well, what a delight to have the opportunity to talk with you. In your new book, the Extraordinary Power of Fireflies, you describe fireflies as people who see past the way things are and illuminate new possibilities. Are we all fireflies?

0:02:49 - Wignall

Absolutely Part of what I write about is to think about this. There are over 2,000 species of fireflies. This is a family that embraces a wide amount of diversity and fireflies. They're on all of the continents of the world except Antarctica, but I say human fireflies. We're on Antarctica too. Everybody, everybody has a light inside of them, and I wrote the book to really be a call to action, to say it's time to stop standing on the sidelines with wishes and dreams and hopes. It's time to take action because you glow and we need you to glow and we need you to shine brighter, now more than ever.

0:03:36 - Julie R

Do you find that women are more hesitant to let their light shine than men?

0:03:41 - Wignall

Yes, in a lot of ways, and I think a lot of this is cultural conditioning. It's getting back to the root of who we are and that's why, by the way, why I used fireflies. You know, when people go, oh fireflies, I remember them. What they're remembering is the magic of seeing fireflies in the backyard. Or even if they've never seen them, they have seen pictures or something and they go oh, they're magic. And it reminds us of a time when we were younger, when we were closer to source energy, where we knew that we were limitless, that we could do anything that we want.

And to get into that mindset, I use the fireflies to go. Let's remember you're more powerful than you realize and you're a firefly. And when you start getting insecure say what kind of difference can I make? Just remember the difference is that one single firefly when it lights up or touches your finger. We all make a difference in the world and we do it in different ways and we do it from different levels. And that's another reason why I added into my book 20 different people and groups that I qualify as fireflies that are doing different things around the world. To say it's not just one path to the top of the mountain. We each find our own.

0:05:14 - Julie R

Can you give us a couple of examples of the different categories, if you will?

0:05:19 - Wignall

Yes, I have them in all different ways. And let me preempt this by saying one of the things that I love about you and the way that you work is is you have all of these capabilities but you go. What's most important to me is is I'm a mother, I'm a grandmother, I'm a friend, I'm a sister, I'm an aunt, and that's like getting back to the who we are, and that's what each of these fireflies do. I wrote about Lisa Gershwin, who is a world famous jellyfish expert and in the field of marine biology and aquariums, we call her the jellyfish guru. If you want to know anything, go to Lisa. She knows it all.

Lisa moved to. She's an American. She moved to Australia. Today she lives in Tasmania. She learned when she was in her 40s that she has Asperger's and it explained a lot to her. And she dealt with a lot of mental health issues attention to mental health issues. We run campaigns, but when people are dealing with actual mental health issues, we tend to ignore the situation. And Lisa said you know what? I'm not going to pretend, to hide it. I'm not going to say oh, I'm this world famous scientist, I can't possibly have these issues. I'm going to be upfront, I'm going to talk about it. She actually ran for a position on the Tasmanian parliament based on being aware of mental health issues, so that was one side of this.

I have written about Kwame Scruggs, who is a storyteller who's changing the lives of inner city children using a djembe drum, telling stories of myths to inner city boys, working with the hero's journey as following Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell, and teaching them to be the heroes of their own stories. Wonderful, wonderful. Another Julie, Dr Julie Stone, who is a psychiatrist, went to Africa during the AIDS crisis and when we go and we help other countries, people you know or people that are in distress or need, we'd spend all this family members to AIDS. And Julie, as a psychiatrist, said somebody needs to deal with nurturing these kids. And she went back to Australia, where she's from, worked with an artist and they created dolls under an organizational name that they founded, called Utando, which just means love and Zulu, and they have been sending tens of thousands of handmade dolls made by volunteers from throughout Australia to encourage play and nurturing in the children in the KwaZulu-Natal area of South Africa.

That covers a little bit of everything, from that to artists. It's not just scientists or business people who change the world. It's anybody who cares and sometimes, when we can, we

change the world on a global effort. Sometimes it's just in our communities and sometimes it's just when you're a caregiver at home and you're making all the difference in somebody else's life. Those are all fireflies.

0:08:50 - Julie R

Good point, whether it be a child or a elderly person or somebody who's ill maybe somebody who's had a broken leg or something and you're having to wait on them while they're healing. I never thought of it that way, but you're right.

0:09:07 - Wignall

Well, and sometimes it's even just taking care of ourselves. You know, sometimes you get up in the morning and you're ready to take on everything, and sometimes just getting up in the morning is a huge win.

0:09:21 - Julie R

And I remember a firefly, as we call them, lightning bugs. I grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and I remember as a kid we had glass jars and we'd use one of those I don't know bottle, like a Coke bottle thing, that you get the lid off you know the metal lid and we'd poke holes in the lid of the tin lid of the jar and we'd go catch a bunch of them. We'd put some grass in there so they'd have something to eat, and I remember doing that and it was so magical. And then we'd always let them go at the end of the night, because I don't think their lifespan is very long and I think about just listening to you right just to this last couple of minutes. You know fireflies are magical and you enjoy them while you have them and then you let them go and then you go out the next night and you catch some other ones and they don't seem to be as plentiful as they were before.

Maybe it's, maybe not where I live. I live in Alabama, but you're in Vegas. For heaven's sakes, do you have fireflies out there? We have no fireflies.

0:10:29 - Wignall

And I'll tell you, I grew up down the highway from you in Cincinnati oh, you did Exactly the same thing, with fireflies growing up, and then I moved all different places. But here I am in Las Vegas, Nevada. We have no fireflies that you can see in the Southwest, Although they have discovered that there may be a species in Utah. But to give you an idea that that magic never leaves you, the memory never leaves you.

