



How to Create Climate Solutions | Jeremy Casebeer

[00:00:00] Guest Intro - Jeremy Casebeer

Darin: Hey, everybody, welcome to the show. This is Darin Olien. This is The Darin Olien Podcast. What's going on? How are you doing? Are you living the life that you want? Come on, this is it. This is our life. What can we do? It's not about being in judgment. It's about being aware, taking responsibility, and taking action on the things that inspire you, that does no harm to other people, that does benefit to the planet and you and you can create a life from that. I have faith in you. Maybe you're working at a job that is not that great, but you can put in time to go after things that you love. You never know what's going to happen when you put that energy out there. We are electrical, magnetic frequency generators. If you don't know that, what happens when your heart stops? They move everyone away and blast them with electricity. Well, we can't even describe the craziness. We have a soul, we have a body, I'm going off on tangents. I'm just inspired today. I had a great talk with my next guest, Jeremy Casebeer. He is a professional beach volleyball player. That's right. But his light's on, man. Dylan Efron came out here and introduced me to Jeremy. We had a great workout. The first time, I'm like dude, we got to get you on the podcast being an Olympian, being a beach volleyball player. He's doing a lot of things. He's got a podcast called Our Impact, great title. He works to better understand his personal impact and brings positive vibes to create positive outcomes. I last saw him before this at the Footprint conference, a company I'm an advisor on, Jeremy works with. We're in Phoenix talking to some of the nine of the top plastic producers in the world that are making changes. So footprintus.com, proud to be with them, supporting them, as they're making alternatives to single-use plastic. They're the largest producers of plant-based packaging that is not plastic. And Jeremy, I just found out too that we're both ambassadors for Caldera Labs. Jeremy is out in the sun all the time, his skin gets beaten up. I'm always out in the sun, my skin gets beaten up. So this isn't even a plug for Caldera, but we'd love Caldera. Jeremy is an ambassador for Parley for the Oceans and the Forest Stewardship Council. He is on the board of Players for the Planet, and the AVP, the professional volleyball tour. He is also personally taking that and trying to get them plastic-free on tour on the beach. Come on, man. So he goes back and forth between Hermosa Beach and Rio de Janeiro. We love Brazil, so he speaks a little Portuguese more than me. We both love the support of the Cerrado, baruka nuts, the best nut on the planet, being destroyed by cattle grazing and growing food, destroying a part of the planet. We got to do these things differently. So this conversation was epic. We had a conversation about the environment, what Jeremy's doing, and all of these common interests. It's incredible to meet and wonderful to meet a brother of the planet and doing good man. Let's do good. Let's be good. Let's be better, and today we're better, and to the next day, we'll be better, and we keep going not out of judgment. We can always do better. He flipped the tables on me a little bit, and started asking me a bunch of questions. It was a cool, relaxed, powerful conversation. So sit back, relax or workout, scream on a mountain, do whatever you want to do, and listen to the podcasts. Remember, like and subscribe and share these episodes so that we can highlight great people doing great things and get this information out so that we



find our tribe, we celebrate our tribe, and create a great life for ourselves and the planet. So enjoy my conversation with Jeremy Casebeer.

[00:04:58] Podcast Intro

Darin: You are listening to The Darin Olien Show. I am Darin, and it is my life's mission to find and share healthy and sustainable ways of living. In this podcast, I talk to inspiring people and professionals from around the world to uncover ways that we as humans can improve our lifestyles, strengthen our mindsets, and take better care of this beautiful planet we call home. If you're looking for motivation to take the next steps towards a happier, healthier life, then you're in the right place, and I'm stoked that you're here. So let's do this. This is my show, The Darin Olien Show.

[00:05:41] First Part of the Interview

Darin: Thank you for making the journey out here, dude. The last time you were here, we worked out with Dylan, put some sweat into the ground.

Jeremy: Yeah, man. It's just outside the gym, and then the pool you gotta go into, it's perfect.

Darin: That's pretty great. So dude, bom dia.

Jeremy: Bom dia.

Darin: So, our love for Brazil, and you're going back and forth. It's so interesting what you're navigating. So, this pro volleyball career plus this pro-environment side, which you and I have talked about a lot, and how you can love what you do, be an athlete and use your voice, your platform for education. Clearly, we have similar paths and crossing, not similar, but just there are certain paths crossing and your connection with Footprint, which is a love of ours. They're kind of the biggest player of single-use plastic alternatives on the frickin planet.

Jeremy: It's gonna be a total game-changer what they're doing and the scale they're doing at that and making it a cost-competitive and easy solution.

Darin: It gives hope. As soon as I heard about it, because it's so overwhelming, what other choice does a regular person have and we're all regular people, and what choices do we have? Everything that we're ordering is coming in plastic. We're on a plane, everything's in plastic. You're like, what do we do? And to see something like that, and we're both in Phoenix, the Footprint Center, in that room full of the big boys, Cargill, McDonald's, Pepsi, Walmart, and all those people that are making changes. Troy and the team at footprint are doing those things, so it was great to hit the drum there and see you there. Tell me about where you're at in your career. You're kind of navigating between still going to Brazil and still here and still having a pro volleyball, beach volleyball career. Tell me about that.

