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aligning thoughts, words, and actions with the welfare of all beings

In Conversation With Giulia

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P: Ahh so here we are back again with another broadcast. Greetings to you my dearest, dearest friends and i do as always sincerely hope that i am once again finding you in good health and high spirits.

'Laughter is the best medicine' dear friends, i spoke about this in a previous broadcast but here today i would like to share with you, what i consider to be a funny little joke that came my way these past few days.

A man walks into a library and says to the librarian,
"I'll have a cheeseburger, fries, and a Coke."
The librarian leans forward and whispers, "Sir... this is a library."_

The man turns red in the face, nods, and whispers back,
"Sorry... I'll have a cheeseburger, fries, and a Coke."

😘😘 Ahhh for goodness sake, it's gas isn't it? i find that one very good! Anyway, i hope you do too, i hope you do too, very good. Anyway, on we go, on we go

And so dear friends in today's episode, i am delighted to welcome a remarkable young Italian woman who embodies the spirit of self-reliance, natural living, and conscious parenthood.

Mother of a four-year-old son, she has taken bold steps toward achieving food independence while maintaining a part-time job in the mechanical engineering sector—a testament to her tenacity and adaptability.

Join us as we jump into the philosophy of motherhood, self-sufficiency, and the future of family living in an era where industrialized systems often fail to nurture true well-being.

Giulia, Giulia... it is a great pleasure and honour for me to welcome you to the NEBOJ podcast.

G: Thank you, it is great to be here, thank you for having me on.

P: Great you're here Giulia... to start, would you give the listeners an overview of your life, your work etc.

G: I am the mother of a four-year-old child, working part-time for a mechanical engineering firm while also establishing an agricultural venture on a small plot of land that once belonged to my grandfather.

P: fascinating, and so was your grandfather an influence on you as you were growing up? Share with the listeners your memories of him. He obviously, coming from an era when life was less complicated and more natural.

G: Yes, he certainly had a significant influence. However, the family traditions related to self-sufficiency focus primarily on food cultivation and preservation—homemade jams, juices, and canned goods. My interest in producing personal care products like detergents and cosmetics emerged as part of broader research into eco-conscious living with the goal of achieving greater independence.

P: Excellent! You said to me earlier that your philosophy of life is to follow your flow... what do you mean by this, what is this, 'follow your flow'?

G: I believe the only thing capable of transforming the world and how we live is our ability to think independently and act in accordance with our principles. In my personal experience, I firmly believe that returning to past practices—such as maintaining a home garden, baking bread, producing household cleaners and cosmetics from natural

ingredients, and more—is the only path toward securing a worthy future for ourselves and our children. This is not merely about economic savings (allowing me, as a part-time employee, to work fewer hours), but also about reducing global pollution by eliminating packaging waste, transportation costs, and processed food consumption. Most importantly, it fosters self-sufficiency—the most critical survival skill.

P: Very well put, my compliments and could i add that you are speaking here about being a sovereign human being, is this so?

G: Yes, definitely, in an era of institutional decline this is vitally important.

P: Could you at this juncture Giulia talk a little about your project: - what exactly is your project, what are you doing and your aspirations and motivations behind it?

G: Several years ago, I attended an ikigai course—an experience that proved illuminating by breaking free from my long-standing routine. It reignited interests I had buried, particularly a lifelong dream of owning an unconventional farm. This sparked curiosity to explore topics like permaculture—a design system for sustainable human settlements—in greater depth. After completing the PDC (Permaculture Design Certificate) course, I began drafting plans for my vision.

To date, the first phase has manifested as a food forest, which I have cultivated over the last year and continue to refine. My ultimate goal is to achieve significant food self-sufficiency while maintaining direct contact with the land. Additionally, I aim to create an environment where my son can grow in alignment with nature—an element that has brought profound enrichment into my own life. Beyond mere personal fulfilment, this project aligns with a deeper aspiration for autonomy and sustainability.

P: Wow, that is wonderful, truly fantastic! But tell me, I am curious... you attended an ikigai course, what was the spark that put the thought into your mind to attend this course? Can you remember?

Briefly for our listeners, ikigai is a holistic Japanese philosophy of longevity, purpose, and vitality as a blueprint for optimal human flourishing.

G: It was during the second year of the COVID lockdown, shortly after discovering I was pregnant, when one of those unsolicited spam emails arrived in my inbox. A training institution was promoting upcoming online courses that would be starting soon, and among them was something called ikigai—a term entirely new to me.

'Why not' i said, and decided on a whim to explore it further. Today, I would wholeheartedly recommend this path to anyone.

P: Wonderful, you following your intuition, your inner voice, it would seem that this email was sent directly with you in mind as you were at that moment looking for some answers and the universe kindly responded. 'Ask and you shall receive,' as they say, fantastic! And so Giulia how has parenthood impacted your life perspective.