My husband's from Iowa and we were taking my daughter on a family trip back to Iowa and we had gotten into the airport, we were driving to his parents' house and we drove through a it was a McDonald's or something just to get my daughter something to eat. And we're just in the car he's called in the order of whatever this was for all three of us and I saw fireflies in a ditch at the side of where the drive-thru was and I went quick. I opened the door, I grabbed my daughter, I said we'll be back and we took off running to see the fireflies and we met my husband after he picked everything up and he was like thanks, a whole lot. That was a little bit embarrassing, picking up three meals for one person, but I said but there were fireflies, I mean we ate it with, and it was the first time my daughter had seen fireflies and it's like you know. You don't forget that magic.

0:11:55 - Julie R

Well, and what a metaphor for magic that you know it's all around us. We just have to take the time to really recognize it and go enjoy it in the moment.

0:12:05 - Wignall

That's the whole point. You know it's like it is there's magic all around us, but we forget, and we forget to look at it because we're so busy with shopping lists and to-do lists and all the

things that we think that we're supposed to do, that we stop and forget, just to turn around and enjoy. You know, it's like, oh, miracles don't take place. Sure, they do. They're around us every day, if we just open our eyes.

0:12:33 - Julie R

I agree. How do we know when it's our time to shine? And is there ever a situation that you've run into where we miss the opportunity and then we're just screwed? You know it's like okay, here's your time to shine If you don't take advantage of it right now. Okay, that's it. Sorry, you missed your turn.

0:12:55 - Wignall

Yeah, that's happened to me actually a number of times, but what I've learned is you got to stick around because even when you there goes, my boat, my ship came in and then it left. And even when you, when you there goes, my boat, my ship came in and then it left. And even when you miss it the first time, there will be another boat. Sometimes it takes longer, but there's always another boat, there's always another way.

0:13:15 - Julie R

I agree Is do you find that there's a set window of opportunity for certain projects or things, or do you find that when you have an idea? Has it been your experience that when you have an idea about something, perhaps it manifests years down the line? It's like you've thought of it and then you get busy with your life and then, all of a sudden, things are starting to materialize and you're thinking back oh my goodness, I thought of that 15 years ago and here I am living it.

0:13:46 - Wignall

Isn't that amazing? And I love when I get the opportunity to work with teenagers and I'll say write those ideas down and look around you in the world of how many people accepting awards go. This song I thought of the lyrics and I had the, or I had the music, I had the whatever since I was 14 or 15 years old. It's like now's the time. Write this down ever since I was 14 or 15 years old. It's like now's the time. Write this down. But in terms of opportunities and things that are there, what I've had happen and I've seen with other people, there's something that you really really want. Maybe things don't work out or the timing isn't there, and you move on and you continue, and you continue on winding paths, you learn different things and somehow you know years might go by and an opportunity comes by. You go. This is the same thing but it's packaged differently. And now I've grown, so I'm going to take this to an even higher level than I would have done had this all fallen into place the first time it was presented.

0:14:43 - Julie R

Do you find that happens with love, lives and with relationships, as much as with careers and other things that are perhaps vacations or fun things that we are on our bucket list?

0:14:57 - Wignall

Absolutely the people that we meet, and I love, you know, connecting with people. When I'm doing podcasts like this, it's like you get to meet kindred spirits, you know, and it's which is something that's just really special. But I think a lot of times, coming from a background of having studied Jungian psychology for over 40 years, I think a lot of times that you know there's the relationships that we choose. Are things that we use to work.

Relationships that we choose are things that we use to work out childhood traumas, things that we need to learn, um, how to stand up for ourselves, how to be more assertive, how to you know so, their relationship dynamics. And then there are people that we meet that there's just an instant connection and it's it. What do they say in yoga? When they say namaste, what they're really saying is it's Sanskrit saying the light in me sees the light in you, where there's

just the connection and we're accepting each other as we are. But there are all kinds of different relationships and it's like that's part of why we're here to me is to keep growing and to keep learning.

0:16:06 - Julie R

And to be on an adventure?

0:16:08 - Wignall

Yeah, and if it was all perfect, think of how boring life would be. I agree.

0:16:13 - Julie R

I agree, absolutely Okay. Among your many accomplishments, you've designed, created and managed the Dolphin Habitat and Secret Garden of Siegfried and Roy for Mirage Resorts. By the way, my Meemaw, for whom I'm named for her 80th birthday I said I'll take you anywhere in the world you want to go. Where do you want to go? She wanted to go to Vegas.

0:16:36 - Wignall

Oh, wow.

0:16:37 - Julie R

This was in probably the early 80s and we were at Siegfried and Roy's show in the Mirage with the white tigers and all of that, and we were sitting next to the runway. I mean, those tigers, if they would have gotten out alive they could have eaten us for lunch. So when I was reading about you, I was like, oh my God, I've been to all of that many times. In addition, you worked with aquarium zoos, the Smithsonian and even provided research for Jacques Cousteau. I'm so sorry you're such an underachiever girl. Goodness, did you? I mean, that's quite a pedigree there. Did you always know that you'd work with animals, even when you were little?

0:17:23 - Wignall

No, absolutely. I mean, I always loved animals. I fell in love with elephants at the Cincinnati Zoo. They once had an elephant named Julie and elephants were my thing, but then it became the ocean. I had many, many experiences with that.

But I was not one of those kids who grew up saying, oh, this is what I want to be for the rest of my life. And there are those kids and I envy them. But you know, for the rest of us, what I tell everybody is you just got to get on a path and start something. So I found my way, believe it or not, into politics. National politics. It started there. It found my way, believe it or not, into politics. National politics Started there before I was even old enough to vote. I was actually the youngest staff member on Jimmy Carter's campaign trail on his national staff and traveled the country with them, which was an amazing experience.

