On today’s show, I interview Mark Plotkin, ethnobotanist, author and president of The Amazon Conservation Team. Mark originally founded this organization as a way to commune between the two disparate fields of aiding the people of the Amazon and the rain forest itself. In his experience, other conservation efforts did not bring these two worlds together, something that is integral to any real effort for either. During our chat, we look at the early years of Mark’s organization, working with local leaders in the Amazon to create maps of the areas and the challenges that these processes posed. We also get to hear from Mark about what keeps him motivated, the status of Shamanism in the contemporary climate and what he believes are essential attitudes towards successful social entrepreneurship. Through our discussion, we learn what ethnobotany as a study can look like and get some nuggets of wisdom from a learned and dedicated student of the jungle. We also end off the episode with a wonderful Ecuadorian psychedelic piece of music from Nicola Cruz! So let’s dive right in and hear what Mark has to say!

Key Points From This Episode:

- The reasons Mark started his organization, The Amazon Conservation Team.
- Mark’s definition of social entrepreneurship for non-profit organization.
- The initiative that Mark spearheaded in which he provided GPS skills for map creation.
- Some of the challenges that Mark faced in educating and creating maps in the Amazon.
- The spiritual boomerang and the reasons Mark keeps going with his quest.
- Mark’s perspective on the fundamental characteristics of success and the importance of luck.
- How 9/11 almost closed the doors of The Amazon Conservation Team.
- Times in the field when Mark feared for his life and the lessons experience has taught him.
- Modern Shamanism and the navigating the contemporary world with ancient wisdom.
- Mark’s beliefs around the spirit world and his experiences relating to it.
- Day to day life in the field and what ethnobotany consists of.
- Advice to social entrepreneurs who might be considering working in the Amazon.
- Mark’s attitude and approach to changing the world effectively.
- And much more!
Tweetables:

“What we like to say when we are asked about these type of social entrepreneurship approaches, is that it is the marriage of ancient shamanic wisdom and 21st century technology.” — @DocMarkPlotkin [0:10:42.2]

“We didn’t set out to map the Amazon, we didn’t set out teach Indians how to use technology, what we did set out to do was give these guys a level playing field or even an advantage on that playing field over the people who want to take advantage of them in may cases.” — @DocMarkPlotkin [0:16:00.1]

About Mark Plotkin

Mark J. Plotkin is an ethnobotanist and a plant explorer in the Neotropics, where he is an expert on rainforest ecosystems. Plotkin is an advocate for tropical rainforest conservation.

After attending Isidore Newman School in New Orleans, Plotkin worked at Harvard University’s Museum of Comparative Zoology when he joined an expedition searching for an elusive crocodilian species in 1978 and was galvanized into returning to education. He completed his bachelor of liberal arts degree at the Harvard Extension School, his master’s degree in forestry at Yale School of Forestry, and his Ph.D. at Tufts University; during which he completed a handbook for the Tiriýo people of Suriname detailing their own medicinal plants—the only other book printed in Tiriýo language being the Bible. He went on to do research at Harvard under Richard Evans Schultes. He is the author of the book Tales of a Shaman’s Apprentice. Other critically acclaimed books by Plotkin include Medicine Quest, The Killers Within: the Deadly Rise of Drug-Resistant Bacteria (with Michael Shnayerson), and The Shaman’s Apprentice, (a children’s book with Lynne Cherry).

In 1995, Plotkin and prominent Costa Rican conservationist Liliana Madrigal formed the Amazon Conservation Team[1] to protect Amazonian rainforest in partnership with local indigenous peoples. ACT has now worked with 32 tribes throughout Amazonia. Plotkin continues to work with the Tirió of Suriname, and in Brazil as well. He is featured in the 1997 IMAX film Amazon, written by photojournalist Loren McIntyre.

Plotkin received the San Diego Zoo Gold Medal for Conservation (1993) and the Roy Chapman Andrews Distinguished Explorer Award (2004). Time called him an “Environmental Hero for the Planet” (2001) and Smithsonian hailed him as one of “35 Who Made a Difference” (2005), along with other notables like Bill Gates, Steven Spielberg, and fellow New Orleanian Wynton Marsalis.

In March 2008, Plotkin and Madrigal were among those chosen as “Social Entrepreneurs of the Year” by the Skoll Foundation.

