

*This is a rough transcript of Beyond Borders, produced by Listen & Be Heard, Episode 10. All contents are ©Listen & Be Heard Network, and/or the author of the work that was read and may not be reprinted, distributed, or used in any way without express permission from the copyright holder.*

Beyond ego, beyond self-centered fear, beyond exceptionalism,  
beyond individualism, Beyond Headlines. This is Beyond Borders.

Brought to you by Listen and Beheard Network.

Welcome to Beyond Borders. I'm your host today, Martha Cinader,  
and I am joined by my co-host, Judy Talaugon, and our special guest,  
Nilsa Rivera. Nilsa is a writer. I see almost every day.

In video conference, we hold each other accountable in a writing group that she started and that I have found very helpful when we meet in the mornings mostly we just write but we have these conversations Nilsa writes about housing with a lot of both personal and professional experience and Judy has her own experience with housing and municipal government and I think there's a lot of intersection in the activities of the two of you and that people can really benefit from just hearing us talk about a lot of these things. So welcome to both of you. Thank you. Welcome, Nilsa. I'm not sure where to start with the book that you're working on that's forthcoming or with your current situation that you're entangled in. Hi, I'll start with the book because I think it would be probably the shortest conversation. I have been working in housing and different levels. I started working at a homeless shelter in Miami-Dade and founded by the Catholic Church when Cuban migrated to Miami and needed assistance. And I worked there for six years back in the 90s, the late 90s, or 2000s, around 2000. And then I moved into working for a public housing authority that provided Section 8 assistance. And I worked there in Miami Beach for a few years as well. There I worked with the VASH program,

which is a program that helped homeless veterans. I worked with a program called family self-sufficiency for many years as well that helped families who are on Section 8 become not dependent on the government. Then with the homeownership program,

I then moved to another housing authority and worked on the front line for quite a few years until I got burned out, hid behind the computers. So for the majority of the last six years I've been working with an agency that administers several public housing authorities throughout the nation, where local public housing have chosen to privatize for one reason or another. So the agency that I work for would administer those programs. You have also acquired an MFA in creative writing during this period of time. Yes, so I have a graduate degree in public administration and in writing.

So I started writing, seriously writing, in 2017, and I started writing about my personal experience as a homeless woman with a child back in 1996 to 1998.

I became homeless with a six-month-old, my first-born, six-month-old baby running from a domestic violence situation. And so I was homeless with him for the first four years, prior years of his life. And once I was able to put him in kindergarten, I was able to get a job, and so forth. So I started writing about that experience, and that created some networking. And so I was able to get a contract with the University of Florida Press to write about my experience and also about others around me. Housing and insecurity and homelessness is a curse. I call it a curse. It's a curse that my family has had to endure at different levels, not only homeless on the street, but homeless in cars, homeless couch surfing, housing, housing and security, not being able to pay the rent on time or experiencing food and insecurity is another big one that me and my family had experience. So the book is mainly about housing insecurity in Florida.

Is there a title yet? No, I think what might go with housing and insecurity in

Florida, but I'm not sure about that title yet. It's pretty straightforward, but I don't know, I'm a little bit more on the creative side, so we'll see. But you went with insecurity as opposed to homelessness. That's good.

Yes. And I did that on purpose because even though there are several stories with me and others physically homeless, I also wanted to include the struggle of when someone moved from homelessness into a house or a home. because The general idea is that once a person gets off the street, they've been successful, right? They got off the street. They're successful now. They got their own house. They got one apartment. And that is just so far from the truth. That's housing and insecurity is still very prevalent in a lot of families after homelessness. Not only that is the effects of homelessness. I think that people don't realize the long-term effects of homelessness.

I was homeless, what, 25 years ago or more, I still get panic attack.

I still, if there is any indication that one month I might be short on my mortgage, I would totally have a breakdown. And that is a result of, you know, my experience. As of COVID, for the first time in my life, you know, I really faced it and I faced it hard, oh, okay, I'm being, I'm going to be completely homeless. And as a, you know, California and California Indian person, I looked at campouts and just do that. But I'll go, I'll tell you, I've been doing this for as long as you have. I'm much older. I did start just in a space of like, I've got to, I've got to help. I've got to help myself. There's no one else.

