

The Uncorked Conversation Podcast with Allyson Scammell

Episode #20: Thankful I Didn't Cork Up

Transcripts

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You are listening to the Uncorked Conversation podcast with Allyson Scammell, episode number 20.

Hello. And welcome to the Uncorked Conversation, a podcast for soul-guided, passion-filled women entrepreneurs who want to uncork big magic in life and business without burning out.

We'll get to the truth about how to uncork our core gifts, the ones we keep hidden inside, and how to infuse those gifts into our personal and professional life in a way that feels like magic.

We'll also uncover how to truly experience the joy of the journey through smart time management and planning. I'm your host, Allyson Scammell. Let's uncork.

Hey, ho Shantipax nation. How are we this week? I'm super thrilled because this is episode number 20. So that means it's time to tell a story.

I devote every 10th episode to telling a story and this episode is being released on Thanksgiving Day so I'm going to tell you the story of how I pulled off a traditional Thanksgiving dinner in Darfur against all odds and the amazing people who helped me to do it and how this helped me to uncork my core gifts because of course I have to talk about core gifts.

So in 2008 I was posted to Darfur which as many of you know is a region in Sudan that's been in conflict for many, many years and I used to work in humanitarian affairs and this was at a period of my life where I was feeling really lonely.

I was feeling like I didn't have a lot of deep connections and I was going through a difficult period. So I had served in conflict zones previously and had made some incredible friendships and lasting connections in those environments and I was hoping that I would do the same in Darfur.

And it was very upsetting for me when I first arrived and I was told that I would be living and working out of a guest house in the town of El Fasher in north Darfur all by myself. I would be the only person in the office except for a few local staff who come in and out and spend a lot of their time outside of the office and otherwise it's just me. So that just sounded very lonely and even further isolating for me and I was like oh this was not the experience I was hoping to have here.

So before I went to my town to start work I went to a different town in Darfur called Nyala to speak with a colleague who was doing the same thing that I would be doing to teach me some of the ropes. And I remember explaining to her that I was really hoping to make meaningful connections on this assignment and she said "Well yes it can be very lonely but the trick to meeting other people in the humanitarian community was to host a dinner at your guest house."

And I thought oh well I can do that. I'm a great cook and oh my goodness, Thanksgiving Day is just a few days away. And I said to myself "I can host a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at my guest house in El Fasher."

So I told my colleague this idea and she was like "Oh no no no no. You won't be able to pull that off, there's no turkey here, you don't have time to get all the traditional ingredients flown in. You'll be just trying to figure out like how to find your bedroom. Don't bite off more than you can chew."

And so I appreciated her advice but I felt undeterred. I felt like I wanted to have Thanksgiving dinner in Darfur and I wanted to invite people over to share Thanksgiving with me and more than anything else I just didn't want to be all alone on Thanksgiving which was indeed an American holiday which nobody else in Darfur, except for maybe a few other Americans, were thinking about. I just didn't feel like being alone on that holiday and I wanted to share it with new people and hopefully make new friends.

And so I remember sitting in that office in Nyala before I got on my flight to Fasher just kind of bummed like how am I going to pull this off and how am I going to make these new connections that I'm hoping to make. And I remember so well one of the local Darfuri staff named Ibrahim walked over to me and said "Allison what's wrong? You seem upset."

And I explained to him that it was Thanksgiving Day in a few days and we traditionally eat turkey and I wanted to host a dinner when I arrived to El Fasher but everyone was telling me that it would be too difficult to pull off in such a short amount of time.

And his eyes got big like saucers and he said "Allison my father was one of the greatest turkey farmers in Darfur. And he gave me his prize turkeys when he passed away. So I raise turkeys. I have about eight turkeys. I will give you one."

And I'm telling you they don't eat turkeys in Darfur. I didn't even think they had turkeys and I was assuming I would have to try to get a frozen turkey flown in from the U.S. embassy somehow. And I couldn't believe my ears.

Here before me was Darfur's probably only turkey farmer and I said "Well yes I will buy one from you, name your price." And of course he was like "No no I must, this is my gift to you. You must have it."

And so just I begged him to give him some money and basically I realized that I was going to really offend him if I gave him any money but I knew that one turkey was a huge huge piece of property for him, it was a huge asset that he was just going to give to me.

And it was almost like how can I accept this. But then I knew that if I didn't accept it I would hurt the man's feelings so I said "Yes, yes please I will have your turkey, thank you. I'm so grateful and you must must let me know how I can ever repay you."

And he said "I do not need repayment. That smile on your face is all the payment I need."

I told him my flight to El Fasher was the next day. So we agreed to meet in the market the next morning with the turkey where it would get slaughtered and prepared for consumption because he knew a butcher in the market that would do it for us. So the next morning I met him there with the live turkey who I named Rufus.

So he was there with Rufus the turkey and I didn't watch poor Rufus get slaughtered but indeed it was done quickly and humanely. And Rufus was prepared perfectly for baking and wrapped very neatly in a cardboard box because we didn't have like nice coolers or anything like that.

So the butcher gave me Rufus in the cardboard box and I thanked Ibrahim again profoundly for this gift which there is just no words for how grateful I was.

And I set off to the airport where I was on a WFP flight to El Fasher which was about a 30 minute flight away and the plane was piloted by two South African pilots and I was actually the only passenger on this particular day.

