



“Casting ReWilding, Permaculture and Mythology” - [Willi Paul Interview](#) on [Talk Story Radio](#) (12/10/15) +PDF by Julia Widdop, Host

Introduction

‘I see the need to find a way for people to get in touch with their abilities to actualize their visions and not be stopped by their fear, routine or whatever we fill our time with.’

“Visions are a nebulous thing to me
Once you have one
Another one comes calling

In my work, I try to build tools and share ideas that may help folks get clear on a purpose and a long-term vision.

Is fear a tool? Yup.

As an outlander in this trans-perm path, I enjoy pushing the edge and challenging the prevailing norms:
[WILDpermaculture](#)” - Mixing ReWilding and Permaculture with Symbols. Lesson Plan is a good example.

As for the big picture- I do not give humans much chance to survive the calamities now under way.

Yes, I live with many paradoxes!"

-- Willi Paul comment from an email with Charlotte Anthony, Eugene, 12/11/15

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Interview with Willi by Julia

Julia: Hello, this is Julia Widdop with Talk Story Radio, and we have with us this morning Willi Paul, who is a very interesting man. He is the creator of Planet Shifter magazine if you want to go to take a look at it while you listen to this interview, but Willi, tell us about, you were telling me earlier about rewilding and permaculture. Shall we explore that a little further?

Willi: Sure, that would be excellent. That's the [recent piece](#) that's illustrated in the center illustration on the webpage. You'll see eight symbols, five of which I attached to rewilding, and three which are attached to permaculture. And in this piece I'm interested in the intersection, or the mixing, of those two. Let's call it movements, to make it easier to understand; these are movements that challenge man's dominance over nature, and man's use of nature.

So I'm using symbols as a catalyst, a nonverbal cue, to get at that intersection. And you can see the symbols on the homepage. They include trekking, and instinct, and the core of the native people, these are all things that I ascribe to rewilding. And, of course, permaculture is more prominent in the circles that I run in. But you would have to look at permaculture and how it feels with the land; it's still carving it up and manipulating the rainfall. So I wanted to challenge people in the permaculture world to take a look at what they're doing and perhaps be softer and more spiritual in their practice. Perma-culturalists are scientists, and, you know, civil engineers, and I've always had trouble trying to get them out of their box. But that's partially what WILDpermaculture is about ...

Julia: They like to take charge.

Julia: This little lean-to you have here, I'm really drawn to that image. Would you say that's rewilding or permaculture?

Willi: Oh, well, that's under the rewilding symbols section. So that should be clear.

Julia: Okay.

Willi: That's going back to nature and living with it versus carving it out and getting a yield.

Julia: So even though there's a manmade structure there it's still living with the culture, or with the nature.

Willi: Yeah, because it will decompose and go back to the planet in a couple of years, so I would argue that it's part of nature.

Julia: Okay, okay. I guess I agree. It wouldn't take it long to go back because it would fall down.

Willi: Right.

Julia: And then Nature would grow right back.

Willi: Yes.

Julia: Mm-hmm. What do you consider, how would you define rewilding?

Willi: Well, I published a [very long interview](#) with Dan De Lion. He's a rewildist and a teacher of children. I would suggest that rewilding, first of all, is about nature lore, a spiritual connection to nature and to animals and to protect, and to live with them; live lightly on the planet, go lightly, I guess, is the cliché. So it's learning how to survive in an appropriate way. Rewilding is a survivor event, although I think there's an element of survivorship, or survivalism in permaculture, too. So in sum, ReWilding is basically living with nature, instead of on top of it.

Julia: ... where would you make the divide if we build a structure that's ... not living with nature? Because even beavers build homes.

Willi: That's true. I do I make the distinction between the two movements. Is that what you're asking?

Julia: Yes.

Willi: Well, permaculture is interested primarily in building permanent agricultural facilities and homes. You could argue that a cobb house is a lot more permanent than a lean-to. But we're probably, you know, shaving a fine hair here. Permaculture is a groovy, new hippie way to engineer the land. And ReWilding is a chance to go back and create harmony, not carve up nature.

Julia: Okay. And then you also have here a myth lab. Talk to me about the myth lab. What's in there?

Willi: Well, the myth lab is a structured process to write new myths. And I'm going to tell you straight up that it's a controversial thing to do. But I have done it over 74 times, so I know the benefits.

Willi: It's probably a little scientific and a little heartfelt. My process is driven by an artifact that you use to write the story. You could use that lean-to image, for instance, to write the new myth. There's are New Myth elements that go with that process and certainly people could look that up on Planetshifter.com. But I'm trying to recharge a dead myth planet, a classic myth planet, that doesn't scant relevance anymore. So other than play with the old ones that don't work I'm trying to create new ones. That's the bottom line.

Julia: That will resonate with archetypal structures within?

Willi: Yes, ma'am, that's right.

Julia: What are they?

Willi: The apocalypse could be spiritual, it could be physical. It could be a charged process and I think it's included. And I think there's an element of science fiction in what I'm trying to do with new myths. So I am using Campbell for the journey and the initiation, but I am in trouble with the Joseph Campbell crowd because I'm promoting the community hero over the individual hero. Clearly the community hero is very important to me when I write new myths.