I've got to advocate for myself. I learned through these, through the charities to the interface

advocates, how to be an advocate. And I learned this way in the very end of the 60s in the, in San Francisco, when runaway homes were developed.

And what you're speaking to is really us as women, as advocates, as mothers, continuing to recharacterize homelessness, houselessness,

in house insecurity. We're defining it still in this country for people and we're setting policies. So I want to thank you for staying with it because I certainly have not left. I've been with runaways. I've been with children, with a mom who come to 24 -hour facilities. I know this track. I know this pathway, and I know you do too. You know, I wanted to ask you, after COVID, I saw a lot of new characterizations. I'm not going to say they're all great, but they needed to happen. You know, a real different form of abuse came to be exposed for women, the coercion, the manipulation to end up unhoused. Oftentimes, we're the ones who were victimized by the system and kicked out, or our children are taken away because of poverty. Very punitive system. If you're poor, you get punished. For you, did it unfold new policy and new energetic potential after COVID in the housing? During COVID, there was a lot of different policies that targeted families that were receiving assistance specifically in Section 8, which is what I am the most familiar with at this point. And, you know, like waivers for families not to have to report certain incomes or there was funding that were provided. And I'll talk a little bit about the consequences of that. But there was some additional help during COVID and some policy to provide some, some leniency, but after COVID, and probably we're facing more of that now recently, the funding that was provided have been taking away little by little more and more. We've seen the news. We know that it's happening. So I don't want to say going back, but it's kind of like, this is what we can do for you. This is what can happen. Oh, by the way, no, we're not going to do that anymore. It's not that important. So it is, it's retransmitting because then at some point, you know, I grew up and I was, I became an adult during the Clinton welfare reform that was pushing self -sufficiency, right? That was pushing like, you know, you have to work to, you know, to be on your own. That wasn't something. My grandparents

didn't teach me when I was growing up, but there was all the programs that were coming up as far as, like, government. Can we stick with that for once a sec?

Because I was going to bring up something about that. And at that time, I remember well, because I was on welfare assistance. I was a single mother with my daughter. And I remember getting thrown off because of the Clinton thing.

And I remember the catch -22 I was in.

Because you mentioned that you were able to solve your homelessness problem when you put your child in kindergarten. And until that point, if you don't have the support of the village, then you're screwed. You and your child are screwed.

Because there's no possible way, actually.

There just isn't. You can't have a job and look after your child.

It's almost impossible if you don't have the support of at least one other person in your life and many people find themselves in that situation where they don't you know so i just wanted to mention that like the the judy was talking about women and mothers and it's built in like you've done something wrong and you're being penalized and your child is being penalized because I don't know because because why you know but that's the situation that many many women and children find themselves in.

This is Beyond Borders, brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

I wanted to mention that they have, and I'm sure you've seen those on the news, you know, on occasions, mothers who, because they're so desperate to find a job and they have their children and they can't pay for daycare or they don't have someone to support them, they would take their children to an interview or to work and they will leave them in the car. And then they will, those women will also get penalized and put in jail for neglect. And, you know, the services are just...

And essentially we're neglecting our mothers, right? And I think it's really blatant

in this country. Because I spent a little time in Europe where, not that Europe is sub-utopia, but I was struck by some of the things they do over there for pregnant women, young mothers, simple things, like letting them cut the line or park closer to the supermarket. Some really simple things. People will get up and give them a seat where I don't see that happening. Thank you.

Right. The book that you're focused on now, is it around housing, is it around surviving the, you know, the housing authority, the leap system, you know, participating, dedicating your life, volunteering your energy while you're writing and participating in community? Is that what you're doing now? Is that what is? Yeah.