In May 2010, Mark Plotkin received the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. The degree citation read in part: “For teaching us that the loss of knowledge and species anywhere impoverishes us all; for combining humanitarian vision with academic rigor and moral sensibility; and for reminding us always, with clarity and passion and humor, that when we study people and plants, we are simultaneously exploring paths to philosophy, music, art, dance, reverence, and healing; Lewis and Clark is honored to confer on you today the Doctorate of Humane Letters, honoris causa.” In October of the same year, the great primatologist Jane Goodall presented Mark with an award for “International Conservation Leadership.”

Links Mentioned in Today’s Episode:

[Mark Plotkin on Twitter](#)
[Mark Plotkin on Ted](#)
[The Amazon Conservation Team](#)
[Tales of A Shama’s Apprentice](#)
[Medicine Quest](#)
[Spiritual Evolution with Sacred Plant Medicines](#)
[EntheoNation Patreon](#)
[Nicola Cruz Bandcamp](#)
Hey there Beautiful Visionaries,

This is Lorna Liana, host of EntheoNation, from Koh Phangan Thailand, a tropical paradise, trance music mecca, Ibiza of the East, and portal of transformational consciousness. It’s the kind of place where, if you threw a crystal you’d hit a vegan tantric yogini.

EntheoNation is launching Season 2 of the podcast after a long 2 year hiatus. I’ve received so many emails asking when EntheoNation would start up again, and I want to thank you so much for your support. I did not expect to put this podcast on hiatus for 2 years, but the time definitely flew by. It’s also a significant amount of work to put together a podcast, it’s hours of time spent in topic research, and scripting. Also, everyone on the podcast production team, except me, gets paid, and it can be difficult to allocate that much time, effort, and money towards a passion project that doesn’t generate revenue, because, well, there aren’t a heck of a lot of corporate sponsors you can find for a channel about psychedelics.

Also, in the last year, I relocated 6 times, including 2 visits to Brazil, while I went through my application process for a Spanish residency visa. As soon as I got it, I moved to Barcelona, but in the summer, Ibiza captured my heart. I am so overjoyed to make Ibiza my permanent home, for now.
Ibiza is a shamanic hub. Over the summer, my Brazilian medicine family came over to host a 4 day prayer ceremony with about 30 indigenous shamans and elders. It was an epic gathering, that I have to say, was a peak moment, a convergence of so many powerful and meaningful aspects of my life, that I felt the unfolding of destiny.

You see, in 2004 I took a trip to Huni Kui territory in the Brazilian Amazon, and traveled 5 days by boat to a remote village with 2 documentary film teams, to participate in the Festival of the Royal Hawk. I almost didn’t go on that trip, because I couldn’t speak Portuguese, however, there was one man who could speak English. His name was Fernando Assad, or better known as Txai Fernando.

He and his team recorded sounds of the forest and indigenous chants, formed the musical group Amazon Ensemble and produced their first album Mãe Inini. Fernando went on to lead ceremonies with his band and bring groups to the Amazon.

My life totally changed as well. During that 4 month trip I received a message from the forest around me that I had to learn emerging technologies to preserve indigenous wisdom, and find a way to empower indigenous people with emerging technology. I went on to pursue a career in Internet marketing, in the San Francisco startup world of disruptive technology, and then became a digital nomad. This mission has become a journey of a lifetime.

I had not seen Txai Fernando since then. 13 years later, we would meet again in Ibiza. As I walked through the doorway of the villa where the Yawanawa ceremony would take place, he was, just at that moment walking out.

We stopped, face to face for the first time in 13 years. And, looking at each other, I blurted, “I wouldn’t have gone on that trip if it weren’t for you, and the fact that you spoke English.”

He looked at me and said, “That trip totally changed my life.”

“Mine too!”

“It changed their lives also. In fact, the Festival was so powerful and revealed a lot of intense energy for them. Some dark energy. Somebody died. It got so bad, that they actually moved the entire village. Nobody lives there anymore.”

And so it was that night, in the dome at the House of Colors, that I sat with the Yawanawa, my medicine family from the Condor Eagle tribe in Alto Paraiso, Brazil, in my new home of Ibiza.

And Txai Fernando, after 13 years, wearing a magnificent headdress of Harpy Eagle feathers, overflowing with joy, served me a cup ayahuasca. The moment the medicine touched my lips, destiny came full circle, and I realized I indeed harnessed the power of visionary states and manifested a life beyond my wildest dreams.

And I want so much to share this gift with you.

What does it mean to “Harness the power of visionary states and forge reality into your wildest dreams?”

Here’s the EntheoNation perspective.

Harness the Power of Visionary States...