Went on to work I tried, worked with a congressman, I worked in the theater, my mother was an actress, also worked in international business and I kind of got burnt out from everything. And I went to Mexico my mom called it my beach bum days and I went and actually worked as a snorkeling instructor and I met a gentleman who was Mexican, an older gentleman who didn't speak any English, but we communicated, and he would tell me to go swim out to the reefs. And what did I see? Well, the reefs at that time were dying. They weren't in great shape, there weren't a lot of fish. And then he would go out and he would sit there, and he would just sit calmly for 15, 20 minutes, and he's what they would call a shark caller. He would just bring in everything. The next thing I knew, there were fish swimming all around, there were dolphins in the background, there were nurse sharks at the bottom, and this happened continually.

And you were snorkeling with him, or you were scuba diving, or what Snorkeling and I actually, although I went through scuba diving, I actually stuck with snorkeling and free diving because I

learned in terms of some of the things in the ocean the sounds from scuba equipment can actually put animals off, so that you don't always get everything that's there, but this guy's energy was so amazing and I looked around and I said you know, this is this amazing habitat.

And, working as a snorkeling instructor, I started seeing the seasons of the ocean they go, it's different. It's different in the winter than it is in the spring and watching the ebb and flow of the animals and everything, and I said this is something that I really want to commit to, to helping and save. I came back to the States, packed my bags and went to school in Australia. And that sounds really exciting. The truth is, and it was and it was fabulous. But I opted to go to Australia because I knew it was a great education system and it was cheaper. I could not afford to study in the States.

So, what were you studying? Marine biology? I was studying marine biology and my tuition and think about this in terms of the United States, my tuition, my airfare, my housing costs and everything I could not have afforded to do a semester in the United States. So it gave me access to doing something really wonderful. And then, when I came back to the States, I was working with the National Aquarium as their director, but, being a female, we had to have a male director. There weren't any females running any zoos or aquariums until we got the Monterey Bay Aquarium with Julie Packard another Julie, oh my gosh. And you know, and people said, well, she's got the Hewlett Packard money behind her. Yes, she did, but she did it really well and she's a brilliant, brilliant human being on top of everything else. But I so? When is this? When the eighties? This, yes, in the in the early eighties.

Early eighties, yeah and uh. So Julie was. She was the first person who did that. I was the direct report to our board of directors, but we had to have an executive director who was a male, because it looked better for the aquarium, although he didn't talk to our board of directors at all. So it was like this is just how things would go. And I said you know, I would really like to do something in the field. I'd like to be just a director, I would like to do something that's more powerful than this. And after years of trying to get into other zoos and aquariums, I hit a brick wall. We're not hiring you, you're a female.

And then let me also add at the time I was working at the National Aquarium, the National Zoo and the Smithsonian, which today sounds like wow. And the truth of the matter is I was carrying all three jobs because I needed to pay the bills and one didn't do it. To give you an idea of you know how broke we all were at the National Aquarium, I would have my education staff would say what's our budget for next month? We've got some great ideas. And I would say you know, budget for next month, we've got some great ideas. And I would say you know that, wishing well in the friendly aquarium where people drop pennies, go and take every penny that there is and whatever that is, that's your budgets for the next month, and I was also working with a lot of major nonprofits, but it was this constant hamster wheel of we've got to raise money, we have to do a fundraising campaign, a fundraising campaign, and I kept saying when is the time that we actually get to do something to make a difference? Maybe after the next fundraising campaign, after the next fundraising campaign, fundraising campaign. So you can imagine, here I am, national Aquarium, going this is like going nowhere.

And I get a call out of the blue from a man who's from Las Vegas, and actually he went through probably six different people before they finally said Julie, we don't know what to do with this guy. You take this call. So I get on the phone with this gentleman and he's telling me that he works for Steve Wynn. He's an architect and they want to build a dolphin facility in Las Vegas, Nevada. And my original thought was oh my gosh, this is a Hotel Six, we're going to teach the dolphins how to pull slot machines and a back parking lot. And I just went no, no, no, no, no, no, please, please, don't do this.

And then he asked me the question that completely changed the trajectory of everything. He said I'm not asking you should we do this, I'm asking you can we do this? And I said that's a different question. There are laws and if you meet these laws, yes, absolutely you can. And I sent information.

I had no idea who these people were. They hounded me and they kept saying Steve one wants to meet you, he wants to meet you. I had no idea who this Steve one person was and I and I actually offered them that if we wait, we can have a cheaper airfare. And they said you are not paying for this, just get on the plane and go. And it dawned on me this is a different thought process. You get into what I call the poverty mindset of well, this is just the way it is, and you have to pinch pennies. And it's this nonprofit mindset where we need a paradigm shift to say we need to begin thinking differently. So this was crazy and I was totally in that nonprofit mindset Let me save you money, let me do this and that.

0:25:27 - Julie R

You think you were dealing with somebody who was a mobster. Did you look up Steve Wendland? That was before the internet.

0:25:32 - Wignall

Before the internet. I knew absolutely nothing, but it was from Las Vegas. I was in Washington DC up and coming marine biologist, working in rainforest issues and all kinds of different things, because I believed even then and this has become even more so that everything is connected and so, for those who don't know who Steve Wynn is, tell everybody, please, all right.

0:26:01 - Julie R

For those who don't know who Steve Wynn is, tell everybody please, all right. So.