And so I had my backpack and my laptop and some other stuff and I had this kind of strange looking cardboard box so they said to me "What's in the box?" and I replied very stupidly, I don't know why but I said "You don't want to know."

So then of course that sounded off every alarm bell and they were like "Oh no, we do want to know. So open it up." And I was like ahh and it was all taped up perfectly and all wrapped perfectly. So I had to open up this box and I had to take out this just freshly slaughtered turkey and show it to them and they looked at me like I was completely insane and they were like all right fine. I think they had probably seen everything.

So they let me have my turkey. I tried to wrap him back up, stuff him back in the box and off we went to El Fasher. So I arrived into my new guest house and I met my local staff and one of the people that was there was a woman named Fatima and she was a woman who was going to help cook for me.

And she was a beautiful woman who everyone told me was an insanely fabulous cook. And her English was extremely minimal. My Arabic wasn't great.

So I had to explain to her that I was putting on a very large Thanksgiving dinner and I wanted to invite 30 to 40 people. After many hours and a lot of trial and error we were understanding each other about what had to happen.

And this is when I realized that all the things that I would normally have made you just can't find in Darfur. And I didn't have time to get anything flown in.

So I improvised and I improvised and I improvised. So instead of regular stuffing we had pita bread stuffing and instead of cranberries we had apple compote and instead of green bean casserole we had eggplant casserole.

So we put a Darfuri twist on all the traditional Thanksgiving staples. I was born and raised on a farm. I'm a vegetarian now but I grew up with meat.

I know how to prepare meat and I knew that that turkey was gonna be really tough and probably with a lot of fat and I knew that it would have to be brined in order for it to keep the moisture in and to have any sort of decent flavor or texture.

So I brined that turkey in salt water for 24 hours. I'd let a few people know that I was going to have this Thanksgiving dinner. I was praying people would show up but I had heard that if humanitarians hear that there's free food somewhere that they would just come in droves.

So the morning that I was having my dinner I got up, I prepared Rufus, Fatima and I were working together. We were getting all the fixings, everything. And when it was done the spread looked absolutely

stunning. The perfectly cooked turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, all the sides, the pita bread stuffing, everything was there and it looked and tasted amazing.

People arrived and could not believe that the new girl who had just arrived was able to pull off this feast and nobody could believe that it was a local turkey that tasted as good and juicy and moist as it tasted. And no one could believe that I had the awareness to brine the turkey otherwise it would have tasted tough like an old shoe.

And so it was an incredible day. And I met a lot of really cool people who went on to be great friends. And in that assignment in Darfur I was able to make some incredible wonderful friends and connections, people I'm still in contact with today.

But when I think back to that day I don't think about the guests that I met. I think about Ibrahim who gave me that turkey and I think of Fatima in the kitchen trying to figure out how to make bread stuffing out of pita bread. And I think of those two individuals who I am so grateful to have been able to meet them and experience them.

And I'm so grateful for Ibrahim's generosity and I'm so grateful for Fatima who just showed up wanting to help me make this event amazing.

And when I look back on that day I see my core gifts in action. And at the time I didn't know anything about core gifts. But today I see I have the core gift of bold action. I have the ability to be resilient in taking bold action to a desired outcome.

And I was so resilient in taking big action after big action to pull off a successful traditional dinner in Darfur with very little preparation and no ingredients coming from outside of the region. And there's a formula which I talk about on this podcast about how we can engage our core gifts to reach our full max potential. And it has four components and all of those components were present in this story.

The first component is your core gift. And in this case bold action. One of my core gifts is to be resilient in taking big action towards an outcome. The second component is the action you take to express that gift.

And in this case it was cooking a meal against difficult odds. And the third component is the mediums so that's the environment in which your gifts are shared. And so in this case that was the dinner itself. And the fourth is the intended audience for your core gifts.

And in this case it was the people I invited to attend the dinner. So all of those four components were in sync. And it was an example of me being an expression of my core gifts. But not my core gift of cooking per say. It was my core gift of taking bold action. So cooking against difficult odds and being resilient with that action and not giving up when people kept telling me that I wouldn't be able to do it.

So I want to challenge you to engage your core gifts. Use the four step formula. Determine which gift you want to share. Decide which action you want to take. Determine the medium in which you will use to share your action. And decide who the intended audience is.

It's such a simple formula and it's something we're doing all the time. I was doing it back in 2008 without even realizing it. But when you put your awareness on it and you set the intention that you are going to

really be in full expression of your core gifts and really reach your full max potential that's when the sparks really start to fly.

And that's when you start to get unintended outcomes that are greater than you could ever imagine. That's when you walk into your zone of genius, that's when your skills start up leveling in a way that feels so amazing, your success and your sales increase without you doing anything more. And life just gets super super sweet. So that is what I wanted to share with you today.

Dear friends if you are feeling at all aligned to this content I would be so grateful if you gave it a rating and review and shared it with a few friends. I truly am in service to you through these episodes and it is my wish that they make your life better and more whole and more joyful in some way. And as always until next time stay uncorked.

Are you ready to say goodbye to performing below your full potential? Then head on over to my Web site at shantipax.com/gifts to download the four step formula to bring all aspects of your core gifts together into targeted intended action that will give you the clarity you need to grow your business in alignment to your true authenticity.

The free video and worksheet will take you through each step so you'll be able to truly up level your skills, sales and satisfaction. Again that's S-H-A-N-T-I-P-A-X / gifts.