What do we mean by this statement? We believe that visionary states are sacred and that all human beings have the ability to receive divine visions and guidance. There are many ways to access visionary states and divine intuition, such as through Holotropic Breathwork, intensive meditation retreats, and through psychoactive medicines. We endorse the grounded, responsible exploration of visionary states.

How do you know if your relationship to visionary states is grounded and healthy?

- You give yourself extensive integration time between vision quests
- You have the ongoing support of a spiritual and or visionary community
- You lead a healthy lifestyle, with enough sleep, exercise, and good food
- You receive positive feedback from people around you that you are solid, grounded, loved, and appreciated

& Forge Reality Into Your Wildest Dreams.

What do we mean by this statement? We believe that we create our own reality, that our experience of the world around us originates first in our minds. For this reason, by changing your thoughts and belief systems, you have the power to co-create
the reality you want to experience. We believe in the power of creating beauty in the world through visionary inspiration. Here are some suggestions:

- What you create be positive, inspiring, healing, loving, and an expression of your authentic truth
- That nobody be harmed by your creation...including yourself.
- That your dreams be grounded in wisdom, love, authenticity, with a sincere desire to awaken and make the world a better place.

So how exactly do you bridge the gap between your experiences in visionary realms, and your day to day reality?

1. The first step is to recognize that your dreams and visions have power, and are real at a certain level, or realm of existence. Your visions and dreams contain information that is being made available to you that defies the rational, linear logic of the conscious mind. Your visions and dreams convey the wisdom and insight of your unconscious mind. This ocean of knowledge has been tapped by shamans and mystics from the earliest years of human existence. The ability to access this innate wisdom is a faculty every human being possesses, a sixth sense, if you will, that you can choose to cultivate or not.

2. The second step is to cultivate your ability to access this knowledge whether you are working with visionary medicines or not. This can be done through cultivating your intuition, or through dreamwork, with or without the support of oneirogenic herbs. The key is to exercise your intuition, so that you can gain clear access to your innate wisdom whenever you need it. Often people see and communicate with angels, protectors, spirit guides, teachers, and ancestors in visionary realms. If you’ve experienced this kind of paranormal phenomenon, you may find it beneficial to cultivate a strong relationship with your guides.

3. The third step is to hone your interpretation skills, so that you develop the clarity around the best actions to take based on the information or guidance you are being shown. Sometimes there is no logical explanation for an powerful intuitive hit. You just know you have to do it, and understand that there is a lesson to be learned from this, a powerful, life-transforming lesson, even if the outcome from pursuing that course of action ends up being painful. That inexplicable intuitive hit may lead you to
a new career, as it did for me, or it may lead you to meet an important person, or valuable opportunity. Part of this process is learning to differentiate between what is an intuitive hit, and what is a nagging, self-limiting fear.

4. Lastly, you will want to bridge the mystic with the mundane, and try to implement the guidance received in the visionary states in your day to day life. Of course, only if it doesn’t harm you, or others. This will require discernment, because taking visionary signs too literally can lead to other problems and complications in life. If you have a vision where you’ve shapeshifted into an eagle soaring through the sky, please don’t jump out of a building thinking you will be able to fly as a human.

Whether or not you are spiritual, if you’ve experienced expanded states of consciousness, chances are, you may have discovered things you never knew about yourself, other people, or the world around you through direct revelation. What we hope to accomplish at EntheoNation is to help you integrate those gems into your everyday life, so that you experience magic and mystery during your time here on Earth.

When I think about what I’d like to bring to you in Season 2 of EntheoNation is a sense of purpose. Because I really think visionary medicines can offer use so much more than a far out, psychedelic trip. Or another means of productivity-hacking through micro-dosing, just so that you can be a better cog in the machine.

I think if we related to visionary medicines from a recreational or materialistic perspective, we really miss out on so much of the magic and mystery that they offer. The opportunity to experience profound healing. Divine love and liberating self-forgiveness. Ecstatic bliss and an ineffable lightness of being. And the inspiration to make something meaningful of our lives.

In Season 2 we will exploring how we can harness the power of our visionary states and forge reality into our wildest dreams. In addition to interviews with leading psychedelic researchers and scientists, we’ll also be covering practical shamanism, ways we use shamanic practices to heal, evolve, transform, shapeshift into our highest selves, create an epic life we love, and manifest a higher purpose.

We’ll also be examining some of the perils inherent with the consumption of powerful visionary medicines, the emergence of dangerous narcissistic facilitators and abusive shamans, and what to do if you are messed up from a psychedelic experience.