Julia: Okay, I see your point. So the community hero would be more, instead of going out on an individual journey, the community hero would be trying to be a, save the community, or what? Tell me a little bit more about that.

Willi: I think you got it. The community well-being over the individual's well-being, the individual's ego. I'm looking for a holistic approach to solving the community's problems. And that comes back to the transition movement, which I'm involved with, and something called localization. Localization is bringing the energy and resources back to the source and surviving the eminent demise of the Safeway's and the inter-state delivery trucks - and the oil industry over-all- and building real sustainability at the local level. So that's also what I mean by creating a community hero. Everybody's equal, everybody gains, everybody shares in the work.

Julia: Okay, so the community as a hero?

Willi: Yes, ma'am. That's a big one for me.

Julia: Okay.

Willi: And that's a part of what I'm talking about with the new myths, making new myths, you'll find that localization theme in there over and over again.

Julia: So you write stories that explore archetypes?

Willi: Well, actually, to be more specific, the archetypes are based on Jung's work on that subconscious/conscious interface that has been explored over and over again. I'm also challenging that. I'm hoping that I can share some new archetypes that might be more beneficial. I think some of the older archetype, like old myths are dead or just ineffective. You'll find a list of new archetypes that I propose in [this piece](#). So those are the ones that I've come up with recently, and they all relate to a movement and to a symbol. I'm developing, new archetypes and, again, it's controversial.

Willi: It's the end of the world.

Julia: Yes, exactly.

Willi: Who cares?

Julia: But well, and that's how transformation occurs, you can't just stand on one side or the other. You have to transform in the middle.

Willi: Very well said. That's where I am.

Julia: You're doing it. And you're trying to show other people how to do it.

Willi: Yes.

Julia: It's kind of nebulous. Well.

Willi: Well, you got to be here.

Julia: Okay, and alchemy. Okay, alchemy is how you do it, right?

Willi: Yeah, alchemy is the, you know, the spiritual and physical power duo that I'm talking about a lot. And, yes, that's true. Alchemy and symbols, especially, are generating these new archetypes. That would be the quick and dirty of it.

Julia: And tell me something about your workshops that you have. How often do you have those?

Willi: Well, I did a series of [roundtables](#) recently, in various cities in Northern California, including Santa Barbara, and Davis, and the Bay Area. So I took some of these base ideas that we are discussing today and presented those, and then we had some discussion, and then archived everything at the PlanetShifter.com. So if you search on roundtable you'll find that material. I made meticulous notes and saved files so people can get ahead of the curve.

Julia: And is there any way for people to be informed when you're having a new workshop? Or do you have a mailing list at all?

Willi: I'll let you know and you can broadcast it to your community, how's that?

Julia: Okay, that'd be great.

Julia: And I notice you have some [e-Books](#) here.

Willi: Yeah, the e-Book is a chance to package and repackage my work into logical topics. But they certainly don't cost anything, these are free.

Julia: Okay.

Willi: But I'm trying to make my work even more accessible than perhaps it is.

Julia: Well, it's wonderful that you don't have to try to make money on any of this. So you're free to ... you're free to explore any direction you'd like, it sounds like.

Willi: Yeah, that's right. It's taken over six plus years to get to this point. So it's just really starting. That's the exciting part. I do make money as a consultant in Silicon Valley so I don't have to worry about selling my soul.

Julia: Oh, good. That was something that was really noticeable about your website, there was like nothing on here where you're asking anybody to buy something.

Willi: Right. That's power. I don't have to deal with that paradox.

Julia: I thought, wow, this is interesting. This is very different.

Willi: Yeah, I don't have any of those baggage points, so I'm really pleased I've done it that way.

Julia: Yeah, that is good. Okay. Well, is there anything you'd like to tell the listeners? Our time is almost up.

Willi: Well, hmm ... just ask them to explore the homepage, because that's where all the entry points are.

Julia: Okay.

Willi: And to use the search engine, the search box, to look for topics. I'm hopeful that they'll find something that might resonate with them. And thirdly I really would welcome anybody's comments or ideas to partner with me. I conduct lots of conversations and interviews, so there's lots of opportunities to get involved here. I'm willing to invite people in.

Julia: Okay, fabulous. Well, and I assume I can put any of your [videos](#). Are these all on YouTube too?

Willi: Yeah, all the videos are on YouTube, so you can watch.

Julia: Okay. And I've been embedding them on my front page, so I did the bee myth one, and right now I've got the water one up on our front page.

Willi: Nice. Thank you.

Julia: But it's so fascinating.

Willi: Thanks so much Julie. I really appreciate your time.

Julia: Thank you. Bye.

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Contacts -

[Julia Widdop](#) offers private Skype coaching sessions using dreams, art & journal work. Supporter of book marketing support and networking group on Talk Story Radio.

Julia at talkstory.media

Willi Paul is integrating the permaculture, transition and new mythology movements. He has published articles, interviews, eBooks and new myths at Planetshifter.com since 2008. Please see his [portfolio](#) and collected works at [academia.edu](#).

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