[00:07:39] Balancing life and a pro volleyball career

Jeremy: Basically, I started playing professionally 10 years ago or so, man, I'm getting older now, the early 30s, right after I graduated from UCLA. I grew up hiking, surfing, camping,



and always had the love of being outdoors. Those are my fondest memories, going backpacking, surfing, camping in the El Cap. I had an incredible environmental science teacher in high school who lived up on the past. Actually, kind of similar to your setup here, man. He lived in a geodesic dome up on the past. He was just such a character, super engaging, dropping F-bombs in class, but really brought sustainability and the climate changed to life. We went on a rad trip out to Santa Cruz Island. I got to build a greenhouse at the field station there and planted endemic species and just kind of opened my eyes to what California looked like hundreds or thousands of years ago before it was settled. I was like, this is amazing. Anyway, that was like my first kind of introduction to sustainability and climate change aside from loving being outdoors and went on to study sustainability or environmental studies at UCLA, and play indoor volleyball there. I was considering a traditional job and sustainability or working for a nonprofit but had the opportunity to play beach volleyball professionally. I figured I could always come back to the desk job later in life.

Darin: Or never.

Jeremy: Or never, hopefully, fingers crossed, never. So, I went overseas, played in Australia and New Zealand. I got to travel to Bali, Turkey, Israel, all in my first six months, and just never looked back. I love the trajectory I was on but also very aware that being a professional athlete, the career span is relatively short. And being a great jump server or beach volleyball player doesn't translate to hard skills after that. So I'm always looking for ways to kind of get some experience and skill set to work in sustainability in a meaningful way later, and have an impact while I'm playing. It's been a process to kind of navigate what that looks like, but the last few years started to connect the dots. It's been fun. The last two years or so, I started to focus on my partnerships and sponsorships on B Corp, 1% for the planet and climate initial brands, basically aligned with my values. I've done sponsorships in the last 10 years in every which way especially when I was just getting going. I feel like athletes just jump at the first opportunity but now being more mindful and thoughtful about the brands I work with and whether or not they're working to have a transparent impact, and then working with them to share their stories, share the impact that they're having, creating content, photos, and videos, working with them on my podcast. Then also looking at the opportunity that athletes in general have to visit communities that they're involved in. I think athletes, especially professional athletes, and even now college athletes, with NIL coming through, being able to be sponsored, you can use their platforms in really meaningful way. How can you interact with fans? How can you work with the other athletes you play with and compete with? How can you work with the leagues or teams that you're on? How can you partner with nonprofits to help raise up the work that they're doing and share it? So, it's been definitely a long meandering process to figure out kind of how to connect those dots, but in the last couple of years it's starting to come together. It's been a really fun and often difficult learning process.

Darin: Whenever you're doing something that hasn't been kind of formulated yet, you have to figure it out and fling yourself in the middle of it, and that's always leading from the passion first. I would rather align myself with someone passionate over someone who's got a PhD. Now, if they have a PhD or whatever, and they're passionate, then great. But that drive that's deeper within is always better, I think. Interesting because it never was a thing when I was in college, certainly in Minnesota as an option of studying the environment. So what was that



aside from the real-life experience that you had? I guess, straight up, was it worth it? You loved it, but as it's giving you the educational side of things, did you gain something that you feel is worthy of putting into motion? Did it just kind of spark you more? What was that like and what do you think is maybe missing or could be adapted from an educational standpoint?

[00:11:55] What's missing in environmental science and climate education

Jeremy: That's a great question. I feel like undergrad and especially as an athlete, the first couple of years, I kind of dicked around. I didn't take it as seriously as I could, kind of to be expected. But then towards the end of my time at UCLA, I started taking classes I was actually interested in. I showed up to every class. I stayed up to date, read, studied. I was getting straight A's versus early on, I was getting like B's and C's in my first few quarters, whatever. I really enjoyed the process of actually diving into the material later in my career, or later in my time at UCLA. Then basically, for the first five years after I graduated, I was falling on volleyball, really focused on that but I wanted more and I wasn't sure how to kind of connect the dots and how to start to get that experience and skill set to actually have an impact and work in sustainability. So, I went back to UCLA to get a certificate of sustainability. After being gone from, I guess, academics for so long, it's really nice to dive into that, especially when you know what you want to focus on and you're more invested. But I also think there's no substitute for hands-on experience. Over the years I've done, I've read so many books, listen to so many podcasts. I've tried to learn from the experts like yourself. I've gotten a ton out of Project Drawdown and all these different organizations that are doing great work coming at it from different sides. And Katharine Hayhoe, like when I was reading the Project Drawdown the first time and then dove into Katharine Hayhoe's work who's a contributor for them. She's a Christian climate scientist living in Texas. She's just so sharp and comes at it from such an open-minded perspective. But one of the things that she said that blew me away in the research is that 97% of climate communications focuses on gloom and doom, or basically how fucked we are. And only 3% focuses on the actual solutions, which we have now, not 5, 10, 20 years but now. I was like, man, that's backwards. It's so backwards. If you constantly talk about how screwed we are, yes, we're in an extremely difficult situation, we need radical change and systemic change, but if you don't offer an action plan or simple steps that everyone can kind of work towards, if there's no plan of action, then people just bury their head in the sand and look away. So when I heard that, I was like, alright, there's got to be something I can do within beach volleyball, small community, but super active and the beach is our office and the beach is our home, and I've never seen the beach without plastic. It's my boat. I've traveled all over the world and seen some of the most beautiful beaches, but I've never been to a beach without plastic. I basically wanted to see how I could learn from the people already doing strong work from the nonprofits, the academics, the brands focused on transparent social environmental impact, and then how support can help leverage that.