The week is, I don't know if that's a genre, but I like to think of it like a report, like a reported memoir. because I

you, so successful or so motivated, well, you know, I'm not, it's not that unique, you know, of an, of an issue. Beautiful. Beautiful. I think that if we bring it down a notch, it is more inclusive of those of us who are trying to get a knee up again. You know, we, women are treated as if we're not allowed to get a knee up, to come back, to define, redefine ourselves, or in the position of a very, very punitive system. And we are dismantling some of the terminology, Nilsa.

We are. Intergenerationally, we are redefining true social services and community care where no one else is, you know, like you say. The minute COVID hit, you know, oh, we had a couple little, like the lived experience, action, you know, peace and all of these wonderful pieces, but the same players are there, and the same players will only go to who they are familiar with, the only game in town. And I won't name names in terms of the Interfaith system, but they need to dismantle some of their own punitive policies. But, you know, we're doing it. I think that women, and I really do believe this because I've survived it, I'm still with it, and I've done it since the 1969 with runaways, reclassifying incorrigible young youth and children

and really looking at the abuse that we've endured, you know, that we've survived. And I'm kind of proud when people look at all three of us and say, you know, people don't survive this, you know, in this country. You know that, Nilsa. People don't survive this. So many don't. Yes, thank you.

And yet still there's so many who, to use that word, are insecure and have a sort of bravery every day that I think Mielsa was referring to when people call her brave. Is that there's a lot of people, and I think especially now, who are feeling insecure and really have to be brave every day.

We all have to be brave to just face what seems to be in our faces, right? But I think the insecurity and addressing, it comes down to family, right, and mothers. When we talk about home, like Essentially a home is meant to be a secure place to raise children at its most basic thing. You know, I mean, we all need a home, I think, but if we don't have a secure place for a child to feel like they can grow and prosper, then as a culture, then we're really in trouble, right? Yes. But I think both of you have experience addressing some of these issues on our local municipal levels. And in the face of all of this national news that we have no control over, perhaps there is some power in that, like you're saying, but by redefining even some of these things and addressing them more on a hyper-local level. Mm -hmm. Mm -hmm.

And some of the unspoken pieces are very quiet realities, inconspicuous, torturous realities. And one is that, you know, it is a surveillance system.

So if Nilsa and I miss a report or you missed a report when you had your babies, you're out. You know, If you are engaged in ongoing domestic dispute, you're on the bottom of that argument, man, and those children, okay? So we're changing that. If you even get a side job, you're out. Oh, you're out. I believe

women like Nilsa in this moment are picking up what we picked up in 1969.

I really do. I think that, you know, there were runaways, and we had to redefine what is a runaway? They're trans, they're gay, they're abandoned, they're poor, they're of color, they're of every color. You know, we learn to advocate for those babies. These are, bravery is a learned thing. What do you think, you guys?

Definitely,

I have a lot of, I have a lot of feelings against the word brave and the word powerful. Because I think that it's sort of idealized this whole notion of if you survive, you're strong. If you don't, you're not. I've come to resent it because for so many years I actually believed it. I believe that if I did what was told to do in order to survive, that I would be okay. And I went into my career with that mentality and telling others, my clients, to do the same. However, as the years past, I started realizing that it's just not that simple. Bravery and power or determination or motivation don't really have a lot to do with who makes it and who doesn't. That's the individual experience, right, which ignores the structure that's creating this experience for you. Yeah, it's more luck and community. Right. It's more having, I didn't get a job when I was homeless, I didn't get the job that I got because I was brave or because I was powerful determined. I got that job because at that moment, I was talking to someone in my community who had a networking relationship with an agency who was looking for someone and was willing to give me a chance. And so I don't see bravery in that, in that aspects. I just see, I see luck and I think that by saying those people who survive are brave and powerful, we're sort of diminishing the impact that the system really have on people and how it really break people down. And I'm saying this as a woman who has a mother who is deaf and who battle with addiction for many years. And I saw as a very brave