0:26:05 - Wignall

I am getting. Well, I actually had no idea who this man was. I'm sitting on an airplane coming out and they said that they were sending a limo to meet me. They were going to wine and dine me, great. I'm sitting next to a gentleman and he says, oh, you're going to Las Vegas, right. And I said, yes, who are you meeting? I'm meeting Steve Wynn. Oh my gosh, you're meeting Steve Wynn. He is like the Aristotle Onassis of the United States. He's a multi-multi-millionaire billionaire.

0:26:34 - Julie R

He was a billionaire.

0:26:36 - Wignall

Mindset of nonprofits going. Yes, but I'm a marine biologist and this is all about the environment and ecology. And I got to the airports, there was and I'll tell you this too there was this long gold limousine that was there and I thought limousine that was there and I thought this is probably some hooker's pimp mobile that's going to take her through to find the high rollers. I didn't see anyone with a placard with my name on it. I said this is silly.

I took a taxi to the architect's office, which was a small office, and as I walked in to this office, there's somebody yelling at me going Steve Wynn's coming, we're just ordering sandwiches. Do you want tuna, fish or chicken salad and do you want it on whole wheat, white or rye? And I went okay, so much for whining and dining me. They didn't pick me up, they didn't whine me and dine me. I'm ordering a sandwich. I don't know what's going on.

And as I'm sitting there waiting, there's a gentleman that I had seen at the airport, who was the limo driver, who came in and said guys, I looked everywhere for her and she wasn't there. And I

went oh my gosh, that gold limo was for me and I sat and I had a sandwich, I met Steve Wynn. We spent hours. He grilled me on everything to know who I was, what I knew. And with someone like Steve Wynn, who's got this photographic memory, if you tell him a humpback whale weighs this number of pounds, you better remember what you said, because six months later he'll ask again and he'll call you on the carpet if you give him a different answer.

0:28:27 - Julie R

Well, so tell everybody who Steve Wynn is, though other than being a billionaire, he was oh, Steve Wynn at the time, which was hence the golden limousine.

0:28:38 - Wignall

He was running the golden nugget. He had done a takeover of that and now he had a vision for Las Vegas and he is the brains and the visionary behind completely transforming Las Vegas. He had a dream for building the Mirage Hotel. He loved dolphins, the Mirage Hotel, he loved dolphins, wanted to build a dolphin facility in the background and just to condense this, Steve went on to build the Mirage, treasure Island, bellagio, the Wynn Hotel. He was the genius behind. Oh my gosh, we've got to change things and provide people who are visiting Las Vegas with something different. We want to do the. I want a volcano in front of the barrage, but I want an erupting volcano. And then backstory behind the scenes. He didn't like the way it smelled when it erupted, so he brought in special people to make sure that when it erupted there was a little bit of an odor of pina colada. But he came up with things that everyone said wouldn't work.

My dealing with Steve is. He said to me if you come here, I don't want to just build a dolphin facility, I want to build one of the top dolphin facilities in the world. I want to be known for this and we'll do this together. And I began thinking, you know, in the poverty mindset of nonprofits, big business is terrible. Oh, they're horrible. But I started thinking big business isn't terrible, big business isn't greedy. People are greedy, people can be terrible, but if that can happen, that can happen in any field. What if people can also be good and also open to different things? And that was Steve. I got carte blanche for everything that I asked for, but one of the lessons I think the biggest lesson that I learned that I've tried to share in the book here is Steve Wynn, this multimillionaire, and he's got this vision for transforming Las Vegas, taking it completely over, looking at things from a different perspective.

And everyone on Wall Street and every economist kept saying it was going to be a failure. Every single day there were news reports If he doesn't make a million dollars a day in that casino hotel, it's all going to go kaplooeey, you know it will erupt just like the volcano. There was so much negativity about him moving forward and how this was going to be a failure, and I watched him and he he didn't feed into it as like what an important lesson for all of us, you know, because we all go as like. What an important lesson for all of us, you know, because we all go, I don't know. Am I on the right path? Is this the right way to go? Is it, is it not? We, you know, we look for signs, um, and you can pick up the signs and you can know that you're on the right path. But you've got to put the blinders on to all of the naysayers, all of the. You're not going to do this. It's never going to work. And that's exactly what I heard. You're a female. You're never going to be in charge of a marine mammal facility.

And not only was I able to become in charge of this, I gave such a list of demands. I was sure that they would kick me out of his office. I said to Steve if we're going to do dolphins, this pool has to be three times the size of any government regulations. I don't want a plain tank for dolphins swimming around. These are intelligent animals. I want a giant artificial coral reef that they can play around. I want a sandy bottom at the bottom of the pool.

And then you know, Las Vegas actually has one of the largest school districts in the United States, and even then it was growing and I said and we need to be doing education programs

for kids and they need to be free, and the kids can only get here in the morning, so I don't want people from the casino here at the same time. I want this to be open just for the kids until we came up with 11 o'clock, that their school tours would be over, and I don't want these kids traipsing through casinos or hotels, so I need a whole side entrance. I'm listing demands and I said and if you want to have dolphins here, I do not want to take any animals from the wild. There are some facilities that are below standard that I would like to relocate animals from, and let's do this in terms of, like, a place where they can live out. If they can't be released to the wild, this is a place that they can happily live out the rest of their lives. And he went for all of it and said and I was sure that he'd go no, you can't do this. Okay, everything that you say, that's it.

And what became amazing is, when you have someone who's a visionary like this, they attract other people who provide ideas and, like I said, I come from a philosophy that everything is connected and that the arts are just as important as the sciences are. The spirituality is important to all of this, with all of these incredibly creative people descending upon Las Vegas to help start and kick off with the Mirage. It put me in touch with amazing people and other visionaries from their field. You know I was lighting. We have a lobby aquarium. I wanted it something really dramatic, to make it look like sun was shining through the breaking through. And I had one of the top lighting designers because at the then they signed on Siegfried and Roy and one of the top lighting designers from Broadway who came in and gave me half an hour and said let's look at this from a theatrical perspective. I said, okay, great, I'll tell you from science what the animals need, what they don't need. Now let's add the theatrics to this, and now we have created something completely new and different and we were able to do all of this.