Darin: You bring up some things that I think about all the time, and I too, we're right there with you in terms of like, well, for the most part, everyone knows what's going on. And if we focus on the world is going to collapse and implode and all of that stuff, it paralyzes people than creates action. Also, I've talked to Paul about this, Paul Hawken, about this too, in the sense that I'm kind of divorcing the climate change same conversation. I'm kind of divorcing even the terminology because this is why, of course, it still exists. Of course, I believe in it.



It's lacking common sense, all of this shit. You look at almost every personal care to fast food to what we're putting on our skin and lotions and the kind of clothes, every direction, we're lacking this lens. And this lens is colored and manipulated by the god that we put in front of it, and that is the profit. Somehow we've gotten that that is the final thing. So it lacks this common sense. That said, by doing all these things, it naturally pollutes the person and pollutes you and pollutes me and pollutes your children and pollutes the planet. So it's like, well, what can we do differently? And if we do that differently and not destroying ourselves and our endocrine systems then it naturally helps the planet too. My point is, maybe you agree, and that is, the messaging is that this can help you right now, not to mention whatever Coke is made out of. Let's just say it's water and it's healthy and you need it, let's wrap it with something different.

Jeremy: Exactly. In the fall I went to the Dominican Republic with the Players for the Planet, which is a nonprofit started by an ex-major league baseball player. He basically created players for the planet out of seeing how many plastic bottles his one team used in one day out of the 180 games they play in a year, and then you multiply that by how many baseball teams, the number of fans in the stadium, it's just kind of mind-boggling. So he started it, I think 10, 15 years ago, and we went to the Dominican Republic because some of the best baseball players in the world come from this tiny little island. A bunch of the major teams have their feeder teams there where they groom talent and whatnot. So I got to bring a number of athletes there, and I've literally lived at the beach. That's where I've spent my entire life growing up in the last 15 years. Like I said, I've never seen the beach without plastic, but this was something else, man. We did a beach cleanup, and I was walking through like 8 to 10 inches of plastic. It was insane. I've never seen it. As you're saying, it kind of all just hit home. I've been doing all this research and trying to learn and understand the issues and possible solutions but when I saw that, I was just like, dude, this is one beach, on one small side of one small island, let alone all over the world. I'm really interested in the idea and I would love to hear you riff on this idea of how do you get towards systemic change? What's the connection between individual action community or collective action and systemic change? When I was sifting through this trash, we had a couple of hundred people cleaned up a couple of different beaches for a day and it looked way better but I'm like, man, this is just the drop in the bucket. This is a tiny, tiny bandaid. And they made it clear that nothing is going to change until the largest companies that have the most negative impact start paying for their externalities, start paying for the impacts, start paying for the billions of bottles they produce and whatnot.

[00:18:24] Caldera Lab Ad

Darin: I never used to give much thought to my skincare routine. There weren't enough brands making products that I would actually feel safe to apply to my skin and that is the truth. And on top of that, the idea of finding a routine that would suit my skin and my schedule was just too much effort. I just blew it off. Nobody has the time or money to try a bunch of different products, look into them, and of course, I'm looking into every single ingredient and most of them are junk until you find one that actually improves your skin. That's why finding Caldera Labs was a blessing for me. They made it easy for me to take care of my skin in a way that fits my routine and my lifestyle. I cleanse my face in the morning and at night using the Clean Slate cleanser. Then in the morning, I use their base layer moisturizer to keep my skin nourished throughout the day. And at night, I use my



favorite product from them, The Good, which is a serum that just leaves my skin feeling incredible. It's that easy. Their products are made from completely clean, nontoxic ingredients. And my favorite part about it is their sustainably harvested botanicals, and they're going above and beyond organic and their incredible extraction processes to create the best skincare that actually works. My skin has never felt or looked healthier. If you're ready to take your skincare to the next level, Caldera is offering my listeners 20% off when you head to calderalab.com/darin and use the code DARIN. That's C-A-L-D-E-R-A-L-A-B dot com forward-slash Darin, D-A-R-I-N. You will not regret it.