woman, but she didn't survive. I don't mean as I'd live because she's alive. But I mean as getting to the level that she could have gotten to if she would have had the community support that she needed, right? The same with my, I have a sister who also battles with addiction. And for many years, I did think, like, you know, oh, you know, she's weak, you know. She doesn't know how to handle the temptation. But the more research I did and the more I understood mental health and And then I started realizing that her power and bravery really doesn't have anything to do. Like, how much do someone have to go through to break down? You know, we are humans, you know? I love that. You know, I brought it up the learned thing because, you know, even as a teacher, it is truly down to the will, the will to live, the will to determine, the will to continue just that very thread alone defining yes and you know there are words that i believe that women mothers survivors are bringing back the vernacular we're taking it back and i say resilience bravery we need to break that stuff down man because you know resilience is a beautiful word again but it i'm broken I'm injured. I might transfer this injury onto future generations. I have work to do. And we talk about that. There's so many glazed over glossed terms that are very broad in definition, but they're no good any longer. And so that's why I say bravery is a learned thing. And I believe that it is basically the will that our will to continue. I don't think we even like learn it and then we know it. But you have to, we have to keep learning to be brave, right? Because that's probably the definition is to like, even when you're afraid, to be brave. So that doesn't mean that you're feeling brave. It means that you're doing something even though you're afraid. Thank you.

This

is Beyond Borders, brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

I

Freedom.

My little struggle.

DC. That you're watching. DC. That's Washington. That's watching. These same. That's watching. DC.

Oh! Oh! I don't know. ...

I don't know.

Good news, so in the middle of this process and say, wow.

Yeah, I like that. When you're called resilient. I like dues paid. I like that.

I like, can we talk about dues paid? I don't know.

Like, do they add up to something? Good one. What about that? Yeah.

Like, if people are owed damages,

then what about, like, damages for, I don't know, what society does to,

to

Martha, they really help us to get down to the nitty -gritty of these, the words and the definitions that they are ripping us off and excluding us from the real process. I think that it's really powerful for all three of us to be here. Nilsa writing about the current epidemic, and it's not so current.

It's been going on. I'm saying, you're picking up where I left off in 1970.

Absolutely. Absolutely.

This is what we need to do now. It says write books. This is what we do, is we teach those. Everyone has a voice, number one. We know that. But we're underrepresented. We've come through some system that is silenced us, all of us, all three of us. We've lived through a silencing and how do we lift that voice up for others? That's all. And publication, really... Well, you have a book that just came out. Yeah, same thing. I mean, really, Nilsa. This is... Let's talk about that

for a second. Tribunal Rising. This is us. Moms can judge.

Huh? Moms could judge. We can determine... We can make determination and disposition.

You're all young enough to remember 1992. And I'm so proud of it because it did jump off. And I think that had it not been for a pandemic, we would not have jumped off to new characterizations of abuse and houselessness and poverty.

So, you know, it was a moment. 1992 was a moment of celebrating 500 years of discovery. We smashed it globally. And it was through word of mouth. I believe, again, through a virus, if you will through a pandemic is what the platform that we need to jump on you know this is the moment to jump on news everybody uh for 2026 absolutely this is the moment to amplify anywhere I should shush I the book is is really how to do what nilsa is doing is to bring moral right morality back into law and policy, and how do we do that with municipalities? We empower people to be the tribunal, to be the judge, to be those that can say, I have indictment, this happened. Thank you, Auntie, for putting it into print. This happened in Honduras, and it's happening in my community in New Haven. You know what I mean? These are dialogues, these are interviews that need to be recorded.

We are valuable people. We influence policy and so we influence the future.

And I think this is a great place to bring in your current situation,

Nielsa, because you were talking to me about these issues that you feel around what's going on on your street right there. And how do you address that in your municipality? Does that sound relevant to you? And maybe we could go and talk about that now. Yes, definitely.

So I bought my first home in Miami in 2003 right before the housing bus.

I can't remember the exact name right now. But, you know, in 1008 when everybody, right, most millions of people went into foreclosure. Everyone went underwater.