My education programs, which I had always done. I used to joke that I could teach marine biology with toothpicks and rubber bands, because that was about what the budget was. But it wasn't a matter of my redesigning things, because even with all this money, you still can't buy these things off the shelves but working within a casino and hotel these things off the shelves, but working within a casino and hotel. We had a uniform division and we had the most incredibly and talented seamstresses doing uniforms. So I went to them and said can you help me design something that we can use and different props and things that will help with educating kids? So we got to encompass a little bit of everything through there and it really it shows you what can happen when you have fireflies and when we shine together.

There is a species of firefly called the synchronous firefly, because they flash in unison.

They're out, actually right now in the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee.

The other place they're found is in Malaysia and this is when they shine in the hundreds and imagine they come out later than the fireflies that you and I grew up with. They come out in the forest and it tends to be not until around 10, 11 o'clock at night, and it's when the forest is so dark you can barely see your fingertips and all of a sudden it's like walking into a fairy tale. The forest lights up with thousands of fireflies that are blinking a message and another group of fireflies that are blinking, and they're in the beautiful yellow-green color we're used to seeing. But then there's also what they call blue, of fireflies that are blinking and they're in the beautiful yellow green color we're used to seeing. But then there's also what they call blue ghost fireflies that line the forest floor and making it look like landing strips. You really do feel like you've walked into a fairy tale. So I always say imagine if one firefly can make that much of a difference. Imagine if one firefly can make that much of a difference.

0:37:05 - Julie R

Imagine what we do when we're all shining and we're shining together. Well, as a fellow entrepreneur, because even though you were working for somebody, you would be what I

would call an intrapreneur, but you were thinking so outside of the box and getting information. Thinking so outside of the box and getting information, and it seems to me that what you experienced I've experienced through my whole life too which is when you have an idea and you trust that people show up exactly when you need them and the situation shows up exactly when you need it to show up and you trust that, and then you experience it several times, then it's just second nature.

0:37:38 - Wignall
Right.

0:37:45 - Julie R

And you just go forward. When you were talking about going to the seamstress at the hotel at the resort, one of my surgical devices that I invented, we needed to do clinical studies and I needed a prototype before we spent kabillions on molds, on plastic molds, and I was living in LA. So, like you, you know, bring in the entertainment industry, bring in the theater. I went to a props place in Hollywood and I said here's what I need. Here are the drawings. Can you guys make me some of these? And they did for pennies on the dollar. And then we were able to test it, just without it being sterile. But then that gave us what we built, the big molds that cost so much money out of. But I got it from a props guy in Hollywood in the movie business, and they can make anything. So I'm with you on that.

How did you know that this was something that you could trust? So you meet with Steve when you go back to DC on the plane. Your head must have been spinning. When did you know that this really was doable?

0:38:54 - Wignall

This is a great question because, no matter how much we follow intuition, we forget and I forget. You're allowed to ask for signs, right, you're on the right path and you'll get those answers. And I wasn't sure and I didn't know if I could trust or I couldn't trust. I have a wonderful mentor who has worked in all areas of spirituality for many, many years and I said to her I need guidance and I tell me, is this the way to go or not? And she said I'm going to tell you how to find out. She said ask for a sign. She said and this is a woman who worked with Yang Yan Psychology doing astrology charts. She said and this is a woman who worked with Yang Yan Psychology doing astrology charts. She said, julie, you're working in science, but you know, when you talk to this guy, ask him what his birthday is and ask him what hour he was born, and let's see if we can figure out how this works.

And I thought I am terrified. You don't work in science and stand up and say, oh, I have a friend who calls it woo-woo. You can't say that I'm that's what my call is. And she said you got to be honest and you got to be authentic in terms of who you are, because you're not going to get a sign from the universe unless you drop the everything and just be you. I got on the phone with the architect and as we were talking I said to him can you tell me I'm trying to figure this out and if this is the place that I need to be or not. Can you tell me your birthday? And I hear this long sly over the phone and I thought okay, this is it. And he says okay, here's my birthday, here's the hour of my birth. And here I was born in Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital in.

0:40:49 - Julie R

Los Angeles, los Angeles, I used to call on it. That was one of my hospitals, one of my accounts is one of my accounts.

0:41:04 - Wignall

Well, my heart stopped because I was adopted and I was born in Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. I have full body chills on that In Los Angeles. So not only had he given me his birth information, he gave me the hospital and I went. Well, that's my sign, that's the connection.

And then he said to me oh, please, are you one of those? He said my wife is a palm reader and every time Steve wins Caesar, he holds up his palm and he says Terry, how am I doing? And it's like, okay, that's actually how I knew Asking for signs and I know this and I've known this for so many years and even I forget this.

And working on new stuff I had with this book and I'm on new paths and I was thinking to myself is this the right path to take? And you never know. And I was putting on a pair of earrings that are shaped like seahorses and I went, I could use a sign. I'll take the sign of the seahorse and I actually have it somewhere close by in my office. I went I'm in Las Vegas, where am I going to find seahorses? Well, I had to go to the library to donate some books and I walked into their used bookstore and right there, front and center, was a children's book with a seahorse on it, the sign of the seahorse, and I went okay, there it is.