[00:20:33] Second Part of the Interview

Darin: The lifetime tax, that's been talked about a little bit like, hey, you're responsible for your product after you sell it. So it's like what part of the great work back to Footprint, whoever uses their containers and stuff, they have already tested it for it to biodegrade back to its original plant fiber roots. That's the kind of thing. So here's my quick answer because it's obviously very complex. The quick answer is you got to punch people in the head or punch them in the gut. We are neutering ourselves, our children, their endocrine systems, their toxicology, their volatile organic compounds are all up in them. An average, what was it, 281 toxins in the umbilical cord of every child born in the US today. Those are all manufactured chemicals that are not regulated. Of that, they say 9% is regulated of the 60,000 to 80,000 every year. So we have to bring the invisible because these are invisible toxins. We can't see the toxins coming into our body and altering our chemistry and stressing our bodies out, and creating a propensity for cancers, which is absolutely true. And now they're even read some studies on cardiovascular disease and obesity and diabetes, and all of these chemicals that are altering things, and it's really starting to like a small thing overtime of the inoculation of these chemicals. So the answer is, people have to become aware that when they're putting this bib or this binky in the proximity of their child, this is full of toxic compounds that are sometimes known very well by these same organizations that are not regulating anything. So it's you and I and many other people that need to bring about this invisible into the visible and say, listen, here's the science, here are the studies, here's what this chemical is doing to your child now today. Do you want that? Of course not. So we have to open up that box to then go, if it was up to me, I'd go to the mothers of the world because the mothers of the world, man, they're changing everything.

Jeremy: A hundred percent.

Darin: They are the masters of the freaking universe. Moms are the glue. They're the love. They're the foundation for what the kids are doing, what the husbands are doing, all of that stuff. So if I had a magic wand, I would bring all the mothers from around the world and show them what these things are doing. What this unfortunately convenient cheap food, fast food, Coca Cola, Pepsi, you name it, the plastic wrapped around it, this crappy subsidized meat that they're doing, all of this stuff. And I would show them the invisible into the visible so that they could go, I cannot any more harm my child now knowing what I know.

Jeremy: Sure. Well, that's what's so cool about what you're doing with this podcast and fatal conveniences, and what you've done with down to earth is you're shedding light on these issues and bringing new people into the conversation that would not have been there otherwise. But I also think like we were saying, it's really important to what are the solutions,



what are the options, what are the better alternatives, and how do you know it's a better alternative, who can you trust? And it's not easy because, man, I've a five and a half-year-old son and I struggled just to get through the day, again, the school and cook a dinner at the end of the night. Nothing's going on, but you need those kinds of sources and those people that you can trust and that's who you are and that's been your life's mission and the number of people that you've helped inform and give them the right information and the ripple effects from there. That's huge.

Darin: Well, thanks. It's a drop in the bucket in terms of let's get this stuff out. Just to answer some of that stuff in terms of where people can look as resources like cosmetic in the cosmetic kind of world which women use a lot of. The campaign for safe cosmetics and nonprofit doing a lot of studies and great work, environmental working group is another one. These organizations have databases we can plug in your brand if you don't know, and there are rating scales on that stuff. So those are a couple of places where people can start to look at some good organizations. The sad truth is, Jeremy, is that these EPAs, the FCCs, the USDAs, all of these organizations and so many more that we think or even labeled as regulatory are not regulating enough for the health of all of us.

Jeremy: Sure. Underfunded and can be easily biased. And another one too, four or five years ago and I was like really trying to figure things out, it's like, how do you know I can trust a brand. Like how you mentioned for cosmetics and whatnot, but also like B Corps. B Corps is like the gold standard for social environmental impact and transparency and they're nonprofit. The only thing they have is their reputation for transparent impact. So, if they ever did step out of line, they would burn all their bridges and lose everything. So you know that you can trust them, you know that B corps go above and beyond. It's cool that they have to recertify every few years, so it's the standard is constantly improving.

Darin: I've talked to some entities too starting to use blockchain as a window into the transparency too, so there are some good ways to start using technology to get that true window into the company. It's tricky. People have to do some hard work beyond the marketing's peak. I just ran into this EMF device thing that was forwarded to me, and luckily, I can go, hey, who's your CEO, can I talk to them? Because then I can be kind of that, put me and my team into it and really lean in, and then be the amplifier for like, hey, man, I looked at these guys, we dug in, I know what they're doing, and we just need more organizations, more people doing that stuff. Maybe as I edit myself, maybe not more, just the amplification of some of these great organizations are already doing it. For you, you're still playing. So you're still charging. Not to switch because we'll go back into it because we both care about it. But I'm just curious, like how you're physically doing, what are you doing for the people?

[00:27:18] Focusing on sustainability in the off-season

Jeremy: Well, I've been playing beach volleyball for the last 10 years or so.

Darin: A lot of jumping.

Jeremy: A lot of jump and thankfully, it's on the sand, so it's a little softer. But I feel like pretty much everyone during COVID, I felt like we had two short seasons during 2020 and 2021,