Yes. The housing bus, yeah. So I was able to buy my home in 2003 and keep my

home through that bus. And then during Hurricane Irma in Miami, my house suffered additional damages, it was already an old house and needed some repairs. And my, my husband got a job in Tampa and so we moved and were able to, not that we couldn't afford another house in Miami because the house market was already increasing in 2019, right before COVID.

It was already increasing. To Judy's point, like this idea that COVID made housing worse, is true. However, housing was already a big issue before COVID.

COVID served as a platform to show the world, like, this is affecting all of us. It's not affecting just low -income families.

This is also affecting middle -class families and even others, right? But we moved to Tampa and we moved again to,

well, we moved to Tampa. We got a brand new house, four -room, two -story for a girl like me that come from already, whoof, that was like I'm in the sober already, you know? I made it in 2019. We had to move. I was already hosting the writing group and had just graduated with my MFA. We had to move because the taxes and the CDD was just too much for the property. And between taxes and insurance, it was double my mortgage and rising. My husband and I decided that since we couldn't control the rising taxes and insurance that we would buy another house that didn't have, you know, those, oh, at a better location, taking an account that, okay? So I was able to move into,

So I'm in Florida, you already know that, but in a city that is between Tampa and Orlando, which are the busiest cities in central Florida, right? Which is a small town or was a small town, and it is sort of transitioning into a larger city because a lot of people were sold out of Miami, The regular average employee, and I'm not talking about minimum wage. I'm talking about the regular family making \$70 a year cannot afford to live in Miami, much less buy a property.

And that includes me and my husband. That includes one of my sister, who she's a Dentist Hygienist who makes a good amount of money, you know. A lot of people have been moving up north in Florida. And so I got lucky to buy a very small house, which is beautiful, and it has a nice yard. And in a historically black neighborhood. And so we ended up buying right across the street from a faith-based organization that helped the community, which is awesome, but there have been so issues of the faith-based organization want to expand and has been buying other properties around the neighborhood to expand their services and their mission. So I'm sort of like in this dilemma of is the mission of helping the community or saving the community more important or mutually exclusive from allowing the community to itself to grow and to own property so is it is it better I guess in my mind I'm thinking a lot of lately of Is it better to build more church, more and more nonprofit organizations that are going to provide, let's say, a food bank for the community? Or is it a better solution to allow the community to create urban food forest or community grocery stores or... To not be a charity? Is that... Right. Yes. To empower the community to own the land that they have and they build something there or to focus on reducing the barriers to homeownership within the black and Hispanic communities, you know. And what are the factors that determine why we do the thing that we, the way that we do them in our community. You know, why do we tend to favor nonprofit and faith-based organizations and grants rather than promote maybe other community solutions? It's something that I've been thinking a lot about lately. I love it. I love it, Nilsa. Martha knows that that's one of my obsessions right now is land access and by -pac land opportunity, that it's available, that this is where you, all three of us, all of us in this continent are in the middle of the greatest land exchange, and it's going to end in

2026. We need to jump in, become a trust, land trust, community land trust.

There is one in Oakland that won a house for four women. You know, we need to look

at the Farm Bureau, there's land available. We just need to be willing to bring our skills in and learn, and it's for people who don't know how to do anything with the land. It's opportunity. Can you elaborate on land trust, please? Sure.

Is that, Melissa, do you know a little bit about it? I wanted to yield. I've heard of the term, but I don't know a lot about it, so we'll love to know more.

Okay, so I will just give one example that I'm really hot on right now, and it bleeds right into housing because it bleeds right into zoning. And that is a, and so try to, because I know it, it's a Citizens Conservation Commission.

So let's say Nilsa, I, and Martha believe that old riparian, the old creek creek where you live, we all live in the same neighborhood. Is industrial waste now, it's been mowed over, there's no more water there. Nobody even wants it. We should form a commission or a land trust, a community land trust, led by women, and go to preserve it for a center or for low -cost housing. These land trusts are really set up to preserve land, right? We don't need to be subjected by banks. That's the first thing that comes to people's mind. Well, we don't qualify. I don't know. Banks are alienating. But a land trust is a group of folks who've already developed, along with the government, guidelines to take over four acres, one acre, a half an acre, a lot.