But you know, and part of it, like you said, sometimes things don't work out. We have this plan for ourselves. It has to go this way, this way, this way. It doesn't always work out that way. Sometimes we have to let that go to be able to find the other paths, or to have them find us, to say let's tweak this because we got a better way for you to go, and that is how the universe tends to work. Oh, you thought you were going to do this, but wouldn't this be so much more fun?

0:43:00 - Julie R

Well, and you get to the end result, but perhaps in a circuitous via, a circuitous route, and that's, I think, what really stalls a lot of people. I'd love to hear your take on this, Julie, because when we let it flow, we know what we want and then we let spirit guide us. It's so much better than what we can envision. Because we have a limited frame of reference, and you were envisioning things that hadn't been ever created before. And, by the way, when you were talking about that, you went to marine biology school in Australia. They have some of the best coral reefs on the planet, yeah. And then you started talking about when you were talking with Steve Wynn, and you said and we need to have a coral reef for these dolphins to swim through.

I'm thinking, well, duh, you were exposed to some of the most amazing ones on the planet when you were in Australia, which is what led you to Australia. We just never know how these different things are going to unfold, but when we're creating and obviously you're the queen of this in so many ways you were allowing yourself to be led. You knew it could be done. You didn't know how, but you trusted that you would figure it out and the people you needed to figure it out would show up. When did you know that you really could trust that, when and the mirage and that whole operation was really going to be behind you like they said they would? I know you got the signs from the architect, but he was working.

0:44:42 - Wignall
Yeah.

0:44:43 - Julie R

For the resort. How did you know that really you could trust that?

0:44:48 - Wignall

I trusted my guts. The one thing I've always done is trusted my intuition, even when people told me no, we all have that inner knowing and we have it in a different way. And I learned I had a mentor. Between Australia and Singapore there are 45,000 islands, and one of them is known to be a place where people have what they call a lot of psychic tendencies. You know, first it was ESP, then it was psychic tendencies and it's like and we can call it anything that we want this mentor went and spent a year and a half living there as a scientist and a biologist and a geologist and he was going to find out is this for real or isn't it? And he came back with

fascinating take on it. He said first of all, yes, you can call it psychic, you can call it telepathic, everybody has special gifts here and they're amazing and they're beyond anything that we're doing. But if you ask the people there, they'll tell you that they're amazing and they're beyond anything that we're doing. But if you ask the people there, they'll tell you that they're not doing anything special. It's in. Everybody has their own gift. You know, you've got your gift in terms of what you have to bring to the world. Everybody does this differently.

There were psychic healers there that that was their, their wheelhouse of what they really knew how to do. But there were also. There were people who were trained to go into the ocean and listen. And I don't know about you if you've ever been deep in the ocean. It's kind of hard to hear anything, even in the bottom of a swimming pool. And these are people who are trained and they would come out and they would give the weather forecast. They would say boats are coming and they're this many days away. But each person had their own gifts. They weren't the same, and think about how boring that would be if they were. But the other thing he came back with was just saying how acceptable this was in terms of their society, and it made me realize, following our own intuition, you, you know, we are what I call enculturated. We're told not to pay attention to that. Oh, you don't know. This is how society works and this is what's expected. You, you don't know, and we stop trusting that. We do know, and it's kind of moving past some of those worn out beliefs.

I had been so busy trying to be taken seriously as a female and as a scientist with a background with science and politics and this, and that that I wasn't sharing a whole lot of more of the spiritual side. And I kept having experiences. People would come with that coral reef. I cannot tell you how many marine biology PhDs I had that would come on a tour and they would go oh my God, how could you possibly put a coral reef there? The dolphins will hurt themselves At the mirage. You mean At the mirage, the dolphins will hurt themselves on the coral reef. And these were PhDs, these were professional people, were very well respected in the field and I went but wait a minute. Dolphins play around coral reefs in the wild all the time.

And they have sonar, they are not going to get hurt by the core reef and sure enough, ours never did. But I thought what a limiting view that is. And that's where, in terms of allowing ourselves to imagine and we even set limitations up on ourselves to go I imagine this could be this big selves to go. I imagine this could be this big and the universe goes. Ah, if you hand this over and you have some trust and you build that up, the universe goes. Yeah. But what if we tweak this and we make this so much more fun and so much better?

And when we sit there at the top of these mountains that we climb, we turn around and we say, would you have done it any other way?

And no, and I always tell when I'm working with clients, to say, when we sit there and we've, oh, we've achieved that we're human, we pat ourselves on the back for maybe a total of five seconds and we start looking for the next mountain to climb, right. When we sit there and talk about how we got there, we don't talk about all the things that were perfect we tend to talk about. Do you remember when we tried this and it was crazy and we laughed and we so. When those obstacles, those blips get in the way, that's all they are, are blips. And when I have people come to me and they'll say, oh, I really thought this was what I meant, I was meant to do and I knocked on all these doors and I tried and everybody just said no, no, no. So I am thinking it's a sign from the universe to say I'm just not meant to do it and I'm here to say no, that's a sign from the universe to do a paradigm shift and go try another door and to think differently.

0:49:57 - Julie R

I agree I want to hear about how did you go from designing this marine extravaganza with the dolphins and everything to the habitat for the white tigers, which I've seen both, and that was

amazing too. So you're a marine biologist and now all of a sudden you're switching over to mammals. Well, cause.