three tournaments and stuff like the normal 8 to 10, so many seasons. And they were kind of short notice because of regulations and all that. So I felt like I got in and out of shape like 10 different times. I have been a fraction of an athlete the last two years, so getting back into it this year for a full summer, which will be awesome on the AVP tour. It's been interesting. I feel like when I was younger, I could get away with just training hard in the gym and train hard in the sands and sighting out on breakfast burritos and whatever I want. Now my metabolism is slowing a little bit. I'm trying to get a little bit smarter shifting towards plant-based diet, which is not easy because I'm not a good cook and just trying to connect the dots and kind of round everything out from nutrition, training in the gym, and recovery, and just trying to enjoy things a little bit more. I feel like when I started out my career, I was like so angry and wanted to win tournaments right away, and like I was working my ass off. Then COVID hit and it was kind of like a chance to reflect and kind of focus a little bit more on the sustainability stuff and working with B Corps and nonprofits and connect the dots there. Then now I get to work out with my son in my home gym almost daily, take him to the beach to practice after school. A few weeks ago, I was just having a kind of a shit practice and I was stressed out about this and that. Then I see my son just running around in the sand playing soccer, kicking the ball against the sidewalk wall and I was just like, man, it's not that bad. So just trying to be the best athlete I can be, get to work on these cool projects working on a sustainability plan with the AVP, the beach volleyball tour, and brought in waste management as a strategic partner. They have the Phoenix Open for PGA golf in Phoenix, which is the largest Zero Waste event on the planet and I went this year for the first time. Actually, it was right after I met you at the Footprint conference in Phoenix and it's just wild. It feels like it's one of the most insane sporting events I've ever been to. And there's not a single trashcan on the premise. It's massive. Everything is recyclable or compostable. They offset or they restore 33 million gallons of water that are used. They have gray water systems from all the bars. It's just so well thought out and planned. They've been building that for 10 years plus. I'm really excited to work with the EVP's management, the ops team, and then the sustainability professionals, a shout out to everyone who had been building this event and working with the NBA, NFL, NHL, all these different and sporting leagues and teams to bring some of that into beach volleyball. So this will just be the first year but I'm really excited and we're focusing on the Manhattan Beach Open this year, which is kind of our Super Bowl, biggest tournament, so that would be cool.

Darin: When is that?

Jeremy: Mid August.

Darin: If I'm in town, I'll try to scoot down.

Jeremy: You'll dig it. We're getting some solar generators on the premise. Basically looking at holistically, what are all the impacts, and what can we feasibly get done this year? Then working next few years, what kind of goals can we set and work towards?

Darin: Sounds like you're carving out your future.

Jeremy: Hopefully, I mean, it's been a process. I feel like I've been working on that sustainability plan for a number of years, but it's starting to come to fruition.



Darin: Well, you're aligning with the right people.

Jeremy: Dude, that's what I've realized more and more is just who you choose to work with, finding those shared values and people that, like you said, have that passion. Obviously, you want smart and capable people, but people that you see things in a similar way and want to work towards the same ends.

Darin: There's a reason why you were at Footprint. Number one, it was so great to see you there, and I have so much passion for Footprint. Everyone in that room, actually, I was given a lot more hope, you know, decision-makers at McDonald's, decision-makers at Pepsi, and decision-makers at Walmart are all there because they have started to make those better choices. I think that for me, over time, and maybe you have seen this too, it's so easy to reduce things down like, Coke is bad. Well, for sure they're polluting the hell out of the planet more than almost anyone in terms of single-use plastic, however--

Jeremy: They're not the only ones.

Darin: They're not the only ones. What I find is, there are usually good people in there pushing up sometimes a boulder up a hill for a long time trying to get things done. So when there are options that show up like a Footprint, who in the last six years have built an alternative empire at scale and at a price point, now those people within those organizations go--

Jeremy: They have an option. They have an option that's competitive and solves the problem.

Darin: Totally.

[00:32:14] How do we create systemic change for climate issues?

Jeremy: That's one thing too. I listened to your episode with Celeste about having meaningful conversations. That's something that came up in one of my episodes with Bryan Pape, the Founder of MiiR, which is a water bottle company, B Corp, 1% For the Planet, Climate Neutral Certified, like you, he has done so much thinking about all these issues and problems and solutions. At the end of it, we got into that question of what's the connection between individual collective and systemic change? How do we move the needle? He went on this really interesting riff about how and shared a very personal story in this on the podcast. I'm repeating it, but how he made it as a child, great, because nothing is black and white? Yes, Coke produces billions of bottles a year and yes, they have a serious negative environmental impact, but that doesn't mean everyone is bad there. It means that there's also an opportunity like Walmart. Walmart had plenty of issues in the last couple of decades, and they're massive, but they've also done a lot of good in the last 5, 10 years around sustainability and improve in working conditions and things. So it's difficult when things get so polarized, and it's easier just to point a finger and say, good, bad, black, white, red, blue.

Darin: Here's what I think we have on our side. We have the human nature. Everyone knows on this planet what's right and wrong. I know that. I know that you know what love is, you know what hate is, and hey, it's on you if you're going to act a certain way. Also, we are nature so, therefore, it's harder for an organism to fight against all of what they are. If we



continue to take these conversations in to the space of it's not either-or, it's and. So there's great infrastructure. I look at the electric power poles everywhere, which I'm never taken power here on my property. I'm creating my own, so they can screw themselves. However, that's infrastructure, so why don't we microgrid ourselves? Why don't we all start creating our own independent sovereign power, and then use the system that's already here and things like Edison can play a part of that. We can use their infrastructure, they can participate, they can make some money. However, I have my own power. My neighbor needs it, and I have extra, I give it to him. We know that microgrids are effective and necessary and infinitely better, especially if you're creating your own power, and it's not coming from a monopoly. These are the kinds of things that we need to break free of, this way or that way, these gray zones. This might not be perfect for the future, but it's necessary now to move in these better directions.