While this podcast is very much a labor of love for me, it is very laborious, time-consuming and expensive to produce. In fact, every episode costs about $100 to produce, and this includes video and audio editing, graphic design, and web production, but doesn’t include the hours and hours of my time.

So if you are a fan of EntheoNation, and love the work that we do, please consider supporting our Patreon campaign. Your small, monthly contribution goes a long way. And we have really great rewards for you as well.

You can check it out at www.patreon.com/entheonation

One of the projects we have in our docket is the creation of a digital songbook of Yawanawá songs. Since my stay with the Yawanawá tribe in 2011 during their festival, I’ve been so moved by the evolution of their music, from traditional chants to soul-stirring songs accompanied by guitar.

The Yawanawá songbook will be a downloadable PDF and multimedia experience. It will involve collaborative effort between individuals in the tribe, Brazilian friends who have visited the tribe, taken groups to the village and accompanied the Yawanawá in their journeys to other parts of the world. Here’s what’s involved with putting this songbook together:

- First we need to verify that the words are written correctly, and we need the help of a member of the tribe to do this. There are many informally transcribed songs, with people’s best phonetization of the words done by Brazilians and other Westerners, written out from people listening to ceremony recordings, but this is not the same as having the language written correctly.
- We also want to include information about the tribe, as well as their own introduction to this work. This requires the assistance of a translator who can simultaneously translate their Portuguese into English.
- We want to record on video Yawanawa musicians singing the song, so that we can include audio with the song lyrics, rather than include a clip cut out of an ayahuasca ceremony, with people vomiting in the background.
- We’ll include professional photos of the tribe.
- We want to enlist the help of a professional musician to indicate the correct guitar chords.
- There’s also the graphic design of the book, and putting together the web pages that will host the video as well as the lyrics, should people want to click through to the recording.
This digital songbook is a labor of love and will be offered to the world for free, for anyone who wants to learn and sing these powerful healing songs from the forest. In order to bring this work to fruition, we are calling upon the support of our tribe to make this project a reality, so we can share the culture and music of the Yawanawá people around the world.

You can support us by becoming a patron at www.patreon.com/entheonation

Mentioned in This Episode

- Amazon Ensemble
- Buy Amazon Ensemble Music

Medicine Music for the Soul

Raminô – Canto Yawanawá

Tarondê - Canto Yawanawá

Acknowledgement:

- Birds of Paradise
- Desert Dwellers
- Emancipator
- The Human Experience
- Kaminanda
- Phuture Primitive
- Shaman's Dream

Philippe Lewis, the Exquisite Lover, is a Sex & Intimacy Coach, Certified
Sexological Bodyworker, Trained Somatica Practitioner, and Epic Event Producer. For the last 18 years, he has been exploring relationships, intimacy, sensuality and sexuality with individuals and communities through teaching, writing, coaching and (sexy) events with the goal of growing men and women into better lovers and better humans. A Burner since 1998, Philippe shares veteran advice on being fully prepared for epic play on the Playa, and getting the most transformation out of transformational festivals for yourself as well as for your intimate relationships.

In this juicy episode, he will share practical advice on how to use the Playa as a transformational relationship playground. Get ready to discover:

- [9:01] How to avoid common Playa pitfalls and ensure your relationship survives Burning Man
- [13:54] What “CPR” is, and how to use it to change the world, change your life, and enhance your relationship.
- [16:39] Creative ways you can use intention to add more magic to your Burn
- [17:08] How to negotiate Playa boundaries with your lover...that include sexual encounters with other people.

**Mentioned in this episode**

- [Burninmg Man](#)
- [Philippe’s Ultimate Burning Man Preparation List](#)
- [Using CPR (Context, Purpose, Results) to Change the World](#)
- [The Poly Boundary Game for Plain Paper](#)

**Philippe’s 10 rules of Burning Man**

- Rule #1: You have to pee once in a while
- Rule #2: Don’t step in it
- Rule #3: It’s not about you
- Rule #4: Unless it is about you
- Rule #5: When the ship set sail, it set sail (about leaving camp and not going back)
- Rule #6: No mo FOMO (stay in the moment and enjoy it)
- Rule #7-8: Intentionally left blank (for you to fill)
- Rule #9: Everyone should have their orgasm
- Rule #10: It’s time to go
Where to find Philippe:

- Philippe’s Website
- Philippe’s Facebook Profile
- Exquisite Love Facebook Page
- Exquisite Love Classes & Events

Medicine music for the soul

*Embraced* (on Jumpsuit Records) by The Human Experience

Acknowledgement:

Deepest gratitude to these artists, for allowing us to use their music in our podcast branding.