This is Beyond Borders, brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network.

You can homestead, you could hold it for the end of time, for preservation. People might even say, well, that's an industrial part, Nilsa. So you don't actually own it, but it's in a trust. Forever, yes. And you can align with very wealthy landowners who want to make a trust so they could preserve their

wealth and never have to you know lose their land that's one way to go i'm not against it i'm not all for it either i think we need to do more self-determination like nilsa's calling for is more opportunity which they are there that just mystified me huh you know they don't tell us uh you need to but but i would say begin and i began working with the the state and the area that I've co-existed in, and that's in Western Mass in Vermont, where these policies, and I will send you links, where once people find that they have an opportunity to join together with the Fish and Wildlife, which is right there in Florida, and they have also an inside view of land base. And so really land trusts are an opportunity for a family, a community of women or people, people quite invested, stockholders, if you will, because they've been there intergenerationally, and maybe very impoverished or hardworking people. To form a community land trust, maybe to save a church, maybe to possess the church so it doesn't get demolished and you know it could be a school so these are things that are opportunities worth researching i can really go on for hours but it's really worth looking at community land trusts i will send you links i always rave about the northeast because these folks up there are rooted in abolition they're rooted in moving and they're also rooted in farmland where no one cares, no one cares, that your children, your next generation, your age is not going to farm that land. They need, they need people to take it over. Okay, so that's, I was... Yeah, definitely. Send me information that is something that I'm definitely in the middle of. I do see, I recently moved, so I haven't been as active within this city as I, as I would like to, actually. But, I mean, in Florida, like the overdevelopment, you know, it's just pushing everybody out. I'd like to throw something in here about food. Yes. Because, Nielsa, you've mentioned not only in this last hour, but also over time when we meet, you talk about a food forest and that,

you know, you would like to grow food where you are.

Essentially, you know, and we've seen this when food becomes corporatized.

And so places where maybe a full gamut of food was being grown has now become like this industrial monocrop. And people are forced to leave,

actually leave that land. Right? And so they can no longer grow food for themselves.

So it's been like a double thing, right? Like that's what happened to a lot of people in Puerto Rico. We've moved to the mainland because they could not survive anymore in Puerto Rico the way they had for generations and generations. And so food, food sovereignty is the key to liberation.

You can fight a lot of things when you know you have food.

You know, so when they talk about food forests or learning how to preserve food or, you know, during COVID, we were talking about COVID, people started growing food because they were confronted with these empty shelves. Very basic. It's very basic to our freedom. Oh, I don't. Yes. Go ahead, Nilsa, because I'll, yes,

Um, I food, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and food insecurity are really the easiest way to oppress a community. And, and yes,

take their, take their livelihood, right? And so I have become more interested.

And it was around in the COVID time, you know, to return back to my grandparents' roots and, you know, my ancestry and Puerto Rico and develop a garden and hopefully

it will get to a point where I can open that to the community or expand it or something with it. I'm not I'm not sure what would happen with that yet. So that