Jeremy: I think that's one of the things that a lot of people are working around climate change and sustainability haven't done a great job of them, it's how they're positioning things is for the longest time, a lot of the technologies were more expensive, they weren't as good, the products weren't as high quality, but I think that's changing a lot now. Things are better quality, last longer, safer, healthier, and sometimes even cheaper. It's not trade-off. It's not a step-down. It's a better way of doing things. Yes, it might be different than the conventional way. The story needs to be told in a better way, a more optimistic way. It doesn't need to be perfect the first time like with Walmart. Sure, they have a massive environmental impact. When they first came out, there were plenty of people saying this is greenwashing, this is bullshit, but what's the next best step? Give the people the benefit of the doubt and give them the opportunity to try and make progress. We can't be perfect overnight, but figuring out what the next best step is, and moving in the right direction is all we can do really.

Darin: Totally. If you were given the ability to make choices for, I mean, you could save the world, what would be some of the things that you would do to help balance this kind of consumer catastrophized system?

Jeremy: I'm smiling right now because like during COVID, when it hit, I basically just went into full-on research mode. Tuning on it as much as I could. I basically got to speak to a ton of smart people from all different areas working on social-environmental impact. I asked each person this question. So, if you had a magic wand, whatever, basically your same question, then for me, I'm like, if I get a number of people in the beach volleyball community to take some action, what is the most impactful thing? Somewhat not surprisingly, everyone had different answers based on their experience, based on what type of work they did, whatever. For me, I think it comes down to some legislation making businesses pay for the full cost of their products, the externalities take into account, the positive and negative social and environmental impacts, how do you source your products, are you mining, are you using petroleum products, how are you shipping them, what type of electricity, comprehensive look at how businesses run, and that should be reflected in the price of the products. At the individual level, I don't like to be prescriptive because everyone comes from different backgrounds, everyone has different resources and values. But a couple of things I've been trying to do myself is like we mentioned shifting towards a plant-based diet. I'm far from perfect. I still enjoy eating meat but I feel like even just a small little change is a solid once or twice a week. Just more veggies, I want to eat healthier, and meat and potatoes and



breakfast burritos aren't going to help me be a better athlete and live a longer and healthier life.

Darin: Yes, subsidizing whole food to instead of crappy meat.

Jeremy: That's another thing, subsidies, man. Just let every industry compete based off of how they operate. Let clean energy, renewable energy compete with oil and gas. Let regenerative agriculture compete with massive monoculture agriculture. I was talking to Dylan Efron a little bit before this conversation. Like we're saying, everyone's busy. No one has time to be an expert on all these different things. It's overwhelming. For the average person, what are a few simple steps to have a more positive social-environmental impact?

[00:38:24] SafeSleeve Ad

Darin: Protect yourself from harmful radiation emitted from your electronic devices by using SafeSleeve's cases. All electronic devices produce streams of energy. Your phone, your laptop, your microwave, your TV, on and on, they're all emitting low-frequency radiation. Studies have proven that close and regular contact with low-frequency EMFs increase your risk of certain types of cancer. That's why it's important to reduce your exposure to radiation while you're using electronics in your day-to-day life more and more. I've been using SafeSleeve for years now, way before I even did the podcast. Each case is designed with a radiation shield technology that's been tested in an FCC-certified lab and has been proven to drastically reduce your exposure to radiofrequency radiation by 92% to 99%. They've also just released an awesome new product for your phone called the Privacy Pouch. It acts as a Faraday cage. Your phone can be tracked at all times and can emit radiation even when it's off. The privacy pouch prevents this from happening while also cutting off any signals attempting to come in or out of your phone. Their products have also passed the military-grade drop test so both you and your electronics are getting the protection you need to stay safe. If you want to get your hands on SafeSleeve's case today, head to safesleevecases.com and use the code `darin10` to get 10% off your purchase. There will also be a link to their website in the show notes. So go get protection right now to help keep down some of this electrical pollution, safesleevecases.com.

[00:40:31] Second Part of the Interview

Darin: What I'm trying to excavate right now, and I'm working on this book, I don't know if I told you that but I've been working on this book, this deeper swing at fatal conveniences. So months on fashion industry, months on EMF, months on personal care and all of this stuff. Just huge amounts of data. I really always go back to the individual and that is every person wakes up to drink water. Is that tap water because it's full of pesticides, herbicides, phthalates, hormone disruptors, even if that's "filtered." So obviously, use a glass container. What dental floss are you using? Well, plastic-coated, Teflon coated. Get rid of that, which is obviously a lot better. There's bamboo string, there's hemp string. There are all kinds of different stuff. Then the deodorant that they're using. What are they putting on in their armpits? Is it harming them? Yes, it is. Is it going into the ground into the water? What kind of shampoos? What kind of conditioners? What kind of body wash? All of these things, what kind of clothes, the jeans, every time you wash a pair of jeans, 50,000 bits of microplastic go in to the waterway, go into the soil, go into the streams, with every wash of blue jeans. Every



t-shirt you put on, it takes 2700 gallons of water, not to mention the dyes and the phthalates and the formaldehyde, all of that stuff. I can go on and on and on in terms of what every person is doing. They think that it's not that big a deal, but if you add up one person's impact, it's freaking massive. Not only is it harming them, back to our point of like, hey, company owners take responsibility for your crap. Not only for the impact of chemicals on the person but the impact that it has on the environment. There's an environmental tax that should be implemented. So if that individual changed every single one of those habits, and we're not asking them to be a hippie. We're still saying, hey, man, you get to turn on your lights, live your life, but there are alternatives to actually live integrated in a much better way.