- Birds of Paradise
- Desert Dwellers
- Emancipator
- The Human Experience
- Ixchel Prisma
- Kaminanda
Larry Norris is the founder and executive director of ERIE (Entheogenic Research, Integration, and Education). ERIE is a group dedicated to entheogenic research and the development of integration tools, as well as bringing diverse entheogenic speakers, practitioners, and researchers to share their wisdom with the San Francisco/Bay Area community. This summer Larry taught Entheogenic Education, a graduate level course at the California Institute of Integral Studies. The goal of this course was to discuss the concept of entheogens as educational tools and teachers. A dedicated activist and a proponent of cognitive liberty, Larry’s efforts emphasize entheogens potentially transformative value given the right set and setting.

Julie D. Megler is a board certified family medicine and psychiatric nurse practitioner. Professionally she strives to integrate the mind/body connection and health care. Julie has a private practice in the San Francisco/Bay Area, offering mental health services and integration of non-ordinary states of consciousness. She is also on the board of directors for ERIE non profit. Julie has presented at Detroit’s First Entheogenic Conference, Psychedelic Science, and The Women’s Visionary Congress. In addition she has co-authored chapters in the books Manifesting Minds and The Therapeutic Uses of Ayahuasca.

In this episode, they will share their tips on how couples can optimize their visionary experiences, while staying healthy, playful, and deeply connected even in extreme conditions.

You will hear about:

- [06:04] How Larry and Julie were brought together by their visionary experiences
- [08:15] Their best advise on how to maintain a harmonious and impactful relationship in a visionary setting
- [11:18] Their first visionary experience as a couple
- [14:45] How to hold a sacrosanct container for a relationship in the midst of entheogenic journeys
- [18:44] How types of entheogenic medicines apply in relationships
- [28:00] The Burning Man experience and its challenges to couples
- [33:15] How couples can get over the Burning Man hangover
- [37:21] Responsibilities of visionary couples in the community
- [39:25] How couples can support each other on integration and get back into the rhythm of the “real world”
Mentioned in this interview:

- Alphabetamines, Alexander Shulgin
- Burning Man
- Optimizing Entheogenic Experiences
- Natalie Metz

Where to find Julie & Larry:

- ERIE’s YouTube Channel
- ERIE website
- Larry’s email address: erievision@gmail.com
- Julie’s email address: juliemeglernp@gmail.com

Medicine music for the soul

One Earth, One Vibration Vol 1 by New Earth Music

Acknowledgement:

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- Birds of Paradise
- Desert Dwellers
- Emancipator
- The Human Experience
- Ixchel Prisma
- Kaminanda
Andrew Johnstone is in charge of designing the Burning Man Man Base, and ensuring that the Man burns safely, so that flaming tons of debris do not cascade down onto the thousands of revelers below. Originally from Great Britain, Andrew currently resides in San Francisco with his wife and children. Since 2005 he apprenticed under Rod Garrett, the architect of Burning Man. When Rod passed away in 2011, Andrew was honored with the title “Design Steward of the Man” and has served to carry on with the design of the Burning Man Man Base. This year, the theme of Burning Man is “Da Vinci’s Workshop” and a bold design employing gears and human power has been devised to rotate the Man in a style that would make Da Vinci proud.

In this conversation, you’ll hear about:

- [11:30] The origins of Burning Man
- [14:03] How Burning Man decides what the Man and the Man Base looks like
- [16:25] What it takes to ensure that the Man burns safely
- [27:22] How to not die at Burning Man
- [36:35] How Burning Man can transform your life
- [38:20] How Burning Man is changing the world
Mentioned in this episode

- Burning Man
- Rod Garrett
- Larry Harvey
- Cacophony Society
- Billy Talen

Other resources

- Transformational festival
- 8 Ways Transformational Festivals Can Change Your Life and Change the World
- 28 Festivals and 8 Reasons They Can Change Your Life
- The World’s Best Festivals
- Sustainable Green Living

Where to find Andrew:

- Burning Man
- Facebook (you must be logged in to view his page)
- Email: andrew@burningman.org

Medicine music for the soul

Return Of The Bird Tribes by Deya Dova
Acknowledgement:

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- Emancipator
- The Human Experience
- Ixchel Prisma
- Kaminanda
- Outersect
- Phuture Primitive
- Shaman’s Dream

To know more about these artists, visit our Gratitude page.

For Exclusive Content & Video Field Reports, CLICK HERE to Subscribe to EntheoNation on YouTube.