0:50:18 - Wignall

Like I said, everything is connected. I was a student in the 1970s. It was a wonderful, wonderful naturalist named Gerald Durrell His wife Leah is still with us, british and Gerald kept saying this was when we were all busy going we've got to save these endangered species. And Gerald Durrell stood up and said stop focusing on saving the species, save the habitat. Save the habitat and you'll save all the species, because maybe there's species that we don't even know about. So in the first rule of biology is everything is connected and it's fun when you then do an overlay spirituality, everyone is connected. And what are those things that are important? We're all one. We're all interconnected. So the same thing in terms of animals. But Siegfried and Roy, I will tell you from my background and here I am trying to be taken seriously and here comes Siegfried and Roy and they're in entertainment. I came from the Smithsonian and the National Zoo and the National Aquarium and oh my gosh, these people are entertainers and I was like this is not going to work and they are known for For their magic tricks with tigers and I'm like, oh my gosh, and white tigers and white tigers and animals only belong in zoos or they belong and preserved somewhere, and again, it's when you allow your beliefs to be challenged.

And I met Siegfried and Roy. Siegfried was pretty much the mastermind in terms of business. He was the tall blonde one right Tall blonde and Roy was the magician who dealt with the animals. And I had heard stories about Roy and I thought this man is absolutely nuts, I don't know how I'm going to do this. And I was not their first choice for this. They wanted a PhD that would help give them credibility to come and design their habitat. And Steve Wynn kept saying, no, julie's already here, she'll do it, she'll do a great job. She's already working with the same vets and my veterinarians. I had three veterinarians a local and two that came in every week to check on animals, which is like three times what the government requires, but they were my veterinarians for the dolphins, they watched the fish, and also veterinarians for Siegfried and Roy. So we were already working together.

But I thought, oh, I don't know how I'm going to do this, and I had heard horrible stories. This is a man who sits in tiger cages and he sits with the tigers and he meditates with them. And then I met him and all I could tell you and this is Roy. Now you're talking about. This is Roy. And their magic wasn't just the magic show. The magic was really real and it reminded me of when I sat with the first man that was Mexican in the ocean and he brought in the sharks and the fish. Roy sat there and he had this amazing connection with the animals.

Now, coming from the background, with Zeus, the first thing that you learn is when you're dealing with tigers. Tigers are dangerous animals. You have a tiger that's giving birth. You can watch it, maybe through closed circuit TV, but you don't want to be anywhere close. So imagine, roy says one of my tigers is going to give birth and I have to be there for her and I'm going. This is crazy, this is against everything that everybody says. And Roy sat with her. Not only did this tiger deliver her litter of cubs, but every single one of them. When she was done licking them and cleaning them off, julie, she picked the tiger cub up by the scruff of its neck, like cats do, and she laid it in Roy's lap.

So that he could be the first to welcome the cubs into the world. That makes me weepy, you know what, and it was truly an honor. And I had an education staff that did tours for me for the dolphin facility and I said, okay, now you're going to learn, you're going to do this with Sick for no Roy's Habitat 2. And every one of them said, oh, we can't do this. These are entertainers working with this. So I said to Roy, would you be willing to come down and talk to them? And it took two hours and all I could tell you is afterwards every one of my staff members were like we would do anything for these guys. This is absolutely incredible.

But in designing the Secret Garden for their animals one of the things because again, they were businessmen they had access financially to take care of their animals these animals got the best of the best, and not only that, but because they really did know what the animals needed, they rotated the animals, so it wasn't the same animals in the secret garden every day. Siegfried and Roy had a home where they could house their animals and they also had a place here in Las Vegas called Little Bavaria where the animals could just go, run free times where they would take them on field trips. There's some old pictures of because they had an elephant, Gilda. There are pictures where they took Gilda down to Lake Mead, a local lake, and let her go swimming in the lake. So because the animals were rotated, they never really got bored and because we knew that we were able to try something really completely different in designing their habitat.

When you go to a lot of zoos it's very common to take a look at lions and tigers from across a 60-foot and 80-foot moat, right that they're safe, the public's safe, totally understand that this is where these animals live all the time.

But knowing that these animals were rotated, we said what if we could bring people up close so that they could really feel the power? I mean, when you get that close to a lion, the white lions, the white tigers they also had snow leopard, they had some jaguars you get that close and you can see the muscle on these animals. You can smell their breath and we use piano wire to separate them from the public. But one of the former presidents of the Mirage Hotel, when we brought him down, he said I can tell you that's piano wire, but when that animal breathed close to me. For that period of time there was nothing between that animal and me. But if we want people to really respect these animals and to help protect them and preserve this for the future, we have to let them know how important that is and you have to have that appreciation, which we were able to provide in a different way than most zoos could.

0:57:29 - Julie R

You obviously have worked at the top of the food chain for lack of a better word with not only wealthy people and influential people and the people that you were introduced to through working through the WIN organizations and on the national front as part of Jimmy Carter's campaign, and at the National Zoo and at the Smithsonian, and on and on and on. How can people know that, when they're in a role of leadership, how do they cultivate their own inner compass without getting diverted, without getting corrupted, because there's so much diverted, without getting corrupted, because there's so much? My God, Vegas, you know, you think of Vegas and you think about the mob there during the Sinatra days and all of that. How does somebody stay true to their own inner compass without being corrupted?

0:58:26 - Wignall

I love this question because I feel like I'm on a campaign for this right now, now more than any. And first we see, most of these people who make this, make it to the top of these different fields, are when you're behind closed doors. They're all very open about following intuition and developing that and following gut, because you're stepping out to do something that everyone says you can't and without trusting that that's not there. So for me, I look at this and what's more important than anything, it's one thing to know we say this is my purpose or this is what gives my life meaning, this is what I really want to happen. Once you know that, and then I encourage people then to find success. What does success look like to you? Because it's not the same for everybody. It doesn't. You know, I'm not a big person into cars, so if you're going to ask me, am I successful in driving a Mercedes Benz? That's not how I equate success. Having time, being able to travel. I have my vision of success and then the most important thing I tell everybody, and especially when people are starting out, is that you have to know your code of values, what you stand for, and that has to be more important than anything. If you're going to stand for honesty, for integrity, for transparency, you've got to walk the walk.