Jeremy: Yes, better ways of doing it, better products, better ways to eat, better ways to travel.

Darin: If I had a wand to change every little pattern of every single person's life of the 8 billion people, everything overnight would shift because the market would collapse and all of the crazy shit that people are putting. If the consciousness could shift on just that impact of that person doing those things, if the invisible became visible, I am knowingly putting lead under my arm and phthalates into my immune system and carcinogens of PFOS, and formaldehyde and fire retardants in my freaking TV set, it totally exists, which is crazy, mattresses. The list--

Jeremy: It's overwhelming.

Darin: Yes. If that person was enlightened just by that alone to go, whoa. I'm talking to everyone, all of you right now, all of this exists right now, that these things are all harmful, all of them, unless you've already started to make the choice of choosing healthier products. So the script would flip completely on its head. Healthy, conscious B Corp type transparent companies would thrive because everyone would be aware of and happy to integrate products that are not only they work, but they're healthier for you instead of detrimental for you and the planet that we would go overnight into an integrated shift and still have an economy and still have great business and all of that stuff.

[00:44:43] Making a profit while still having a positive environmental impact

Jeremy: Well, that's one of the things like when I started to like that question a few years ago, I was like, okay, how can I trust these companies? I was looking at what B corpse do and they look at all of their stakeholders. They look at all the people they impact from manufacturing, employees, customers, the products themselves and full lifecycle of the products like you were talking about. And they've proven that they can actually make a profit. A lot of them donate money. They're 1% For the Planet members as well. They support charities. They pay their employees and their employees overseas above living wages. It's possible to run an ethical, profitable business that has a close to a positive social-environmental impact. I guess if I could wave a magic wand at the individual level, it would be to support more B Corps and 1% For the Planet, and Climate Neutral brands. Then at the larger level, make some sort of legislative shift where climate disclosures, where chemical disclosures, and where brands actually have to pay for the true impact of their products and the externalities. That would go a long way to, I think, creating a more equitable economy and society.



Darin: Then go back to a simple swing, let's go back to grow your own food. Grow your own food, be less dependent on food transported everywhere else, poor food quality, poor nutrient quality, all that stuff, grow your own food, no matter how much land you have.

Jeremy: I mean, that's the idea. I would love to do that, but where I'm living here most in LA, I don't have the opportunity. But even just like having more access to quality food, having more access to regenerative agriculture, organic products, that goes a long way. And working to make that cost-competitive and removing subsidies for the shit food you find elsewhere.

Darin: Now that opens up this whole other Pandora's Box, too, and that is the food deserts and poor economic places in urban areas. When you really look at the evidence, it almost seems like it's programmed to not have people of lower economic status have access to a whole food, instead of the subsidized crap at 7-Elevens and fast foods, which is give a big shout out to my buddy badass vegan, John Lewis, who created this show, which we're trying to get distribution. It looks like we will. The current title called They're Trying To Kill Us. Straight up punch you right in the gut, but also evidence-based around this specific topic. So there's a lot of things and listen, again, you're in a situation, I would also say, sprout. You could sprout in your sink with fresh water and sprouting seeds. Boom, you have a salad in five days. Some of the most nutrient-dense food in the world are sprouts exploding with life, broccoli sprouts, for example. I'll show you all my sprouts.

Jeremy: I want a little tutorial after this.

Darin: I'll show you the whole thing. Also, I'm connected with this great organization called Food Forest Abundance. So you can actually show them your situation. If you have a 16th of an acre of a backyard, whatever you have, they can say, okay, do this, do this, do this. They'll lay out the plan, boom, boom, boom. If you have something like this, in the next couple of years, you'll come back to here and you'll see this place exploding. So there are ways but listen, if I grow food here, how much do I need for myself? Very little. I have a lot of excess food, which food forest abundance, this is cool as shi. You should actually look into it, Tim Gale, an amazing guy. They're actually connecting it to the cryptocurrency, so you can grow food, and that is valued. That is the value on the currency. The food becomes the currency again, which is backing the coin. It flips the whole script, so your food literally is now mining currency for you. And your abundance, you can give out to whoever needs it because now we're creating food security within ourselves. We don't need people outside of that. Get enough people together. I can create all the food for you and your family easily right here. Have a little community. You can come here once a week, get all your vegetables, boom, done. We can send a little truck, deliver to your door, whatever. It's literally just us coming together and figuring this stuff out. It's not rocket science.

[00:49:22] Hindsight is 20/20

Jeremy: Can I ask you another question?

Darin: Yeah.



Jeremy: I started a podcast and I was inspired by what you were doing and how you dove into this and all the amazing guests you've gotten to have. It's really interesting, the art of podcasting and having a conversation, and asking questions. One of them I keep coming back to, I'm super curious because like I said, you've been on this journey and you're way ahead of me. But if you were to look back 10, 15, 20 years, kind of when you're getting started, is there anything that you would do differently or any advice you would give yourself? Anything you're like, man, I had to zig and zag way too long to figure that out.