G: Motherhood has deepened my perspective on life and the future. While I had already begun taking steps toward my vision, receiving the gift of a child—especially as a single parent—has made me profoundly grateful for this new life. Like all parents, I strive to give my son the best possible opportunities, sometimes succeeding but other times falling short. However, recognizing that being human means learning from failures and mistakes while waking each day with renewed determination to improve.

P: Very profound words indeed demonstrating a wonderful spirit but it cannot be easy in this age to manage work and family as a single parent, my compliments to you. Do you have family support? grandparents etc., to assist you?

G: Thank you—no, it's certainly not easy, but my mother and a couple of relatives help out in emergency situations. Even still, exceptional organization is required.

P: I can well believe it and so this brings us to your son's education, how has the experience been overall up till now?

G: A top priority in my child's upbringing is education. I believe it is fundamental for his growth and long-term success. Currently, though, I have little faith in the Italian school system. After extensive visits to public, private, Waldorf, and other institutions, I enrolled him at a traditional parish pre-kindergarten that puts emphasis on real-world interaction over structured materials. Last year, students were directly involved in planting, maintaining, and harvesting an on-site garden for example—from manual weeding to preparing meals from their produce. The school also hosted seasonal events like fire gatherings in the garden, fostering communal experiences.

But I do not exclude exploring homeschooling or parental instruction in the future. Though such alternatives are growing in Italy (though not widely publicized), they require commitment and a willingness to diverge from mainstream schooling. I am open to these options because—while not dismissing all public schools—I believe that education should be tailored to individual needs, rather than confined to one rigid system.

P: Yes, the current educational system is based on a one size fits all (programming, we could say) which is nonsense really considering the diversity and individual needs of each child. How is support in general in Italy when it comes to child rearing? Are there satisfactory structures in place? Is the system in general child friendly with adequate family support?

G: Regrettably, no. As of today, the Italian school system is entirely inadequate for genuine needs. Overcrowded classrooms often require up to six teaching assistants per class just to keep pace with individual learning styles—yet children still develop learning disabilities due to insufficient attention. Most families now rely on private tutors to supplement daily homework because in-class instruction frequently fails to equip students for independent work. Critical subjects like history and geography have been reduced or eliminated, leaving severe knowledge gaps. School schedules do not

accommodate working parents, while pre- and post-school care is exorbitantly priced. The system prioritizes test scores over real comprehension, leaving children chronically frustrated.

P: You summed it up remarkably well there Giulia i would just add; the centralized, industrialized education system fails to deliver meaningful learning experiences for the children. And so looking forward what would be your future aspirations?

G: I trust that the efforts my family and I are investing in developing our farm will begin bearing fruit within the coming years, allowing us to achieve partial food self-sufficiency and a stable economic livelihood. Whether or not this dream fully materializes, I hope it serves as an example for my son—a demonstration of resilience through challenges, showing him that persistence pays off when aligned with one's true desires.

P: Again Giulia very well expressed my absolute compliments to you... so may i thank you enormously for coming to join me here today, it has been really a great pleasure talking to you. i really do appreciate you giving up your time to be here but also for sharing what i consider to be very useful insights that no doubt will of great benefit to everyone listening. Thank you, and may i wish you, your son and all your family continued success, happiness and togetherness going forward.

G: Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. It's always wonderful to share one's thoughts and experiences, thank you.

P: Thank you and bye, bye Giulia, bye bye... bye bye thank you.

There you are now, a wonderfully warm person, i think you'd agree. It was a pleasure for me to have had the opportunity to speak to her.

She being a firm believer in the power of independent thinking and natural living. Her story is one of empowerment, showing how even amid personal struggles, individuals can reclaim autonomy over their lives. Fantastic isn't it? Isn't it really? Proving the universal truth correct; 'where there's a will, there's a way,' meaning that if someone really wants to do something, they will find a way to do it, even if there are obstacles in their way that make it hard to do.

Speaking as she was of permaculture, one of the most influential and authoritative voices in the field of permaculture—a design system for sustainable agriculture rooted in ecology, ethics, and regenerative practices—is Bill Mollison, often referred to as the "father of permaculture."

His foundational work, 'Permaculture One: A Perennial Agriculture for Human Settlements' (1978), established the core principles and techniques that define modern permaculture.

In one of Mollison's most widely cited passages from this book, he states:

"The problem is not just soil erosion or desertification, but the loss of a philosophy that views land as sacred, living beings as part of an integrated system, and humans as stewards rather than conquerors. Permaculture is a design science for creating stable human settlements by mimicking natural ecosystems—where every element performs multiple functions, waste is eliminated, and energy flows in cycles, not linear chains."