And when you're starting out, if you say this is my code of values, you know what you'll do and you know what you won't do, and you'll never find yourself in that position going. I've been asked to do something I'm really uncomfortable with. How. How do I do this? You know, when someone says to me oh, I'll do anything to, I'm going to take a leadership role and I'll do anything to take care of my staff and family Really Anything. So that means, if I give you an opportunity to become a drug dealer, you would do that. Well, no, Well, if you won't, then that's your code of ethics. You need to know what that is. You need to know what your, because those are your boundaries and we make choices based on the code of ethics. And that's where you know.

We all talk about the importance of leadership, and then I talk about the importance of let's define what leadership is, because, boy, people should define it in a whole lot of different ways. And for me, it's when you have that code of ethics, that code of values, and you stand true to them. That's how you build trust in terms of people following you, in terms of your being that leader. What Steve Wynn did for me is he built up that trust.

I asked for all of these things to make this one of the best facilities in the world, and he follows through. He was good on his word, which means that if he asks me to do what he did, oh, let's do another facility at another location. Okay, here we go. We're going to do this because I trust him now when I say I don't want to cut corners in terms of veterinary services, in terms of the fish that I'm feeding the animals, and when he follows through on that, yes, he's earned my trust as a leader, and for us to step in that light, we need to be leaders. We need to know what our code of values is.

1:01:58 - Julie R

Great points. A couple of questions left as we're adding down. Do you have a suggestion or two that we can use to help us overcome fear and follow where we're being led?

1:02:15 - Wignall

Yes and this comes from my background in terms of Jungian psychology that fear is universal and we all have it. And everybody is so busy on celebrating the accomplishments we always say the destination is actually in the journey. And, like I said, what do we do? Once we hit the top of that mountain, we go off for the next mountain. But what happens when we go on that next journey? We're faced with the fears, the uncertainty, everything all over again, and it's an uncomfortable feeling that I think that we need to start acknowledging it for what it is.

And I would say fear isn't something that you overcome and it's not something that you put behind you. It's something to address head on, to welcome it, but let it be by your side so that it's not steering the boat, that it's not steering the boat. And to do that you have to cultivate courage. It's not something that we're born with. For some people maybe I'm not one of those people and I don't think most people are but we have to continue to cultivate that, to say, I have to keep moving forward, and we do that by feeling really strong about what gives our life meaning. It's the same reason why a mother can pick up a car, if a baby is underneath it in an emergency, because they're not thinking about fear. The fear is absolutely there, but it's to the side. They're focused on saying this is what I need to accomplish and I can't think of anything else and I can't let the fear drive my way. And you lift up that car and you do things that you thought were absolutely impossible.

1:04:02 - Julie R

Right. Last question why do we incarnate?

1:04:06 - Wignall

I believe that we incarnate to continue to grow and evolve as humans. My belief is that our whole purpose in being here is to evolve, is to grow, and to do that that means that we have to

have all these different experiences. If we didn't have those childhood traumas, we'd have nothing to learn. If we wouldn't be growing, and that some of those blips and those winding roads that life gives us are so that we can learn, so that we can connect with other people and to learn from each other, which becomes also the importance of, you know, developing compassion. And if you know, there's a theory that we come through in soul groups and that when we cross over to the inner planes, what we're doing is we're sharing these life experiences so that we're learning, but we're also learning from each other, and that's back to the concept that we're all one.

1:05:09 - Julie R

I agree. Great answer. My goodness, what a fascinating conversation. You are as extraordinary, more so than I knew you would be. When we first talked about having you on the show, I said absolutely. I am so eager to talk to this gal and see what she's made of because of everything that you've accomplished, and I feel like you're just getting started. It's going to be fun to see where you go from here.

1:05:41 - Wignall

That's what I'm really hoping to do, because this isn't done. This was just the launching pad, because fireflies everywhere and to me it's like this leads to. We need to be developing communities and communities of support and communities of encouragement and of inspiration that let us know that it's okay to be exactly who we are. Um, and we were.

You had mentioned before in terms of women. You know we are, and you had mentioned before in terms of women, you know, one of the things that we walk around through is maybe I'm not deserving. We're told, this is what your life is supposed to be and this is what we expect of you. So when you have these yearnings, you know because the spirit never stops whispering you've got these super talents, you've got these skills, you need to share these with the world, but we stop and we go. I'm not worthy, I'm not deserving. Which is why I say, in terms of being caretakers, and why that's so important, we all have to start with being caretakers of ourselves, to say we are deserving and we are worthy and the world is waiting for us.

1:06:54 - Julie R

I agree Absolutely. How can people learn more about you and your work?

1:06:59 - Wignall

Everything can be connected right back to my website, which is really easy. It's just www.extraordinaryfireflies.com, and that connects to all the social media handles. There's a free handout. That's flying lessons for fireflies and that puts you on a mailing list. I send out once a week just a small tidbit through an email, just to remind everybody that you're worthy, you're deserving, and I want to inspire you and I want you to know that you are connected to something greater than yourself and just want you to shine brighter. Beautiful.

1:07:39 - Julie R

All righty everybody. Lots for you to digest in this one. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I have, in the meantime sending you lots of love from Sweet Home, Alabama, and from Vegas to where the other Julie is. You got Julie squared today. We'll see you next time.

1:07:57 - AnnCR

Thanks for joining us. Be sure to follow Julie on Instagram and YouTube at AskJulieRyan, and like her on Facebook at AskJulieRyan. To schedule an appointment or submit a question, please visit AskJulieRyan.com.

1:08:12 - Disclaimer

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