Darin: I mean, it was all happening accidentally because, at that time, I was heavy into traveling and superfood hunting. I was already starting to go seeing the water problem. Going to India and Africa, you'll figure that out pretty quickly. I got involved with the water program straight away. Actually, I had a couple of times where I was able to meet Obama's grandmother.

Jeremy: No way.

Darin: I sat down with her under a tree. Also, Obama's older brother, Malik, sat under-eating mangoes with him. And I actually met Obama's grandmother on World Water Day giving her village clean water. He can't even write that. It just lined up and everything else. So the point is that I was starting to get there because of the exposure of the world exposure showing you that people-- it's hard to say that because I was giving information and then was doing the best I could at that time. I think I could have organized more people. I could have illuminated what I was seeing a little more aggressively to other people that try to help situations even though I was involved with this organization, getting clean water, we got 800,000 kids clean water. So that was obviously meaningful. It's hard to say. It's hard to go back and say what I would have said because I was doing the very best I could at that time. I was lucky to align companies and products to indigenous farmers and growers to create a healthy fairtrade before fairtrade was like a term. I always saw that as the way to do it. So that's the challenge for me. When I saw what I saw, why would you not take care of the people, take care of the product, take care of the customer, take care of the environment from which you're benefiting? That was the lens always. I don't know if it was coming from a small town, I'm just grateful for that.

Jeremy: Well, part of it probably came from traveling too and that's one thing I've been super fortunate to do. You just get to see the impact in person. You get to have that real experience and see how other people live.

Darin: And I think if you were to say to someone, learn, get outside of your bubble, have conversations, if you can, try to travel. It doesn't mean you have to leave the country, just go to another community. I'm excited to go back to Minnesota. I've done some talks in Minnesota. I've shared some small little newsletters. Just trying to educate my community that doesn't get exposed to any of this stuff. Talk to them because the people will tell you their struggles just by being with them. You will see talking like people are being victims, just having conversations, see where people are, and see what they're struggling with just by observing them and maybe having a meal with them. No one's above, no one's below.

Jeremy: Everyone's just trying to figure it out.



Darin: Everyone's trying to figure it out. And some people are just blessed in the scenario that they're in that. So I see something, I can't unsee it. I can't unsee some kid walking with a jerry can getting water that a cow just took a shit in, which is a normal freaking thing that goes on. And they're playing Russian roulette. They may die with the very thing that they have to consume. You can't unsee that. It's imprinted on my soul. So from those things, although setting the course on finding great superfoods and helping people live that way, the accidental environmental side of things illuminated, and now setting my course for the next part of my life. Anyway, enough about me. How much longer do you want to play?

Jeremy: That's a good question. I mean, I'm 33 now and I could play for another 10 years or even longer if I want to but we'll see. As long as I'm still competitive and enjoying it and have a good quality of life for me and my family, then I'll keep going because it's what I like to do. As long as I get to keep advancing social-environmental impact and get to work with cool partners and brands, I'm game.

Darin: So you're gonna be playing, you love playing. So what you're doing with the tour, and stuff like that is so phenomenal because that is the groundwork for every organization being able to do that. So if there's any way I can help with that stuff and push in that direction. I don't know if you saw Habits of Waste, I'm on the board of that. Sheila Morovati, she's a badass and she's starting to push into the entertainment industry and get sets without having plastic. So it's these kinds of things that we don't realize eyes are so detrimental and have so much plastics, you think about all the events, right?

Jeremy: Well, especially with the AVP, like we're doing at the professional level. I want to create a blueprint or plan of action to do at the pro level and then have that scaled down to NCAA, the college programs like I've played with, probably the majority of the D1 coaches for beach volleyball programs. After I get the AVP dialed and build that out, I want to do that in the NCAA level and then do that at the junior level because that's where you get down to the grassroots. That's where there are 5000, 10000, 15000 tournaments across the US every year. Imagine if at every single tournament, before and after, kids, the parents, they all did a 20-minute beach cleanup. The scale of that, multiply that by 5000 or 10000, build that out in other countries, that's where you start to get real scale.

Darin: Well, then just keep going. More events and triathlons and the NFL, all of that stuff, the stadiums. And I know the Footprint, the Phoenix Suns stadium, they're eliminating--

Jeremy: We're actually having the AVP Championships in I think late September at the Footprint Center. So I'm fired out.

Darin: That's incredible. That's a perfect intersection. Well, dude, super proud of you. Super stoked to have this great conversation. I hope people can start to understand that small changes added up over time can make some massive differences. I'm just stoked in what you're doing, and I'm here for you.

Jeremy: Thank you, man, I appreciate it.

[00:56:39] Podcast Outro



Darin: Thanks for tuning in to this episode of The Darin Olien Show. I hope you took something valuable away from this conversation that will help improve your life in some way. If you'd like to learn more about my incredible guests, you can find all of their information in the show notes on my website. If you enjoyed this episode, or even you didn't like it, please rate this podcast. The team and I value your feedback so we can continue to give you the most value possible. We want you to get the most out of every podcast. So please rate, subscribe, share anything you feel called to do. I truly appreciate it, and I love and value your support. So, thank you, and I'll meet you in the next episode.