is very much in my mind. It's just a quiet political resistant move for me and

hopefully get to the point where I don't think I'll ever have I'm at a farm I'm

like I'm in less than half an acre like I have a very small area not my whole

including my home is probably less than acre but I still get enough I've gotten

enough crop to to do a few meals out of and it's growing every day and I would

like to to share the power that's in that right and because there was a moment in in history where we were able to go on and we didn't need progress you know as much as it was sold you know we don't we we were okay with, you know, my grandparents lived in the mountains in the countryside of Puerto Rico, central Puerto Rico. And, you know, so that my husband's family, you know, they live in a small boyo, call them that were made out of platinum leaves and thin roots. And yes, they struggled, but they had food, right? They didn't need to to depend on on grocery stores or things like that. Or a charity to come back to what you were saying. Yeah. And you work just as hard. I work just as hard right now with my full -turn job. And my husband works just as hard as my grandparents did, you know, in their backyard. And we are Just as Preston for our family as our grandparents were at that time. So maybe I'm an idealist at that, you know, for thinking that maybe the way forward might be going back. You know. Not that I'm not, I'm not at this point. I acknowledge my privilege. I have two graduate degrees. I have a corporate full -time job. I have a wonderful husband who also has a really good job. So there's privilege in that, but also with the conversations in the media and the political environment, then I also want to be prepared and I want to be there for the community. And I only see, the only solution I see is securing land and growing our own food as a way to survive what could potentially go a bad, a bad route. So I am definitely interested in learning more about land trust because I don't, I don't know. We go. You know, I'm definitely interested in finding out more about how do you protect, I'm not going to say rights, but how do you protect, how do you protect your survival and in an environment that might not be designed for us to survive, right? That is specifically tailored for us to perish.

How do we, you know, how do we survive, you know? And how do protect that you know you know almost at the end of this hour so i would like to hear from you tini before we have to i do this i want to say before we say goodbye that market farming market gardeners and that's like half an acre a lot you could make fruits and vegetables from porto rico specifically for the community that never gets to taste those things number one or food that we could share with everyone. But market farming and market gardening is counterculture. It is restorative justice. It is our memory. So you're not idealistic or utopic. These are memory that we've been able to restore and recover many times over as people from Puerto Rico, from the island states. So yes, absolutely Farming is counterculture. You lift out of the matrix. Everything is a mystery. You never know. The moon will tell you. The dirt will tell you. You learn to move like you used to, like your ancestors did. We need to go that way. It is not utopic. It is not idealistic. Actually, there's a movement. I will send you the link. I will say it now. In Quebec, there's a beautiful man that speaks this talk. This is counterculture to live out of the matrix, is to farm. Right. And that's such a, it's so not a radical thought. It is memory, it is deep memory. It is, in Quebec, I'm gonna send you the link. It's a Market Gardner Institute. I'm participating, it's a movement. I'm willing to join. I'm not willing to reinvent this. I'm from an agricultural state and I'm going towards Quebec. That's symbolic. That means a lot. And we could talk about that in the next show. Why is Auntie a native of the West Coast lifting up to learn farming right in Quebec? Right. From a French Canadian gentleman and a family and a Michelin restaurant. You are on the right track you are on the right track so that is room for the next conversation this is awesome yes definitely i would i i i think we need to do another show well then then we will i you know what i'd like to add to that um

before we go is that i i was just thinking of course this has made me a little sad thinking about the six and a half acres that I left in South Carolina to move to New York City where I'm on an even smaller bit of land than what Niels is describing. But I feel like as bittersweet as that is, urban spaces should provide the same for people. that we need to be able to grow food that, you know, new developments should have that in mind.

How can people grow food in an apartment building? Can they use their roof? Can they have a backyard? Can we have, you know, shared gardens? Uh -huh. And all of that matters, you know, why can't the city be beautiful in green? Mm -hmm. And why can't we, you know, pull fruit off the trees as we're walking down the street? Right. Right. And I want to piggy point on that, I want to expand and say that while we wait for the policy makers to shift the mindset, right, into that route that you're mentioning, Maybe we should use our barcany or a porch or our small apartments and small garden, you know, to even inside the house with parts and containers grow, you know, to show that there is a demand and a need for that in the community. Because it is doable, right? We could put, I'll say, mint because it grows wildly in here, right? But we can grow mint in a container inside of the house. And we can learn the native plants that will thrive where we live too. Absolutely. Well, on that note, Nilsa Rivera and Judy Talaugon, my sisters from around the country, California, Florida. I'm in New York. I want to thank you both so much for shedding some light. And I think that we will have to do this again. It's such an important subject just to talk about homes, housing, food, motherhood. And I appreciate you both. Appreciate you. Thank you, Nasser. Thank you. Awesome.

Beyond Borders is brought to you by Listen and Be Heard Network. Please Visit our

archives at [listenandbeheard.net](http://listenandbeheard.net).